

Celebrating our History



Inn-side story

Cloister at 100 endures as monument to Addison Mizner’s dream deferred

By Holly Baltz



Mizner

Nearly 50 years before the vision of a certain Imagineer put Florida on the map as a year-round resort destination, Addison Mizner wanted the same thing as he built his “dream city” of Boca Raton. The famed architect, after bringing his distinctive Mediterranean Revival style to the Everglades Club and more than 30 homes on Palm Beach in the mid-1920s, wanted to make his mark with the “first tailor-made city in the world.”

See CLOISTER on page 20



TOP: The Cloister as it appears today, 100 years after it opened in 1926. It’s now one of five hotels at The Boca Raton. Photo provided

ABOVE: The main entrance to the hotel was simpler in 1926. Photo provided by Boca Raton Historical Society

Along the Coast

Ballot issue fires debate on waste vs. necessities

As tax revenue spiked, so did push for services

By Rich Pollack and Larry Barszewski

As a member of the statehouse’s Joint Legislative Auditing Committee, Rep. Peggy Gossett-Seidman says she has seen numerous examples of overspending by municipal governments and the apparent misuse of taxpayer dollars. “What was most surprising to me was the actual number of municipalities throughout the state who failed their own taxpayers by excessive spending and by failing to support budget expenditures with proper documentation,” she said. “There is excessive spending throughout Florida in several municipalities.” With a proposed state constitutional amendment coming before voters in November that could dramatically cut the amount

See TAXES on page 18

Along the Coast

Turtle trouble: Mounting challenges make survival harder for hatchlings

By Jan Norris

Poor babies! Turtles, that is. Hatchlings are crawling out from a record number of nests this year, but they’re having a tough summer trying to navigate the growing piles of sargassum at the shoreline to reach the ocean. The mounds of brown seaweed, stretching for miles along the coast, affect beach visitors, too. The sun-baked, decaying seaweed — and the debris and organisms that tumble in with it — stink. The noxious smell is from a toxic hydrogen-sulfide gas the rotting weed gives off that with lengthy exposure can cause headaches, watery eyes and nausea. “I’ve never seen it like this,” said Ryan Lillicotch. “Do they clean it up?” He and his wife, Argentina, visiting from Washington, D.C., were walking along Delray Beach

with nephews and nieces who had just arrived from Argentina. The sargassum ran the length of the curving shore in an unbroken line, with more washing up as the tide pushed in. Neat piles of freshly raked seaweed were stacked at the vegetation line high on the dunes in intervals. “What do they do with all this?” Argentina Lillicotch asked. “Could they use it to spread around elsewhere as organic matter?” The seaweed may be tilled into the sand as a soil enrichment for dune plants, but procedures for preparing it for use elsewhere are impractical. “I guess it’s food for the fishes,” Ryan Lillicotch said, “but it’s a mess for the people.” Sargassum is a natural occurrence in the Atlantic

See HATCHLINGS on page 16



A crow scurries away with a sea turtle hatchling at Red Reef Park. Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

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The ArtsPaper
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West Palm
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Page AT5



Summer movies
Coastal Star staffers share a
few of their favorite flicks.
Page AT1



Homeless in Boca
City hiring police,
resource coordinator
to deal with issue.
Page 9
A1A safety
Highland Beach to
get upgrades to
walkway, crosswalks.
Page 14

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<https://supportfloridajournalism.com/newspaper/the-coastal-star/>

A story on Page 24 of the July edition incorrectly reported that Manalapan Town Manager Eric Marmer received a new contract. Beginning Oct. 1, Marmer will be in the last year of his current three-year contract. The commission voted him a \$40,000 raise for the coming year.



2026 PRIMARY ELECTION

Dates & Deadlines

3 WAYS TO VOTE

The deadline to register to vote or change party affiliation was **Monday, July 20, 2026.**

1 Vote-By-Mail



Request It

Visit VotePalmBeach.gov, call (561) 656-6208, or email votebymail@votepalmbeach.gov. The deadline to request that a Vote-by-Mail ballot be mailed to you is 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, August 6, 2026. Vote-by-Mail ballot pickup is not available at our offices from August 8th through August 18th, unless, due to an emergency, the voter is unable to go to a designated Early Voting site or to his or her assigned polling place on Election Day (See F.S. §101.62(3)(d)(5)). Please have your Driver License, Florida ID card, or the last 4 digits of your Social Security number available when making your request.



Return It

Return your Vote-by-Mail ballot using pre-paid postage or drop it off inside any of our four offices during business hours. You may also drop it off at designated drop off locations starting August 8, 2026. **All Vote-by-Mail ballots must be received by 7:00 p.m. at our Main Office, or by 5:00 p.m. at one of our branch offices, on Election Day, Tuesday, August 18, 2026, in order to be counted.**



Track It

You can sign up for BallotTrax at VotePalmBeach.gov or by scanning this QR code to get alerts via email, text (SMS), and/or voice message with updates about the status of your ballot or if there is an issue so that it can be corrected right away.



2 Early Voting

Saturday, August 8, 2026, through Sunday, August 16, 2026

Early Voting locations are open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Registered voters in Palm Beach County can vote at any Early Voting location. Visit VotePalmBeach.gov for Early Voting locations, directions, wait times, or skip the line and make an Early Voting appointment (optional).

3 Election Day

Election Day is Tuesday, August 18, 2026. Polls are open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

On Election Day, you must vote at the polling place that is assigned to your precinct. Polling places may change! Visit VotePalmBeach.gov to confirm your polling place before you go vote.

Vote-by-Mail ballots may be returned at any Early Voting location during Early Voting hours, at a Secure Ballot Intake Station, or one of our four offices during office hours.



SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
EARLY VOTING & VOTE-BY-MAIL
BALLOT DROP OFF LOCATIONS



Florida is a Closed Primary State

Your political party affiliation determines which partisan candidates will appear on your ballot in the August 18, 2026 Primary Election. The deadline to change your party affiliation for the 2026 Primary Election was July 20, 2026. Visit RegisterToVoteFlorida.gov or contact our office to learn more.

NOTE: All registered voters may vote in a Universal Primary Contest when all candidates for an office have the same party affiliation and the winner will face no opposition in the General Election. There are two Universal Primary Contests this election. Only Democratic candidates qualified for County Commission District 2 and Port of Palm Beach Group 4. As a result, these contests are Universal Primary Contests, and all qualified voters residing in the affected districts may vote regardless of party affiliation.

VotePalmBeach.gov

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Ocean Ridge

Commissioners plan to keep tax rate the same

Ocean Ridge landowners will pay \$5.40 for every \$1,000 of taxable property value to fund next year’s proposed \$11 million town operating budget, according to a preliminary tax rate approved July 8 by town commissioners.

The preliminary tax rate, which is the same rate the town has charged since 2023, is set with the idea that it can be reduced during budget hearings in September but not increased, said Town

Manager Michelle Heiser.

While the tax rate would remain unchanged, the town will collect about \$1 million more in property taxes — a roughly 6% increase — during the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1. To collect the same amount of money it did this year, except for taxes from new construction, the town could impose a reduced tax rate of \$5.08 for every \$1,000 of taxable value.

In addition to daily operating

expenses, the town plans to spend \$4.6 million on construction projects.

The proposed tax rate would find the owner of a house, with a taxable value of \$1 million, paying \$5,400 for town services next year. If the town held steady on spending, that homeowner would pay \$5,080, a savings of \$320.

That doesn’t include the extra money landowners will pay because of property value increases. The assessed value of

homesteaded property can only increase by a maximum 3% a year, according to state law. However, the assessed value of commercial property and second homes can increase by as much as 10% annually.

The first of two budget hearings, to give town residents a chance to comment on the proposed budget, will be held Sept. 14.

— Jane Musgrave



Ocean Ridge police officers, family and officials celebrate after several of the officers were honored for their professional achievements. **FRONT** (l-r): Town Manager Michelle Heiser, Sgt. Jimmy Pilon, Officer Matthew Powers, Officer Mario Galluscio with his wife, Christine, Officer William Ranta with his wife, Lauren, mother, Suzanne, and children, Mia and Billy Jr., Chief Scott McClure, Officer Debra Boyle with therapy K-9 Dash, and Officer Aaron Choban. **BACK ROW** (l-r): Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy, Mayor Geoff Pugh, Vice Mayor Steve Coz and Commissioner Ainar Aijala Jr. **Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star**

Town police honored for work

Ocean Ridge Police Sgt. Jimmy Pilon on July 8 was honored by town commissioners for the second time in a year for police work that helped solve crimes in other communities.

In May, he stopped a car in the 6800 block of North Ocean Boulevard that had a defective headlamp.

After smelling marijuana, he searched the car and found a loaded Glock 29 semiautomatic pistol and ammunition. Tests showed the gun was linked to shootings in Lake Worth Beach, West

Palm Beach, Miami Gardens and Boynton Beach, where a young woman was shot in the head.

In March 2025, a similar traffic stop led to the arrest of a juvenile who was involved in shootings in Boynton and Delray Beach.

“We’re going to start billing other jurisdictions for all the crimes you’re solving in all these other towns,” joked Police Chief Scott McClure.

In addition to Pilon, Officer Matthew Powers was honored for receiving

the Distinguished Service Award for Enforcement from the Safety Council of Palm Beach County in June.

In a year, Powers conducted 1,128 traffic stops, issued 829 traffic citations, 655 written warnings, and made 17 arrests for traffic-related offenses.

Two other officers — William Ranta and Mario Galluscio — were honored for saving an elderly man’s life in April by administering a department-issued automated external defibrillator.

— Jane Musgrave

P&Z member tapped for vacant Town Commission seat

Lanette Bosch Gustafson, a 20-year Ocean Ridge resident who serves as an alternate on the town’s Planning and Zoning Board, has been appointed to a seat on the Town Commission.

Gustafson replaces two-term Commissioner David Hutchins, who died in May at age 78. Nominated by Commissioner Carolyn Cassidy, Gustafson was unanimously selected by town commissioners at their meeting on July 8. She is to be sworn in in August and will serve until March 2027.

A commercial real estate capital markets adviser, Gustafson acknowledged she hasn’t been active in town affairs because of work demands.

“The P&Z board kind of prepared me for town service,” she said before commissioners voted on her nomination. “I think I’ll do a good job.”

While Vice Mayor Steve Coz thanked others for submitting applications, the town clerk said none were formally filed. “The vacancy was filled by suggestions of the commissioners themselves,” the clerk wrote in response to a public records request.

Cassidy said Gustafson will be a welcome addition. “She’s smart and thoughtful,” Cassidy said. “I think she’ll bring refreshing new ideas to the commission.”

— Jane Musgrave



Gustafson

Flood relief plans move forward — Four years in the making, work to reduce chronic high-tide flooding on Harbour Drive North in Ocean Ridge will soon be underway.

Town commissioners on July 8 unanimously agreed to award a nearly \$500,000 contract to Heavy Civil construction company. With four other companies offering to do the work for \$642,000 to more than \$1 million, the Boca Raton company was the clear low bidder. Drainage improvements are to begin in several months and are expected to take six months to complete.

— Jane Musgrave

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Boca Raton

Four more police, new coordinator to tackle homelessness

By Rich Pollack

Among growing concerns about the homeless, especially in the downtown area, Boca Raton City Manager Mark Sohaney has introduced a multi-pronged effort that includes stepped-up enforcement of vagrancy laws and a coordinated approach to connecting those in need with available services.

Unveiled during a July 24 City Council workshop meeting, Sohaney’s proposal includes adding four police officers in the downtown community redevelopment area and hiring a community resource coordinator who will serve as the linchpin in overseeing homeless outreach efforts.

Sohaney also highlighted existing efforts on the law enforcement side of the approach, including continued implementation of a trespass ordinance and transitioning park rangers from the parks department to the Police Department.

Outreach initiatives under the proposal include keeping two community outreach police officers, continuing coordination with nonprofit service providers and county homeless outreach staff, creating a Quality of Life Working Group made up of community leaders, and establishing a quarterly homelessness and quality-of-life dashboard to track and report progress.

“No single policy, ordinance or program will eliminate homelessness,” Sohaney wrote in a memorandum to council members. “However, by combining public space management, outreach, service coordination, accountability and regional collaboration, the city can continue making meaningful progress while preserving the quality of life that residents, businesses and visitors expect.”

Under the proposed plan, Sohaney asked the City Council to approve funding for the additional downtown police officers — two for traffic enforcement and two as designated homeless liaisons — bringing the total number of downtown officers to eight.

The new officers will cost the city \$280,000 per officer while the community service coordinator will cost between \$110,000 and \$145,000.

Following the presentation from Sohaney and Acting Police Chief Seth Dubinsky, council

members voiced support for the plan with the consensus to move forward as soon as possible.

“These are sensible ways to address the issue,” Mayor Andy Thomson said. “The Quality of Life Working Group I think is a great idea. The sooner we can get that up and running, the better.”

Thomson and other council members also voiced their support for the community resource coordinator position.

The city manager envisions that staff member to lead the homeless outreach effort citywide and serve as the city’s primary point of coordination.

The coordinator will also play a key role in developing partnerships with the Palm Beach County Homeless Outreach Team and with nonprofits that provide access to transitional housing, shelter placement, case management and behavioral health.

Following the success of community-based programs in both Delray Beach and Fort Lauderdale, Sohaney sees the Quality of Life Working Group as a tool to improve communication and coordination among various segments of the community, while identifying early concerns.

The group of residents, business leaders, law enforcement officers and other city staff will hold ongoing forums focused on key issues.

In his memo, the city

manager identified seven outcomes he said would be used to measure the effort’s effectiveness.

“Staff believe success should be measured not only by law enforcement activity but also by meaningful improvements in public space conditions and service outcomes,” he wrote.

The outcomes are:

- Reduction in recurring quality-of-life complaints;
- Increased compliance with city ordinances and trespass

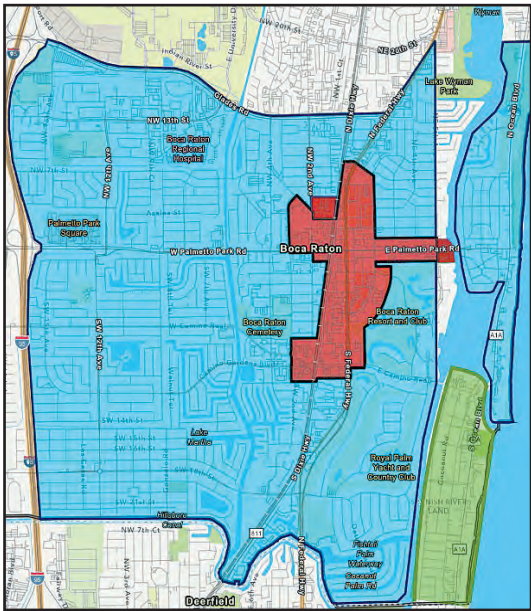
warnings;

- Increased acceptance of available services and referrals;
- Reduction in repeat contacts involving the same individuals;
- Improved perceptions of safety and accessibility in parks, downtown areas and other public spaces;
- Enhanced coordination among city departments, service providers, law enforcement agencies and regional partners;
- Measurable progress toward housing placements, treatment

engagements or other long-term service outcomes where data is available.

“While homelessness remains a complex regional challenge, Boca Raton can continue taking a proactive, balanced and measurable approach that protects public spaces, supports residents and businesses, connects individuals to services whenever possible and ensures enforcement remains fair, lawful and consistent,” Sohaney wrote.★

On-demand shuttle serving more of barrier island until Sept. 30



The map shows the on-demand shuttle’s service area. Red is the downtown area, blue is the regular coverage area and green is the expanded area (through Sept. 30).

Boca Raton has expanded the BocaConnect service area for the summer.

Through Sept. 30, riders will be able to take the on-demand shuttle to travel to or from downtown and the barrier island south of the Boca Raton Inlet.

The city launched the EV shuttle service operated by Circuit Transit in 2024. It expanded in 2025 to include the barrier island from the inlet to just north of the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, but not to the barrier island south of the inlet. That changes through Sept. 30.

Rides can be booked on the Circuit app. All trips must begin or end within the downtown area.

There is no charge for trips that both begin and end at downtown locations. Trips that begin or end in the downtown area but go outside that area to other covered parts of the city cost \$2, with each additional passenger paying \$1, up to a maximum one-way trip of \$5. Hours of service are, 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. Monday-Thursday; 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday; 9 a.m. to 2 a.m. Saturday; and 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday.

— Mary Hladky

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Manalapan

Town again challenges sand transfer across Boynton Inlet

By Jane Musgrave

After years of claiming Palm Beach County is robbing sand from its beaches, Manalapan will get another chance to persuade a judge to stop the steal.

A Florida administrative law judge will hold a five-day hearing beginning Aug. 24 to decide whether the county, with permission from Florida environmental regulators, is properly operating a sand transfer plant that moves sand across the Boynton Beach Inlet at the southern border of the town.

At a meeting on July 14, Town Manager Eric Marmer encouraged residents to write letters and attend the hearing at the South Florida Water Management District offices in West Palm Beach.

“We need a grassroots effort,” he said of the importance of residents taking action to show how important the issue is to the town.

He also encouraged residents to contact County Commissioner Marci Woodward to enlist her support. When Marmer reached out to the town’s district commissioner, he said Woodward declined to talk to him, saying that county attorneys told her she couldn’t address his concerns because of the ongoing litigation.

After years of complaining about the operations of the plant, the town in January filed a complaint with the Florida Department of Administrative Hearings.

In its 18-page petition, the town is asking Administrative Law Judge Francine Ffolkes to throw out a 10-year permit extension the county received in 2025 that allows it to increase the amount of sand that is pumped from Manalapan across



The sand transfer plant located on the north side of the Boynton Inlet pumps a slurry of sand and seawater through a pipe under the bridge, and onto the beach south (left) of the inlet. **Photo provided by Google Maps**

If You Go

What: Five-day hearing before administrative law judge begins 9:30 a.m. Aug. 24.

Where: South Florida Water Management District office, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm Beach.

People can also watch on Zoom. The meeting ID is 890 4077 2846.

Those who want to watch on their cell phones can call 929-436-2866.

the inlet to Ocean Ridge and beyond.

Taking more sand from the north side of the inlet will accelerate the damage that has already been done to the town’s fragile coastline, wrote attorney John Fumero, who was hired to represent the town.

“The increased erosion will diminish the size and quality

of Manalapan’s beaches thereby injuring the environment and the natural resources of the state, reducing turtle habitat, (and) diminishing protection offered by the beaches to upland development,” he wrote.

Manalapan residents will be hurt, he said. The erosion will reduce their “enjoyment of its beaches by degrading the beaches and increasing the need for Manalapan to renourish its beaches,” concluded Fumero, former general counsel for the water management district.

The extension should have been treated as a major modification by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, he said. That would have spurred an extensive review and given the town the chance to comment on its potential impact. Instead, it was approved as a minor change. Manalapan was given no chance to object, he wrote.

Both the county and the state

agency vehemently disagree with the town’s claims.

A July 10 settlement meeting failed to resolve the dispute, setting the stage for the August hearing.

This isn’t the first time the county and the town have battled over the sand transfer plant since it was built in 1937 — six years after the town was founded. It is well documented that residents in the 1930s and 1940s objected to the plant, Marmer said.

Previous legal challenges the town has filed to modify the operations of the plant have failed. Marmer feels confident that this time the town is on firm legal ground.

“I think we’ll win the administrative hearing,” he said.

But Ocean Ridge Mayor Geoff Pugh, whose town’s beaches to the south of the inlet are the first to receive the sand being transferred across it, says not only would Manalapan’s

request hurt Ocean Ridge beaches — it wouldn’t help Manalapan’s, either.

“For almost 90 years now, the thing has worked as it’s supposed to work,” Pugh said.

“The sand constantly moves north to south,” piling up at the inlet jetty, he said.

Any sand transfer reduction would add to the beachfront immediately north of the jetty, but wouldn’t add any sand to the beaches in Manalapan farther to the north, he said. It’s not pulling sand from those beaches either, he said; the sand movement there is all due to Mother Nature.

If the sand is left to pile up at the inlet’s jetty, it wouldn’t just deprive sand to the beaches to the south, but the sand accumulating would find its way into the inlet itself, creating problems for boaters navigating the inlet, Pugh said. ★

Larry Barszewski contributed to this story.

Passing the hat for a new Town Hall

By Jane Musgrave

Now that Manalapan has the deed for the land for its new Town Hall, it’s turning its attention to figuring out how to pay for the complex.

One likely source of money is donations from Manalapan residents.

Town Commissioner David Knobel said many of his neighbors want to contribute to the estimated \$20 million project so the town doesn’t have to go into debt to build its new digs on the site of a former bank in Plaza del Mar.

A reasonable fund-raising goal? Ten million dollars, Knobel suggested.

The town has already secured an estimated \$8 million from Palm Beach County Fire Rescue to help pay for the fire station that will be part of its new administrative complex. Town Manager Eric Marmer estimated the sale of the half-acre site of the existing Town Hall, which likely would be torn down for residential development, would bring in \$4 million to \$6 million.

He also said that a proposed luxury condominium development near the shopping plaza on South Ocean Boulevard could generate sufficient taxes to pay for the new complex. However, he cautioned, the project isn’t a sure thing.

Also, Knobel said, the \$20 million estimate for the new administrative complex doesn’t cover all of the expenses. “It’s not only the building, but we have to furnish it,” he said.

Marmer said he would develop brochures and work with Knobel on the fund-raising campaign.

The town in June paid an initial \$2.85 million for the 1-acre site of the former bank that is owned by Salute Realty LLC, of Babylon, New York. The payment came after Palm Beach County Circuit Judge Darren Shull ruled that the town could seize the property by eminent domain.

Negotiations for a final sale price are continuing. If no agreement is reached, a jury could be asked to determine how much more the town should pay for the land. ★

Town plans to keep tax rate steady again as property values rise

Even though Manalapan plans to spend 26% less on day-to-day costs next year, residents will pay the same property tax rate for town operations, according to preliminary budget figures.

The Town Commission on July 14 set a preliminary tax rate of \$3.00 for every \$1,000 of taxable value to pay for its proposed \$9.7 million operating budget for the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1.

It marks the fifth year in a row the tax rate has stayed the same. But, because property values have increased, most town residents will see a jump in their tax bills.

The owner of a home valued at \$3.7 million after a \$50,000 homestead exemption paid \$11,100 for town services last year. An expected 3% property value increase, the most allowed by Florida law, would mean the homeowner would pay about \$330 more for town services this year.

Property values for commercial property and second homes can increase up to 10% annually, according to state law. Overall, property values in Manalapan went up 7%, reaching \$2.6 billion, according to the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser’s Office.

Increased property tax revenues will help make up for a projected \$1 million drop in building permit fees, according to town officials. Various planned construction projects were postponed, they said.

The overall operating budget will drop roughly \$3.3 million to \$9.7 million. Most of the decrease is because the town set aside \$2.9 million this year to buy a 1-acre former bank site in Plaza del Mar that will be used for a new Town Hall.

The commission will finalize its spending plan during hearings on Sept. 8 and 22.

— Jane Musgrave

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Along the Coast



Rob Konrad's Land Rover landed upside down on State Road A1A after the impact tore the front end off, including the engine. Photo provided by Gulf Stream Police Department

Former Miami Dolphin, Ocean Ridge resident charged with reckless driving in A1A crash

By Larry Barszewski

The driver in a late-night June 29 single-car crash on State Road A1A in Gulf Stream has been identified as former Miami Dolphin fullback and Ocean Ridge resident Rob Konrad. Police say he lost control of his speeding Land Rover SUV, which crashed into several trees and a water valve before flipping over.



Konrad

Konrad was airlifted via Trauma Hawk helicopter for medical attention following the crash, which took place in the 4000 to 4300 blocks of A1A. He has been charged with reckless driving involving property damage and three civil violations. His medical condition was not available.

His attorney entered not guilty pleas to all counts on July 13 in Palm Beach County Court. A status hearing is scheduled for Aug. 13.

The crash is not the first time Konrad, 49, has survived a perilous situation.

In 2015, he fell off his 31-foot boat 9 miles from shore in the Atlantic Ocean. He spent 16 hours swimming what was later determined to be 27 miles — given ocean drift — before reaching shore in Palm Beach. He spent several days recovering in the hospital and later admitted “I shouldn’t be alive.”

The A1A crash took place as he was heading northbound on State Road A1A about a mile away from his Ocean Ridge home at about 11:20 p.m. June 29.

Gulf Stream Police Chief Richard Jones said one of his officers was stationed in a cruiser along northbound A1A when the officer’s car shook from the silver, 2024 Land Rover speeding

past at what he estimated to be 80 mph. “As he looked up, the car was about beginning to lose control,” Jones said the day following the crash. The car struck a large water valve and crashed into multiple trees before flipping over, he said. The car’s engine could be seen along the roadway, having been knocked out of the car.

After being shut down for several hours following the crash, A1A traffic was also detoured for about 4½ hours the following morning as crews for Boynton Beach worked to repair the damaged water pipe that had caused some road flooding.

Besides the reckless driving count, a first-degree misdemeanor, Konrad was cited for careless driving, failure to drive in a single lane, and traveling too fast for conditions.

If convicted of reckless driving, Konrad could face punishment of up to a year in jail and/or a fine of up to \$1,000. The three civil citations carry penalties of \$166 each.

Konrad’s attorney, Michael Gottlieb, did not return a call seeking comment and Konrad could not be reached for comment.

The crash occurred near the Ballantrae condominiums. Debris was scattered for several hundred feet, Jones said.

Konrad played fullback for the Miami Dolphins from 1999 to 2004, serving primarily as a blocking back for Lamar Smith and Ricky Williams. Konrad now works as a financial adviser.

Drafted in the second round out of Syracuse University, he compiled only modest career statistics, rushing 38 times for 114 yards and one touchdown and catching 111 passes for 854 yards and six touchdowns. ★

Brian Biggane contributed to this story.

Residents can get a pass from county’s beach parking fees

By Jane Musgrave

Palm Beach County residents will have to get annual passes to park for free at 12 county parks, including ones in Gulf Stream, Ocean Ridge and Boynton Beach.

The passes will allow county residents to avoid a \$4-an-hour parking fee that will be collected beginning Oct. 1.

While the details are still being worked out, County Administrator Joe Abruzzo said the passes will be easy to get. But, he said, without them county residents will have to pay to park or risk getting tickets.

Parks in the southern part of the county where passes will be needed are: Ocean Inlet Park in Boynton Beach, Ocean Ridge Hammock Park in Ocean Ridge and Gulfstream Park in the County Pocket.

The passes won’t be good at the county’s South Inlet Park in Boca Raton and R.G. Kreusler Park near Lake Worth Beach, which both have had parking fees in place for decades.

The annual parking passes were approved after county residents flooded Commissioner Maria Marino with emails, blasting the commission’s plans to make them pay to go to the beach.

Marino was the target of their ire because she pushed for the parking fee. While other commissioners said the fees were unfair to cash-strapped county residents, they bowed to her wishes because seven of the 12 beachfront parks are in her north county district.

On July 14, Marino reversed course, saying the 2,000 emails she received convinced her that county residents should continue to enjoy county beachfront parks for free.

“Our residents have spoken,” Marino said, urging the commission not to charge county residents to park.

The commission had suggested giving county residents a 20% discount, which would have shaved 80 cents off the hourly rate. But, Marino conceded, that concession wasn’t enough.

The parking fee was first proposed to help the commission balance its proposed \$2.2 billion spending plan. If all beachgoers were charged \$4 an hour, it would have generated \$10 million annually. After the commission agreed to give county residents a discount, that amount dropped to \$7 million.

By only charging out-of-county residents, the county will pocket about \$3 million, Abruzzo said. He said he would take \$4 million out of the county’s emergency fund to make up the shortfall.

The county years ago imposed parking fees at South Inlet Park in Boca Raton and R.G. Kreusler Park, which is adjacent to Lake Worth Beach Park.

Boca and Lake Worth Beach officials demanded it. They worried that revenues at their nearby parks would plummet if beachgoers could park at the county parks for free. ★

Hypoluxo Island

Homeowners want to keep access road in flood-prone area

By Patrick Sherry

Owners of a Pelican Lane home on Hypoluxo Island say that worsening flooding leaves them without road access. They are asking Lantana officials to allow them to keep an access road to give them another route to South Atlantic Drive.

Harry Ehrlich and Heather Brookman, owners of 701 Pelican Lane, halted work on the project after recently receiving a stop-work order from the town. They already built a small access road from their driveway across the nearby town-owned right-of-way adjacent to their property, creating an emergency route during floods.

At the Town Council’s July 27 meeting, Ehrlich apologized for not getting a permit from the town for the project, but he wanted to work with staff to find some way they could get a permanent easement, license, or variance to keep the access road.

He is still awaiting a decision from the town and is working with town staff to find a solution to the problem.

When the area floods, the water can block the only route to and from their home. “We had the best of intentions: create safe access, help reduce flooding on Pelican Lane for the benefit of all, update tired landscaping and install a new sprinkler system,” Ehrlich said.

According to documents submitted to the town, former owner Bob Fritts privately maintained the right-of-way for 40 years. Neighbors have submitted 12 letters in support of the project.

However, other neighbors were worried about losing more green space on Hypoluxo Island.

“We’re dealing with a reduction, dwindling of canopies, vegetation, trees and natural open space that helps with drainage,” nearby resident George Huguely said. ★

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Highland Beach

Money from state to help pay for walking path, more crosswalk lights

By Rich Pollack

Highland Beach residents as well as anyone passing through town on State Road A1A are likely to see some additional safety improvements soon thanks in large part to an appropriation of \$375,000 from the state.

Construction is expected to start this month on the town's Pedestrian Safety Traffic Improvement Project, which includes major upgrades to the 3-mile walking path on the west side of A1A as well as the installation of in-ground lighting on eight pedestrian crosswalks.

The walking path project will include milling, regrading and repaving the shared use walkway at a cost of \$263,260. The town will use \$180,420 of state money for the project and supplement it with \$82,840 of budgeted town funds.

The improvements to the widely used walking path are much needed, according to Town Commissioner Judith Goldberg.

"There's a lot of activity and it will now be safer for everyone," she said.

Part of the problem with the path as it is now, Goldberg said, is that there are a lot of uneven spots that can make it easy for someone to fall.

She knows firsthand about the fall risk, having taken a tumble not too long ago on the uneven surface.

"I was very shaken up," she said, adding that although she wasn't seriously hurt, she avoided walking on the path for some time.

The commissioner said that town leaders had hoped that improvements to the walking path would have been made by the state Department of Transportation during a two-year A1A resurfacing project.

When that didn't happen, the town sought the help of state Rep. Peggy Gossett-Seidman, a Republican who Goldberg said was instrumental in helping get legislative approval for the two projects and helping them avoid the veto of Gov. Ron DeSantis.

Pedestrian crosswalk safety has long been a priority for the town, and the addition of embedded pedestrian-activated lights will enhance the effort that has already included flashing beacons — and orange flags that walkers can carry — to improve visibility.

The new embedded solar lights will come with a price tag of \$283,920, with \$194,580 coming from the state appropriation and the remainder coming from the town.

"The lights will certainly enhance the safety and beauty of our town," Goldberg said. "Drivers won't be able to miss them."

The Highland Beach appropriations were co-sponsored in the state senate by Sen. Lori Berman, a Democrat who also co-sponsored a successful \$1 million appropriation request for improvement to the intersection of Swinton and Atlantic avenues in Delray Beach and \$375,000 in funding for water line improvements in the Riviera community in Boca Raton. ★

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Boca Raton

Legal battles heating up over unfinished Mandarin Oriental projects

By Mary Hladky

Penn-Florida Companies is facing new lawsuits filed by both the group of lenders and the construction manager for the Mandarin Oriental condos that are being built in Boca Raton on Federal Highway a few blocks north of Camino Real.

In its July 17 complaint filed in Palm Beach County Circuit Court, Via Mizner Lender 1 LLC, the administrative agent for a group of lenders, wants to foreclose on a mortgage Via Mizner Owner III, the Penn-Florida affiliate building the condos, secured in August 2023. It seeks \$417.7 million to repay the original \$270 million loan plus interest, advances and fees.

Penn-Florida stopped making interest payments on the loan in June 2024 and failed to pay off the full amount as promised in September 2025, the lawsuit says.

And in a July 6 complaint also filed in Circuit Court, Strategic Group Builders is seeking \$24.1 million that it says it has not been paid for its work, as well as interest, costs and attorneys' fees.

The lawsuit names as defendants Via Mizner Owner III and four project lenders that the lawsuit says stopped making monthly payments to Strategic Group without giving notice.

Strategic Group, which has offices in Miami and Boca Raton, recorded a lien against the property when Penn-Florida and the lenders stopped paying. The lawsuit seeks to foreclose on that lien. Its five-count complaint includes a breach of contract claim.

The lawsuit also notes that Strategic Group stopped providing labor, services and materials at the condo site prior to May 6.

Separately, a Palm Beach County Circuit Court judge has ruled in favor of a couple seeking return of a \$1.98 million deposit they made on a Mandarin Oriental condo unit.

Judge James Sherman's June 29 ruling states that Douglas and Debra Jacobs can demand payment from the title companies holding their deposit money.

But attorney Robert Sweetapple, who represents Via Mizner Owner III, has filed a motion for rehearing.

In that pleading filed on July 9, he contends that Sherman made legal errors that include contract misinterpretation.

Sherman's analysis of the case found that arguments made by Via Mizner Owner III — concerning why the Jacobses are not entitled to get back their deposit — are erroneous, insufficient or without adequate evidence.

Sherman's ruling came shortly after Niles and Liliana Undavia settled their legal case against Via Mizner Owner III following an arbitrator's determination that they were entitled to compensation and interest, according to court records.

The Undavias, who had placed a \$1.65 million deposit on a condo unit, are to be paid by Jan. 7, or within 30 days of Via Mizner refinancing or obtaining additional financing for the condo construction.

If that doesn't happen, they will be entitled to a consent judgment for breach of contract for the amount due to them.

Eight other buyers also have settled their lawsuits against Penn-Florida, but the settlement amounts are confidential. The Undavia case was the first to reveal settlement terms.

But the lenders' foreclosure action seeks also to undo any claims by what it calls "purported junior lienholders" including Strategic Group Builders and "purported contract purchasers" of condo units including the Undavias. "The mortgage is a lien superior in dignity to any prior or subsequent rights, title, claim, lien, or interest arising out of borrower," its lawsuit argues.

Yet another legal case, this one concerning the Mandarin Oriental hotel that is under construction next to the condo building, is underway in U.S. Bankruptcy Court.

Penn-Florida affiliates Via Mizner Owner II and Via Mizner Pledgor II filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection last December after they were unable to repay lenders about \$210 million at loan maturity. Under an agreement with their senior secured lender, TIG Romspen, the affiliates have been given time to seek refinancing or recapitalization and they sought to push back the date of the property auction.

On July 7, the date of the property auction was extended to Aug. 14 and a hearing to approve the sale was extended to Aug. 21. ★

Steve Plunkett contributed to this story.



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HATCHLINGS

Continued from page 1

Ocean that has its greatest onshore impact during the spring and summer. The seaweed, floating in the ocean, is deposited on Florida beaches by wind and currents as it travels up the Gulf Stream.

"We get heavy sargassum every summer," said Jennifer Cirillo, director of Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation.

The problem is exacerbated because the onslaught of seaweed coincides with turtle nesting season.

The sea algae tends to accumulate most heavily in the county on the beaches south of the town of Palm Beach, she said.

Lines of the brown, tangled weed are visible from the air up and down the coastline as well as in the water, where the healthy grass appears as yellow mats, floating in miles-long patches throughout the Caribbean and Atlantic Ocean.

While found all along both Florida's coasts, it worsens along the southern tip, with the Keys particularly hard-hit this time of year.

Sargassum's presence is complex: It's beneficial for providing food sources and hiding places for small fish, crustaceans and sea turtle hatchlings, who float along with it in the water to the Sargasso Sea or Azores. When it washes ashore, it can aid beach renourishment efforts and dune stabilization.

But piling up as it has this summer, it impedes hatchlings heading out into the ocean, and deters visitors looking to enjoy the sand and surf.

Patricia Diaz, a Delray Beach resident, comes to the beach to sunbathe occasionally.

"It's bad," she said. "You can't walk along the beach."

Diaz says seaweed has always been present in summer, but she doesn't remember it being this heavy in previous years.

"It used to be more natural. I don't know how they're going to get rid of it."

While the seaweed has affected tourism numbers, there are only a couple of beaches that show fewer visitors than last year at this time, said Cirillo.

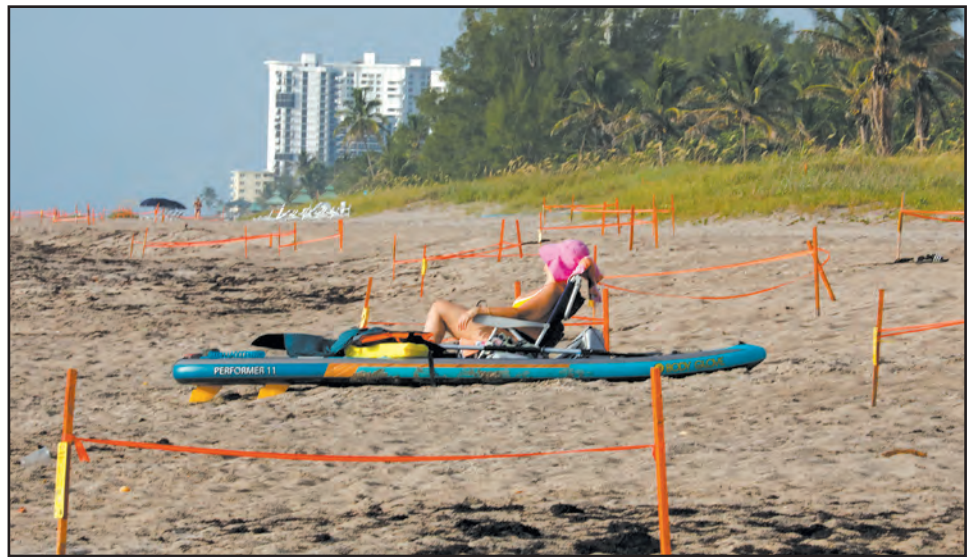
"It could be weather, or other factors, too," she said, though the heavy seaweed, especially in South County, "definitely has had an effect."

Ocean Inlet Park in Boynton Beach had 93,700 visitors in June, down 2.65% over last year. South Inlet Park in Boca Raton showed a 17.6% drop over last June, with only 18,758 beachgoers.

Dealing with the mess

The county has a "hands-off" approach to sargassum, because of the benefits to dune retention, and to avoid turtle nest disruption.

There's an economic reason, too. In years past, the county cleaned beaches regularly, using tractors pulling rakes. But in 2002, Cirillo said, "Money for cleaning was cut from our



TOP: A loggerhead sea turtle hatchling struggles to make its way over a thick bed of sargassum in late July at Red Reef Park in Boca Raton.

ABOVE: A seagull takes to the air with a hatchling at Red Reef Park, where a beachgoer lounges among turtle nests. The nest numbers by July had set records for Boca Raton beaches.

LEFT: Dozens of feet wide and more than 7 feet deep on the south side of the Boynton Inlet, the rotting sargassum gave off an odor so intense it followed a *Coastal Star* photographer back to his car.

Photos by Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

budget." The figure was \$90,000.

But in early July, the state made the county aware of a reimbursable grant program to help clean beaches.

"They'd be willing to reimburse \$100,000 in one season to work with sargassum cleanup. They're trying to work with us," Cirillo said.

The South Inlet Park and Ocean Inlet Park county beaches were raked once in June, she said.

Crews in Delray Beach and Boca Raton are more proactive, raking the seaweed regularly — but even then, it still piles up.

The seaweed "season" doesn't stop till early fall.

In a mid-July interview, Cirillo said the county is now monitoring Gulfstream Park for seaweed. "There's quite a bit in the water," she said.

It gets pushed onto beaches there and because of wind and tide patterns, she said, "it tends to not get washed away or leave in tidal currents."

It's usually left alone, or raked only slightly to provide pathways for rescue personnel and beach visitors, with a goal of leaving turtle nests undisturbed.

If "heavy, heavy mats" stay on shore, the county gets a permit to clean the beaches.

The county works with the Florida Department of

Environmental Protection to rake up and till the seaweed under the sand. There, it stabilizes the sand dunes and nourishes vegetation that helps hold the sand on land. Turtle nests are monitored carefully.

Condo owners and single-family homeowners wanting beaches cleaned in front of their property must pay private concerns to do the work.

For example, South Palm Beach Mayor Rafael Pineiro said in a Town Council meeting that the condos in town are collaborating with Beachkeeper Inc. to have the beach raked three times a week and blend the weed into the

sand, coordinating with wildlife agencies.

Lantana is raking its public beach twice a week, or on an as-needed basis, said Marc Fichtner, chief of Lantana's Ocean Rescue Division. The Town Council's decision to rake represents a policy shift. The beach is only 250 yards wide, in front of the Dune Deck Cafe.

Working with the agencies that protect the turtles and other beach wildlife, the town has permits to rake, he said.

Big year for nesting

So far, there's been no effect

Continued on the next page

Continued from page 16

on the turtle nests from either the tilling or the seaweed mounds on the beaches, according to Dave Anderson, the sea turtle conservation coordinator at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton.

"The mother turtles are 300 pounds or more. They have no trouble plowing through it. They may be deterred, and turn around and come back later."

"But what we see is a normal pattern."

This is his 20th season monitoring turtle nesting in a 5-mile area north and south of the Boca Raton Inlet.

It's a banner year for nesting in the county overall, he said.

"Leatherbacks broke our all-time high of 43," Anderson said of the Boca Raton count.

Before the end of July, loggerhead nests also set a record on city beaches. The previous record, 1,075 nests, was broken July 25 when this year's count reached 1,077.

From nest to ocean

While there's no count of how many baby turtles make it from the nest to the ocean, Anderson said his staff works on percentages and estimates the success rate.

"We take an inventory of eggs in the nest and the percentage that hatch," he said.

The sargassum mounds do work against the tiny turtles — especially those that hatch in the daytime.

"It's always been a concern for a lot of the beach patrols and those who are going out in the morning and seeing hatchlings tangled in the sargassum," said Dr. Sarah Milton, chair of the Department of Biological Sciences at Florida Atlantic University.

In 2013, her department researchers performed an experiment to test the hatchlings' ability to climb over a mound of seaweed and get to the ocean.

Not surprisingly, the babies crawled more slowly up the seaweed piles. While they didn't show distress at the end of the climbs, the seaweed slowed them significantly.

The researchers found in a previous study that sargassum had to be 30 centimeters high — about 1 foot — before hatchlings were altogether deterred.

But getting tangled in the mounds created another problem: The hatchlings were easy pickings for opportunistic predators such as crows — especially in the daytime — despite the camouflage.

"Most do hatch at night, but if they're stuck in it and can't get across, then they can die from heat and dehydration, or get picked off by predators," Milton said.

Crows and shorebirds are attracted to the seaweed because of other creatures in it.

While it appears more crows are at the beach now, Milton said, "I hadn't heard that. But the seaweed brings crabs and dead fish and other food with it. It's like putting in a bird feeder."



Palm Beach County has added warning signs at county parks, like at the Boynton Inlet. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

It doesn't mean there are more birds — it just means they've found a food source."

Anderson says his turtle patrol volunteers shoo the birds when possible. "But crows are smart. They'll fly off with a hatchling, bury it near the shoreline and keep hunting."

People to the rescue

Beachgoers finding hatchlings stuck in the weeds in the daytime are encouraged to take them to Gumbo Limbo Nature Center in Boca Raton.

A cooler on the front porch has a poster instructing rescuers how to leave the turtles inside.

"We encourage people to utilize it if they find hatchlings in trouble," Anderson said. It's not illegal to rescue hatchlings, especially those picked at by crows, or tangled in the weeds.

"Most likely, it's daytime and the babies are exhausted. They've been out all night, and are too exhausted to make that swim. They have a better chance once we get our hands on them," he said.

"We evaluate them — rinse them off, examine them and deem them healthy enough to be released at night, or we take them to the rehab center at the Palm Beach Zoo."

Sea Turtle Specialists, a newly established rehabilitation center at the zoo, is run by Whitney Crowder, former sea turtle rehab director at Gumbo Limbo.

Hatchlings crawling for their lives already have survived nest attacks from predatory animals — foxes, raccoons and coyotes digging up nests to eat eggs.

At night, the yellow-crowned night herons pick them off once hatched.

But with more people monitoring the turtles, and increased awareness that includes restrictions on light pollution, the turtles have a better chance each year, Anderson said.

"Everything's beachy on our end."

The seaweed-turtle-human situation isn't really a problem for beach lover Larina Maldonado, either.

A Delray Beach resident, she comes to the beach often.

She's sitting on the sand on a July morning, "to get some peace; clear my head."

To her, the seaweed is just part of nature. "It really doesn't bother me. I'm a big respecter of habitat. I'm just visiting — this is someone else's home." ★

Robert Haughn contributed to this story.

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Recent tax and spending habits

Most local governments have seen hefty increases in their spending and taxing in recent years, while adding more employees to their payrolls. Is it government waste or just the cost of providing services residents want? Here's a look at some of the changes, either 2016-2025, or 2016-2024.

Municipality	Population			Expenses			Tax Revenue			Total Employees			Public Safety		
	2016	2025	change	2016	2025	change	2016	2025	change	2016	2025	change	2016	2025	change
Boca Raton	88,275	100,897	↑14%	\$170.7M	\$322.9M	↑89%	\$72M	\$137.4M	↑91%	1,385	1,703	↑23%	522	598	↑15%
Boynton Beach	72,784	82,396	↑13%	\$92.1M	\$164.9M	↑79%	\$36.6M	\$81.4M	↑122%	812	962	↑19%	420	467	↑11%
Briny Breezes	414	494	↑19%	\$0.66M*	\$1.1M*	↑72%	\$0.37M	\$0.31M*	↓17%	2	2	0%	0***	0***	0%
Delray Beach	63,972	72,352	↑13%	\$112.1M	\$198.1M	↑77%	\$56.9M	103.8M	↑82%	813	935	↑15%	457	508	↑11%
Gulf Stream	998	957	↓4%	\$4.2M	\$7.7M*	↑84%	\$4.7M	\$5.8M*	↑25%	18	22	↑22%	12	15	↑25%
Highland Beach	3,600	4,303	↑20%	\$9.3M	\$18.5M	↑99%	\$8.6M	\$13.8 M	↑61%	38	87	↑129%	17	61**	↑259%
Lantana	10,737	12,226	↑14%	\$9.8M	\$18.4M	↑87%	\$2.6M	\$7.3M	↑180%	90	110	↑23%	49	62	↑28%
Manalapan	417	475	↑14%	\$4.2M	\$7.6M*	↑78%	\$3.1M	\$6.2M*	↑102%	38	52	↑37%	N.A.	27	
Ocean Ridge	1,779	1,911	↑7%	\$5.8M	\$10.1M*	↑74%	\$4.3M	\$8M*	↑86%	27	33	↑22%	20	24	↑20%
South Palm Beach	1,443	1,556	↑8%	\$1.8M	\$2.3M	↑28%	\$1.1M	\$2.2M	↑92%	13	4	↓69%	9	0**	↓100%

* 2024 figure; 2025 not available **Highland Beach and South Palm Beach public safety numbers are skewed because South Palm Beach switched from its own police force to PBSO, and Highland Beach added its own fire rescue department. *** Briny Breezes contracts its police from Ocean Ridge and fire from Boynton Beach. **SOURCES:** Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports, Annual Financial Reports and other information provided by municipalities.

TAXES

Continued from page 1

of property tax dollars filling municipal coffers, a fresh focus on local government spending has emerged.

The challenge is that what is wasteful spending to some is money for necessary services to others.

Republican Gossett-Seidman supports and voted to put on the ballot Amendment 3 this November, which will increase the state’s homestead exemption — from \$51,411 this year to \$150,000 in 2027 and to \$250,000 in 2028 — if 60% of voters agree. Proponents say the increased exemptions will force governments to be more efficient and help curb unneeded spending on nonessential services.

Opponents of the amendment say the increases will handcuff local governments as they attempt to provide services that residents need and want.

State Rep. Rob Long, a Democrat who previously served on the Delray Beach City Commission, says that there is lots of talk about government waste by state leaders but not a lot of details.

“There are always ways to optimize things in government but there needs to be a discussion that focuses on real data and specifics,” he said.

What to provide?

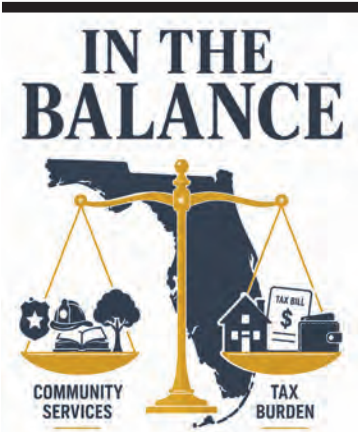
Delray Beach Mayor Tom Carney, who is at odds with his fellow commissioners over their proposed tax rate increase in his city this year, has pushed for fiscally responsible city budgets, saying that municipalities must always prioritize core services.

“The core function of government is to provide public safety and good infrastructure,” he said.

That translates into providing money for police and fire services, water and sewer services, and ensuring roads and other public property are well maintained.

Still, Carney — who has not publicly said how he will vote on Amendment 3 — says governments cannot simply rule out spending in other areas.

“You never retreat from core function but if you can demonstrate the value of other enhancements and they contribute to the success of the city, then those are things you



Ongoing coverage of pros and cons of Amendment 3 on the November ballot

should pursue,” he said.

An event that brings recognition to Delray Beach and that helps make the city special, for example, might be worth spending money on, he said.

In an opinion piece that appeared in the *Palm Beach Post* in July, Carney wrote that should Amendment 3 pass, he thinks his city will be able to weather what he calls more modest revenue growth.

To do so, he says the city would need to delay non-essential hiring, push back lower priority capital purchases, consolidate administrative functions, prioritize the order of projects and “closely review overtime, contracts and discretionary spending.”

Carney, in the opinion piece, pointed out that Delray Beach’s general fund budget and spending grew significantly during the years when property values increased substantially.

And it wasn’t just Delray Beach.

Tax revenues rise

A *Coastal Star* analysis found that property tax revenues in 10 southern Palm Beach County coastal communities increased significantly in recent years. The analysis used Annual Comprehensive Financial Reports and other published financial documents from the municipalities.

In Boca Raton and Delray Beach, property tax revenues nearly doubled from 2016 to 2025 — a jump of \$65 million in Boca Raton and \$47 million in Delray Beach — and more than doubled in Boynton Beach.

In contrast, the Consumer Price Index and the Municipal Cost Index — a measure that looks at the change in government costs and not household ones — generally

grew between 35% and 40% during the same time.

However, the MCI and CPI wouldn't take into consideration items like population growth, new services, added employees and one-time expenditures.

The coast’s smaller communities also saw large property tax revenue increases during that time, with Lantana’s tax revenues increasing 180%, going from \$2.6 million in 2016 to \$7.3 million in 2025. Other hefty increases ranged from a 61% jump in Highland Beach to a 102% increase in Manalapan in the years looked at.

Only Gulf Stream’s 25% increase was under the change in the CPI and MCI.

The outlier is Briny Breezes, which saw a substantial decrease in its property tax collections over the same period. That was due to its unique position as a town and a corporation — and a decision several years ago to shift a greater portion of the town’s expenses from the town’s budget and onto the corporation’s budget, both of which are paid for by property owners there.

Lantana’s huge increase, meanwhile, was directly related to the town’s 2022 decision to raise its tax rate 7.1% — even though taxable values in town that year increased 15.8%.

Council members moved forward with the increase despite resident opposition. Taxpayers complained about many things — including how frequently the town bought new vehicles — but then-Council member Lynn “Doc” Moorhouse said the town was turning a corner and needed to make up for past neglect. Not raising the tax rate would lead to the town’s infrastructure “going to crap again,” he said.

Among the items included in Lantana’s budget that year were 5% cost-of-living raises for regular employees (7.5% to 8.5% COLAs for police), making a part-time lifeguard position full time, and adding hours for part-time library employees to provide better service to patrons.

Budget, employee impacts

Not surprisingly, the extra revenues local towns and cities were collecting corresponded with bigger operating budgets, with nine of the 10 South County municipalities reviewed seeing their expenditures jump

between 72% and 99% between 2016 and either 2024 or 2025.

The only municipality with a substantially smaller expenditure increase was South Palm Beach, up 28%.

The extra spending included more employees in most municipalities, including police and fire rescue positions.

Most of Highland Beach’s 49-employee increase between 2016 and 2025 can be attributed to the town’s decision to create its own Fire Rescue Department, while South Palm Beach’s drop from 13 employees to four over the same period is due to that town’s decision to shut down its own police force and hire the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office for service.

Both are examples of municipal governments trying to determine the best and most affordable ways to deliver public safety services to their residents.

Salaries and benefits are typically the biggest part of a city or town’s operating budget. Officials must balance residents’ demands for good service and to be kept safe against the increased costs that come with a larger workforce.

In Boca Raton, Delray Beach and Boynton Beach, growth in each’s overall workforce outpaced growth in their public safety areas from 2016 to 2025, with total staff positions increasing 23% in Boca Raton, 19% in Boynton Beach and 15% in Delray Beach.

Employee costs, especially in the public safety personnel area, have mushroomed.

In Highland Beach, for example, police officer’s pay increased 61% from 2019 to 2026, with sergeant’s pay increasing 68%, according to Town Manager Marshall Labadie.

The pay increases are needed in large part because there is stiff competition for qualified police officers among local departments, which are also competing for personnel with the PBSO.

“This is an essential service in a competitive market,” said Long, whose district covers portions of coastal southern Palm Beach County, including parts of Delray Beach and Boynton Beach as well as Gulf Stream, Ocean Ridge and Briny Breezes.

A quick Google search showed that starting salaries for police officers in the area

that were in the mid-to-high \$40,000s in 2015 are now in the low \$70,000s or higher.

Local government leaders point out that other costs associated with employees, including health insurance and pensions, also continue to increase.

Municipal hiring practices were on the minds of legislators proposing the property tax referendum, said Gossett-Seidman, whose district includes Highland Beach and Boca Raton.

“We suspected that when funds were available before and after COVID that cities rushed out to hire personnel,” she said.

Other budget items

Cities and towns are facing some of the same skyrocketing bills as their residents, such as the cost of property insurance. There’s also the increased cost of maintaining municipally owned property and infrastructure.

“Everything costs more now,” Long said.

Highland Beach’s Labadie says officials also face the challenge of meeting the expectations of residents who want quality services.

“It’s difficult for elected officials not to spend money on what residents are demanding,” he said. “It’s challenging.”

Ocean Ridge Mayor Geoff Pugh, who plans to vote against Amendment 3, said it isn’t because he doesn’t want to pay less in taxes.

He said it has more to do with the quality of life people seek out in coming to Ocean Ridge — and probably other coastal communities as well.

“People expect to have certain things paid for and to have a certain way of life,” Pugh said. “They expect the amenities they get. ... They want the service to remain as it is today.”

Another thing higher tax revenues provided coastal communities is the ability to have more savings on hand. Local governments have been putting more money into general fund reserves, which can be tapped for disaster relief and for budget stabilization.

Gulf Stream has relied on reserves to pay for infrastructure and road improvements taking place the past several years; Ocean Ridge has used reserves to support the

Continued on the next page

Lantana

Town to keep same tax rate for fifth straight year

By Patrick Sherry

Lantana officials say their proposed fiscal budget is business as usual, with the approval for the fifth consecutive year of a maximum tax rate of \$3.75 for every \$1,000 of taxable value.

The Lantana Town Council unanimously approved the tentative property tax rate at its budget workshop on July 13. Staff developed the town's proposed total \$32.4 million budget using the council's priorities of maintaining infrastructure, continuing beautification projects, responsible development, attracting and retaining valuable employees, continuing to attract businesses along Ocean Avenue, promoting community engagement, supporting the library, resuming dune restoration and enhancing public safety.

"These are the same priorities we've been using for the last really several years, and the reason why we use them is because, for the most part, they really work well," Town Manager Brian Raducci said.

"They're broad enough that they can be adjusted, and they're all-encompassing."

The town's general fund revenues are projected to be about \$19.1 million, and increasing property values are expected to generate an additional \$495,000 without a rise in the property tax rate. The general fund covers the cost of the town's day-to-day operations, supported by property tax revenues.

Staff proposed \$551,000 in capital spending in the general fund that will go toward town improvements, fund the town library and pay for police equipment. Also included in the proposed budget is a 3.3% cost-of-living adjustment for employees and a merit increase of up to 4%.

"We try to propose a budget that makes sense that we can support without overburdening and overtaxing the residents," Raducci said.

The council will set the town's solid waste assessment in August and will vote to adopt the final budget and tax rate in September. ★

Lantana News

Mayor praised for lobbying of Tallahassee — Florida League of Cities President Holly Smith of Sanibel presented Lantana Mayor Karen Lythgoe with the Home Rule Hero Award during a meeting of the Palm Beach County League of Cities in Palm Beach Gardens on July 22.



Lythgoe

The award is given to local leaders who go above and beyond to protect the rights of cities and towns to make their own decisions. During the 2026 legislative session, Lythgoe worked to ensure Lantana's voice was heard in Tallahassee, advocating against bills that would have impacted local zoning, business taxes and community autonomy.

Continued from page 18

cost of replacing aging water pipes; and Highland Beach used \$4 million from reserves to build a new fire station when it started its own department.

Some local government leaders have said they will consider tapping into reserves to continue some non-core services if Amendment 3 passes. But they know they must be careful to use those reserves for one-time expenses and not to support ongoing costs such as employee salaries.

Show me the waste

One example of possible excessive government spending that came before the state audit committee, Gossett-Seidman said, included an audit that found a small North Florida community paid its town manager — who lived 130 miles away — \$11,500 mostly in mileage reimbursements for travel to and from the town and to conferences. The manager spent only 69 days out of 755 workdays in the town, according to the audit.

The committee also heard

about controversial purchases of 11 pickup trucks for \$635,000 in Daytona Beach that drew concerns about overspending and lack of adequate documentation to prove that expenses were only for when the trucks were used for city business, she said.

Gossett-Seidman said that while there are other examples throughout the state, she does not know of any serious issues among South County municipalities.

It could be that little things adding up lead to the perception of spending that's out of control.

For example, Gossett-Seidman said, consider redundancy and the general belief that tasks that could be handled by one person often are being done by two or three.

Carney says local governments will have to decide if the money they're spending brings value to the municipalities and benefits taxpayers footing the bills.

"It's their money," he said. "We need to be the best stewards of taxpayer dollars." ★

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EXPLORE MORE »

CLOISTER

Continued from page 1

Its centerpiece was the 100-room Ritz-Carlton Cloister Inn, an ultra-exclusive, \$1 million hotel, which opened 100 years ago and was slated to entertain guests year-round. Today, it is one of five hotels at The Boca Raton and fulfills one of Mizner's dreams as visitors flock there from not only around the nation but the world.

"The next step is to keep the Florida populous with happy, contented visitors in June as in January," Mizner told the *Miami Herald* in March 1926, a month after the Cloister Inn had opened and in announcing a campaign to improve Florida's roads to bring tourists to the state. "The time is right for us to branch out as a 12-month's resort instead of being regarded merely as a winter playground."

A planned community

Until Mizner cast his eye south, Boca Raton was a small farming community.

But that started to change in 1925 when Mizner and his brother Wilson formed the Mizner Development Corp. and bought 2 miles of waterfront property on what is now the Intracoastal Waterway with 18,000 acres adjoining it.

Everything from boulevards to waterways to villas, gardens and golf courses would be coordinated, an early planned community of the kind that would dominate the South Florida landscape a century later.

Mizner had the money backers to bring it to reality: Sen. T. Coleman du Pont of Delaware, the Vanderbilts, England's Duchess of Sutherland, steel magnate Henry Phipps of Pittsburgh and U.S. Rep. George Graham of Philadelphia — all connections he'd made in Palm Beach.

Mizner would design Boca Raton's City Hall and an Episcopal Church where he installed another brother, Henry, as rector. He planned golf courses, to be designed by the most famous course architect in the country, Donald Ross, as well as an airport.

Plans for Camino Real called for a grand boulevard — 219 feet wide and at least 20 lanes.

Even the corporation's headquarters, at the corner of Dixie Highway and Camino Real, was considered a work of art, fashioned after El Greco's house in Toledo, Spain.

And finally, Mizner would design about 40 homes nearby in the Floresta section of town.

A resort takes shape

Situated on the shores of Lake Boca Raton with a natural inlet and the ocean beyond, the inn would feature yachting, golf, aviation, polo and tennis.

The hotel, the smaller one of two slated resorts, took shape swiftly after 22 weeks of construction despite workers' wading in waist-deep water through almost impassable vegetation.



Extra care was taken by all to present the most pristine appearance.

Even the lake was beautified. Trees were removed to foster a glass-like surface. A cement factory on site produced "great slabs of granite-like material" in order to "bulkhead the four-mile circumference," according to a *Miami Herald* story days after the opening. Mizner also planned to widen and deepen the inlet.

The architect and real estate man aimed to attract year-round travelers with the balmy temperatures coming off the Gulf Stream.

He planned to build his own \$1 million castle on a small, man-made island in the north portion of the lake with drawbridge — but it was not to be.

The magical first night

The crown jewel of Mizner's community held its swanky opening on a Saturday night, Feb. 6, 1926.

Guests signed a bound leather guest book that survives under glass at The Boca Raton today. Mizner cleverly placed parchment paper on the pages of what was then a contemporary songbook of Gregorian hymns,

according to an article in *Architectural Digest*, and it gave the appearance of Old World Europe.

The elite of the upper crust attended.

They were "jeweled to the hilt and furred to the teeth," wrote historian Henry Kinney, according to an article on the Florida State Archives website, floridamemory.com.

"Royalty, Wall Street wealth, the most famous film stars of the day and the ranking hierarchy of Palm Beach and Bal Harbor rubbed shoulders in the throng," he said.

Dinner was served at 9 p.m., with dancing and grand tours to follow.

Called the most expensive hotel ever built, the inn featured vaulted ceilings, 14-karat gold columns and rooms that cost as much as \$10,000 each to furnish.

The guests included philanthropist Mrs. Vincent Astor, prominent investment banker Edward Stotesbury and novelist Theodore Dreiser.

A luxurious design

The prized feature of the inn was its tower, patterned after La Giralda tower in Seville, Spain, and supervised personally by Mizner. He designed room

ABOVE: The Cloister's cathedral dining room has an ornate ceiling and columns that were originally overlaid with gold leaf. When the hotel was built, the \$1 million price tag earned it the moniker 'the most expensive hotel ever built.'

Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

LEFT: Hariette Gates and Mary Driscoll at the resort in 1927.

BELOW: The dining room in 1926 was inspired by a 15th century hospital in Catalonia. **Photos provided by Boca Raton Historical Society**

at the top to see the Atlantic Ocean, Lake Boca Raton and surrounding "tropical country."

Mizner's own objects d'art adorned the public areas.

Guests entered through a large Romanesque stone arch and great Spanish doors with images at the top of Queen Isabella of Spain's shield on one side and King Ferdinand's on the other. From there, they passed into a 1,600-square-foot lobby that was two stories high.

Atop "snow white plaster walls," as one newspaper described it, was a balcony around the second floor.

A lantern hung in the middle under ceilings with hand-carved beams as guests stepped onto the red-tile floor.

The hotel's lounge projected over the water with stained glass windows. The arches of the actual cloisters (covered open-air walkways) overlooked the lake.

The dining hall featured 13th century loggia beams resting on giant columns, which were 35 feet tall and inspired by a 15th century hospital in Catalonia. Spanish hand basins lined the walls.

Each guest room was furnished differently. A number had private elevators. A West Palm Beach Mizner furniture factory contributed 220 beds, 120 telephone stands, 100 dressing tables, 110 mirrors, 100 writing tables, 210 three-drawer dressing tables and 350 dining room chairs with two antique cupboards.

The dream unravels

It was a beautiful beginning. But soon after, Mizner's vision began to unravel.

Already, in the fall before the inn opened, Florida's land boom was beginning to bust.

Tourists came to visit in

the off-season but found few restaurants open and markets without much that was fresh.

Six months after the inn opened, the Hurricane of 1926 sealed its fate.

In spring 1927, the Mizner Development Corp. went under bankruptcy protection. Later that year, one of its original investors, wealthy utility company owner Clarence Geist, paid \$71,500 and assumed \$7 million in debt for the inn, oceanfront property, homes and administration buildings.

After \$8 million in renovations and 300 more rooms, the Cloister Inn reopened in 1930 as the Boca Raton Club. In 1944 real estate and theater entrepreneur J. Myer Schine bought the club for \$3 million and opened it as the Boca Raton Hotel and Club.

In 1988 the property became known as the Boca Raton Resort & Club. MSD Partners acquired the property in 2019 and dubbed it The Boca Raton.

One day short of seven years after the opening of his exclusive hotel, Addison Mizner died in his apartment on Via Mizner in Palm Beach, of a heart attack. It was 1933, during the Great Depression, and he was penniless.

Forty-five years after Mizner's crown jewel opened, Walt Disney's dream came to life in Orlando in 1971. Part of his genius was putting the resort in Central Florida where the heat wasn't as bad as in South Florida and mosquitoes were fewer.

Walt Disney World's Grand Floridian Resort & Spa hosted Mizner's Lounge from the hotel's opening in 1988 until 2019, when the resort changed it to a Beauty and the Beast theme. ★

Gulf Stream

Tax rate likely to hold steady as Core road project winds down

By Steve Plunkett

Just as Roadway Construction LLC was about to lay the final asphalt on streets in Gulf Stream's Core area, town commissioners were looking ahead to paying for similar work in Place Au Soleil.

Meanwhile, town commissioners for the sixth consecutive year set the tentative property tax rate at \$3.67 per \$1,000 of taxable value for the upcoming fiscal year.

The capital improvement plan "continues to drive the budget with the transition from analyzing the impacts of the two-year project here in the Core to planning for the engineering work and construction of the Place Au Soleil project," Town Manager Trey Nazzaro told commissioners July 10.

The tentative tax rate will generate \$7.53 million, up about \$544,000 from the current year, Nazzaro said. Taxable property values rose 7.9% to \$2.05 billion.

Commissioners spurned the rollback rate — the rate that would have collected the same amount of taxes as this year, except for new construction — that would have generated \$6.99 million.



Workers lay asphalt in Gulf Stream's Core area on July 27. The work is part of a two-year capital improvement plan. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

"I think it's important to maintain the millage rate as it is," Mayor Scott Morgan said. "We have been financially responsible for over a decade (and) more now, building reserves without raising

the millage rate."

Nazzaro said Gulf Stream now has \$6.7 million in undesignated reserve funds.

The roadwork in the Core area still

had \$1.4 million left to pay. The Place Au Soleil construction will cost an estimated \$2.8 million.

In addition, Nazzaro will take \$1.2 million from the water enterprise fund to pay for a planned connection with Boynton Beach's water plant, which he said will take place in spring 2027.

The town now anticipates completing both projects without having to borrow money.

Nazzaro also proposed a 4.5% cost-of-living raise for the town's general employees to match the step raise being given to police officers.

"Investing in quality personnel and maintaining them is of utmost importance to the town to continue our efficient provision of services," Nazzaro said in a memo to commissioners.

Under the tentative tax rate, the owner of a house with a \$1 million taxable value would pay \$3,672 in town property taxes in addition to county, school and other levies.

Commissioners can lower that tax rate but not raise it at public hearings they scheduled in Town Hall for 5:01 p.m. Sept. 11, after their 4 p.m. monthly meeting, and for 5:01 p.m. Sept. 23. ★

Delray Beach

City set to raise tax rate for second year in a row

By Patrick Sherry

Residents of Delray Beach could see the city's tax rate rise for a second straight year — following a dozen years of dropping tax rates that culminated with a "no new taxes" budget in 2024.

Officials attributed the proposed increase to rising operating costs and the years of reduced rates.

Commissioners voted 4-1 at their meeting on July 21 for a tentative operating tax rate of \$6.4371 for every \$1,000 of taxable value, a 4.5% increase from the previous year, to support a proposed \$219.8 million general fund budget.

City property owners will also pay taxes to cover debt from bond issues previously approved by voters, for a tentative total city tax rate of \$6.446 per \$1,000 of taxable value, up 4.1% from the current rate.

The owner of a home valued at \$451,411, who receives a homestead exemption, would pay about \$2,578 in city taxes, an increase of about \$175.

Except for 2024, when the commission approved that year's rollback rate that meant no new taxes except for those from new construction, the commission's decision to slight tax rate reductions in other years still led to tax increases for most residents because of rising property values. City officials said government operational costs and inflation continued to rise, so they needed to bring in additional revenue.

"As our taxable values kept increasing, we lowered the millage rate to offset some of that increase, so that the actual taxes paid by the citizens were less than just the increase in the real estate values," Chief Financial Officer Henry Dachowitz said at the budget workshop. "Now we're working to try to catch up from where we have been."

The proposed budget shows salaries and benefits increasing by 8.8%, to a total of \$131.4 million, including \$1.9 million for employee cost-of-living raises.

The city will be increasing firefighter pension contributions by \$589,000 and police pension contributions by \$724,000. Operating expenditures will also be growing, with public works street maintenance increasing by \$500,000 and fleet fuel and lube costs by \$370,000. To balance the budget, staff proposed drawing from the city's reserves.

The proposed budget was also put together with an eye to November and the possibility voters in the state will approve Amendment 3, which will slash property taxes for homesteaded properties, leading to reduced tax revenues for municipalities, counties and other taxing agencies.

"We are trying to balance not just for this year, but also looking forward. ... It's also positioning us well in case the referendum passes," Dachowitz said at the workshop.

The city could lose about \$7.4 million in tax revenue in 2027 if the amendment passes and nearly \$12.8 million in 2028. To mitigate revenue loss, additional fees to residents — including fire and EMS fees — may be implemented in the future. City staff will be conducting studies and fiscal impact analysis exercises to see where they could recoup some of the lost revenue if Amendment 3 is approved.

"The only legal avenue above and beyond increasing the millage rate to the extent that [municipalities] possibly can, would be to consider fee-based revenue streams, and it is straight regressive," City Manager Terrence Moore said at the workshop. "That's a bit of a downside. Nevertheless, municipalities don't have any other choice if there's an interest in maintaining the level of service and covering operational expenses."

Commissioners may lower the maximum property tax rate before a final rate is approved during public hearings scheduled for Sept. 8 and 22. ★

Larry Barszewski contributed to this story.

Boynton Beach

City Commission envisions Intracoastal waterfront open to all

By Larry Barszewski

In a desire to open Boynton Beach's waterfront along the Intracoastal Waterway to greater public access and to more water-related businesses and activities, the City Commission has approved new zoning rules to encourage such growth.

The Marina Overlay District, as the city is calling it, stretches along the west side of the Intracoastal from Gateway Boulevard to south of Woolbright Road. It was approved unanimously at the commission's July 7 meeting.

New developments along the water in the overlay district are required to provide a minimum 12-foot-wide promenade accessible to the public. The idea is eventually to create continuous stretches of public walkway along the water by linking promenade spaces on adjoining properties.

City Planner Tyler Tornese spoke about the motivation behind the district at the commission's June 16 meeting, saying the idea emerged from a joint City Commission/Community Redevelopment Agency workshop in November.

"We want to encourage marine uses. We want to attract new businesses. We want to — most importantly — activate that public waterfront along the Intracoastal," Tornese said.

"We do not want to focus on dense residential development," he said. "We want to focus on commercial uses with accessory hospitality and recreation uses," such as hotels or marine-oriented businesses. Heights would be limited to a maximum of 60 feet to 80 feet, or roughly six to eight stories.

The new regulations also allow for more intense development — increased square footage of buildings on site and up to 20 feet higher buildings — on properties that provide more waterway benefits. Such properties would be those that do at least three of the following:

- Have a portion of the promenade

be wider than the required 12 feet;

- Provide public docks, fishing piers, or kayak/paddleboard launches;
- Include public plazas or space for events and public gatherings;
- Implement environmental restoration features, such as a living shoreline; and/or

- Have a water taxi or ferry stop, including floating docks, boarding areas, seating, shade structures and lighting.

The district also offers eligible developments reduced on-site parking requirements of up to 30%, but those spaces would have to be replaced by shared parking agreements and valet services — and the development would have to include public waterfront access amenities.

While the overlay district does not apply to residential zones, a major goal behind the city's effort is to step away from the dense residential developments that have been attracted to the area. For instance, it allows hotels but drops the maximum allowed height from 150 feet to 60 feet, a 60% decrease.

It also permits enclosed dry docks for boats in the overlay district, while prohibiting auto dealerships, automotive repair shops and new merchandise developments such as supercenters, discount and department stores and pet care spots.

The overlay district doesn't automatically rezone any properties, offer density bonuses for residential development, or reduce any environmental protections or regulations, officials said.

It encourages mixed-use commercial developments that activate the waterfront for the public, including marine-oriented businesses and industries, and it promotes private investment in the city's waterfront infrastructure, officials said. ★

10 Questions

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: Stuart Kerr

An entrepreneur and sales and marketing executive for software companies for many years, Highland Beach resident Stuart Kerr has a passion for business. So, why quit working?

He didn't. After retiring three years ago he dove into ChatGPT and created an AI strategy consulting business.

In addition, he and his wife, June, sponsor a dozen women in Asia who are attending college through the charity U-GO University.

He also runs a team of volunteers to provide AI training to 10,000 scholars through U-GO University, which funds higher education scholarships to talented women in low-income countries.

His latest venture: Kerr, with June, launched AppealArmor in July, a free AI-based tool that arms consumers to fight insurance claim denials.

"Fewer than one in 500 denials are ever appealed," he said. "So, by definition, when the insurance company denies you, it wins. It's a claim not paid — a great deal for the insurance company, a terrible deal for people who pay their health care benefits and then can't get the health care they expected, especially while they're going through a health scare."

"We essentially built a solution that takes your denial letter through a sort of AI-based jujitsu, where we take all the insurance company's arguments against doing it, and build an entire argument that shows why their denial was wrong. And while you're at it, you can go one step further and escalate an appeal to file a complaint with your state's insurance commission. That will put the insurance company on notice and force it to actively reconsider and respond to your appeal letter in a timely fashion."

He began building AppealArmor a year ago, based on his and his wife's experience in dealing with denial letters over many years. When Stuart, 62, and June met 25 years ago, she was a single mother with 10-year-old triplets. Rachel, Zoe and Matthew just celebrated their 35th birthday.

Actually, the babies were quads, born so early that about 27 doctors were in the delivery room. But a daughter, Erica, developed a staph infection and died within 48 hours.

June was caring for preemie triplets while mourning the loss of Erica. That's pretty unthinkable. But preemies often have body challenges that come with not being carried to term, and the triplets have totaled 16 surgeries.

Before marrying Stuart, June had already navigated 10 of those surgeries and was expert at dealing with insurance denials.

Recently, a friend who was denied a claim asked June for



Stuart Kerr of Highland Beach with his wife, June. Together, they created AppealArmor, a free tool that drafts formal appeal letters for people who have been denied health insurance claims. **Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**

help. "She said to me, 'I'm done with this. There is no good solution when a person gets denied. We need a system to fight back, and you're someone who can help.'"

In response, Stuart built AppealArmor.com.

Here's how it works. After you upload a photo or PDF of your denial letter, AppealArmor makes a package that includes a draft of an appeal letter citing specific legal and clinical guidelines that insurers respect. It generates a state regulatory complaint letter and calculates appeal deadlines, then delivers a ready-to-sign, ready-to-mail packet in minutes that otherwise could take hours to compile manually.

He estimates an appeal's success rate to be 40-60%, because you can be denied for legitimate reasons, he said. "The thing to remember, 'one in 500 people appeal,' so your odds are infinitely better than zero."

AppealArmor is free to use for consumers and takes five minutes. The system uses different AIs to validate information, and the tool is secure. "Your information never leaves your side of the web browser," Stuart said.

— Christine Davis

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

A. Cherry Hill, New Jersey, just outside Philadelphia. My family helped run a local soda company, Frank's Soda, and that business taught me early on what it means to be part of a community. You knew your customers, you showed up for your neighbors, and you understood that a business

could be a way of serving the people around you, not just a way of making money. I went on to get my MBA at Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management, but that hometown lesson never left me.

From there, life took me to Chicago for 20 years, where I met my wife, June — she'd recently been through a divorce and was raising 10-year-old triplets, Matthew, Rachel and Zoe, on her own. We built our life together on Long Island, raising the kids there until they left for college, and 11 years ago we moved to Highland Beach, which has been home ever since. It's a long way from Cherry Hill to Highland Beach, but that same instinct — show up for the people around you.

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

A. I got my start in sales and marketing for software companies, and that background shaped everything that came after — you learn early how to read a room, tell a story with data, and understand what a customer actually needs versus what they say they need. That grew into more than 30 years as an operating executive and entrepreneur.

Over that time, I've helped build more than a dozen software companies — including taking two of them public, Vitria and Fleetmatics, both of which reached valuations over \$1 billion. I've also helped sell five companies and served on the board of four more. More recently I founded ISO Vision LLC, where I help enterprises use AI to automate

business processes.

But if you'd asked me a year ago what I was proudest of, I'd have given you that corporate answer. Today it's different. My wife and I just launched AppealArmor.com, a free AI tool that helps people fight back when their health insurance denies them care.

Q. What advice do you have for a young person selecting a career today?

A. Don't chase the job title — chase the problem.

Q. How did you choose to make your home in Highland Beach?

A. We landed here about 11 years ago after our kids headed off to college and June and I found ourselves with a chance to choose our next chapter together. Part of it was family — my parents, Burton and Hope Kerr, were in West Palm Beach, and June's parents, Bob and Elaine Eisenberg, were in Boynton Beach, so Highland Beach put us close to both.

Q. What is your favorite part about living in Highland Beach?

A. Honestly, my favorite part is watching June swim. She's an active open-water ocean swimmer — she'll walk out our back door and swim several miles in open water, several times a week. There's something amazing about a town where your backyard is the Atlantic Ocean and your spouse gets to live her passion just by stepping outside.

Q. What book are you reading now?

A. I just finished a phenomenal book called *There*

Was a Time, written by a colleague of mine, John Lipsey. It's coming out later this fall.

Q. What music do you listen to when you need inspiration? When you want to relax?

A. When I need to relax or feel nostalgic, it's '80s music — Sting and The Police, that whole era. When I'm heads-down working, I put on progressive house — no words, just a groove, so it doesn't pull my attention away from the screen.

Q. Do you have a favorite quote that inspires your decisions?

A. "You only have one shot at life — don't spend it living somebody else's." I've always paired that with Steve Jobs' idea of being a maverick, of trying to make a dent in the universe. The point isn't ego — it's that we're only here once, and we owe it to the people we love to actually make an impact while we can.

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

A. My heroes aren't in a boardroom — they're in my house. My wife, June, and our kids.

Q. If your life story were made into a movie, who would you want to play you?

A. George Clooney, hands down. I grew up watching his career, and years ago I actually got to be an extra on *ER* while it was filming — I've felt an affinity for him ever since. And hey, it doesn't hurt that he's a pretty great actor, too.

Highland Beach

Town poised to keep same tax rate for fifth year in a row

By Rich Pollack

Barring last-minute changes, Highland Beach town leaders will keep their tax rate for the next fiscal year the same as it has been for the past four years.

Town commissioners in July approved a maximum tax rate of \$3.58 per \$1,000 of taxable value, a rate that has been the same since 2023.

That rate will generate \$14.7 million in property taxes, about \$900,000 more than for the current fiscal year, or just shy of a 5% increase. Those tax revenues cover about 73% of the town's \$20 million general fund budget,

The total proposed budget of \$30.3 million includes the water and sewer funds as well as the building fund.

Town Manager Marshall Labadie said that he and the town staff kept in mind the possibility of revenues falling in the

beginning of the 2028 fiscal year, should a proposed increase in the homestead exemption get 60% statewide voter approval this November.

“The preliminary FY 2027 budget reflects a balanced and conservative financial approach focused on maintaining service levels, preserving reserves and preparing for potential legislative changes that may impact municipal revenues in future years,” he wrote in his monthly communication with residents.

While the town's tax rate remains the same, most property owners will likely see an increase in their municipal taxes due to an increase in property values, with the town seeing a 4.1% increase in total property values.

Labadie said that the town's tax rate is the third lowest in Palm Beach County.

He also pointed out that a large

portion of the town's overall costs go toward staffing and maintaining the police and fire departments.

“The budget prioritizes public safety, employee retention, infrastructure maintenance and long-term financial sustainability,” he wrote. “Public safety, including police and fire rescue, represent about 67% of the general fund expenditures, reflecting the town’s continued commitment to resident safety and emergency services. The town continues to keep a mindful eye on the increasing costs of providing public safety services.”

The proposed budget shows the Police Department expenditures at \$5.55 million, a slight decrease from the current year, while the Fire Rescue Department budget is \$530,409 over the current year's \$6.93 million in expenditures, or up about 7.6%.

The town continues to maintain a significant amount in reserves, with a total fund balance in the general fund projected to be a little more than \$12 million, an increase of about \$500,000.

In his budget message to residents, Labadie explained that should the proposed constitutional amendment — Amendment 3 — get 60% voter approval, the town would lose about \$1 million a year in 2028 and \$1.5 million beginning in 2029. The legislation would increase the homestead exemption — currently at a little more than \$50,000 of a property's assessed value— to \$150,000 in the 2028 fiscal year budget and \$250,000 in 2029.

He said the town's "strong reserves, conservative budgeting practices and five-year financial forecast place the town in an excellent position to adapt to these changes while continuing to protect the quality of life our residents enjoy." ★

Boca Raton

'Live, work, play' project proposed for part of Town Center mall site

By Mary Hladky

The owners of the Town Center at Boca Raton want to demolish the former Sears store that has been closed since 2018 and redevelop 31.6 acres in the northwest corner of the mall to create a “live, work, play” destination.

Under plans presented to the city in May, the Simon Property Group proposes an eight-story, 197-key hotel, a 374-unit

luxury multi-family building, 157,170 square feet of retail and restaurants and a 629-space parking garage. The seven-story residential building would sit atop ground floor retail.

The project would create “a transformative, vibrant, walkable and high-density environment where residents and visitors can live, work, play, stay, and shop within a single, cohesive campus,” the application states.

The “heart of the redevelopment” would be a walkable “Main Street” that would connect the hotel, residential, retail and restaurants. It would also feature an open plaza with water features and shaded arcades.

The former Sears building footprint would become green space.

The redevelopment generally would be located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Glades Road and St.

Andrews Boulevard.

Simon's application follows a trend among mall owners to reinvigorate their properties with mixed-used development that drives traffic to the mall stores.

The proposal is in the initial stage of the city review process, and no hearings are yet scheduled before the Planning and Zoning Board or City Council.

The council got an early look at the plans at a February meeting. ★



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South Palm Beach

New council has expanding vision for what the town can offer

By Henry Fitzgerald

Menorah and Christmas tree lighting ceremonies. More community events. A waterfront gazebo at Town Hall. Enhanced beach preservation. Various beautification projects.

At the South Palm Beach Town Council’s visioning workshop held July 21, council members expressed these and other “visions” for the future of their town.

Ideas ran the gamut, from the long-standing desires to improve Town Hall, repair an aging wastewater lift station, and improve the State Road A1A corridor, to boosting residents’ engagement in town affairs through social media and enhancing public spaces.

Through the entire two-hour discussion, one thing was clear: It’s OK to dream big.

“These are priorities, specific goals and initiatives we are dedicated to executing for the community,” Mayor Rafael Pineiro said. “This being a workshop, it’s really the only opportunity we have to talk to each other. The whole concept is

to be able to have a discussion, an open discussion, so we can build up agreement and have a plan going forward.”

Overall, Pineiro numbered four areas upon which to start: critical infrastructure, having a transparent government, financial prudence and having an inclusive community.

Not surprisingly, critical infrastructure includes the fate of Town Hall. Pineiro, Vice Mayor Fran Attardi and Council member Adrian Burcet were swept into office in March on the promise of refurbishing Town Hall, in stark contrast to a plan by previous council members to raze it and build a new one.

Pineiro’s vision echoes the five-point plan on which he ran for office, which includes: stopping Town Hall work and then determining if it can be renovated; building a new master lift station; working with the Florida Department of Transportation to upgrade the sidewalk running along A1A; and working with Florida Power & Light to bury power lines in town.

These were echoed by other council members, but each also pitched his or her own ideas.

Council member Ray McMillan said when he was elected more than six years ago, his No. 1 thing was “trying to get more greenery, more trees planted,” he said. “And of course the sidewalk problem, which has been chronic for years and years.”

“Regarding the Town Hall, I believe we’ll be able to get where we need to get with the new council members to keep the existing building and be able to resurrect it. I believe we can really make this building work.”

Attardi says she sees South Palm Beach in five years as one of the most welcoming, engaged and desirable coastal communities in Palm Beach County.

“I want us to be known not only for our beautiful location, but for our strong sense of community, transparent government and exceptional quality of life,” she said. “I want South Palm Beach to be a town where people feel connected to their neighbors, participate in

town events and take pride in being part of the community.”

Additionally, she said she’d like to establish annual traditions such as holiday celebrations, pet-focused events and community gatherings.

“Let’s have something for lighting a menorah, putting up a Christmas tree, or a Halloween event where we get our local businesses involved,” she said.

Council member Sandra Beckett said her priorities are the lift station and Town Hall renovations, but she doesn’t want to forget about budget priorities, especially if the state property tax amendment passes in November and affects the town.

“We need to consider the impact, and we may need to modify and revise some things later if that passes,” she said. “Considering that, it’s important for us to be cautious with funding additional projects that would be very expensive. A huge priority is for us to continue to monitor and manage our monies responsibly.”

For Burcet, he wants the town to focus on environmental

stewardship such as protecting coastal areas and the beaches.

“We should also focus on the amount of litter on the beach,” he said. “We all enjoy our beaches, but I’m seeing cans, I’m seeing cigarette butts. We’re a nesting area for sea turtles, so it’s very important that we work together to upkeep our beaches and protect our wildlife as much as we can.”

Plans for a few of these items on the wish list have already been put in motion. The town plans to launch an updated website soon, and preliminary meetings and discussions are already taking place for Town Hall, the lift station, the sidewalk and burying the power lines.

“We believe that if we fix critical infrastructure, if we practice financial prudence, if we ensure a transparent government, then that protects and enhances the quality of our lives,” Pineiro said. “As an outcome, we inherently drive up property values and ensure South Palm Beach remains a premier residential community in the Palm Beaches.” ★

Town considers later meeting times

South Palm Beach officials are discussing changing the Town Council meeting time from 2 p.m. to a later time of day.

The potential move, they said at a July 21 workshop, will help make it easier for people in the town who work to attend the meetings and may even make it more appealing for residents who might consider running for office.

South Palm Beach has historically held meetings at night, Mayor Rafael Pineiro said. From 1955 to 1969, they were held at 8 or 8:30 p.m. From 1970 to 2010, they were held at 7:30, and from 2010 to 2020, they were held at 7. The time was changed to 4 p.m. in 2020 during COVID-19, then to 2 p.m. in 2023 to accommodate board presidents and condo managers.

“When I was campaigning, this came up at every one of the meetings we had with people: What many people wanted was to move the meetings to later,” Pineiro said.

As council members were unable to vote on the issue at the workshop, they chose to bring it up for more discussion and a possible vote at a future meeting.

— Henry Fitzgerald

South Palm Beach News

Grants sought for lift station

— The South Palm Beach Town Council passed a resolution on July 14 to allow for a grant application to Resilient Florida for a new wastewater lift station. Town Manager Jamie Titcomb said the grant would provide \$2.5 million in funds, roughly half the total cost of the project.

Titcomb also said that the town is having conversations with lobbyists in Washington D.C. to try to secure federal grants. He said that if things went right on that front, the project could potentially see a full reimbursement over multiple years.

Town affirms waterfront permitting powers

— The council passed a resolution that affirms the town’s permitting jurisdiction over docks, sea walls, piers and other waterfront structures within its boundaries.

“This resolution reinforces our home-rule powers and commitment to processing these permits locally,” Mayor Rafael Pineiro said. “Which will allow our friends from Brittany, Concordia ... to proceed with their dock projects.”

A related ordinance was also read after the council passed the resolution to codify the process in which licenses would be

granted. The ordinance passed on first reading.

Sea wall markings update

— A public safety ordinance announced in June was given tentative approval at the July 14 council meeting. The ordinance would require condominiums facing the ocean to be marked with their address numbers to make it easier for emergency services to accurately locate beach emergencies.

Updated sheriff’s contract approved

— The council approved a new contract with the Palm Beach Sheriff’s Office. The new \$1.2 million contract is a 3% increase from the current year. The agreement is for the fiscal year that starts on Oct. 1.

— Robert Haughn

Briny Breezes

Taking the month off

— Briny Breezes has canceled its August Town Council meeting. The next regularly scheduled meeting is set for 4 p.m. Sept. 24. That meeting will be followed by a final budget hearing at 5:01. Both meetings will be at Town Hall, 4802 N. Ocean Blvd.

— Staff report

The next edition of *The Coastal Star* will be distributed the weekend of Sept. 5

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Obituaries

Lisa Swint Petersen

MANALAPAN — Lisa Petersen, who served 18 years as Manalapan's town clerk, died surrounded by family on July 21 after suffering an injury. She was 70.

Town Manager Eric Marmer said Mrs. Petersen was "a familiar, trusted presence to generations of residents, elected officials, and staff" in town.



"Throughout her many years of service, Lisa cared deeply about Manalapan and the people who call it home," Marmer said in a message to town residents.

"Her dedication, institutional knowledge, and commitment to the town left a lasting impact on our community, and she will be remembered fondly by the many people whose lives she touched."

Mrs. Petersen was preceded in death by her parents, Jo Ann Swint and Robert L. Swint, her brother Richard Swint, and her son, John Thomas Petersen.

Lisa Swint was born on Nov. 5, 1955, in Columbia, South Carolina. She attended the University of South Carolina and graduated from Florida State University with a bachelor's degree in fashion merchandising. She met her husband of 47 years, Thomas Petersen, at FSU.

Mrs. Petersen lived in North Palm Beach and had a long career in Manalapan, retiring in 2022. In that role, she served as "concierge, referee, researcher, big sister, ambassador and, yes, municipal clerk," according to a story about her retirement in *The Coastal Star*.

Former Mayor Keith Waters, who worked closely with her during his six years leading the town, called her "absolutely stellar and one of the more interesting people I've ever met."

Waters recalled that "on an individual level,

she knew the people." She knew their addresses, too, she said in the story about her retirement.

"I have this thing for numbers," she said. "I can tell you everyone's house number. It's terrible because I use valuable brain cells for information I could easily look up."

The clerk's job was not an easy one, Waters said. "She did it with such grace and style and calm. She was such a kind and compassionate person in every situation," he said. "It didn't matter what the problem was, she'd say 'there's a solution, don't worry, we'll get there.'"

Former Mayor Stewart Satter said she "helped shape the character of our town through her years of devoted service." She "carried out her responsibilities with integrity, grace and genuine care for the residents she served," he said.

Mrs. Petersen's daughter, Erika Petersen, succeeded her as town clerk and still serves in that position.

Mrs. Petersen's greatest joys were spending time with her daughter, playing with her grandchildren, enjoying live music and watching Atlanta Braves baseball. In her free time, she enjoyed volunteering at her grandson's elementary school and participating in water aerobics.

She is survived by her husband and daughter; her son-in-law, Julio Mejia; grandsons Soren Mejia and Holden Mejia; brother Robert A. Swint; and six loving nieces.

The family thanks friends for their generous support, as well as the ICU staff at St. Mary's Medical Center for their exceptional care, compassion and support.

She will be greatly missed and forever remembered for her beautiful smile, the family said. The family will hold a celebration of life at a later date.

— Staff report

Joanne Garrett Long

BRINY BREEZES — Joanne Garrett Long, a bridge player who shared her enthusiasm with friends old and new, died June 29. She was 96.

Born on Aug. 4, 1929, in Peoria, Illinois, to Ashton and Doris Johnson Garrett, she married Donald David Long on July 8, 1951.

Since the 1990s, Mrs. Long resided in Briny Breezes during the winter months and Greenville, South Carolina, when it was warmer. She participated in many activities wherever she lived: tennis, bridge, chorus, and all kinds of volunteering.

Joanne received her bachelor and master's degrees from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. She taught at Hines Grade School from 1959 to 1967 before becoming a guidance counselor at Washington Community High School in Peoria from 1967 to 1987.

She was a member of the United Presbyterian Church and served as a deaconess, served with the UnityPoint Health proctor service auxiliary, and was a charter member of the Beta Eta Chapter of Gamma Phi Beta Sorority. She was a former member of the Willow Knolls Country Club, the Illinois Education Association, the National Education Association, the Washington Education Club, the Kiwanis Club (president of Peoria North), and the Bradley University Alumni Board.

Mrs. Long was preceded in death by her parents, her husband and their son Douglas Donald Long, and brothers James K. (Barbara) Garrett and Jerry L. (Marile) Garrett.

She is survived by son David (Carol) Garrett Long and daughter-in-law Sally Long; four grandchildren, Ashley (Michael) Long Pastore, Sarah (Daniel) Long Assey, Ashton (Cassie) Long, and Matthew Long; and three great-grandchildren, Stella Joanne Pastore, Douglas Daniel Assey, and Walter Wayne Assey.

Two services were held in Mrs. Long's honor. On July 9, a memorial service was held at The Woodlands at Furman, in Greenville. On July 13, a funeral service was held at Davison-Fulton Woodland Chapel, in Peoria. Joanne will forever rest next to her husband in Parkview Memorial Park in Peoria.

Her request was that any gifts be sent to the Wheels O' Time Museum in Dunlap, Illinois, or ShrinersChildrens.org.

— Submitted by the family

Lantana

Disparaging anonymous letters spark outrage from town leaders

By Mary Thurwachter

A trio of anonymous letters signed by "Concerned Residents of Lantana" have enraged the town's mayor, council, manager and attorney. The missives, dated June 30 and delivered by snail mail that town officials received in mid-July, were given top billing at a workshop meeting July 24.

The letters — addressed to the Florida Auditor General, the town's auditors, Grau & Associates, and the Florida Board of Accountancy — allege financial mismanagement and misappropriations by the Town Council, manager, independent auditors, legal counsel and various contracted consultants.

The "concerned residents" want a forensic audit and, if appropriate, damages paid by outside consultants and criminal prosecution of officials "if financial misdeeds are as heinous as believed."

Town Manager Brian Raducci said officials have no idea who wrote the complaints.

"The letters allege baseless claims that reference nothing specific," Raducci said at the workshop. "They appear to be rambling. They're all over the place. They talk about potential financial misappropriation or mismanagement and general failures to discharge constitutional duties imposed

upon the town. Those are serious allegations. There's no substantive evidence, merit or proof of any of this."

The letters cite "acres and acres of vacant retail and former residential sites," including the former Kmart property, while "drug rehab centers abound up and down Dixie Highway." They call town parks "a disgrace," the Building Department slow-moving and question the rising cost of legal fees.

The authors say the town budgets don't spell out the true cost of the legal fees paid, fees that they say have been routinely amended and increased every year since 2018.

"The base legal fee budget, combined with the annual budget amendments exceed hundreds of thousands of dollars," the letters state.

Raducci defended Max Lohman, who has been town attorney for 22 years. "Yes, his fees have been up, and I'll take responsibility for a lot of that as well because we're doing a lot more work since I've been here."

"We've been doing a ton of infrastructure work. We get contracts and he has to review them. When we get a civil suit, that goes to him. Every ordinance change goes to him. He's doing good work. Yeah, he has an hourly rate, and he raises his rate every year like everybody else does. But he

doesn't set his hours. We give him work to do."

Lohman was livid, saying he has a "serious issue with the cowards" who wrote the letters and promised "a reckoning" if he finds out who they are.

"I will spend every penny I have to skin them in the courts," Lohman said. "My professional reputation has been impugned and that is defamation and libel per se for which I can get punitive damages. I can't wait."

Lohman charges the town \$250 per hour, less than many other municipal attorneys, he said. "When I started representing this town it was \$125 an hour. When I left my old firm 12 years ago, I froze Lantana's rates for five years. It was \$1.1 million over five years. That's a really good number for your legal fees over five years."

Mayor Karen Lythgoe also weighed in: "While there may be circumstances that justify confidentiality, the anonymous publication of serious allegations raises legitimate questions about credibility, accountability and the willingness of the accuser to stand behind those claims."

Public discourse is best when it is grounded in facts, transparency and accountability, and "those standards should apply equally to public officials and to those who choose to criticize them," she said.

Derek Noonan, audit

manager for the state's Auditor General's Office, said that although he hadn't seen the letter, his office gets requests like this often.

"Because the auditor general is an audit agency, not an investigative agency, we have no authority to conduct an independent investigation of the situation outside of an audit,"

Noonan wrote in an email to *The Coastal Star*. He suggested the letter writers contact the Palm Beach County Inspector General and the CPA firm Grau & Associates.

Raducci said he had spoken with the CPA firm, which had received the letter but did not have someone attend the July 24 meeting. ★

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Business Spotlight

Lang Realty salutes canine companions as stress managers

Lang Realty marked National Bring Your Dog to Work Day on June 26 by celebrating dogs owned by Lang agents that ride along to showings, keep their owners company during late-night contracts, and quietly anchor the workday from their owners' home offices.

Amy Snook's doodles, Stormie and Addison, are fixtures by her side from morning coffee to late-night emails. "They may not know a contingency from a closing date, but they know exactly when I need a break," said Snook. "Having them around reminds me to slow down and enjoy the little moments."

For Joanne Loud, working from home has always included her "co-worker" Miss Roxy, a quiet, steady presence through calls, contracts and client emails. When the workday runs long, Roxy handles the reminder: It's time for a walk or a lunch break.

Blake Morris's "co-worker" Teddy, a terrier mix, doesn't know anything about real estate, Morris says, but he knows exactly how to make a client feel at ease. "There's something about having a dog around that just lowers the pressure and makes people feel at home."

Maria Kovachev, an advocate for both dog and cat rescue, shares her home with four German shepherds, all adopted from local rescues. "When we give a little love to these four-legged sweethearts, they shower us with love right back," Kovachev said.

Snook works out of the east Delray Beach office. Loud works out of Lang's east Boca Raton office, while Morris and Kovachev work out of the central Boca office. Lang's community outreach initiative Lang Cares makes animal welfare a priority. Lang agents volunteer at shelters,



Lang Realty agents showed how much they appreciate their canine companions by bringing them to the office in June. **Clockwise from far left:** Amy Snook with Stormie and Addison; Joanne Loud with Miss Roxy; Maria Kovachev with Chloe, one of her four German shepherds, and Blake Morris with Teddy. **Photos provided**

collect supplies and direct resources to no-kill rescues throughout Palm Beach and Broward counties.

WeatherTech founder and CEO David F. MacNeil has been busy amassing nearly 8 acres of ocean-to-Intracoastal property in Manalapan for a combined \$136 million.

In the latest transaction, MacNeil paid Ralph and Mary Gesualdo \$36 million for their 1.88-acre estate at **1920 S. Ocean Blvd., Manalapan**. The Gesualdos bought the property from Billy Joel for \$10.3 million in 2020.

William Raveis agent **Jack Elkins** represented the sellers, with **Premier Estate Properties** agent **Margit Brandt** representing the buyer. MacNeil already owns the estate to the south at **1940 S. Ocean Blvd.**, which he purchased for \$68.3 million in February. In June, it was also reported that MacNeil and billionaire Larry Ellison

were splitting the 4-acre lot at **1960 S. Ocean Blvd. between their properties**, with MacNeil purchasing the northern half closest to his home for \$32 million.

Ellison's expected \$35 million purchase of his portion of the split lot, on top of the \$173 million he paid for the adjacent **2000 S. Ocean Blvd.** lot in 2022, would bring the total for his contiguous lots to \$208 million.

Building.Florida.Home LLC, managed by Gabe L. Newell, the Seattle co-founder of game developer Valve, paid \$70.85 million for a Manalapan estate at **1660 S. Ocean Blvd. Morgan Stanley Private Bank** provided him with a \$46.05 million mortgage. The sellers, Ronald G. McMackin, the president of **Pan-Pacific Mechanical**, and his wife, Town Commissioner Cindy L. McMackin, paid \$38.88 million for it in 2020.

Situated on a 2.06-acre property with 150 feet fronting the ocean and Intracoastal Waterway, the seven-bedroom home features a wellness wing, 240-bottle wine cellar, eight-car garage, guest apartment, a private beach tunnel under A1A, a fitness room, a summer kitchen, a beach cabana house, an office, a game room, a bar and staff quarters.

The McMackins were represented by **Premier Estate Properties** agent **Margit Brandt**. They listed their new address on the deed as **1860 S. Ocean Blvd.**, a nearby mansion under construction.

Katie Casali of **Ocean Sotheby's International** represented the buyer.

G. Robert Sheetz, through the 1992 Royal Palm Way Trust, sold his homestead property at **1992 Royal Palm Way** in Boca Raton's Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club for \$24 million. Sheetz bought the property in 2020 for \$6 million. Sheetz's family owns the **Sheetz**

convenience store chain, which has more than 700 locations.

The new owners are John H. Slavik and Kathleen A. Slavik. The four-bedroom, 6,200-square-foot home is sited on 0.39 acre along the Intracoastal Waterway. **David Roberts** of **Royal Palm Properties** represented both sides in the deal.

Paul and Catherine Stile sold a home at **481 Thatch Palm Drive**, in the Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club, for \$15.5 million to the 481 Thatch Palm Land Trust, with attorney **Thomas U. Graner** as trustee. Situated on a 0.39-acre non-waterfront lot, the five-bedroom, 8,525-square-foot home was recently completed by **SRD Builders**. **David Roberts** of **Royal Palm Properties** represented the sellers. **Michelle Smith** of **PenderWhite Properties** represented the buyer.

The Jean C. Marston Revocable Trust, with Jean C. Marston and Benjamin Lee as trustees, along with Benjamin Lee and Jeffrey Lee and Amy Lee, sold the property at **3070 S. Ocean Blvd., Manalapan**, for \$15.1 million. The new owner is 3070 South Ocean LLC, managed by **Antony Hine** in Boca Raton. **Shelly Newman** of the **Corcoran Group** represented the sellers, while **Steven Presson** of the **Corcoran Group** worked with the buyer. Marketed as a land sale, the ocean-to-lake 1.2-acre lot offers 140 feet on the ocean.

Sigalit "Siggy" Flicker, formerly a main cast member of *The Real Housewives of New Jersey*, and her husband, Michael Campanella, an auto dealer, paid \$10.5 million for the home at **443 E. Alexander Palm Road** in Boca Raton's Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club. **Axos Bank** provided them with a \$9.9 million mortgage.

The sellers were trusts that

included the Frank P. Diassi 2009 Revocable Trust and the Marianne D. Diassi 2010 Revocable Trust. **David Roberts** of **Royal Palm Properties** represented the sellers in the deal, while **Joyce Schneider** of **Castles by the Beach Realty** worked with the buyers.

The five-bedroom, 8,246-square-foot home, on a 0.37-acre site along a canal, features a summer kitchen, a pool, a dock and a bar.

Flicker hosted the VH1 series *Why Am I Still Single?* and was a featured cast member of *The Real Housewives of New Jersey* from 2016 to 2018.

The late Frank Diassi was an investor and executive in energy and chemical companies.

The Boynton Beach

Chamber of Industry and Commerce has appointed four member volunteers to new leadership roles. **Tammy Sirmons**, CEO of **Gracefully at Home Caregiving**, is the director of new member relations. She will connect new Chamber members with an experienced Chamber member as a mentor for the first six months. **Raquel Hernandez**, owner of **Clutter Crusher**, and



Sirmons



Hernandez



Castro

Bethany Castro, founder of **The Stretch Concierge**, were named as operations coordinators. Hernandez will support the planning and execution of Chamber events and assist with weekly member communications. Castro

Continued on next page

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Kodish



Petroski

will focus on developing and refining best practices for the Chamber's Ambassador Program and the social media program.

Dennis Paul, founder of **Chronic Wellness**, is the new chief strategy officer, focusing on initiatives that align with the Chamber's goals for organizational growth and long-term impact.

Also of note: **Roz Kodish**, owner of **Everything Logo**, was named the Chamber's ambassador of the month for April. **Carol Petroski**, property manager of **Nexus Workspaces Executive Suites and Office Rentals**, was named ambassador of the month for May.

Robert Loredo was recently named the executive director of **Florida Atlantic's Center for Quantum Technologies**. In this role, Loredo will lead the university's quantum computing

efforts. Loredo brings more than two decades of experience in quantum education, curriculum development, and large-scale workforce training initiatives. His appointment, which began on July 1, comes as the university continues to build out its on-campus quantum computing infrastructure in partnership with **D-Wave Quantum Inc.**



Ziv

Tal Ziv, daughter of developer **Noam Ziv**, has joined the sales team of **Glass House Boca Raton** as a sales executive with **Douglas Elliman Realty**. She has followed the project from its earliest stages. Before earning her real estate license, she worked in engineering and product development positions with **GE Aerospace**, **Sierra Space** and **Spin Master**. She holds a bachelor of science in aeronautical and astronautical engineering from **Purdue University** and recently transitioned into luxury real estate.

Samuel Cifuentes is now an intern at the nonprofit **Institute for Regional Conservation** through the **Florida Atlantic University School of**

Environmental, Coastal, and Ocean Sustainability Internship Program. **Cifuentes**, majoring in biological sciences at **Florida Atlantic University**, is interested in environmental science and ecological restoration. The **IRC** is a nonprofit dedicated to the protection, restoration and long-term management of ecological diversity.

The **League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County** is launching **Every Vote Counts!**, a nonpartisan campaign of voter registration, education and candidate engagement for the statewide primary on Aug. 18 and the national general election on Nov. 3. Components will include voter registration and education events, **VOTE411** voters' guides, **Election Expo**, **Meet the Candidate** forums, **Hot Topic** luncheons, and how-to handcards. These can be accessed at **LWVPBC.org**.

Eau Resort & Spa presents **Red, White & Eau**, offering a getaway in celebration of the nation's 250th birthday. When reserving two or more nights between now and Sept. 30, guests will receive a \$250 resort credit, a custom welcome gift and daily valet parking. To book, call 561-533-6000 or visit **eauresortandspa.com/packages/**

red-white-eau.

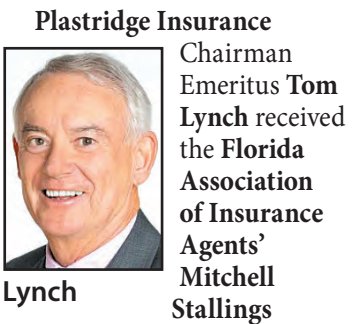
The **Delray Chamber Education Fund** is offering local businesses the opportunity to advertise on four highly visible billboards along I-95 exits (**Linton Road north**, **Linton Road south**, **Congress Avenue north** and **Congress Avenue south**) while helping fund programs and resources for students in all eight **Delray Beach** public schools serving grades K-12.

For \$3,500 per quarter, each business receives billboard advertising that generates more than 1.1 million drive-by impressions every three months.

Every sponsorship helps fund programs benefiting students in **STEM** and technology programs, arts and cultural enrichment, early literacy initiatives, and wellness and support services, among others. To take part, email **Info@Delrayeducation.org**.

Alina, of **Boca Raton**, was selected as one of seven luxury residential communities in the country to participate in a new program developed through a collaboration between **FirstService Residential** and **Atelier CX**, the consulting division of **Forbes Travel Guide**. The program is designed to bring hotel-caliber service standards

to residential communities through customized service, staff training and workflow assessments focused on consistency, personalization and service excellence.



Plastridge Insurance
Chairman Emeritus **Tom Lynch** received the **Florida Association of Insurance Agents' Mitchell Stallings Lifetime Achievement Award**.

Lynch served on the citizens board of governors in 2009 and was reappointed in 2011. Beyond his professional accomplishments, Lynch served as mayor of **Delray Beach** from 1990 to 1996, chairman of the **Palm Beach County School Board** and the **Business Development Board of Palm Beach County**, on the boards of trustees for both the **Delray Beach** and **Boca Raton Chambers of Commerce**, and as a board member of the **Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County**.



Send business news to Christine Davis at **davis9797@gmail.com**.

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New Listing | 5560 N Ocean Boulevard, A | Ocean Ridge | \$1,375,000 | Set in the Ocean Ridge Yacht Club, this spacious, light-filled 3 BR, 2.5 BA townhouse has volume ceilings and an open, airy feel throughout. Oversized deck overlooks the lagoon with Intracoastal views, creating an ideal indoor-outdoor setting for entertaining or relaxing. Dockage for boats up to 22 ft may be available for lease (buyer to verify availability and terms). **Web# B26022835**

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Around Town

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August 2026

The **Coastal Star**

Inside



Tots & Teens

Boca High marching band plays in D.C. **Page AT9**



Dining

More deluxe dining coming to Boca Raton. **Page AT12**



Finding Faith

Cason United getting some upgrades. **Page AT13**



Pets

Saluting people who help cats. **Page AT17**



Our ultimate summer movies

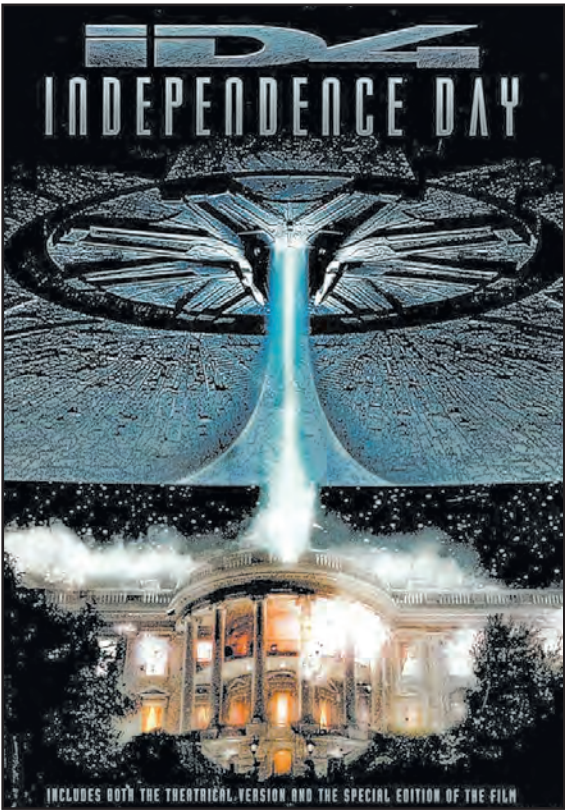


TOP: Baseball and summer go hand in hand. Yes, 1989's *Field of Dreams* is a baseball classic, but calling it just a sports flick doesn't do it justice. 'It is also about redemption, about second chances, about family' and more, our writer Rich Pollack says.

CENTER: Bill Murray has a hilarious tussle with a gopher in 1980's *Caddyshack*. Our writer Brian Biggane says this quirky homage to golf is 'as enjoyable as a birdie on the 18th hole.'

RIGHT: Paws Up for Pets columnist Arden Moore can't get enough of 1996's *Independence Day*. It feels good to see the entire world 'unite to battle menacing alien invaders,' she says.

Photos provided by the movie distributors



Coastal Star writers and editors share their favorites of the season

It's August and it's hot. Why not escape to the movies? You won't need to drive to the cinema. Just plant yourself comfortably on a sofa or recliner in your air-conditioned home.

What to watch? Here are our staff recommendations — the classics edition — for our first-ever Summer Movie Round-Up.

Go get that popcorn popping and make sure to have cool drinks on hand. Milk Duds are optional.

Field of Dreams

— Rich Pollack's pick

"Hey, is this heaven?" an incredulous Shoeless Joe Jackson asks in the 1989 movie *Field of Dreams*.

"No," says protagonist Ray Kinsella, "it's Iowa."

That iconic line from what is considered a quintessential summer movie is so good that it is actually repeated one more time, toward the end, when Ray meets a younger version of his father, which heals many old wounds.

Several elements make *Field of Dreams* a great movie. First and foremost, it's about baseball and about how baseball transcends time. If you love the game, you have to love the movie.

But it is also about redemption, about second chances, about family and about taking a chance on something that sounds crazy. What really makes it great

See **MOVIES** on page AT16



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Philanthropy Notes

Men Giving Back selects 12 finalists for grants up to \$100,000

Men Giving Back, a Boca Raton-based membership organization supporting nonprofits throughout south Palm Beach County, has chosen 12 organizations that provide services in one of four fields within Men Giving Back's charitable focus areas: mental health, children, education and food security.

Each finalist is guaranteed a 2026 MGB grant of at least \$12,500 and will be in the running for the large grant awards of up to \$100,000, which are determined at the 2026 MGB Golden Evening at Royal Palm Yacht and Country Club in November. Men Giving Back has contributed more than \$3 million to a number of charitable organizations throughout the region.

Finalists are: Best Foot Forward, Delray Beach Public Library, Homesafe, Clinics Can Help, Caridad Center, Feed the Hungry, Literacy Coalition, Roots and Wings, Volen Center, Boca Raton Rotary Fund, Bound for College and Fuller Center.

"As our organization continues to grow, the selection process becomes increasingly more competitive,"

said Dr. Nathan Nachlas, a founding member of Men Giving Back and head of its grant committee. "We are extraordinarily appreciative of every organization that took the time to apply for a grant and for the work they do in our community."

Achievement Centers earns 20th year of accreditation

The Achievement Centers for Children & Families has been recognized by Nonprofits First for maintaining continuous accreditation since the accreditor's founding in 2005, marking 20 years of commitment to accountability, transparency and nonprofit best practices.

Nonprofits First is a West Palm Beach-based coalition of public and private funders.

In a letter to Achievement Centers, Nonprofits First President and CEO Trudy Crowetz wrote: "Achieving accreditation for one year is a noteworthy achievement — maintaining it for two decades is exceptional."

Nonprofits First recognizes organizations that demonstrate strong governance, sound

financial oversight, compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and a commitment to operational excellence.

Achievement Centers serves more than 750 children and families each year across Delray Beach and surrounding communities through such programs as early learning, Out-of-School Time, teen leadership, family support, and enrichment opportunities.

For more information about Achievement Centers for Children & Families, visit achievementcentersfl.org or call 561-266-0003.

Connections Inc. honors dads with special week

Community-Based Connections Inc., dedicated to youth development, family strengthening and providing community empowerment services to underserved populations, concluded Fatherhood Week 2026 with a multiday opportunity for fathers, father figures and other men throughout the region to focus on mental health awareness, economic empowerment, family connection, domestic violence

awareness, mentorship and community support.

Fatherhood Week is tied to CBCI's nationally recognized fatherhood program, Awesome Dads Awesome Men, a mentoring program funded by the Jim Moran Foundation for fathers and men in Broward County.

CBCI's Fatherhood Week was held in collaboration with Palm Beach County, the city of Riviera Beach, the Department of Health and Human Services, Riviera Beach SBA, The Lord's Place, Palm Beach County Clergy Alliance, Saint Paul AME Church, AVDA, YWCA, Destiny by Choice and D.R. Hair Studio in West Palm Beach.

Green Blazer Awards

CBCI also has announced this year's Green Blazer Awards Gala & Celebration honorees: Kirk Brown, CEO of Handy; Carol Hylton, president and CEO of CareerSource Broward; Brian C. Johnson, founder of Community-Based Connections and president and CEO of the Minority Builders Coalition; and Newton Sanon, president and CEO of OIC of South Florida.

These community leaders will each receive a commemorative and branded green blazer for their contributions to improving the quality of life for children and families at the gala at 6 p.m. Oct. 3 at the Westin Fort Lauderdale Beach Resort, 321 N. Fort Lauderdale Beach Blvd.

Proceeds benefit CBCI's Awesome Dads Awesome Men fatherhood mentoring program, The Beacon of HOPE-Intact Family Navigation Program, Family Strengthening Program, and S.M.A.R.T. monitoring safety plans, as well as Early Achievers at Markham Elementary, Young Believers, Club Elevate, Haven, and Healing Space.

Tickets are \$150 per person; a table is \$2,500. Reserve seats at communitybasedconnections.com/green-blazer-awards/.

Lynn to host Women's Leadership Symposium

Lynn University, in collaboration with the Boca Regional Chamber, will host the inaugural Karen S. Lynch Women's Leadership Symposium, an event bringing together nationally recognized executives and thought leaders from organizations including the New York Stock Exchange, Revlon and Walgreens.

The symposium is presented by the Dandelion Foundation, founded by best-selling author, mindfulness teacher and Peaceful Mind Peaceful Life co-founder Barbara Schmidt. It is scheduled for 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Oct. 7 at Lynn's Keith C. and Elaine Johnson Wild Performing Arts Center.

Designed to inspire, educate and empower current and aspiring leaders, the event will include conversations on leadership, career advancement, workplace wellness, knowing your value, salary negotiation and strategic risk-taking.

Featured speakers scheduled to attend include:

- Lynch, an author and former president and CEO of CVS Health
- Amy Bricker, executive vice president of Walgreens
- Anne Phelps, principal at Deloitte & Touche
- David Ko, former CEO of Calm and strategic adviser to the board
- Eileen Auen, chairman of Point32Health
- Lynn Martin, president of NYSE Group
- Michelle Peluso, CEO of Revlon
- Russ Miller, founder and CEO of ClearBridge Compensation Group

Attendance is limited to 300 participants. Tickets are \$295 and available for purchase. Visit business.bocachamber.com/chamber-events-calendar/Details/women-s-leadership-symposium-1635701.

\$75,000 grant expands food access for seniors

The Palm Beach County Food Bank has received a \$75,000 grant from Quantum Foundation to support its Groceries for Seniors program, part of the Food Bank's broader Senior Hunger Initiatives.

The Food Bank gets food from grocery stores, farmers, distributors, wholesalers and other sources and distributes it to more than 200 community partners, including food pantries, soup kitchens and schools.

During 2025, PBCFB distributed more than 10.6 million meals to more than 194,000 residents.

The Quantum Foundation

Continued on the next page

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Celebrations

Junior League of Boca Raton Annual Meeting
The Addison, Boca Raton — May 12



The Junior League of Boca Raton has installed Melody Cobbe as president, along with a new board of directors. Cobbe, a member since 2012, is the founder of Cobbe Law, with a focus on helping small businesses navigate legal matters. The Junior League this year features the theme ‘Anchored in Purpose, Moving Together.’ **ABOVE:** The 2026-27 Junior League of Boca Raton board of directors (front, l-r): Darina Bowerman, Lise Orr, Cobbe, Anne Grigsby, Karen Liu, Shannon Moriarty; (back, l-r) Lisa Warren, Alexandra Scheiber, Daniele Jean, Donna Capparelli, Alyson Reeves, Jackie Reeves, Jill Merjeski and Kristin Martin. **Photo provided by Coastal Click Photography**

grant will also help advance plans for nutrition education sessions led by a registered dietitian. Seniors interested in participating in the Groceries for Seniors program, as well as caregivers and community partners seeking additional information, can learn more, view participating distribution sites and determine eligibility by visiting pbfoodbank.org/

senior-hunger-initiatives.

Girl Scouts donate 6,560 pounds of food

Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida led a councilwide food drive called Feeding Florida Together to work toward a hunger-free community. Eight hundred-forty girls from 82 troops in Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River

and Okeechobee counties clocked 327 volunteer hours and donated 6,560 pounds of food to 45 pantries and collection centers.

The girls learned the importance of giving back to their communities and helping those who are less fortunate.

According to Feeding South Florida, 1 in 7 people and 1 in 5 children face hunger in Florida.

Delray Beach

Fourth of July
Atlantic Avenue and A1A, Delray Beach — July 4



ABOVE: A giant U.S. flag was lifted into the air to begin the festivities in Delray Beach as the city celebrated America’s 250th birthday.

RIGHT: Sloane McDonald 11, reads a portion of the Declaration of Independence. She was one of a group of citizens, students, and historians representing the Delray Beach Historical Society who read the document. **Photos by Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star**



“At Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, we instill community stewardship, volunteerism and leadership in our members of all ages, from 5-year-old Daisies to high school senior Ambassadors,” said Lisa Johnson, CEO of Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida.

Weston-based Troop 10055 volunteered 150 hours at CROS Ministries and Boca Raton-

based Troop 24626 donated 338 pounds of food to Boca Helping Hands in Boca Raton, more than any other troop.



Send news, photos and notes to Lou Ann Frala at philanthropy@thecoastalstar.com.

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Dance

Movement for GROWTH

By Jan Engoren
ArtsPaper Contributing Writer

Like the sprawling tree it's named for, the inaugural Banyan Dance Festival — running Aug. 3 to 8 in West Palm Beach — takes root in the shared vision for local dance of two Palm Beach County artists and educators, Ericka Squire of Natural Movers Foundation and Brannndi Lewis of GroundedWPB.

For years, South Florida's dancers and choreographers faced a shortage of training, creative development and performance platforms.

"Talented dancers and choreographers have had to look elsewhere for opportunities to sustain a career in dance," Lewis says. "This festival creates a platform that expands the local dance ecosystem while investing in artists through paid opportunities, professional training and a full creative pipeline."

Inspired by the iconic model of Jacob's Pillow — which takes place every summer in the Berkshires of Massachusetts — the pair envisioned a layered festival offering not only performances but also artist development, training and community engagement. A Bright Ideas grant from the Cultural Council for Palm Beach County helped turn that vision into reality.

"The Banyan Dance Festival is about creating opportunities for artists," Squire says. "Brannndi and I

recognized a chance to further enrich the cultural landscape of Palm Beach County through a festival dedicated to dance."

Squire, a Florida native, incorporates African influences into her choreography. Her own aesthetic reflects that mission, drawing on African culture and community traditions.

"When I think of Banyan, I think of *Ubuntu* — 'I am because we are,'" Squire says. "To me, that is the essence of this festival." She credits the artists and educators who came before her for laying the groundwork that made the partnership — and the festival — possible.

"Like the banyan tree, this festival is multilayered and interconnected," she says. "Every root strengthens the whole. Every person has a place and contributes something essential to the experience."

At the heart of Banyan is its multitiered training structure.

During the festival, 12–15 dancers will participate in a preprofessional intensive for ages 16–25, followed by rehearsals for a group of eight professional dancers selected from an open national call.

More than 30 dancers applied from across the country — from a variety of states including New York, Texas, Michigan, Minnesota, Massachusetts and Florida — with eight ultimately

See BANYAN on AT6

Inaugural
Banyan festival
aims to expand
local dance
ecosystem

Sean Aaron Carmon has choreographed a piece for festival dancers to perform on closing night, Aug. 8, at the Norton Museum of Art. Photo provided by the Banyan Dance Festival

Music

JP Soars: Red Hot, almost famous, and loving living la vida Boca

By Bill Meredith
ArtsPaper Music Writer

Success for performing artists in the music business comes in many forms, most of which fly decidedly under the familiar radar of current superstars like Taylor Swift or Bad Bunny, Beyoncé or Harry Styles.

Case in point: South Florida-based blues singer, guitarist and songwriter J.P. Soars, leader of the Red Hots trio. He likewise has multiple album releases, radio airplay, placement near the top of album charts, numerous nominations and awards, and international touring experience that includes Europe and South America during a lengthy career.

Yet most of those experiences have occurred while Soars was based out of the decidedly non-musical hotbed of his residence since 1999, Boca Raton.

In 2009, Soars' trio won the annual regional International Blues Challenge, sending the group to Memphis for the finals. Not only did they win that competition (which no artist can win more than once), but Soars also earned the coveted Albert King Award as its best guitarist. The

stage was set for upward mobility; a departure from Florida to climb higher rungs of the musical ladder.

Former area guitarists like jazz/fusion icon Scott Henderson had moved to Los Angeles; blues player John Beemiller to Nashville, and traditional jazz artist Jonathan Kreisberg to New York City in search of better gigs and profiles. All succeeded to varying degrees, but Soars — whose hands-on approach means he still books the vast majority of his band's gigs, from Florida to internationally — maintains priorities not based in fame.

"I have family in Hobe Sound," he says. "My brothers and sisters, and now 11 nieces and nephews, are nearby. And once I started touring to so many other places, it actually made me realize how much I really love Florida. I never thought in a million years that I would settle in Boca Raton, but it means that I'm seven minutes from the beach, close to I-95, and Fort Lauderdale is 20 minutes one way and West Palm Beach is 20 minutes the other way. It's become a central, peaceful location for me."

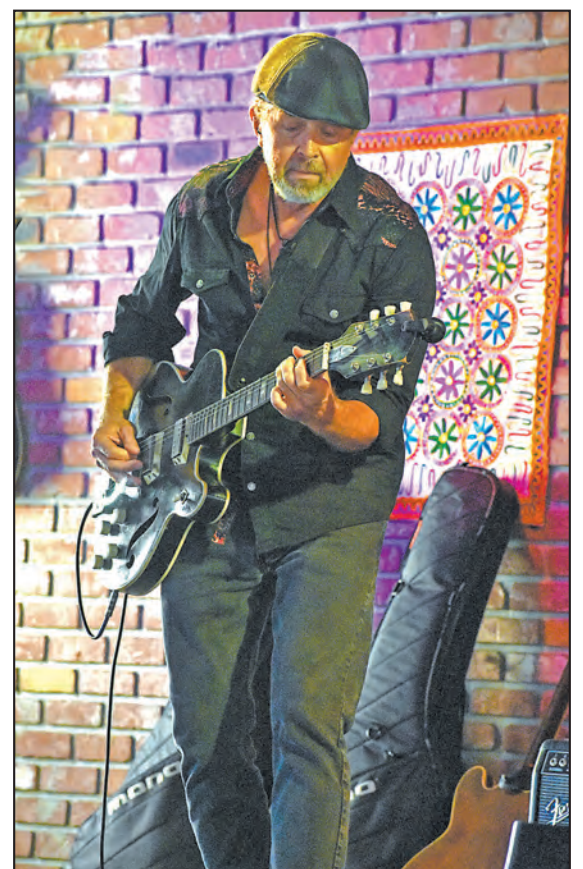
The 57-year-old Soars' ninth album

is the new *Gypsy Blue Revue* (Forty Below, 2026), which features his longtime trio mates Chris Peet (drums) and Cleveland Frederick (bass) as well as classically trained Chicago-based violinist Anne Harris. Her credits include roots music icons Taj Mahal, Keb Mo and Otis Taylor, and the album had been in the works ever since Soars and Harris crossed paths on the festival circuit in 2019.

"We decided to combine forces and make this into something," Soars says. "Anne's great. Her ear is amazing. She'll latch onto a melody after hearing it one time and can play it back verbatim. She also has a great sense of harmony. She's very musical, and very easy to work with."

Gypsy Blue Revue blends studio sound quality with concert energy. Soars' growling, Dr. John-like baritone stands out on slower original vamps like "Jessie Mae" (co-written with keyboardist the Rev. Billy C. Wirtz), the repurposed "Viper" (initially on Soars' 2014 release *Full Moon Night in Memphis*), and "Goin' to South Carolina."

See SOARS on AT6



Blues guitarist, singer and songwriter J.P. Soars plays regular gigs throughout Palm Beach County with his trio, the Red Hots. Photo provided

BANYAN

Continued from page 5

chosen.

The festival also includes a Young Artist Program (YAP) open to dancers ages 9–15, plus an apprenticeship track that allows emerging dancers to train with the company and perform new works.

Three choreographers — Babatunji, a former company member with Alonzo King Lines Ballet; Betty Garcia, a Cuban-born dancer with 15 years of international experience, and Sean Aaron Carmon, a former Alvin Ailey dancer — are creating original pieces for the festival’s dancers.

Garcia is also the inaugural Banyan Choreography Fellow.

Festival faculty member and Guggenheim Fellow Loni Landon will teach and create a featured solo for a dancer in the intensive.

What sets Banyan apart from other South Florida events is its emphasis on immersion, by inviting dancers and nondancers alike to experience the creative process from multiple angles.

Community members can watch rehearsals, observe choreography sessions, take classes in hiphop, African dance or silent disco, attend artist talks, or join the gala and concert.

The founders hope the festival builds strong rapport with the community and gains enough traction to become an annual event. “This is serving a real need,” Squire says. “It’s

an opportunity for dancers to keep working in their craft — and for the community to be immersed in the full spectrum of dance.”

Cofounder Lewis met choreographer Carmon, 38 — who also appeared on Broadway in *The Phantom of the Opera* and *La Cage aux Folles* — at The Black Artist Dance Collective in Atlanta last year, where they were both teaching.

She invited him to be part of the first Banyan Dance Festival.

Carmon, now choreographer for Dance Kaleidoscope in Indianapolis, was on tour with *The Lion King* in 2020 when the coronavirus pandemic hit.

He returned home to Houston and discovered he loved teaching.

“I want to help create the next generation,” he says. “Not just good dancers and good artists — but good people.”

He was mentored by celebrated choreographer Christopher L. Huggins, whom he met while training at the Ailey School. Seeing Huggins’ work *Enemy Behind the Gates* “changed my worldview,” he says, prompting him to transfer from New York University to Fordham so he could study under him. Huggins became a father figure, coaching him through a solo tour that took them to South Africa and Italy. “He was my gateway into professionalism as a dancer.”

Carmon will create an original work for the festival. His creative process is rooted in everyday observation — art,

If You Go

The Banyan Dance Festival runs Aug. 3-8 at various locations in West Palm Beach.

The Banyan Festival Concert is 8-9:30 p.m. Aug. 8 at the Norton Museum of Art, 1450 S. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach (\$65).

Info: banyandancefestival.com.

politics, relationships — filtered through “healthy absorption.” Inspiration, he says, strikes when he least expects it.

The new work’s topical themes center on courage, restraint and the artist’s struggle to be heard.

“Art and dance are living, breathing things,” he says. “You have to convey the ups and downs. Sometimes you whisper, sometimes you raise your voice, sometimes you stand up and be seen.”

As for what he hopes the local dance community will take away, he paraphrases Alvin Ailey: “The audience wants to be entertained.” But he also wants them to think, and to see themselves reflected in the work.

Events will be held throughout the county, at Palm Beach Atlantic University, Ballet Florida, Nora District and City Hall Courtyard.

The week culminates on Aug. 8, with a performance at the Norton Museum of Art with its — what else — iconic banyan tree.

SOARS

Continued from page 5

And Harris is a textural presence on her introspective composition “May Mountain Waltz” (on which she doubles on mandolin), the Brazilian-influenced instrumental “Paradise,” a cover of Django Reinhardt’s “Minor Blues,” and the raucous “Cigar Box Jam.”

The latter 18-minute track offers an album-ending synopsis of Soars’ open mind and dexterity, encompassing not only blues and rock but also jazz/fusion, jam band, pop, Latin and world music. All with the guitarist playing a fretless, two-stringed slide guitar that’s his own design.

Born in Anaheim, Calif., Soars moved with his family to Arkansas at age 3 before the growing clan relocated to West Palm Beach when he was 16.

A youthful Soars first found local musical success playing metallic rock during the 1990s with the groups Raped Ape, Paingod, and Divine Empire, a band that toured Europe and Canada. But meeting blues titan B.B. King at age 18 set Soars on a more roots-oriented musical course. Capable of practically any style between his hollow-bodied, two-stringed cigar box, and steel and nylon-stringed hybrid guitars, Soars’ influences include King and Muddy Waters, Reinhardt and Wes Montgomery, Hank Williams and Tito Puente, and Slayer and Black Sabbath.

“In 1997, I was working in electronics for Motorola on Gateway Boulevard in Boynton Beach and living in Lake Worth,” Soars says. “I decided to quit that job and move to Hollywood, California. I wanted to study at the Guitar Institute of Technology in Los Angeles, but I couldn’t afford the tuition. Then my metal band Divine Empire got a record deal, so I was flying back to Florida to record with them. It all made me realize how much I missed my family and this area. So I came back to Boca Raton in 1999.”

Divine Empire’s lineup changes and struggles helped Soars transition into a force at area blues clubs’ open jams by the mid-2000s. Once he started his original recording career in 2008 with the independent release *Back of My Mind*, his profile rose quickly after the IBC win in Memphis. An explosive 2011 sophomore album, *More Bees With Honey*, was followed by Soars’ appearance on the Legendary Rhythm and Blues Cruise, on which he traded solos with Jimmy Thackery, guitarist for Washington, D.C. blues road warriors The Nighthawks. The 2012 album *As Live As It Gets* documented the occasion, and the 2013 Red Hots release *Live From the Netherlands* showcased his trio’s own international road prowess.

“When I first heard J.P. Soars,” Thackery says, “I knew right away that he was separate from the rest of the pack.”

“I didn’t even know the

If You Go

See J.P. Soars and the Red Hots at 8 p.m. Aug. 22 at Village Music Café, 10410 Forest Hill Blvd., Wellington (561-798-5334); 5 p.m. Aug. 23 at Rudy’s at Bamboo, 21 S. J St., Lake Worth Beach (561-602-5307); and 7 p.m. Aug. 28 at DAS Beer Garden, 1203 Town Center Drive, No. 116, Jupiter (561-776-8669).

album with Jimmy was being recorded,” Soars says. “A couple months later, he told me, ‘That sounds pretty good, so I think I’m going to release it.’”

The ongoing regional collective Southern Hospitality also launched during that same era, featuring Soars and Peet, Bradenton-based singing guitarist Damon Fowler and his bassist, Chuck Riley, plus Memphis vocalist/keyboardist Victor Wainwright.

More recent Soars releases include *Let Go of the Reins* (Whiskey Bayou, 2019), recorded at fellow singing guitarist Tab Benoit’s studio in Louisiana and featuring that blues star’s production and drumming as well. *Brick By Brick* (2024) and *Gypsy Blue Revue* have followed in Soars’ recording catalog.

Harris turns Soars’ trio into a quartet mostly during festival appearances, the way it began with them seven years ago. On the aforementioned “Cigar Box Jam” from the new album, she displays influences from Stephane Grappelli to Regina Carter in answering and anticipating Soars’ phrases. And the guitarist’s wizardry on the unorthodox two-stringed instrument includes nuances of guitarists from pop to rock (George Harrison, Jimi Hendrix, Carlos Santana, Jimmy Page), jam bands to jazz/fusion (Jerry Garcia, Jimmy Herring, John McLaughlin, Jeff Beck).

Frederick takes a solo displaying his wide range of influences, and Peet’s lengthy break on his toms echoes the work of British phenom Ian Paice of Deep Purple on that group’s anthemic track “Space Truckin.”

“People have been asking us about recording that track for a long time,” says Soars. “For years, we’ve had to say no, but finally we do.”

As an almost-famous musical artist, Soars expresses nothing but contentment with his comparative anonymity.

“I’ve been tempted a little bit to relocate, and it was a learning and growing experience when I moved to L.A.,” says Soars. “A bit overwhelming, actually. The competition for gigs there and in places like Nashville and Austin is insane, while most of our shows still involve playing original music in Florida in spite of the current tribute act craze. I’m happy to be able to play music for a living here. I’ve been able to pay off my condo and student loan, and my vehicles are paid for, all through music. It’s a good quality of life.”






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Arts Calendar

Editor's note: Events listed through August 31 were current as of July 23. Check with the presenting agency for any changes. Ticket prices are single sales unless otherwise specified.

ART

Boca Raton Museum of Art: Through Oct. 11: *Modernisms: Art from the Manes Collection; Typoe Gran: Anatomy of a Practice.* Through Nov. 8: *Frédéric Bruly Bouabré: Selections from the 404 Art Collection.* Through Dec. 6: *Exploring Jess: Beat Generation Visionary.* Through Feb. 8: *Drawing with Scissors: Collage from the Collection.* \$16, \$12 seniors, free for students. 501 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 11 am-6 pm W-Sun (to 8 pm Th). 561-392-2500 or www.bocamuseum.org

Cornell Art Museum: Through Sept. 10: *Persistence of Matter; Rodney Dumps: The Surrealist of the Highwaymen Exhibition; Spotlighting James Knill: Through a Lucid Lens.* Free. 51 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Noon-5 pm W, Sun, noon-7 pm Th, F; 10 am-5 pm Sat. 561-243-7922 or delrayoldschoolsquare.com

Cultural Council for Palm Beach County: Through Aug. 21: *Dominique Denis: Metamorphosis.* Free. 601 Lake Ave., Lake Worth Beach. Noon-5 pm T-F. 561-471-2901, palmbeachculture.com/exhibitions

Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens: Through Aug. 30: *Yōkai: Scenes of the Supernatural in Japanese Woodblock Prints; Courage and Compassion: Our Shared Story of the Japanese American World War II Experience.* Through Sept. 20: *Threads of Silver and Gold.* \$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 Aug. 16: *60 Seconds: Polaroids from the Collection.* Through Aug. 23: *Galloping Steed: Celebrating the Year of the Horse in Chinese Paintings.* Through Sept. 27: *Recognition of Art by Women: In Retrospect.* Through Oct. 4: *Danielle Mckinney: Shelter.* Through Nov. 1: *Cursed Images: Pictures Out of Context.* Hours: \$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

DANCE

Monday, August 3-Saturday, August 8
Banyan Dance Festival: In West Palm Beach, enjoy a new dance presentation featuring performances by acclaimed and emerging artists, as well as training opportunities. Presented by the Natural Movers Foundation and Grounded West Palm Beach, funded in part by the Cultural Council for Palm Beach County. banyandancefestival.com.

Wednesday, August 5
Derek Hough: The Emmy Award-winning dancer and choreographer, known for *Dancing With the Stars*, is bringing his "Symphony of Dance: Encore" show to South Florida. 8 pm. Tickets start at \$80. Hard Rock Live, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. ticketmaster.com

Saturday, August 22
Siempre Flamenco: An international cast of flamenco musicians and dancers is returning to Arts Garage, performing *palos*, from *guajiras* and *tanguillos* to the lament of the *soleares* and *alegrías*. 8 pm. \$53-\$58. 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 561-450-6357 or artsgarage.org

JAZZ AND BLUES

Wednesday, August 5
Troy Anderson & the Wonderful World Band: A tribute to the music of jazz trumpeter and singer Lois Armstrong, courtesy trumpeter Troy Anderson and his band. 7 pm. \$74-\$97. Glazer Hall, 70 Royal Poinciana Way, Palm Beach. 561-576-7860 or glazerhall.org

Friday, August 7
Bob Merrill and The Sunnyside Swing Band: The host of Legends Radio and the Delray Beach-based band will offer fresh interpretations of vintage jazz, blues, and country swing for a nostalgic night. 7:15 and 8:15 pm. \$10 adults and seniors; \$5 students. Norton Museum of Art, 1401 S. Dixie Highway, West Palm Beach. 561-832-5196 or norton.org

Saturday, August 8
Shaw Davis and The Black Ties: Looking for a night of blues-rock fusion? Formed in 2016 in Pompano Beach, this trio has already released three critically acclaimed albums. 8 pm. \$28-\$44. The Funky Biscuit, 303 SE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. 561-395-2929 or funkybiscuit.com

Friday, August 14
Kat Riggins: This Miami-born singer has brought her blend of blues, rock, gospel and soul around the world. She'll be returning to Arts Garage with her band for *Big Momma*

Blues, a show highlighting iconic women in blues history. 8 pm. \$50-\$55. 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 561-450-6357 or artsgarage.org

Najee: Often blending jazz, R&B, and world music, this accomplished saxophonist and flutist has worked with many notable artists, including Prince and Quincy Jones. He released his latest album, *Under the Moon, Over the Sky*, last August and is performing two shows at Crazy Uncle Mike's. 6 and 8:30 pm. \$104 and up. 6450 N. Federal Highway, Boca Raton. crazyunclemikes.com

POPULAR MUSIC

Thursday, August 6
Mumford and Sons: Defined by their signature folk-rock sound and stadium-anthem choruses, this English band was formed in Greater London in 2007. You might know their songs "I Will Wait" and "Little Lion Man." 7:30 pm. \$314 and up. Hard Rock Live, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. ticketmaster.com

Wednesday, August 19
Anthony Green: Hailing from Pennsylvania, the singer-songwriter is known for being the frontman of progressive band Circa Survive and the original vocalist for Saosin. He's stopping in South Florida as part of his This Tour Won't Save You tour. With special guests Goon and Keith Goodwin. 7 pm. \$44. Culture Room, 3045 N. Federal Highway, No. 60-E, Fort Lauderdale. 954-564-1074 or visit cultureroom.net

Thursday, August 20
Rob Zombie and Marilyn Manson: Two of the most iconic figures in industrial and shock rock are coming to South Florida this summer. With special guests The Hu and Orgy. 6:15 pm. \$40 and up. iThink Financial Amphitheatre, 601-7 Sansburys Way, West Palm Beach. ticketmaster.com

Tuesday, August 25
Goo Goo Dolls: Known for their defining anthem "Iris," this rock band formed in Buffalo, New York, in 1986. Their summer 2026 tour will make a stop in South Florida. 8 pm. Tickets start at \$49. Hard Rock Live, 1 Seminole Way, Hollywood. ticketmaster.com

Sunday, August 30
Dirty Heads and 311: California-based reggae rock band Dirty Heads and Nebraska-based rock band 311 are co-headlining their So Glad You Made It tour. 5:30 pm. \$40 and up. iThink Financial Amphitheatre, 601-7 Sansburys Way, West Palm Beach. ticketmaster.com.

THEATER

Friday, August 7-Saturday, August 8
Greater Tuna: The first in a series of 1981 plays by Jaston Williams, Joe Sears and Ed Howard about the quirky inhabitants of Tuna, Texas. Actors Matthew Paszkiet and Kyler O'Brien play all 20 characters. 7 pm. Lighthouse Theater, 6743 W. Indiantown Road, Suite 35, Jupiter. \$30. stickingplacetheatre.com (See story on page A78)

Sunday, August 9
The Dolphins Are Still Singing. Can You Hear Them?: Artist Jill Karlin's one-woman theatrical debut tells her life story as an artist and advocate for nature. 6 pm. \$33. Stonzek Studio Theater at Lake Worth Playhouse. 713 Lake Ave, Lake Worth Beach. 561-586-6410 or lakeworthplayhouse.org

Opens Thursday, August 20
Eureka Day: At Eureka Day, an ultra-progressive private school in California, every voice matters — until a mumps outbreak turns harmony into hysteria. Andy Rogow directs this relevant and sharp comedy by Jonathan Spector. Through Sept. 20. \$45-\$62. Island City Stage, 2304 N. Dixie Highway, Wilton Manors. islandcitystage.org

Opens Friday, August 21
42nd Street: This classic stage musical about being plucked from the chorus to become a featured star gets a mounting at the Delray Beach Playhouse. Through Sept. 13. 2 and 7:30 pm. \$55. 950 NW 9th St, Delray Beach. 561-272-1281 or delraybeachplayhouse.com

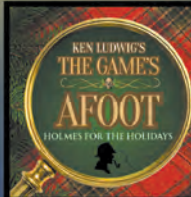


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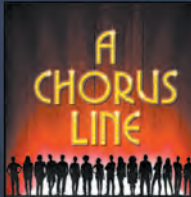
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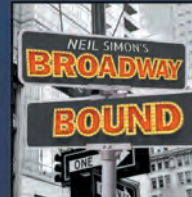
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New Jupiter company will offer adventurous theater

Greater Tuna will be performed Aug. 7 and 8 by the Sticking Place Theatre Collective at The Lighthouse Theater, 6743 W. Indiantown Road, Suite 35, Jupiter. Tickets are \$30. Visit StickingPlaceTheatre.com.

Saturday - 8/1 - Bask to School Bash at Norman J. Wimbley Gymnasium, 1515 Wingfield St, Lake Worth Beach. For all students in the 33460-33461 area - must present a Lake Worth bill. Featuring food music and free backpack with supplies while they last. 9 am-noon. Free. 561-586-1702; lakeworthbeachfl.gov

8/1 - Drop-In Family Storytime at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Up to age 5. Every Sat through 8/29. 10-10:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org

8/1 - Morning Makers - Play with Prints at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Creative family program designed for children ages 5-12. 10-11:30 am. \$10/members; \$5-\$20/non-members. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

8/1 - SoFlo Market: Back To School Bash at Boca Raton City Hall, 201 W Palmetto Park Rd. 11 am-5 pm. Free. soflo-market.merlin-site.com

8/1 - The Spongebob Musical at Delray Beach Playhouse, 950 NW 9th St. Two shows: 2 pm & 6 pm. \$20/ adults; \$15/children. 561-272-1281; delraybeachplayhouse.com

Monday - 8/3 - Triassic Treats at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Ages 13-17. Held again 8/18. 2-3:30 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org

8/3-7 - Fab 5 Camp at Ezell Hester, Jr. Community Center, 1901 N Seacrest Blvd. M-F. Ages 5-12. 7:30 am-5:30 pm. 561-742-6000. \$135/resident; \$169/non-resident. 561-742-6650; boynton-beach.org/277/Recreation-Parks

8/3-7 - Youth Summer Camp:
Moana at The Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. Ages 6-12. M-F, 9 am-4 pm. \$475. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com

8/3-7 - Art-Sea Living Summer Camp at Art-Sea Living, 510 E Ocean Ave #103, Boynton Beach. Runs through 8/7. Ages 6-12 M-F 10 am-2 pm \$365/week. Extended care 2-3 pm \$35/day (not available on T). 561-737-2600; artsealiving.com

Tuesday - 8/4 - Pop-Up Pages at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Literacy enrichment: stories, music, movement. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Ages 0-5. Held again 8/10, 12 & 8/18. 10-10:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org

8/4 - Children's Art Workshop: "Bird Nerding 101" at the Delray Beach Historical Society Historic Bungalow, 3 NE 1st St. Ages 6-13. Students should bring a bagged lunch. 10 am-3 pm. \$25/student. Registration: 561-274-9578; delraybeachhistory.org

8/4 - Sandaway Discovery Center Daily Feedings at 142 S Ocean Blvd, Delray Beach. All ages. Invertebrate touch tank 12:30-2:30 pm; Shark & stingray feedings 1 pm; aquarium feedings 2 pm; animal encounters 3 pm. T-Sat. Free w/\$10 admission. 561-274-7263; sandaway.org

8/4 - Gaming Guild at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Ages 13-17. Held again 8/18. 2-4 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org

Wednesday - 8/5 - Game Day at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Ages 13-17. Every W 4:30-6:30 pm. Free. 561-742-6393; boyntonlibrary.org

Thursday - 8/6 - Drop-In Family Storytime at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Up to age 5. Every Th 10-10:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org

8/6 - Kindergarten Prep at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Attending all 10 classes is required. Ages 4-5. 2-4 pm. Free. 561-742-6393; boyntonlibrary.org

8/6 - Make & Take: Kings & Queens of School - Crowns at Boynton Beach Library,

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Tots & Teens

Boca band changes tune, performs in D.C. after heat cancels parade

By Faran Fagen

Boca Raton High School brass musician Stephin Restivo and his 49 bandmates were shocked to find out at 10:15 p.m. on July 3 that the Independence Day parade they had worked so hard to prepare for in Washington, D.C., was canceled.

But the Bobcats didn't travel more than 1,000 miles from South Florida to the nation's capital for the country's 250th anniversary for their instruments to stay silent.

When extreme heat forced the cancellation of the National Independence Day Parade on July 4, the students and their band directors joined forces with three other high school bands to organize an impromptu patriotic concert inside the National Museum of the United States Army at Fort Belvoir, Virginia.

"When we got the news the parade was canceled, people were sort of in shock and thinking what this meant for the rest of the trip or if it was going to be replaced," said Restivo, 17. "It also bummed out many people since it was going to be such a big event. The change to the museum was a very quick turnaround, so everyone quickly hustled back together so we could prepare."

The four bands were each selected to be in the National Independence Day Parade, an honor reserved for invited bands nominated by state officials. The students had come far and paid a lot of money to attend.

The performance at the National Museum of the United States Army was actually set



Restivo



The Boca Raton High School marching band performs at the National Museum of the United States Army. Members and support staff chalked up their experience in Washington, D.C. as an important life lesson about perseverance and determination. Photo provided by Jenn Girdlestone

up by a band parent of a band from Washington state, which invited Boca High and the other schools (from California and Wisconsin) to perform. At 4 p.m., the music began, and the 307 student musicians from four high schools played.

"We're extremely grateful that we got the opportunity to perform at all, and honored to perform in the Army museum," said Boca High band director Jenn Girdlestone. "We're so proud of our students for the way they performed."

The Bobcats played the same material that they had planned for the parade. Each band took about 10 minutes and had the opportunity to watch and listen to the other bands from across the country.

"Even though we didn't get to march and play in the

parade like the original plan, it was still a great experience to be able to play for people and show our appreciation," Restivo said. "I think it also shows our perseverance as a band that even on short notice we were able to come and perform for everyone. Personally, I think it gives a really good sense of hope."

Restivo plays the mellophone, which has the sound of a French horn but is shaped more like a trumpet so that the sound can be projected toward the audience during marching shows.

The extreme weather conditions made the trip a challenge. Tours of monuments and the National Mall were outdoors. Other events moved indoors. And then lightning delayed the fireworks on the Fourth.

The concert reflected a collaborative effort involving the Army museum, U.S. Rep. Emily Randall of Washington state and members of her staff, and Chimacum (Wash.) High band director Daniel Ferland, along with the other band directors, students and supporters from each participating school.

More than a patriotic performance, the concert became a powerful reminder that when circumstances change, determination, teamwork and music can still bring people together.

The upcoming fall semester brings marching band season for Boca High. The Bobcats are excited about supporting their football team and competing in the Marching Band State Championships the weekend of Nov. 14.

Restivo, who has been in band since the seventh grade, says his goals for his senior year are to "just have fun and do what makes me happy."

He's in jazz, symphonic, as well as marching bands, which all have a different feel. In college, he plans to pursue a criminal justice major with a minor in music, and of course, play in the university and local bands.

"The band community is by far one of the best communities people can be a part of," Restivo said. "No matter where you go, you will be able to find others who enjoy the same things as you and had similar experiences. It's almost as if we're all part of one big family supporting each other." ★

100 E Ocean Ave. Ages 5-11. 4:30-5:30 pm. Free. 561-742-6393; boyntonlibrary.org
Saturday - 8/8 - Teen Advisory Board at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Grades 6-12. Held again 8/22. 10-11:30 am. Free. 561-742-6393; boyntonlibrary.org
8/8 - ColorSpace: Artistic Excavations at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Ages 13-17. 11 am-12:30 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
8/8 - School Year Spark: Back to School Bash at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Ages 5-12. 11 am-1 pm. Free. 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
8/8 - Sketching in the Galleries at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Family fare. 11 am-4 pm. Free w/ paid admission. Registration: 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

AUGUST 9-15

Tuesday - 8/11 - Karate Class at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Ages 6-17. Every T/Th through 9/17. Ages 6-12: 5:30-6:25 pm, \$90-\$113; Ages 13+: 6:30-7:30 pm, \$110-\$138. Registration: 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
Saturday - 8/22 - Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. All ages. 2-3 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org

AUGUST 23-29

Monday - 8/24 - TAB (Teen Advisory Board) Meeting at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Ages 13-17. 5-6 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
Tuesday - 8/25 - Teen Movie Night: The Lost World: Jurassic Park (1997, PG-13) or Indian Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984, PG) at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Ages 13-17. 5-7:45 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
Saturday - 8/29 - Creation Station: Fashion Through Time at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Limited seating. 11 am-4 pm. Free w/ paid admission. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

AUGUST 30-SEPT. 5

Sunday - 8/30 - Wild Wonders at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Hike, crafts, stories. Ages 3-6 w/an adult. 9:30-10:15 am. \$8/resident & member; \$10/non-member. Reservations: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org
Tuesday - 9/1 - Toddler Tales at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Stories, music, movement. Ages walking to 23 mos. 10-10:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
Wednesday - 9/2 - Reading & Rhythm for 2-3s at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW

2nd Ave. Literacy enrichment class. Child must be accompanied by an adult. 10-10:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
9/2 - Crafternoon at the Library for Tweens & Teens at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Ages 9-17. 6-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
Thursday - 9/3 - My First Book Club at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Ages 6-7. Child attends independently. 4:30-5 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
Friday - 9/4 - Baby Bookworm at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Storytime for infants accompanied by an adult. Ages 0 months to non-walking. 11-11:30 am. Free. Registration: 561-393-7852; bocalibrary.org
Saturday - 9/5 - Morning Makers - Make Your Mark at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Creative family program designed for children ages 5-12. 10-11:30 am. \$10/members; \$5-\$20/non-members. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
9/5 - Supa Awesome Dog Man Fair at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Ages 6-12 with parent/caretaker. 10 am-1 pm. Free. Registration: 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org
9/5 - Teen Advisory Board at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Grades 6-12. Held again 9/19. 10-11:30 am. Free. 561-742-6393; boyntonlibrary.org

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Health & Harmony

Golf injuries are par for course, but prevention can ease pain

While Tiger Woods is one of the best golfers in modern history, he's also known for the golfing injuries that have sidelined him: back surgeries, knee problems, an Achilles tendon tear and more. He's not the only one.

While golf is considered a leisurely sport, injuries are common even among lesser players. Poor form, shaky fundamentals, improper swing form, or limited mobility and strength can all take a toll.

According to the market research website Gitnux, males aged 30-50 have the highest back injury rate among golfers at 45%. Seniors older than 65 account for 35% of ER visits related to golf. Poor swing mechanics contribute to 70% of back injuries.

To combat those statistics, it's important to stretch before playing, stay hydrated, warm up and focus on proper swing mechanics, advises Berkcan Akpinar, an orthopedic surgeon at NYU Langone Medical Associates in Delray Beach.

"The game of golf has a lot of torque built into it," says Akpinar, who occasionally hits a few balls on the driving range. "The trunk of your body is prone to injuries from a repetitive golf swing, including your spine, the muscles flanking the spine and the obliques."

"Stretch, make sure you use appropriate equipment, take your time, make sure your technique is good and then go out and have fun," he advises.

As an orthopedic surgeon, he often operates on golfers who need shoulder replacements and says that, in addition to focusing on the back and core, it's important to stretch the shoulder muscles. Rotator-cuff tears or sprains, tendinitis and arthritis are common, as are wrist injuries.

Akpinar stresses the importance of proper club fittings in staying healthy.

"If you're playing 18 holes, you might swing at the ball 80 to 100 times over that course, so it's important to make sure it's done with proper ergonomics and properly fitted clubs," he says.

Another recommendation is to use a pushcart or golf cart instead of shlepping a heavy bag for 18 holes, which can strain the spine, shoulders and hips.

Akpinar suggests using your clubs as a stretching tool before you start your round — doing adductions or external rotations to warm up the shoulder muscles.

"Be creative," he says.



Akpinar



Czaja



Hough

A golf pro's advice

While Akpinar treats the injuries once they happen, golf pro Christian Czaja focuses on the habits that help prevent them long before a golfer feels the first twinge.

If you look at Czaja's Instagram, you'll see the PGA Teacher of the Year for the South Florida Section and golf pro at Boca West Country Club giving putting lessons.

Wearing red, white and blue harlequin pants, Czaja demonstrates proper putting technique: how to keep your lower body inert and swing using only your upper torso.

"Professional golfers can spend up to one hour warming up," says Czaja, who has played in three National Club Professional Championships. "It's important to warm up, do 15 minutes of light stretching and start off with relaxed swings, to avoid injuries."

He also emphasizes the importance of good fundamentals, which allow you to repeat an action numerous times without sustaining injury.

Often, weekend players are more prone to injuries, Czaja says. To stay in good golf shape, Czaja bikes, does other cardio and works out with weights to keep his core strong.

Gitnux reports that core strengthening can reduce the risk of back injuries by 45% and a good warmup can decrease the chances of strain by 60%. Also, physical therapy can resolve up to 85% of golfer's elbow.

Other tips include drinking plenty of liquids, strengthening key muscle groups and listening to your body.

Keeping body in balance

Some injury prevention begins long before you set foot on the golf course. It starts with balance in the body, says Kim Hough, owner of Relaxed Living Yoga, Massage & Nutrition in Delray Beach. A golfer and competitive tennis and pickleball player, Hough takes a holistic approach to keeping golfers, including herself, healthy on the course and beyond.

One of her favorite tricks to minimize repetitive-motion injuries is to counterbalance your movement.

"I tell all my golf clients that when they are waiting

to hit the ball, swing the club in the opposite direction," Hough says. "If you swing in the other direction, it will engage

and stretch the muscles on the other side of your body, providing more balance."

She believes in the mind-body approach to staying healthy in sport and in life.

"There's a lot of spokes on the wheel," she says. "It's important to see the bigger picture to maintain optimum health and be able to continue these sports as you age."

She credits her own health to a mix of nutrition, massage and daily yoga — all aimed at reducing inflammation and keeping the body in balance.

In her yoga classes, she emphasizes exercises to keep the spine healthy and flexible, such as rotation, extension and flexion — something she does every morning and before hitting any golf balls.

She believes yoga is one of the best things you can do for back issues, which golfers often develop from rotating during their swing.

So, whether you're chasing a hole in one, taking a mulligan or simply out for the exercise, the key to a good golf game is staying fit and avoiding injury.

Keeping your mind and body in shape — through good nutrition, flexibility, proper technique and well-fitted equipment — can make the game safer and more enjoyable. And with a little preparation, a little awareness and a little creativity, you can stay on the course longer, playing the sport you love.

"Maintaining optimum health and fitness and an active lifestyle can help you keep doing the sports you love well into your later years," Hough says.

To learn more about Hough's practice, visit relaxedliving.org or call 561-715-4573.

To contact Czaja, go to Christianczaja.com or call or text 561-213-9213.

To learn more about NYU Langone services, visit nyulangone.org/locations/nyulangone-medical-associates-delray-beach.

Jan Engoren writes about health and healthy living. Send column ideas to jengoren@hotmail.com.



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Health Notes

JFK employee wins award for being an extraordinary nurse

Nigel Williams has received the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurses, an international recognition honoring nurses who provide exceptional clinical care and compassion to patients and their families.

Williams, a member of HCI College's 2025 graduating class, earned the award less than a year after entering the nursing profession.

Williams serves on the Three East acute care unit at JFK North Hospital in West Palm Beach, where he was nominated by a patient's family for his attentiveness, professionalism and commitment to patient-centered care.

"I was totally shocked," Williams said in a news release. "I treat every patient the same way. I take the time to listen, answer questions and make sure they feel cared for. To be recognized for something that I try to do every day is incredibly meaningful."

Before pursuing nursing, Williams worked as a pharmacy technician while balancing a second full-time job. He



Nigel Williams received the Daisy Award for Extraordinary Nurses less than a year after entering the profession. **Photo provided**

selected HCI College because its flexible scheduling allowed him to continue working while completing his education.

Williams credits HCI College faculty and clinical instructors

with helping shape his approach to patient care.

"A big thing our professors taught us was to always take the time to treat the patient with empathy and care," Williams

said. "Nothing else matters. That's why I take the time to talk with my patients, learn their story and understand what's going on in their lives."

Williams, who lives in Greenacres, plans to continue advancing his career in psychiatric nursing and ultimately become a psychiatric mental health nurse practitioner.

HCI College offers career-focused health care education programs designed to prepare students for success through hands-on training, experienced faculty and real-world clinical experiences. For more information about HCI College's nursing programs, visit hci.edu.

Dean of FAU nursing school recognized for work

Cameron G. Duncan, dean of Florida Atlantic University's Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing, was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing in recognition of his work in advancing health care, nursing practice, research, education and policy.

Duncan has focused on research that bridges evidence-based findings with practical clinical applications. Duncan's research interests include integrating mental health services into primary care settings, advancing health care policy, supporting the nursing profession and addressing substance use disorders.

Surgeon completes heart procedure with new device

Delray Medical Center



Newman

cardiothoracic surgeon Dr. Jeff Newman recently completed a procedure using AMDS Hybrid Prothesis. This device, recently approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, is a new treatment option for aortic dissections. The prothesis is designed to treat acute DeBakey Type I, especially when the blood flow is blocked.

— Christine Davis

Health Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 7/22. Please check with organizers for any changes.

AUGUST 1

Saturday - 8/1 - Saturdays @ Sanborn: Yoga Class at Sanborn Square, 72 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. 8:45 am registration; 9 am class. Free. 561-393-7703; downtownboca.org

8/1 - Zumba Class at South Beach Park Pavilion, 400 N State Rd A1A, Boca Raton. Every Sat 10 am. Free. 561-393-7703; downtownboca.org

8/1 - Yoga at the Beach at Red Reef Park West, 1221 S Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Held on grass overlooking the Intracoastal. No cash accepted on-site. Every 1st & 3rd Sat 10-11 am. \$10-\$12.50/class; 60-day membership \$65/resident, \$81.25/non-resident. 561-393-7807; myboca.us

8/1 - Tomadachi Judo Club 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 10:30 am-noon all groups. Per month \$21.50/resident; \$27/non-resident. Registration: 561-393-7807; myboca.us

8/1 - AA Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach Fellowship Hall, 101 NW 22nd St. Every Sat 5:30 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

AUGUST 2-8

Sunday - 8/2 - Coco Market at Old School Square Amphitheater, 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. 9 am-2 pm. Free. 561-870-4090; thecocoyogi.com/market

8/2 - CODA (Codependents Anonymous) Meeting at Unity of Delray

Beach Fellowship Hall, 101 NW 22nd St. Every Sun 6 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

8/2 - Yoga at the Beach at Red Reef Park East, 1400 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Held on grass overlooking the Intracoastal. No cash accepted on-site. Every W/Sun 6:30 pm. \$10-\$12.50/class; 60-day membership \$65/resident, \$81.25/non-resident. 561-393-7807; myboca.us

Monday - 8/3 - LGBTQ ACOA Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach Prayer Room, 101 NW 22nd St. Every M 6:30 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

8/3 - Adult Zumba Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Every M 7-8 pm. Per class: \$6/resident; \$7.50/non-resident. Registration: 561-393-7807; myboca.us

Tuesday - 8/4 - Tai Chi Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Age 18+. Every T through 8/25 6-7 pm. Per class: \$8/resident; \$10/non-resident. Registration: 561-393-7807;

myboca.us

8/4 - Al-Anon Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach Fellowship Hall, 101 NW 22nd St. Every T 7 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

Thursday - 8/6 - Pilates Class at Boca Raton Community Center, 150 Crawford Blvd. Age 18+. Every Th through 8/27 5:30-6:30 pm. Per class: \$20/resident; \$25/non-resident. Registration: 561-393-7807; myboca.us

Thursday - 8/6 - LGBTQ+ AA Meeting at Unity of Delray Beach Prayer Room, 101 NW 22nd St. Every Th 7 pm. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org

8/6 - Alateen Meeting at St. Mark's Catholic Church, 643 NE 4th Ave, Boynton Beach. Every Th 7:30 pm. Free. 561-278-3481; southpalmbeachafg.org

AUGUST 9-15

Sunday - 8/9 - Yoga at the Museum at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 9-10:30 am. \$15/member; \$30/non-

member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

Saturday - 8/15 - Sound Healing at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 3-4 pm. \$20/member; \$40/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

AUGUST 16-22

Wednesday - 8/19 - Scripps Research Front-Row Lecture Series: Predicting the Chemistry of Tomorrow for the Medicines of the Future w/ Ryan Shenvi, Ph.D. 1-hour virtual lecture. 7 pm. Free. Register for link: frontrow.scripps.edu

AUGUST 23-29

Thursday - 8/27 - Full Moon Yoga & Night Market at Old School Square Park, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 6:30-9:30 pm. Free; \$5 suggested donation. 561-561-243-1077; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events

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Dining

Downtown Boca to get luxe dining, lounge and membership experience

Private membership supper clubs and bars are the latest in “eatertainment,” and Boca Raton is getting a new one in **Fletchers**.

The luxe dining, lounge and membership experience is scheduled for a fall opening in downtown Boca Raton at 133 SE Mizner Blvd.

It’s being billed as a five-star menu dining room that morphs into a high-energy upscale nightclub later at night.

While Fletchers will be open to the public, its Members Club card will give people access to a private area and lounge space with exclusive amenities.

Creating the menu is executive chef and co-founder Michael Stember, who ran track for the United States in the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

After gaining international fame for his pop-ups called Sushi Belly Tower, he started a brick and mortar, Ponyboy, in Brooklyn.

Fletchers’ other co-founders are Sam Meitus and Jake Marr, South Florida entrepreneurs. They watched the growth of companies drawing young professionals to the area, and felt Boca Raton was overdue for an experiential upscale restaurant.

Marr wrote in a news release, “We see a demand from discerning diners in Boca who are looking for a sophisticated sanctuary for members to connect, relax, and enjoy bespoke services. Boca Raton is the perfect locale for our first venture, given its vibrant community and appreciation for luxury.”

Josie’s Ristorante in Boynton Beach is progressing with its move to a stand-alone, two-story building of its own on Federal Highway.

The planned 55,000-square-foot restaurant, about 1.5 miles south of Josie’s current site, will include outside dining and, to the relief of its manager, its own parking lot. A sign is on the new shell of the building.

“The parking now is a nightmare at this place,” said Dante Setticasì, the son of owner Steve Setticasì. Josie’s shares parking with numerous other businesses, including its neighboring restaurant, Prime Catch.



He said the current restaurant rented in the rebuilt plaza at Woolbright Road and Federal was a leftover from the “Kmart parking lot” era.

“A lot of this stuff was retrofitted,” Dante Setticasì said.

The owners are looking forward to a building of their own, from the ground up.

A new pizza oven, new kitchen, bar and dining room will be exciting, he said.

But the staff will come from the old place.

“A lot of the staff we’ve had for a long time,” Setticasì said. “It’s a long-standing crew here. I really don’t know too many restaurants who have kept the same staff for so long. We have had very little turnover.”

Josie’s opened in 1992, and it sold to Steve Setticasì a year later. It gained a large following

for its Italian menu.

The addition of James Beard Award-winning chef Mark Militello a decade ago brought a menu makeover and new clientele. He kept recipes simple and built on the classics using fresh, local ingredients and fresh bread.

The new restaurant will grow with at least 50% more seating, Dante Setticasì said.

“It will be substantially larger, and with a bigger bar. I know there are plans for private dining,” he said.

A small market selling breads, pizza and sandwiches will be part of the new build-out, accessible from a separate entrance.

The website lists a late October grand opening, but that depends on construction and permitting, as well as equipment



Michael Stember (left) is executive chef and a co-founder of Fletchers, opening soon in Boca Raton. Above is a rendering of the private dining area. **Photo and rendering provided**

deliveries — all nuances that go into a new restaurant build-out.

“We’re aiming for late fall, early winter opening,” Setticasì said.

Rivalries, a sports pub with banks of TVs and a video arcade for kids big and little, opened in June in the former Butcher and Bar space on East Ocean Avenue in Boynton Beach.

The pub menu touts “oil-free” foods from an air fryer — including crispy chicken wings — and healthier versions of pub food in general. A vegetarian option, Buffalo cauliflower appetizer, is listed among others. They cover most of the sports bar must-haves: burgers, nachos, pressed paninis.

These are served in loud, energy-spiked rooms where TVs can show every game, match and race available. Tables have bar games to keep diners amused.

Live music is scheduled, and happy hours are 3-6 p.m. daily, with beer and wine deals. Special events are planned; patrons can sign up for alerts online.

Rivalries, 510 E. Ocean Ave., Boynton Beach. Phone 561-345-1834; rivalriessportspub.com

In brief

Still open: **Hurricane Alley Raw Bar and Restaurant**, which plans to relocate from its Ocean Avenue home in Boynton Beach, isn’t moving yet.

Manager Tiara Heal wanted to let patrons know the Boynton

fixture is open and going strong at the same location, at least for a few more months.

The move, she said, “is dependent on so many variables — construction, a lot of other variables.”

The casual seafood spot will move across the street from **Bud’s Chicken** on Boynton Beach Boulevard at some point as part of the downtown revitalization plan that involves a live-work space, The Pierce.

It will become a two-story restaurant with patio and balcony seating. Early plans called for it to open around 2027.

Closed: **Pigsty BBQ** on Boynton Beach Boulevard. Road construction that impeded customers from getting into the plaza was cited as the reason for the closure.

Coming soon: Another outlet for **Le Petit Pain**, the wholesale French bakery based in Lantana, is set to open on East Ocean Avenue in Boynton Beach. A coming-soon sign is on the window at 618 Ocean Ave. The bakery has numerous takeout and pickup shops from Vero Beach to the Keys, including one at 410 Boynton Beach Blvd. They also sell at all the local green markets in season.



Jan Norris is a food writer who can be reached at nativefla@gmail.com.

Outdoors Calendar

Taking the month off

Steve Waters' Outdoors column will return in September.



Note: Events are current as of 7/22. Please check with organizers for any changes.

AUGUST 1

Saturday - 8/1 - Intracoastal Adventures: Intro to Stand Up Paddleboarding at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Short talks about South Florida’s unique animals/ecosystems. Age 13-adult; children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. Held again 8/15. 9-10:30 am. \$20/member; \$25/non-member. 561-544-8615; gumbolimbo.org

8/1 - Coast Guard Auxiliary: GPS for Mariners Course at Harvey E. Oyer, Jr. Park, 2010 N Federal Hwy, Boynton Beach. Focuses on the GPS equipment typically owned by the recreational boater. 9 am-noon. \$35/paypal; \$30/cash. 561-312-6439; birdlover5@bellsouth.net

8/1 - 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

8/1-2 - Nature Connections at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Meet in the amphitheater for a short presentation featuring our native flora and fauna All ages; children under 18

must be accompanied by an adult. Every Sat/Sun. 11:30 am. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

AUGUST 2-8

Sunday - 8/2 - Family Fun Snorkel at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Snorkel shallow intracoastal waters, study animals sheltered/protected from ocean’s dangers. Bring your own snorkel, mask, water shoes (no fins allowed). Age 10-adult; child under 18 must be accompanied. 9-10:30 am. \$15/member; \$19/non-member. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org
Tuesday - 8/4 - Island Treks at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Visitors will be guided on a

short trek through the tropical hardwood hammock forest, pausing for some intracoastal views through the mangroves. All ages; child must be accompanied by an adult. Every T 10-10:30 am. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org
Saturday - 8/8 - 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, 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

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Finding Faith

Cason United aims to project a new look of welcome

Change is afoot at Cason United Methodist Church in Delray Beach.

If you've driven by the church at the corner of Swinton Avenue and Lake Ida Road lately, you may have noticed the three wooden crosses that have been standing in front of the church for five decades are gone.

"As recognizable as the crosses were," Pastor David Schmidt said, "they didn't really draw people in. And you'd be surprised how many people look at the crosses and think of the KKK burning crosses, which freaks me out. But I've had people in my congregation say that it made them uncomfortable."

There were other reasons church leaders advocated for a change.

"I think the crosses made an important statement, but I think sometimes we focus too much on Jesus' death on the cross. Why not focus on (Jesus') 3½ years of teaching and preaching and loving and showing a good example?" Schmidt said.

"We're building a 10-foot-tall cross-and-flame sculpture that is the symbol of the Methodist Church, and around it will be a prayer labyrinth with benches. Anybody in the community can come and walk the labyrinth or just sit."

Schmidt hopes the new curb appeal will make people think about visiting Cason.

"The crosses really didn't draw people in the way I hope this will," he said. "The church is a place where there's a great deal of belonging and graciousness. The old motto of the United Methodist Church was 'open hearts, open minds, open doors,' and I still love that. People find community, they find grace and they find fellowship."

The cross-and-flame sculpture will be stainless steel, etched with black and red paint. Schmidt expects it will be delivered in time for Christmas. The church is looking for a company to do the labyrinth.

Schmidt believes he got a message of support from a higher authority.

"The center cross literally



TOP: Cason United Methodist Church has removed three wooden crosses that were in front of the church for 50 years. **ABOVE LEFT:** As seen in this rendering, a labyrinth and sculpture of the cross-and-flame symbol of the denomination will replace the crosses. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Pastor David Schmidt, ordained as a minister in June, with his wife, Tricia, at the ceremony. **Images provided**

fell on Easter, which to me is a huge theological statement," he said.

Another important change came in June when he was officially ordained a minister. More than 25 parishioners along with his wife, Tricia, and two daughters made the 400-mile round trip for the ceremony in Lakeland.

Mearl Evans, 83, of Delray Beach, joined a dozen others on a bus that took them to the

special service.

"I love going on these trips," she said by phone, "but I also wanted to support my pastor. Pastor David is one of us, and he makes you feel so comfortable, knowing that you can go to your pastor at any time, and he listens. He listens."

Evans, who has been a member of Cason since she moved to Delray Beach in 2019, said she "just felt compelled to

go, and I was glad I was able to do so." She said the words of Bishop LaTrelle M. Easterling renewed her passion and commitment to the church.

"I wrote something down when she was finished that I took from the Bible, what Jesus would have said. 'Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.' Her words to the congregation were encouraging, and much needed."

Schmidt felt blessed that

so many people would give their time to support him. "It was very touching for me, because there was a lot of work involved," he said. "It took seven years."

Getting ordained isn't as simple as passing classes and graduating from seminary, which Schmidt did in 2023. You still need to complete two years' residency and ministry as a provisional elder before you're finally qualified for ordination.

Schmidt spent hundreds of hours studying scripture, wrote thousands of pages of essays and papers, read more than 150 books and survived a series of intense interviews in front of six stern theologians asking difficult questions.

Now he works for the diocese, which could move him any time it wants, but he just had his position affirmed for another year. He's grateful.

On his desk, Schmidt keeps a bowl of little plastic Jesuses — he calls them "Jesi" — which he gives out to everyone who visits as a reminder: Jesus is with you. And he wants you to think.

"What did Jesus do? He modeled the behavior that he wanted his disciples to follow. That's exactly what we're supposed to do: Model the behavior Jesus taught us."

"Christianity is not about reciting tomes and scriptures. Christianity is about how we treat one another, how we show grace, how we show mercy, how we live our lives. If we do that enough, people will say there's something different about those people."

"They will know we are Christians by our love."

Cason United Methodist Church is at 342 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Services are at 10 a.m. (casual, contemporary) and 11:30 a.m. (traditional) Sundays. 561-276-5302 or casonumc.org.

Janis Fontaine writes about people of faith, their congregations, causes and community events. Contact her at fontaine423@outlook.com.



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AUGUST 9-15

Sunday - 8/9 - Intracoastal

Adventures: Intro to Kayaking at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Age 7-adult; each child under 13 must be accompanied by one adult. 9-10:30 am. \$20/resident & member; \$25/non-member. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Saturday - 8/15 - Coast Guard

Auxiliary: Suddenly in Command Course at Harvey E. Oyer, Jr. Park, 2010 N Federal Hwy, Boynton Beach. Boating safety primer designed for those not generally at the helm. Will help prepare with the basics in case of an emergency. 9

am-noon. \$35/paypal; \$30/cash. 561-312-6439; birdlover5@bellsouth.net

AUGUST 16-22

Sunday - 8/16 - Intracoastal

Adventures: Advanced Stand Up Paddleboarding at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Short talks about South Florida's unique animals/ecosystems. Age 13-adult; children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 9-10:30 am. \$20/member; \$25/non-member. 561-544-8615; gumbolimbo.org

Saturday - 8/22 - Coast Guard Auxiliary

Boat America: A Boating Safety Course at Harvey E. Oyer, Jr. Park, 2010 N Federal Hwy, Boynton Beach. Boating

terminology, boat handling, navigation rules, regulations, more. Course provides knowledge needed to obtain a boating certificate; possible insurance discount. 8 am-3 pm. \$35/paypal; \$30/cash. 561-312-6439; birdlover5@bellsouth.net

8/22-23 - Education Explorations

at Gumbo Limbo Environmental Complex, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Each month a different topic is presented. All ages; minors must be accompanied by an adult. 1-3 pm. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

AUGUST 23-29

Sunday - 8/23 - Seining the Lagoon

at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N

Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Explore grasses/flats of the Intracoastal Waterway behind Gumbo Limbo. Wear clothes that can get wet. Closed toed shoes required. Age 7-adult; child must be accompanied by an adult. 9-10:30 am. \$15/member; \$19/non-member. Reservations required: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Friday - 8/28 - After Hours Tours

at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Guided tour ends w/ sunset views of the Intracoastal Waterway from the beach by the Seminole chickee. Ages 7-adult; child under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 6:30-8 pm. \$10/resident & member; \$13/non-resident. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

org

Saturday - 8/29 - Intracoastal

Adventures: Advanced Kayaking at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Age 7-adult; each child under 13 must be accompanied by one adult. 9-10:30 am. \$20/resident & member; \$25/non-member. Registration: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

AUGUST 30-SEPT. 5

Saturday - 9/5-6 - Parks for Pollinators

BioBlitz Bonanza! at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. All ages; children under 18 must be accompanied by an adult. 1-3 pm. Free. 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org

Religion Notes

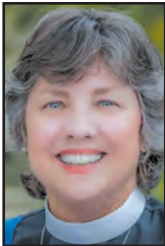
St. Gregory’s welcomes ‘gifted priest’ as assistant to rector

The Rev. Mary Ellen Cassini joined St. Gregory’s Episcopal Church in Boca Raton on June 1 as the assistant to the rector, the Rev. Andrew J. Sherman.

Known as “Mother Mary Ellen” by her congregants, Cassini had been serving as the associate rector at St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church in Boynton Beach since August 2024.

A native South Floridian, Cassini is the product of South Florida schools. She attended Miami-Dade public schools before getting her bachelor’s and master’s degrees (in history and English lit) from Barry University in Miami Shores. She taught school for 20 years before she began her theological studies in earnest.

Cassini completed a year of Anglican studies at Virginia Theological Seminary in 2005 and focused on furthering her education and expanding her vocational journey, which earned her leadership



Cassini

roles at the elite Saint Andrew’s School, St. Christopher’s-by-the-Sea Montessori School and Palmer Trinity School.

She was ordained a deacon in 2006 and then a priest in 2008 in the Diocese of

Southeast Florida. In 2010 she earned her doctor of ministry degree in practical theology from Barry University. Cassini also served in the parish ministry at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church from 2011 to 2013.

Father Andrew called Cassini, whom he has known for 20 years, “a gifted priest” and praised her “extensive ministry working with children in education.”

“She brings such a rich array of

experiences to this work,” he said.

Cassini is married to Charley Cassini, a retired philosophy professor. They have two grown sons and a cocker spaniel named Simba.

St. Gregory’s is at 100 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton.

Bryan Wexler appointed as senior rabbi at B’nai Torah

On July 1, B’nai Torah Congregation announced the appointment of Rabbi Bryan Wexler as its new senior rabbi. Rabbi Wexler assumes the role following the retirement of longtime spiritual leader Rabbi David Steinhardt on June 30.

Wexler earned a bachelor’s degree from Brandeis University and master’s degree in Jewish education from the William Davidson Graduate School of Jewish Education. He was ordained by



Bryan Wexler, wife Rebecca and their children, (l-r) Meyer, Gavi and Eliana. Photo provided

the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2017. Prior to joining B’nai Torah, Wexler

Continued on the next page

PLACES OF WORSHIP DIRECTORY

CATHOLIC

ST. LUCY CATHOLIC CHURCH 3510 S. Ocean Blvd., Highland Beach, FL 33487 • Phone: 561-278-1280 • Web: stlucy.net • Daily Masses: Monday-Saturday, 8:30 a.m. • Weekend Masses: Saturday, 4:00 p.m.; Sunday, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.

ST. MARK CATHOLIC CHURCH 643 NE 4th Ave., Boynton Beach, FL 33435 • Phone 561-734-9330 • Web: stmarkboynton.com • Daily Masses: Monday-Saturday, 9:00 a.m. • Weekend Masses: Saturday 4:00 p.m., Sunday 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m. and 12:15 (Spanish).

CHRISTIAN SCIENCE

FIRST CHURCH OF CHRIST, SCIENTIST 566 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33432 • Phone 561-391-7689 • Web: christianscientistboca.org • Sunday Service: 10:30-11:30 a.m.; Wednesday Service: 7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

EPISCOPAL

ST. GREGORY’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH 100 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton, FL 33432 • Phone: 561-395-8285 • Web: stgregorysepiscopal.org • Email: office@st-gregorys.com The Reverend Andrew Sherman, Rector. We warmly welcome all seeking God’s love and grace. Join us Sundays for Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m. (with coffee hour after), and 6:00 p.m. evening service.

ST. JOSEPH’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH 3300A S. Seacrest Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33435. • Phone 561-732-3060. • Web: stjoesweb.org. • Worship Schedule: Saturdays 5:00 p.m. Reflective Healing; Sundays 9:30 a.m. Choral Rite II; 10:45 a.m. Coffee Hour; 11:45 a.m. Contemporary service, live band (livestreamed).

ST. PAUL’S EPISCOPAL CHURCH 188 S. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach, FL 33444. • Phone: 561-276-4541 • Web: stpaulsdelray.org. Father Paul Kane. Services of Holy Eucharist: Saturdays 5:00 p.m.; Sundays 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.; Sundays 10:00 a.m. Family Prayers and Praise Service; Thursday 12:10 p.m. Healing Service; Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. Online Morning Prayer and 8:00 p.m. Compline.

JEWISH

BETH AMI CONGREGATION - A Contemporary Conservative Congregation, 1401 NW 4th Avenue, Boca Raton, FL 33432 • Phone: (561) 347-0031 • Web: BACBOCA.com • Email: info@Bacboca.com • Rabbi Bertram Kieffer, Cantor Lewis Messulam • Friday Service 7:00 p.m., Shabbat morning and Festivals, 9:30 a.m.

CHABAD OF EAST DELRAY 101 SE 2nd Ave., Delray Beach, FL 33444 • Phone: 954-283-7261 • Web: Jewisheastdelray.com • Rabbi Shmuel Biston. • Saturdays at 10:00 a.m.

TEMPLE SINAI OF PBC 2475 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach, FL 33445 • Phone: 561-276-6161 • Web: templesinaipbc.org • Rabbi Steven Moss & Cantorial Soloist Shir Rozzen • Friday Service: 7:30 p.m.; Saturday Service: 10:30 a.m.

LUTHERAN

ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH 2929 S. Seacrest Blvd., Boynton Beach, FL 33435 • Phone: 561-732-2929 • Web: ascensionlutheranchurch.net. Worship Service/Holy Communion Sundays 10:30 a.m. All are welcome! Our mission is Ministry: God has called us to share His love through healing hurts, filling needs and caring for those who are less fortunate in our family, in our community and around the world. See ad this section for Easter Services

NON-DENOMINATIONAL

CHURCH OF THE PALMS CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, 1960 N. Swinton Avenue, Delray Beach, FL 33444 • Phone: 561-276-6347 • Web: churchofthepalms.net • Services: Sunday 10:00 a.m., Online Worship Sunday 4:00 p.m.

JOURNEY CHURCH • GoJourneyChurch.com • We’re here to help you transform your life by Experiencing God, Finding Freedom, Discovering Your Purpose, and Making a Difference. There’s a campus near you! Services are Sundays 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. • **West Palm Beach:** 2341 S. Military Trail, West Palm Beach, FL 33415 • **Boynton Beach:** 715 S. Federal Hwy., Boynton Beach, FL 33435 • **Lake Worth Beach:** S. Military Trail, Lake Worth Beach, FL 33463.

ORTHODOX CHRISTIAN

SAINT MARK GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH 2100 Yamato Rd., Boca Raton, FL 33431 • Phone: 561-994-4822 • Web: saintmarkboca.net • Sunday Services: 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayers (Matins); 9:45 a.m. Divine Liturgy. All are welcome.

PRESBYTERIAN

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BOYNTON BEACH 235 SW 6th Ave., Boynton Beach, FL 33435 • Phone: 561-732-3774 • Web: fpcboynton.org • Services: Sundays at 10 a.m. in-person; live streamed on You Tube and Facebook. Fresh traditional worship; volunteer opportunities. Personal spirituality deepens in community worship.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF DELRAY BEACH 33 Gleason Street, Delray Beach, FL 33483 • Phone: 561-276-6338 • Web: firstdelray.com • Our purpose is Building Disciples, Transforming Lives. • Sunday Worship at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Religious institutions of all faiths are invited to be included in this paid feature. For more info, call 561-337-1553.

Religion Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 7/22. Please check with organizers for any changes.

AUGUST 2-8

Sunday - 8/2 - 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 - 8/3 - 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
8/3 - Rosary for Peace at St. Vincent Ferrer Family Life Center, 840 George Bush Blvd, Delray Beach. Every M 5:45-6:15 pm. Free. 561-276-6892; stvincentferrer.com
Tuesday - 8/4 - Tuesday Morning Prayer Service at Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. 10 am. Free. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org
Wednesday - 8/5 - 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
8/5 - Wednesday Evening Meditation Service at Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. 6:30 pm. Free; love offering. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org
Thursday - 8/6 - Thursday Morning Telephone Prosperity Coffee presented by Unity of Delray Beach Church, 101 NW 22nd St. Phone meeting (605-475-6006, passcode 3031030). Free; love offering. 561-276-5796; unityofdelraybeach.org
8/6 - Men’s Fellowship at First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach Courtyard, 33 Gleason St. Every Th 8:30 am. Free. 561-276-6338; firstdelray.com
8/6 - Women’s Bible Study at St. Gregory’s Episcopal Church Youth Room, 100 NE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. Every Th 1 pm. Free. 561-395-8285; stgregorysepiscopal.org
Friday - 8/7 - Legion of Mary at St. Vincent Ferrer Family Life Center, 840 George Bush Blvd, Delray Beach. Every F 9:30-11 am. Free. 561-276-6892; stvincentferrer.com
8/7 - 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
8/7 - 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

Continued from previous page

served for nine years as associate rabbi at Temple Beth Sholom in Cherry Hill, New Jersey.

"This is a congregation that values learning, embraces tradition and genuinely cares for one another," Wexler said. I look forward to building relationships, celebrating life's meaningful moments together, and helping create a vibrant Jewish future for generations to come."

B'nai Torah Congregation is at 6261 SW 18th St., Boca Raton. Learn more at btcboca.org.

'Lunch and Learn' at Temple Beth El campus

The "Lunch & Learn" series continues at the Schaefer Family Campus of Temple Beth El with "The Poetry, Prayer and Music of the Days of Awe," at noon on Tuesdays, Aug. 4, 11, 18 and 25, at 333 SW Fourth Ave., Boca Raton. Hear and discuss some of Judaism's most beautiful and powerful prayers, poems and melodies that are part of the High Holy Days.

Each week, a rabbi or cantor explores a different sacred text or musical piece. The program is available in person and online via Zoom. Get the link at tbeoca.org/event/lunch-learn-the-poetry-prayer-and-music-of-the-days-of-awe/2026-08-04/.

St. Gregory's hosts 'Piano and Poetry' in sanctuary

Join Tim Brumfield, director of the music ministry at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, for "Piano & Poetry" at 6 p.m. Aug. 6 in the sanctuary at 100 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton.

This program combines Brumfield's skill on the Steinway with the world's best poetry by greats like Frost, Shakespeare and Angelou.

This celebration has a suggested donation of \$25. RSVP by email at office@st-gregorys.com or 561-395-8285.

Men's Ministry gathers to discuss faith, serving

First United Methodist

Church, 625 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton, is hosting a coffee-and-doughnuts fellowship for men at 9 a.m. on the second Saturday of the month for faith-centered discussions, a bit of humor, and information on opportunities to serve. The next meeting is Aug. 8.

Contact Stan Belyeu at 919-624-1544 or sbelyeugt@gmail.com.

St. Gregory's members invited to vestry meetings

Vestry meetings at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton, are open to all members.

Elected church leaders meet to discuss church business, letting members see how the church is run and giving them a chance to share ideas during an open forum. The next meeting is at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 17 in the Harris Hall Conference Room. You can also participate via Zoom. Call 561-395-8285 or go to stgregorysepiscopal.org.

Temple Beth El offering volunteer opportunities

Temple Beth El's Membership & Engagement Committee will hold a kickoff meeting at 7 p.m. Aug. 27 at the Schaefer Family Campus, 333 SW Fourth Ave., Boca Raton. If you're looking for a way to get involved, the committee offers volunteer and leadership opportunities benefiting the temple community.

Contact Elinor Josephson, director of engagement and programming, at ejosephson@tbeoca.org or 561-314-2833, or register online at tbeoca.shulcloud.com/event/membership-engagement-committee-kickoff-meeting1.html.

St. Vincent Ferrer seeks volunteers for programs

St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church, 840 George Bush Blvd., Delray Beach, is looking for volunteers for a variety of programs, but two stand out.

Volunteer teachers are needed for PREP, which offers Sunday morning religious classes for

children at the church. Contact Father Emmanuel at 561-276-6892 if you feel called to serve children.

The second group seeking helpers is the new SVF Events Committee, which needs help planning special events. Contact Ericka Ruiz at 561-276-6892, or email stewardship@stvincentferrer.com.

Other ministries always looking for participants include the music ministry (adult and youth choirs), the Knights of Columbus and the Columbiettes, and the SVF Care Ministry.

Second annual Tour de Friendship charity ride

Start your training and fundraising now for the second annual Tour de Friendship

charity bike ride on Nov. 15.

The inaugural ride, hosted by Friendship House of Boca Raton, raised \$56,000 for children and adults with special needs. Organizers hope to beat that number this year.

Rabbi Sholom Kessler, founder and executive director of Friendship House, hopes to raise money and awareness by "creating an experience that brings together cycling, community and purpose while supporting children and young adults with special needs."

There are two rides, a 30- and 60-miler. Both go north and back along scenic State Road A1A from Boca Raton. Last year 60 riders participated in the FHP-escorted ride with stocked rest stops.

The finish line features

a barbecue celebration for riders and their families, plus participants get custom jerseys, water bottles and socks.

Registration is \$150 and a commitment to raise at least \$1,500 to support Friendship House programs. Sponsors are also needed.

Founded in 2020, Friendship House, located at 17950 N. Military Trail, Boca Raton, is a nonprofit dedicated to building an inclusive community for children, teens and young adults with special needs. For information on the work it does, visit bocafriendship.com.

To register for the bike ride, visit tourdefriendship.com.

— Janis Fontaine



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MOVIES

Continued from page AT1

is that it’s a very well-done feel-good, family friendly film that leaves you smiling as the credits roll by at the end.

Available on Hulu and YouTube TV with a subscription, or on Amazon Prime Video, Apple TV and Fandango for a rental fee.

Caddyshack

— Brian Biggane’s pick

Ask golfers — including me — to name their favorite summer movie and chances are they’ll answer with one that’s as enjoyable as a birdie on the 18th hole: *Caddyshack* (1980).

Bill Murray has played a lot of great comedic roles, but his stint as groundskeeper Carl Spackler is hard to top. Most of his appearances are technically little more than cameos, but the one of him proudly showing Chevy Chase his dumpy living quarters is classic.

Ted Knight as the smug rich guy Judge Smails, Rodney Dangerfield as the overbearing Al Czervik, and Chase as Ty Webb team up for what ESPN has called “the funniest sports movie ever made.”

Also, it doesn’t hurt that I played the course a few years after the 1980 release of the film when it was called Rolling Hills down in Davie.

Available on Amazon Prime and Apple TV.

Independence Day

— Arden Moore’s pick

Thirty years ago — July 4, 1996, to be exact — I opted to celebrate Independence Day by heading to a movie theater in Philadelphia to catch the sci-fi blockbuster *Independence Day*. It felt fitting to watch this flick starring Will Smith, Bill Pullman and Jeff Goldblum in the country’s first national capital. That added to my feeling of patriotism.

I also loved the plotline: All of us — the entire world — unite to battle menacing alien invaders. It was one of the first large-scale disaster flicks. It’s been 30 years. Time for me to re-watch it at home enjoying my own homemade popcorn. Highly recommend!

Available on Hulu and YouTube TV.



ABOVE: 1986’s *Stand by Me* is ‘a journey through self-discovery and the loss of innocence,’ Tots & Teens columnist Faran Fagen says.

RIGHT: Our writer Ron Hayes has nothing but admiration for Charlie Chaplin in 1940’s *The Great Dictator*, which he finds both ‘deadly serious’ and ‘very funny.’

Stand by Me

— Faran Fagen’s pick

Directed in 1986 by the late great Rob Reiner, *Stand by Me* is not only a wonderful summer film, it is one of my favorite movies of all time.

Set in 1959, it follows four young friends who embark on a trek along train tracks to find a missing boy’s body, only to discover a deeper bond and inner strength.

It takes place right at the end of summer as the four boys are set to enter junior high. These best friends know things will change and “cherish these moments” of a journey through self-discovery and the loss of innocence.

But the most endearing feature of this film is the close bond of the four boys and the beautiful friendship only young boys can feel. The boys know each other so well and will do anything for each other. Anyone watching this movie will remember their closest childhood friends and revel in the nostalgia as summer wanes. Available on Amazon Prime

Dirty Dancing

— Janis Fontaine’s pick

Dirty Dancing (1987) was set in 1963 at Kellerman’s, a grand resort where wealthy families summered in luxury in New York’s Catskill Mountains. Thick woods opened up to



spring-fed lakes so pristine you could drink from them.

For most, this movie is a love story. But for me, it was a story about families, how they grow and change, and I fell in love with Jerry Orbach as Dr. Jake Houseman, Baby’s father. Even though he favors the villain (Robbie) and misunderstands Johnny, he proves he trusts his daughter when he lends her a lot of money, no questions asked, and when she needs him later, he’s there, coming to Penny’s rescue with compassion. The scene where he jumps out of bed and runs up the wooden steps to Penny’s cabin is one of my favorites.

After, he and Baby argue on the porch in the rain. She says, “If you love me, you have to love all the things about me.” We understand love is imperfect.

Then, at the end of the movie, Dr. Houseman does something extraordinary: He apologizes to Johnny. “When I’m wrong, I say I’m wrong,” he says. A real man admits his mistake.

Available on Hulu with a subscription or available for rent through Prime Video.

Roman Holiday

— Jan Norris’ pick

Roman Holiday (1953) is a William Wyler movie that makes my heart smile and tweaks my journalist’s sensibilities.



ABOVE: Finding Faith columnist Janis Fontaine says the 1987 love story *Dirty Dancing* is also ‘a story about families, how they grow and change.’



LEFT: Audrey Hepburn and Gregory Peck in 1953’s *Roman Holiday*. Dining columnist Jan Norris says the flick ‘makes my heart smile and tweaks my journalist’s sensibilities.’

with a bowler hat and a funny walk, moving through a silent world.

And then in 1940, he wrote, produced, directed and starred in *The Great Dictator*.

For the first time, Chaplin spoke on screen, and what he had to say was still very funny, but in between the puns and pratfalls, deadly serious.

Chaplin plays two roles — Adenoid Hynkel, dictator of Tomainia, and a nameless Jewish barber. Jack Oakie is Benzino Napaloni, Il Duce of Bacteria.

The Great Dictator is a withering attack on Hitler, Mussolini, Nazism, fascism and antisemitism.

And it’s also very funny.

In his 1964 autobiography, Chaplin wrote that if he had known about the Holocaust then, he would not have been able to make the film.

We know, and that makes *The Great Dictator* all the more moving, especially the final moments, when Chaplin breaks character and speaks directly to the camera, to you and me, and to the future.

Available on HBO Max, as well as the free Kanopy streaming service and from the Boca Raton Public Library. DVD copies are available at Palm Beach County Library branches and the Delray Beach Public Library.

Body Heat

— Victoria Preuss’ pick

The 1981 film *Body Heat* nudged up the Fahrenheit with sizzling chemistry between William Hurt and Kathleen Turner and, allegedly, humid Florida summer weather.

Except the latter was movie magic.

The bandshell scene where the characters Ned Racine and Matty Walker first meet was filmed on Hollywood’s beach one night in November 1980, and I was there as an extra.

The hundred or so of us had been told to wear summer/beach clothes, so folks were in bathing suits, shorts and tank tops and



Copy editor Victoria Preuss says *Body Heat* (above) had ‘sizzling chemistry’ and, for her, a paycheck (right).

the like. I wore a Hawaiian shirt and shorts — and carried a thick Irish sweater.

Not only did we not face summer heat, but it was

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downright cold and windy as take after take was filmed and the night wore on.

A combo on the bandshell stage repeated the same few bars of music while the scene played out — over and over. Extras on

the benches fanned themselves with a printed “program” — an attention to detail that I loved.

Between takes, I pulled my sweater up around my shoulders. Each time cameras started to roll I shoved it down

behind me on the bench. (Truthfully, though, I was in the middle of the “audience” and not visible on screen at all.)

Some extras got to walk in or out of the seating area or along the nearby shops while Ned chatted up Matty.

Luckily, the shops stayed open for real, and during longer breaks I got some hot tea.

My Central Casting pay stub shows I took home \$33.10, less taxes, for my night of memories.

I spent it all on cold medication.

Available for rent on YouTube, Google Play Movies, Apple TV, Fandango and Amazon Prime.

Paws Up for Pets

August is purrfect time to salute people who improve cats' lives

People and groups are steadily doing their parts to bring out the best in kittens and cats in Palm Beach County. So, it is fitting to salute them this month since August has not one, but three special days focused on felines.

They are International Cat Day (Aug. 8), Black Cat Appreciation Day (Aug. 17) and Take Your Cat to the Vet Day (Aug. 22).

Felines can be trickier to figure out than dogs. Yes, cats can be fussy, fascinating, funny and a bit frustrating. It was my quest for this month's column to salute individuals and groups that make life better for cats.

Let's start with the staff and volunteers at Peggy Adams Rescue League based in West Palm Beach. Right now, they are grappling with kitten season and now have more kittens and cats at the shelter and in foster care homes than puppies and dogs.

"The summer months find us with more cats than dogs," says Kelsey Otocky, Peggy Adams' marketing manager, who shares her home with a pair of adopted cats named Bubbles and Ghost.

She highlighted some cat-related programs now underway:

Special adoption rates for the summer: Until the end of August, all adoption fees are waived for adoptable cats and a 50% adoption rate discount exists for kittens at the shelter.

Spay/Neuter Day on Aug. 15: Peggy Adams teams up with various organizations and veterinarians with the goal to spay and neuter 500 unowned cats in the community. Each cat will be sterilized, vaccinated and have their left ears tipped (the universal signal that the cat has been spayed/neutered).

Working cats: Not all cats want to live in homes. Some prefer living in barns, garages, warehouses and other places. For people willing to adopt these cats, the shelter waives adoption fees, offers free spay/neuter and vaccinations plus provides cat dens, bowls and starter food and litter. "These cats get rid of pests and can be your furry outdoor friends," says Kelsey. "These are cats who do not want to come inside, but they need care."

Next up is professional pet groomer **Aundrea Altman**, from the Zoomin Groomin mobile pet company that serves Boca Raton and Delray Beach. Company owner Eric Berman says about 20% of pets they



bathe and groom are cats.

Cats come in many coats, from the super thick and fluffy Maine coons and Himalayans to the hairless sphynx. Aundrea also bathes, grooms and trims nails for nervous cats, senior cats with arthritis and cats with mats.

"With cats, you need endless amounts of patience when grooming," says Aundrea. "One of the best things I learned is the power of a towel! You normally don't have to place a towel over

a dog's head to help calm them down, but with cats, I've found it can really help de-escalate the grooming process."

Her parting advice? "Do not wait until the matting becomes severe," she says. "The earlier you address it, the more options the groomer may have and the more comfortable the process can be for your cat."

Robin Zygelman operates the Puppies and Kitties by the Sea pet-sitting company that serves Boca Raton, Delray

Learn more

Check out in more detail how these people and organizations in Palm Beach County are helping cats:

Peggy Adams Rescue League: This West Palm Beach-based animal shelter offers many programs to benefit cats. Visit peggyadams.org.

Zoomin Groomin: This professional pet grooming company offers mobile grooming services to cats and dogs. Visit zoomingroomin.com/locations/florida/boca-raton-delray-beach.

KitKats Rescue: This Delray Beach-based nonprofit has been helping kittens and cats since 2010. Learn more at kitkatsrescue.com.

Puppies and Kitties By the Sea: This professional pet-sitting company serves Boca Raton, Delray Beach and Highland Beach. Learn more at puppiesandkittiesbythesea.com.

them if they allow while their families are away on extended trips," says Robin.

Since 2010, **Kathleen Wright** has operated KitKats Rescue, a nonprofit based in Delray Beach. She estimates she and her volunteer team have rescued and found homes for nearly 2,500 felines.

They have also teamed up with veterinarians to trap-neuter-vaccinate-return with about 3,000 community cats.

Her wish list? More people to foster kittens and cats in their homes, canned cat food, pine pellet litter and monetary donations to offset the veterinary bills to care for found felines.

Kathleen says the long days are worth it.

"Many cats and kittens become more confident and affectionate when they are given consistent, positive interactions and given time to feel safe," she says.

Arden Moore is an author, pet podcast show host and master certified pet first aid instructor. Check out petfirstaid4u.com and ardenmoore.com.



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Community Calendar

Note: Events are current as of 7/22. Please check with organizers for any changes.

AUGUST 1
Saturday - 8/1 - Freestyle Saturdays Art Class at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Ages 18+. Every Sat through 8/29. 10 am-12:30 pm. Per class \$29/resident; \$35/non-resident. Registration: 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/1 - Collected Summer: Memory-Keeping & Bookbinding Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Adults. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$75. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/1 - \$5 Studio Days at Creative Arts School, 51 N. Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. Ages 5+. Held again 9/5. 11 am-12:30 pm or 1-2:30 pm. \$5. 561-243-7209; delraybeachfl.gov/cas
8/1 - The Road to Unforgettable: An Artist Talk with Sonya Sanchez Arias at Cornell Art Museum at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 1-3 pm. Free. Registration: 561-654-2220; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events
8/1 - Ceramics by You Class at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Ages 18+. Every Sat through 8/29. 1-3 pm. Per class \$10/resident; \$13/non-resident. Registration: 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/1 - 6th Annual Delray Beach Unity Festival at Delray Beach Community Center, 50 NW 1st Ave. 3-9 pm. Free. 561-243-7356; delraybeachfl.gov
8/1 - Glow & Pour: Luxury Candle Making Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Adults. 3-5 pm. \$85. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/1 - BSA After Dark: Cocktails & Comedy at Delray Genesis Club at FAU, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Join Boca School for Autism for an evening featuring cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, stand-up comedy, music and more. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Ages 21+. 6:30-8:30 pm. \$50. givebutter.com/BSAAfterDark
8/1 - Jonathan Ellison at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$50.50-\$55.50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
8/1-2 - Swing Era Jazz Concerts at FAU Carole & Barry Kaye Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Sat: 7 pm; Sun: 2 pm. \$20-\$30. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com
8/1-2 - In The Heights at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. Sat: 7:30 pm; Sat/Sun: 2 pm. \$40/show; \$66-\$116/dinner & show. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
8/1-2 - Boca Ballet Theatre: La Bayadere at Olympic Heights Performing Arts Theater, 20101 Lyons Rd, Boca Raton. Sat: 7:30 pm; Sun: 2 pm. \$25-\$55. 561-995-0709; bocaballet.org

AUGUST 2-8
Sunday - 8/2 - Boca Farmers Market every Sunday at Boca Raton Innovation Campus (BRiC), 4950 Communication Ave, Boca Raton. Featuring 9:30 am yoga, fresh, local food and handmade goods. 9 am-1 pm. Free. bocafarmersmarket.com
8/2 - Film Screening - Modigliani and His Secrets at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 1:30-2:45 pm. \$10/adults. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
Monday - 8/3 - Advanced Squares at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. All ages. Every M 2-4 pm. \$6. 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/3 - BCFD: The Uplift Olympics@ at Eddie V's Prime Seafood, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. An evening of friendship and competition in support of our children's literacy program. Featuring buffet dinner, beverages and raffles. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Ages 21+. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$50. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/3 - Pickleball at Hester Center, 1901 N Seacrest Blvd, Boynton Beach. Combines badminton & tennis. Adults. M/F 6-8 pm. \$5-\$7; \$50-\$65/24-visit pass. 561-742-6550; boynton-beach.org
8/3-4 - Auditions: Falsettos at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. Callbacks (by invitation) 8/7. Production dates 10/2-18. 7-10:30 pm. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
Tuesday - 8/4 - Career & Employment Help w/CareerSource PBC at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Representative fluent in English, Creole, French. Adults. Every T 9 am-4 pm. Free. 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org
8/4 - The Women Who Shaped the American Art World w/Sylvia Laudien-Meo at FAU Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Live in-person Zoom. Every T through 8/25. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$64/member; \$80/non-member; \$30/guest pass. 561-297-3185; olli.fau.edu
8/4 - Book Talks - An Hour to Kill: What We Can Know by Ian McEwan at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-3 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org
8/4 - Beginning Tap for Adults at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. Ages 18+. Every T through 8/25 5:30-7 pm. \$60/4-weeks; \$20/drop-in. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
8/4 - BCFD: The Kickoff at American Social Bar and Restaurant, 351 W Plaza Real, Ste 315, Boca Raton. Supports Spirit of Giving's Back to School PBC Program. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Ages 21+. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$40-\$50. ticketsignup.io/TicketEvent/TheKickOff

Municipal Meetings

8/3 – Ocean Ridge Town Hall, 6450 N Ocean Blvd. 6 pm. oceanridgeflorida.com
8/4, 8/18, 9/1 – Boynton Beach City Hall, 100 E Ocean Ave. 6 pm. boynton-beach.org
8/10 – Lantana Town Hall, 500 Greynolds Cir. 6 pm. lantana.org
8/11, 8/18 – Delray Beach City Hall, 100 NW 1st Ave. 5 pm. delraybeachfl.gov
8/11, 9/1 – Highland Beach Town Hall, 3614 S Ocean Blvd. 1:30 pm. highlandbeach.us
8/11 – Manalapan Town Hall, 600 S Ocean Blvd. 9 am. manalapan.org
8/11 – South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S Ocean Blvd. 2 pm. southpalmbeach.com
8/14 – Gulf Stream Town Hall, 100 Sea Rd. 9 am. gulf-stream.org
8/25 – Boca Raton Auditorium, 6500 Congress Ave. 6 pm. myboca.us

8/4 - Movie Night at Highland Beach Library, 3618 Ocean Blvd. Held again 8/25. 5:30 pm. Free. 561-278-5455; highlandbeach.us
8/4 - Comedy Open Mic at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. Every 1st T 8-10:30 pm. \$10-\$25. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
Wednesday - 8/5 - Pastels Made Easy Class at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Ages 18+. Every W through 8/26. 1-4 pm. Per class \$35/resident; \$44/non-resident. Registration: 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/5 - Annual National Night Out at Boynton Beach Police Department Headquarters, 2100 High Ridge Rd, Boynton Beach. Family-friendly event featuring a backpack giveaway, face painting, bounce house, food trucks, music, and more. 5-8 pm. Free. 561-742-6100; bbpd.org/national_night_out/index.php
8/5 - BCFD: Game Night: Protecting Children Trivia at American Social Bar and Restaurant, 351 W Plaza Real, Ste 315, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$50. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/5-6 - Color Crush: Mix with Confidence 2-Day Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Adults. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$150. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
Thursday - 8/6 - Quilters meet at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Share quilting information, perpetuate quilting as a cultural & artistic form. Limit 10 quilters at a time. Every Th 9 am-noon. \$1/lifetime membership. 561-742-6886; boyntonlibrary.org
8/6 - Line Dancing at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. All ages. Every Th 11 am-noon. \$7. 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/6 - Artist Marketplace at Cultural Council of Palm Beach County, 601 Lake Ave, Lake Worth Beach. Featuring paintings, glass art, mixed media, sculpture and photography. 3-8 pm. Free. 561-471-2901; palmbeachculture.com
8/6 - Bodacious Botanicals Class at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Ages 18+. Every Th through 8/27. 4:30-6:30 pm. Per class \$29/resident; \$35/non-resident. Registration: 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/6 - The Art of Film Photography 3-Week Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Adults. Held again 8/13 & 20. 5-8 pm. \$275. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/6 - Intermediate Tap for Adults at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. Ages 18+. Every Th through 8/27 5:30-7 pm. \$60/4 weeks; \$20/drop-in. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
8/6 - BCFD: YMCA Casino Night at Delray Genesis Club at FAU, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Join Boca School for Autism for an evening featuring cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, stand-up comedy, music and more. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Ages 21+. 5:30-9 pm. \$50/individual; \$95/couple; \$150/entry to poker tournament. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/6 - Concert: Polynesian Dancers at Highland Beach Library, 3618 Ocean Blvd. 5:30 pm. Free. 561-278-5455; highlandbeach.us
8/6 - Piano and Poetry at St. Gregory's Episcopal Church, 100 NE Mizner Blvd, Boca Raton. An evening of music and spoken word. 6 pm. Free; suggested donations beginning at \$25. RSVP: 561-395-8285; stgregorysepiscopal.org
Friday - 8/7 - First Friday @ 5 at Centennial Park & Amphitheater, 120 E Ocean Ave. 5 pm. Free. 561-742-6024;

boynton-beach.org
8/7 - Beginner Squares at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. All ages. Every F 6-7 pm. \$6. 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
8/7 - BCFD: Golden Bell Sunset Happy Hour at The Boca Raton Beach Club, 900 S Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. Benefits The Golden Bell Education Foundation. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Ages 21+. 6-8 pm. \$75. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/7 - First Friday Art Walk at Cornell Art Museum at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 6-9 pm. Registration: 561-654-2220; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events
8/7 - First Friday Art Walk at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Adults. 6-9 pm. Free. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/7 - 6th Annual Battle of the Bands & Young Entrepreneurs Market at Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. Part of Summer in the City series. Bring blankets/chairs. 7 pm. Free. 561-393-7890; mizneramp.com
8/7 - Castoffs Square Dance at Boynton Beach Arts & Cultural Center, 125 E Ocean Ave. Basic modern western square dancing. All ages. Every F 7-9 pm. \$6. 561-742-6221; boynton-beach.org
Saturday - 8/8 - Creativity by the Coast Workshop Series at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N Ocean Blvd, Boca Raton. For ages 13+; parent/guardian must register to participate with minors. 10-11:30 am. \$10/resident; \$13/non-resident. Reservations: 561-544-8605; gumbolimbo.org
8/8 - Open Figure Studio w/Model at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. Held again 6-8 pm 8/27. 10:30 am-12:30 pm. \$15. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/8 - Playful Poppies in Watercolor Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-12:30 pm. \$40. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/8 - RF Factor at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$48-\$53. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

AUGUST 9-15
Sunday - 8/9 - Exhibit Opening Reception at Artist's Eye Gallery Boutique, 604 Lucerne Ave, Lake Worth. Runs through 9/5. 2-4 pm. Free. 561-586-8666; lwartleague.org
8/9-8/14 - The Music for Americas Strings Orchestra presents Summer Strings, a festival conducted by Lorenzo Turchi-Floris and featuring soloists from the Quartett Orfeo of Rome. Various times and locations in Palm Beach County. 954-551-3015 or www.musicforamericas.org
Tuesday - 8/11 - Reckoning and Redemption in German Cinema w/Shelly Isaacs at FAU Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Every T through 9/8. 2:30-4:30 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$64/member; \$80/non-member; \$30/guest pass. 561-297-3185; olli.fau.edu
8/11 - BCFD: Boca's Got Talent at Crazy Uncle Mike's, 6450 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5 pm. \$25-\$40. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/11 - Summer at Sea Lecture - "100 Years of Surfing in Delray Beach & Beyond" at the Delray Beach Historical Society Historic Bungalow, 3 NE 1st St. 6 pm. \$12/society members; \$15/non-members. Registration: 561-274-9578; delraybeachhistory.org
8/11 - Harmattan Season by Tochi Onyebuchi part of Tuesday Evening Book

Group at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 6-7 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0196; delraylibrary.org
8/11 - Delray Beach Orchid Society Meeting at Veterans Park, 802 NE 1st St, Delray Beach. 2nd T 7 pm. Free. 561-573-2422; delraybeachorchidsociety.org
8/11 - All Arts Open Mic Night at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. Every 2nd T 8-10:30 pm. \$10-\$25. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org
Wednesday - 8/12 - Fruit in Flight: Painting Color That Moves Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$75. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/12 - Art in Focus: Pepe Mar's Untitled and Cabeza IV at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 1-1:30 pm. Free w/ paid museum admission. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
8/12 - Intro to Colored Pencil Drawing & Painting Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 5-8 pm. \$55. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/12 - BCFD: ScholarSip: Raise a Glass, Raise a Future at Crazy Uncle Mike's, 6450 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$42. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
8/12 - Sunset Sips & Game Night Hits - Gin, Rum & Rummy at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Adults. 6-8 pm. \$25. Registration: 561-266-0798; delraylibrary.org
Thursday - 8/13 - The Remarkable Aging Brain: Myths, Facts, and Strengths w/Lana Jones at FAU Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$30.40/member; \$38/non-member. 561-297-3185; olli.fau.edu
8/13 - Summer Film Series - "Frida Kahlo" at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Two times: 2-3:30 pm & 6-7:30 pm. \$10/member; \$5-\$15/non-member. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org
8/13 - BCFD: AACY Celebrity Game Night at Boca Raton Marriott at Boca Center, 5150 Town Center Circle, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-8:30 pm. \$40. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com
Friday - 8/14 - Self-Portrait Painting with Acrylic Paint Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. Held again 8/21 & 8/28. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$90/class. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/14 - Magic In Mizner: Jack Maxwell at The Studio at Mizner Park, The Club Room, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7 pm. Tickets start at \$33.85. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com
8/14-15 - Sculpted Acrylic Painting 2-Day Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$100. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
Saturday - 8/15 - Calling All Serious Writers! Saturday Writers Studio presented by Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. All other Sat via Zoom. 10 am. Free. 561-266-0194; delraylibrary.org
8/15 - Make Waves: Abstract the Sea in Acrylic Paint Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$70. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/15 - Colored Pencil Drawing & Painting 4-Week Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 1-4 pm. \$220. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org
8/15 - Blankets & Bear Hugs Community Day at Boca Raton Innovation Campus, 4930 Conference Way N., Boca Raton. Presented by Child Rescue Coalition. 1:45-4 pm. Free. 561-208-9000; spiritofgivingnetwork.com/organizer/child-rescue-coalition
8/15 - Bad Side Records presents Give Me The Mic at Lake Worth Playhouse, 713 Lake Ave. 7 pm. \$22. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org
8/15 - Live Bowie - Tribute to David Bowie at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$50.50-\$55.50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org



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AUGUST 16-22

Sunday - 8/16 - Boca Raton Championship Wrestling Summer Smash at The Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 5 pm. Tickets start at \$32.35. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com

Tuesday - 8/18 - Primary Election Day. Polls open 7 am-7pm.

8/18 - Book Talks - Non-Fiction/ Biographies: *The Feather Detective: Mystery, Mayhem, and the Magnificent Life of Roxie Laybourne* by Chris Sweeney at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-3 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org

8/18 - BCFD: Annual Fondue Raiser at The Melting Pot, 5455 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 4:30-10 pm. Reservations: 561-997-7472; bocaratonchamber.com

8/18 - Charity Comedy featuring Jimmy Shubert, Jay Risk & Chris Roe at The Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. Benefits Tetralogy of Fallout Foundation. 8 pm. \$35. 561-203-3742; thestudioatmiznerpark.com

8/18 - FAU Astronomical Observatory public viewing at FAU 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; physics.fau.edu/observatory/events/

8/18 - Spoken Word Open Mic: Poetry, Storytelling & Lyrics at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. Every 3rd T 8-10:30 pm. \$20-\$25. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

Wednesday - 8/19 - League of Women Voters Hot Topics Zoom Discussion: Primary Election Post Mortem w/ Brian Crowley & Michael Williams presented by League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County. 10-11 am. Free/registration required for Zoom link. Registration: 561-276-4898; lwpbpc.org

8/19 - Book Buzz Adult Book Club at Boynton Beach Library, 100 E Ocean Ave. Adults. 10:30 am-noon. Free. Registration: 561-742-6390; boyntonlibrary.org

8/19 - Torn & Texture: Abstract Art with Attitude Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$75. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

8/19 - BCFD: The Addison Unveiled - History, Bubbles, & Bites at The Addison, 2 E Camino Real, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$65. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

Thursday - 8/20 - Artist Marketplace at Cultural Council of Palm Beach County, 601 Lake Ave, Lake Worth Beach. Featuring jewelry, ceramics, fiber art, printmaking and paintings. 3-8 pm. Free. 561-471-2901; palmbeachculture.com

8/20 - Timeless Standards: The Songs of the 1930s at The Schmidt Boca Raton History Museum, 71 N Federal Hwy, Boca Raton. Part of the Summer Sips & Sounds series. 6-8 pm. \$45-\$55. 561-395-6766; bocahistory.org

8/20 - 16th Annual White Coats-4-Care Reception: Invest, Innovate, Champion. Together, We Can Shape the Future of Healthcare at The Club of Boca Pointe, 7144 Boca Pointe Dr, Boca Raton. 6:30 pm. \$350/person. 561-297-2984; fau.edu/medicine/white-coats-r-care/

8/20 - Summer at Sea Outdoor Movie Series - Gidget at the Delray Beach Historical Society, 3 NE 1st St. Bring a picnic dinner. Free popcorn, water & tea. Doors open 7 pm. \$10/ person. Registration: 561-274-9578; delraybeachhistory.org

Friday - 8/21 - BCFD: Faulk Center Networking Reception at The Northern Trust Company, 3100 N Military Tr, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 4-6 pm. Free. Registration: 561-483-5300; bocaratonchamber.com

8/21 - Never Stop Believin’ - The Ultimate Tribute to Journey at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$53-\$58. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

8/21-23 - 42nd Street at The Delray Beach Playhouse, 950 NW 9th St. Runs through 9/13. F/Sat: 7:30 pm; Sat/Sun: 2 pm. Tickets start at \$45. 561-272-1281; delraybeachplayhouse.com

Saturday - 8/22 - Flowers in Flight: Painting Color That Moves Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$75. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

8/22 - Intro to Photography Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-2:30 pm. \$160. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

8/22 - Delray’s Hottest Party: A Women’s Wellness Celebration at Vintage Gym at Old School Square, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 4-6 pm. \$45. tickets.delrayoldschoolsquare.com/event/lovedelray-hottest-ladies-night

8/22 - Rock the Plaza at Heart of Boynton Shops, 137 NE 10th Ave, Boynton Beach. Live music, activities, food offerings from restaurants in the plaza. Free. Check website for time. 561-600-9097; boyntonbeachcra.com

8/22 - Guy Cherubin Live in Concert: My Heaven presented by Guy Cherubin at Lake Worth Playhouse Stephanie Smith Main Stage, 713 Lake Ave. 8 pm. \$45. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org

8/22 - Siempre Flamenco at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$53-\$58. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

AUGUST 23-29

Monday - 8/24 - The Empusium by Oleg Tokarczuik part of Afternoon Book Group at Delray Beach Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 1 pm. Free. Registration: 561-266-0196; delraylibrary.org

8/24 - BCFD: Think, Drink, & Do Good - Happy Hour Trivia Night at Prosperity Brewers, 4160 NW 1st Ave, Ste. 21, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$30/person/ \$180/team of 6. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

8/24 - Monday Movies - Feature Film: Jackie Brown directed by Quentin Tarantino at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 5:30-8 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org

Tuesday - 8/25 – Socrates Café at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Philosophical discussions. Held again 9/1. 1:30-3 pm. Free. 561-393-7852; bocalibrary.org

8/25 - BCFD: 2nd Annual Chopstick Challenge at Wyndham Boca Raton, 1950 Glades Rd/Wyndham Way, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 6-8 pm. \$60-\$70. Reservations: 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

Wednesday - 8/26 - Art in Focus - Typee Gran, In the House of Shadows, Flowers Boom at Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. 1-1:30 pm. Free w/ paid museum admission. 561-392-2500; bocamuseum.org

8/26 - Advanced Colored Pencil Drawing & Painting Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 3-8 pm. \$95. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

8/26 - BCFD: Beer, Wine & Cheese Tasting Bash for People with Disabilities at Prosperity Brewers, 4160 NW 1st Ave, Ste. 21, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-7:30 pm. \$30. Registration: 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

8/26-27 - Color in Motion: Painting Light, Atmosphere & Emotion 2-Day Workshop at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-1:30 pm. \$150. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

Thursday - 8/27 - Guided Discussion: Because I Could Not Stop for Death w/ Rabbi Michael Gold at FAU Friedberg Auditorium, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. 12:30-2 pm. \$60/annual membership; \$50.40/member; \$63/non-member. 561-297-3185; olli.fau.edu

8/27 - Sounds of The Set featuring the Blackmer’s Market at Libby Wesley Plaza, 2 SW 5th Ave, Delray Beach. 5:30-8:30 pm. Free. downtowndelraybeach.com/do/sounds-of-the-set

8/27 - BCFD: Lip Sync Battle at The

Studio at Mizner Park, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 6:30-9:30 pm. \$50-\$75. Registration: 561-483-5300; bocaratonchamber.com

8/27 - Friends Virtual Book Club: Sipsworth by Simon Van Booy presented by Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 7-8 pm. Free. 561-393-7968; bocalibrary.org

Friday - 8/28 - BCFD: Tiles, Treats & Tea at La Boulangerie Boul’Mich, 6000 Glades Rd, Ste. 1048A, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 11 am-3 pm. \$75. Registration: 561-483-5300; bocaratonchamber.com

8/28 - Party in Paradise: Delray’s Tribute to Jimmy Buffett at Old School Square Amphitheater, 51 N Swinton Ave, Delray Beach. 5-10 pm. \$50/VIP; free/ general admission. 561-243-7250 x3; delrayoldschoolsquare.com/events

8/28 - BCFD: Battle of the Bartenders at Boca Grove Golf & Tennis Club, 21351 Whitaker Dr, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 6-8 pm. \$45. Registration: 561-483-5300; bocaratonchamber.com

8/28 - The Surfin’ Rascals - Tribute to The Beach Boys at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$48-\$53. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

8/28-30 - Cat Video Fest 2026 at Lake Worth Playhouse Stonzek Theatre, 713 Lake Ave. F: 6 pm; Sat: 3pm & 5 pm; Sun: 2 pm & 4 pm. \$9/general admission. 561-586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org

Saturday - 8/29 - Fluid Florals in Watercolor Workshop for Beginners at Arts Warehouse, 313 NE 3rd St, Delray Beach. Ages 18+. 10:30 am-12:30 pm. \$40. 561-330-9614; artswarehouse.org

8/29 - BCFD: Back to School Bash at Jeremiah’s Italian Ice of Boca, 8170 Glades Rd, Ste K2, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Noon-11 pm. 561-483-5300; bocaratonchamber.com

8/29 - Ashley Pezzotti: Celebrates Ella Fitzgerald at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$48-\$53. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

AUG. 30-SEPT. 5

Sunday - 8/30 - BCFD: Bowling for Bread at Lucky Strike Boca Raton, 21046 Commercial Trail, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. Noon-2:30 pm. Sponsor a kids’ lane for \$500, a child for \$100. Reservations: 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

8/30 - BCFD: Al’s Rock & Raise - A Golden Bell Battle of the Bands Fundraiser at The Addison, 2 E Camino Real, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 6-10 pm. \$150. 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

Monday - 8/31 - BCFD: Drive for Diapers at The Back Nine Gold, 6919 SW 18th St, Ste. C103, Boca Raton. Part of Boca Chamber Festival Days. 5:30-8 pm. \$30. Reservations: 561-395-4433; bocaratonchamber.com

Tuesday - 9/1 - Book Talks - An Hour to Kill: I Have Some Questions For You by Rebecca Makkai at Boca Raton Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. Adults. 2-3 pm. Registration: 561-393-7906; bocalibrary.org

9/1 - Comedy Open Mic at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. Every 1st T 8-10:30 pm. \$10-\$25. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

Friday - 9/4 - First Friday @ 5 at Centennial Park & Amphitheater, 120 E Ocean Ave. 5 pm. Free. 561-742-6024; boynton-beach.org

9/4 - Yarden Shalev - The Stay Cool Comedy Magic Show at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$50.50-\$55.50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

Saturday - 9/5 - Johnbren Thomas at Arts Garage, 94 NE 2nd Ave, Delray Beach. 8 pm. \$50.50-\$55.50. 561-450-6357; artsgarage.org

9/5-6 - Baker Street Beginnings by Gina Montet at FAU Theatre Lab, 777 Glades Rd, Boca Raton. Runs through 9/20. Sat: 7 pm; Sat/Sun: 3 pm. \$5-\$25. 561-297-6124; fauevents.com

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