Delray Beach

Sediment in drinking water was linked to neglected maintenance

By Rich Pollack and Jane Smith

One morning in late March residents throughout a large portion of Delray Beach woke up to find water coming out of their taps that just wasn’t right. Some complained of a yellowish or reddish tint to the water while others complained of a strong odor. Residents Reeve and Anne Bright noticed that even the ice coming out of their ice maker looked strange. “There was black and brown stuff, like little pieces of dirt, that came out with it,” Reeve Bright said.

Concerned, the Brights threw away the ice. They now suspect the discoloration may have been the result of a series of system failures at Delray Beach’s water treatment facilities that resulted in what the industry refers to as a “slug” getting into the city water lines.

A “slug” is sediment that gathers at the bottom of storage tanks and is unintentionally released. It does not generally pose a health threat to those using the water, according to people in the water treatment industry.

To read the full story, see WATER on page 27.

Reflections from the front line

This Labor Day, essential workers reveal how their jobs have changed to meet the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic. These are the folks who protect us from fires, comfort our souls, teach our children, deliver food and mail, and treat those who have fallen ill to COVID-19.

Meet them, Pages 20-21

INSIDE

Utilities director praises fixes to reclaimed water system. Page 26

Kindergarten teacher Julie O’Brien, the Rev. D. Brian Horgan, Dr. Bill Benda, Battalion Chief Kevin Saxton, restaurant manager Sue Brown, postal clerk Valerie Jacoby and Shipt shopper Michael Varesio. Seven photos shot individually at a COVID-19 safe distance and assembled into this composite by Tim Stepien/The Coastal Star

Delray Beach

Feds accuse doctor of $681 million fraud in substance abuse treatment billings

By Larry Keller

Coastal Delray Beach osteopathic doctor Michael Ligotti was a man in whom investigators had long been interested as they probed fraudulent practices in one of Palm Beach County’s largest industries — substance abuse treatment centers.

Numerous people have been charged and sentenced in recent years in connection with abuses at halfway houses — or sober homes — including medical insurance scams. Now some of them have turned on Ligotti. The doctor was arrested at home in late July. The U.S. Justice Department charged him with conspiracy to commit health care fraud and wire fraud — fraudulently billing private insurance companies and Medicare of around $681 million, for which they paid $121 million over a span of nine years. His attorney said Ligotti “looks forward to establishing his innocence.”

A federal judge Sept. 1 in West Palm Beach conducted a preliminary hearing and concluded that the government’s evidence established probable cause for the case to move forward.

Ligotti, 46, is free on a $1.5 million bond. To read the full story, see DOCTOR on page 10.
**Editor’s Note**

Bee sting spurs renewed thanks to essential workers

I stepped on a bee. A tiny, industrious bee. This stinging encounter — on the beach, of all places — put me face down on a bed with a purple, swollen foot,iced-down and elevated on a pillow.

Even the bee died, of course, so obviously its experience was worse than mine. In my case, Benadryl cream worked in my case, Benadryl cream worked but it got me thinking: what if one brief encounter — on this Labor Day, as you’re thru September 30, 2020

Thru September 30, 2020

**By Mary Thurwachter**

Steven E. Bernstein conquered the corporate world a few decades ago. The company he started in 1989 — SBA Communications Corp. — owns and leases communications towers to the cellular and wireless industry. SBA went public in 1999 at $39 per share on Nasdaq. Today, the company owns more than 30,000 towers in 12 countries, has more than 1,000 employees, boasts revenues approaching $2 billion and has a stock price of about $240 per share.

But how will this savvy Highland Beach businessman — chairman of the board at SBA — fare on the dance floor Sept. 26 as one of eight contestants in the Ballroom Battle, a spoof of Dancing With The Stars that raises money for the George Snow Scholarship Fund? The evening pits eight local dancers and their professional partners against each other for the Mirror Ball trophy, awarded to the top male and female fundraisers.

"I can dance, have no rhythm and I'm not fond of dancing," the exec admits. "But I am always up for a challenge and a good cause and I'm definitely up for it." To that end, Bernstein, 59, rehearses three times a week at the Fred Astaire Dance Studio in Boca Raton with his professional dance partner, Sayra Vazquez-Brann. He is making strides, he says, but it's not easy.

"I find it more of a mental workout than a physical workout because you're learning the steps and learning the routine and then improving that just takes time," he says. "And when you're not a natural at it, it just seems to take longer. But my instructor is great, and we are breaking it up into pieces and we've gone through the routine. Now we're cleaning it up — meaning having the proper embellishments, the proper hand moves, the proper facial moves." This year, because of the pandemic, dancers are training while wearing masks.

"When you're dancing and moving and breathing you're very fatigue and doing it with a mask on it adds another element," Bernstein says.

Unlike previous years, the event will not be held at the Boca Raton ballroom. Instead, it will be held at the WPTV-TV studios, with viewers calling in pledges for their favorite dancers.

Last year’s dance-off raised $650,000.

The whole process has given him he raises, so if he meets his goal, he’ll have amassed an impressive — perhaps record-breaking — $200,000.

He doesn’t really care about winning, he insists, but he does care about giving back to the community, especially children. His foundation, the Steven E. Bernstein Family Foundation, has been the most rewarding part of his journey, he says. He and his daughter Abby run it.

"The philosophy of the foundation is not to just give money where it is needed, but to give of your time," Bernstein says. The foundation has donated to many nonprofit organizations, and Bernstein sits, or has sat, on the boards of several local charities.

Bernstein, who is single, received his bachelor of science degree in business administration with a major in real estate at the University of Florida and has served as an adjunct professor at Lynn University.

The other dancers are Boca Raton attorney Robin Bresky, Dr. Gwennia S. Collins from Boca Raton Regional Hospital, William Donnell of NCCC, Tara Lucier of integrated supply chain company Inspire, Kirsten Stanley of Tammy Fender Holistic Skin Care, Kyle Stewart of Wells Fargo and Ross O’Connor, a financial adviser at Morgan Stanley.

---

**Ballroom Battle**

**What:** Eight community leaders compete in a ballroom dance competition paired with professional dancers from Fred Astaire Dance Studios.

**When:** 7 p.m. Sept. 26.

**Where:** Broadcast on WPTV Ch. 5 and livestreamed on WPTV and George Snow Scholarship Fund websites.

**Donations:** To financially support to your favorite dancer or purchase raffle tickets, visit scholarship.org/ballroom-battle.

Bernstein, who was born in New York, a new respect for dancers. Tennis or golf is more his style. "Being a dancer is one heck of a sport," he says. "You're an athlete if you're a dancer, but it's so underrated. There's a lot of work to dance. My hat's off to anybody who does dance as a profession."

Dancing is only part of what it takes to win the Ballroom Battle. The other is fundraising, something Bernstein finds much less arduous. By the end of July, he had already collected more than $70,000 in more pledges. His goal is $100,000 — and he intends to match every dollar
ULTRA LUXURY
ESTATE PROPERTIES
FOR A DISCERNING CLIENTELE

OCEAN FRONT
INTRACOASTAL
DEEPWATER
ESTATE ENCLAVE
COUNTRY CLUB
CONDOMINIUM

602 NORTH OCEAN BOULEVARD
DELRAY BEACH
$5,995 MILLION
PASCAL LIQUORI
ANTONIO LIQUORI
561 789 3300
Video | Info:
www.rx10620018.com

717 SOUTH ATLANTIC AVENUE
DELRAY BEACH
$5,695 MILLION
PASCAL LIQUORI
ANTONIO LIQUORI
561 789 8300
Video | Info:
www.rx10620750.com

527 NW 1ST AVENUE
DELRAY BEACH
$3,495 MILLION
JILLY CAMMISA
866 502 2058
Video | Info:
www.rx10629340.com

1040 SOUTH OCEAN BOULEVARD
MANALAPAN
$2495 MILLION
PASCAL LIQUORI
ANTONIO LIQUORI
561 789 8300
Video | Info:
www.rx10621881.com

126 SE 7TH AVENUE
DELRAY BEACH
$1.25 MILLION
JIM LEKAS
866 502 4174
Info:
www.rx10592766.com

Premier
Estate
Properties

900 East Atlantic Avenue, Boutique 4
Delray Beach, Florida
561 278 8188
premierestateproperties.com

Exclusive Affiliate
CHRISTIE'S
INTERNATIONAL REAL ESTATE

DISCLAIMER: Information published or otherwise provided by Premier Estate Properties, Inc. and its representatives, including but not limited to prices, measurements, square footage, lot sizes, calculations and statistics are deemed reliable but are not guaranteed and are subject to errors, omissions or changes without notice. All such information should be independently verified by any prospective purchaser or seller. Parties should perform their own due diligence to verify such information prior to a sale or listing. Premier Estate Properties, Inc. expressly disclaims any warranty or representation regarding such information. Premier Estate Properties, Inc. participates in the Multiple Listing Service and IDX. Copyright 2009 Premier Estate Properties, Inc. All Rights Reserved.
WE FOUND OUR OWN BUYERS FOR SELLERS’ PROPERTIES

75% OF THE TIME
January 1 - August 5, 2020

561.789.8300
PASCAL LIGUORI
ANTONIO LIGUORI

Newly Priced For Immediate
$17.95 Million Original List Price $19.95

Intracoastal Estate
$4.795 Million
Video | Info: www.rx10596080.com

Seagate Yacht Club End Unit Townhome
$3.895 Million
Video | Info: www.rx10509987.com

Beach Area Estate
$2.95 Million
Video | Info: www.rx10635338.com

Rare Marina Bay End Unit Intracoastal Townhome
$1.795 Million
Info: www.rx10627655.com

DECLARATION: Information published in this advertisement by Premier Estate Properties, Inc. and its representatives, including but not limited to, prices, measurements, square footage, lot sizes, calculations and statistics are deemed reliable but are not guaranteed and are subject to change without notice. All buyers and sellers should be independently verified. Premier Estate Properties, Inc. and its representatives do not assume any liability of any kind for such errors or omissions and the defects or condition of the property, or any part thereof. All properties are subject to prior sale, lease, withdrawal, or error, and all contracts and purchases must be in writing. Equal Housing Opportunity.
Sale Direct Oceanfront Lot In Delray Beach

Million  Video  Info: www.rx10585639.com

Elegant Beach Area Estate
$3.25 Million
Video  Info: www.rx10624197.com

Elegant Gulf Stream Villa
$2.995 Million
Video  Info: www.rx10583558.com

Nautica  New Beach Area Townhomes
$2.975 Million
Info: www.rx10622727.com

Pelican Cove Townhome
$1.595 Million
Info: www.rx10581968.com

Beach Area Townhome
$1.495 Million
Info: www.rx10640694.com

Beach Area Townhome
$1.295 Million
Info: www.rx10588843.com

NEWMAN PRICED

ONLY 2 REMAINING

OPEN SATURDAY AND SUNDAY
Town to use aggressive cuts, reserves to erase budget deficit

By Dan Moffett

Several Ocean Ridge commissioners have suggested that this could be the town's most challenging budget year since the Great Recession. That probably would have been the case even without the COVID-19 pandemic. But with the public health crisis, and the resulting depletion of state and county revenue contributions to the town, the fiscal picture gets more challenging still.

Ocean Ridge finds itself trying to close a $725,000 hole in the 2020-2021 budget. A resident sent a written request asking Town Manager Tracey Stevens what cuts the commission was looking at making.

Stevens answered with a long list of slashed expenses: travel, training, vehicle maintenance, postage, phone service, office supplies, uniforms, gas, oil, equipment, holiday event downsizing and yes, even electricity. Employees are mindful to turn off lights when they leave a room.

Ocean Ridge taxpayers do have some hopeful news, however. Stevens said the town could wind up with unspent dollars at the end of this fiscal year: “Stab in the dark, maybe $300,000, or maybe $250,000.” That surplus could take a sizable chunk out of next year’s shortfall. Also, the town has been fiscally prudent for years.

The increased expenses the town faces include:
- An increase of $395,000 for legal services, about $250,000 or 172% over last year, largely because of civil litigation against Ocean Ridge and revisions to the town’s charter and codes.
- A proposed increase of about $127,000 or 3% over last year for police and fire-rescue services, caused by incremental hikes in contracts with Boynton Beach and the police union.
- A salary increase of about $26,000 for town administration, including a pay raise for the manager, who transitioned from an interim position to permanent status.
- About $45,000 in new costs for stormwater drainage improvements, landscaping and pest control, an increase of about 10% over last year.

In other business: Ocean Ridge voters made a strong statement in the Florida primary on Aug. 18, that they like their town’s Police Department and aren’t in the market for mergers with outside agencies. By an overwhelming margin, 87% to 13%, voters approved a charter amendment that makes it considerably more difficult to change the department’s independent makeup.

The new law requires a ballot referendum to approve a merger, and it requires a four-vote supermajority of the Town Commission to put the issue on the ballot in the first place.

“Totally support the voters having a voice in what happens to their Police Department,” Turnow said. “I totally support the voters having a voice in what happens to their Police Department.”

Town officials have spent weeks studying and debating what to do about code violators— in particular, residents who don’t cut back their coconut trees before storm season. Dozens of the trees are in violation, officials say, and many encroach on the town’s rights of way.

After a lengthy debate on Aug. 3, the commission unanimously voted to approve the second reading of an ordinance mandating coconut tree maintenance. However, commissioners also decided not to send violators to a magistrate hearing until staff develops a tiered plan for code enforcement penalties.

• In July, the town hired Durrani Guy, 45, as its new building official, replacing Wayne Cameron, who resigned to take a similar position in North Palm Beach.

Guy comes to Ocean Ridge from C.A.P. Government, the building services company that works for numerous South Florida municipalities. Guy has an associate’s degree in building environment from the Caribbean School of Architecture and two decades’ experience in the construction industry. Guy will earn $89,250 annually.

Letter to the Editor

Australian pines are invasive, not historic

In your recent edition, The Coastal Star stated about a Gulf Stream issue of AT&T requesting more funds to preserve “the historic Australian pines” roots due to construction work.

The Australian pine is an invasive species that needs to be eradicated, not designated as historic.

This tree hugging living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. The tree bugger living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. — Christopher Utkus

Australian pines are invasive, not historic

In your recent edition, The Coastal Star stated about a Gulf Stream issue of AT&T requesting more funds to preserve “the historic Australian pines” roots due to construction work.

The Australian pine is an invasive species that needs to be eradicated, not designated as historic.

This tree hugging living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. The tree bugger living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. — Christopher Utkus

Australian pines are invasive, not historic

In your recent edition, The Coastal Star stated about a Gulf Stream issue of AT&T requesting more funds to preserve “the historic Australian pines” roots due to construction work.

The Australian pine is an invasive species that needs to be eradicated, not designated as historic.

This tree hugging living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. The tree bugger living in Boynton Beach directly west of said history watches evolution bring more and more pines to the Everglades heading east. — Christopher Utkus
South Palm Beach

Council seeks to take bigger role during town emergencies

By Dan Moffett

In March, South Palm Beach voters overwhelmingly approved a charter amendment that gave the mayor the power to declare emergencies.

When the Town Council debated putting the referendum on the ballot late last year, the thinking was the charter change would allow town officials the latitude to react quickly to natural disasters — hurricanes, in particular.

No one saw the COVID-19 pandemic coming, however.

Now the council is poised to take a second look at the measure to see how to adapt it to deal with a broader range of emergencies beyond storms.

“It has to be reshaped and discussed,” Vice Mayor Robert Kellogg said during the council’s meeting on Aug. 11. “We don’t want to rescind it,” said Mayor Bonnie Fischer. “We want to revise and rewrite it.”

Councilman Ray McMillan, who won his seat in the March election, has complained that the mayor’s declaration of emergency has resulted in transferring too much power to the town manager.

Fischer declared a state of emergency shortly after the election because of COVID-19. The council approved it in a resolution that gave the manager the authority to suspend town meetings and activities, reschedule events and close Town Hall, until the mayor declares the emergency ended.

“One person has a whole lot of power,” McMillan said of the manager.

“And I have used the power very judiciously,” said Manager Robert Kellogg, who told the council he wouldn’t hesitate to “shut down Town Hall for the safety of the staff” again.

The mayor said the council should have a role in making decisions related to emergencies, and the language in the charter change doesn’t cover this.

“We need to provide some oversight,” Fischer said. “I don’t think we’re serving the town’s people if we have one person managing every aspect of the town.”

Town Attorney Glen Torcivia told the council he would look at possible revisions that might give the council more control and make emergency declarations flexible enough to deal with potentially long-running crises, such as the pandemic may be. The council expects to discuss the issue again at its regular meeting on Sept. 8.

In other business, council members, during budget workshops this summer, had approved setting the 2020-2021 tentative tax rate at last year’s level of $3.59 per $1,000 of taxable property value.

But that could change. Gottlieb says he wants to push the rate lower and give taxpayers a break. “I’m in favor of a millage reduction as we have done in previous years,” the vice mayor said.

The council scheduled its first public budget hearing at 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 8. By law council members can reduce the proposed $3.59 millage between now and the beginning of the new fiscal year but cannot increase it.

Taxable values are up 22% in South Palm Beach, more than any other established municipality in Palm Beach County, thanks largely to the opening of 3550 South Ocean Boulevard, a $72 million luxury condo building.

The council has lowered the town’s tax rate in each of the last four years, Gottlieb said.

Along the Coast

Judges give 16 awards to ‘Coastal Star’ contributors

The Coastal Star brought home top honors in breaking news, local government reporting, sports photography and sports coverage in this year’s Weekly Newspaper Contest sponsored by the Florida Press Association.

The newspaper also collected five second-place awards and seven third-place awards.

First-place trophies went to the staff and Ron Hayes in the breaking news story category for Hurricane Dorian coverage; to Jane Smith and Rich Pollack in local government reporting for their work on Delray Beach city managers; to Publisher Jerry Lower in the sports photo category for a surfing image; and to Willie Howard and Brian Biggane in the sports page or section category for stories on the outdoors, a college baseball player from Ocean Ridge and tennis in Delray Beach, including teenage phenom Cori “Coco” Gauff.

Coming in second place were: Tracy Allerton, page design; Rachel O’Hara, feature photo; Rich Pollack, Mary Thurwachter and Arden Moore, best obituary; Cheryl Blackerby, agricultural and environmental reporting; and Jan Engoren, arts, entertainment and reviews.

In third place were: staff, overall graphic design; Tim Stepien, portfolio photography; Mary Hladky and Jane Smith, business reporting; Charles Elmore, roads and transportation; Gretel Sarmiento, arts, entertainment and review; Rich Pollack, in-depth reporting (non-investigative); and Executive Editor Mary Kate Leming, serious column.

The Tallahassee-based press association announced the awards on July 31. The Coastal Star competed in Division A for the state’s largest weekly and monthly newspapers with a circulation of more than 13,000.

The next edition of The Coastal Star will be delivered the weekend of Oct. 30.
Census response rates lag with a month remaining

By Charles Elmore

With a sped-up 2020 U.S. Census deadline fast approaching Sept. 30, 11 towns and cities along Palm Beach County’s southern coast risk what one mayor calls a “10-year hurt” as their response rates lag behind U.S. and Florida averages.

As of Aug. 23, response rates ranged as low as 42.4% for households in South Palm Beach, with Ocean Ridge and Highland Beach also under 50% and all 11 trailing Florida’s average of 60.9%, federal records showed. The U.S. average was 64.2%.

Lantana stood at 52.5%. Its lowest response levels came in the town’s easternmost census tract in its Hypoluxo Island neighborhood, where the rate was 41.6%.

The response snapshot can change with each passing day, but the stakes do not. Hanging in the balance is funding estimated at $1,600 lost annually for each person missed, for roads, schools, environmental and other programs, not to mention Florida’s chances to gain more seats in Congress. The effects last for a decade.

Lantana Mayor Dave Stewart had a message in an Aug. 24 meeting for any residents who have not acted because they don’t care or think it is not important.

“高它’s going to hurt bad,” Stewart said. “It is a 10-year hurt, that’s what people don’t understand. We’re stuck with those numbers for 10 years.”

Among other enticements, Lantana is raffling off a 65-inch TV for residents who show proof of responding to the census.

“Our message to residents is RESPOND NOW,” Nicole Dritz, Lantana’s development services director, said in an email. “Don’t wait for the Sept. 30th deadline. If our residents respond now to the census, it will yield a favorable response rate for the town.”

A federal report concluded about 94,000 people who should have been counted in Palm Beach County, or 7.2% of its population, failed to make it on census rolls in 2010.

In an eventful 2020, it’s not immediately clear to local officials how much the response rates can be explained by disruptions related to COVID-19, or seasonal residents who wound up in other places during the pandemic, or immigrants wary of being counted, or residents who are here but just forgot or did not bother.

“It’s hard to say at this time what impact COVID-19 will have on the reporting since everyone is trying to navigate these new waters,” Dritz said.

As of Aug. 23, Boca Raton showed a 60.4% response rate, within an eyelash of the state average.

“As a city we’re not lagging, but I’d prefer we be leading,” Mayor Scott Singer said. “That’s why the city has continued to communicate the importance of responding. It takes a minute online and will avoid the need for enumerators to visit your home.”

The 2020 census marks the first to allow wide-scale responses online as well as by mail or phone, but that had not raised overall participation rates for late August in southern Palm Beach County.

Things got even more urgent when the Census Bureau moved up the deadline for all self-responses as well as field visits by census workers to the end of September, a month earlier than previously announced.

“We will improve the speed of our count without sacrificing completeness,” U.S. Census Bureau Director Steven Dillingham said in a statement Aug. 3. “Under this plan, the Census Bureau intends to meet a similar level of household responses as collected in prior censuses, including outreach to hard-to-count communities.”

U.S. Senate minority leader Chuck Schumer questioned why officials were “rushing the census count in the middle of a pandemic” and called for an investigation into possible political pressure from the Trump administration. At a national level, Democrats have expressed concern that immigrants, lower-income residents and others might get undercounted on a more political basis.

But in South Florida this year, relatively affluent coastal communities are struggling to reach their 2010 response rates.

Highland Beach, for example, showed a 45.6% response rate by Aug. 23, compared to 49.8% in 2010, according to 2020census.gov.

Census officials did not respond to requests to discuss how well they have met local hiring goals for workers to check on non-responsive households, or whether any problems have occurred with handling responses online.

An oversight report prepared for Congress in February noted the Census Bureau had, fairly late in the process, changed to a backup online system after the first one struggled with high-volume testing.

Whatever the reasons, response rates in the region have lagged. With little more than a month to go, Delray Beach (51.8%) trailed its final 2010 response rate (61.3%) by nearly 10 points.

There’s still time to change the numbers and things could look different as September unfolds.

But as of Aug. 23, Briny Breezes (54.2%), Boynton Beach (58.7%), Gulf Stream (54.2%), Hypoluxo (50.9%), Manalapan (50.2%), and Ocean Ridge (48.2%) had yet to match their final 2010 self-response rates.

Mary Thruvacherry and Mary Hady contributed to this story.
Consultants price new sewer system at $11 million-plus

By Steve Plunkett

Building a municipal sewer system will cost the town at least $11.2 million, Gulf Stream’s engineering consultants say. But the price does not include roughly $5 million to take over about 250 privately owned low-pressure “grinder pumps,” that now service the town’s core district, said Jockey Prinyavivatkul, the project manager at Baxter and Woodman Consulting Engineers.

Those pumps send sewage to Boynton Beach for treatment via a 10-inch force main under the Intracoastal. In Baxter and Woodman’s plan, the 10-inch main would be upgraded to also handle waste from the area east of State Road A1A from the Gulf Stream Golf Club to Sea Road. Sewage from the south part of the town and from Place Au Soleil would be treated by Delray Beach under the plan.

The new town system would also need approximately 35,000 linear feet of low-pressure mains, 2,000 linear feet of force mains and pump upgrades at three lift stations in Delray Beach.

Baxter and Woodman also looked at installing a gravity sewer system — the most common type but in Gulf Stream’s case also the most expensive — and a vacuum system that would have required three vacuum pump stations each the size of a small house. Imagine a 2,000-square-foot home with a basement, OK? So this is significant,” Prinyavivatkul said.

Town commissioners made no decision at their Aug. 14 meeting on how to proceed with a sewer project. But Commissioner Paul Lyons asked whether the work could be done at the same time roads are being rebuilt and was assured that it was possible.

Gulf Stream is in its second year of a 10-year, $10 million capital improvement plan for streets and water pipes — and now is installing a new water main along the northern part of A1A.

In other business:

• The town will put “No Parking” signs at the western end of Golfview Drive to deter people from hopping over the guardrail to fish in the Intracoastal Waterway. “It’s not constructed to have safe fishing like that in that area. I mean there’s huge boulders and rocks there,” Town Manager Greg Dunham said.

• Gulf Stream will again hire Nowlen, Holt and Miner as its outside auditor. The firm has audited the town since 2000, and state law required that the contract go out to bid again after 20 years. Lyons, Manalapan Town Manager Linda Stumpf and Ocean Ridge Town Manager Trace Stevens made up the auditor selection committee and reviewed two bids. The county Office of Inspector General scolded Gulf Stream in 2018 for renewing Nowlen, Holt’s contract four times without competitive bidding.

Police take warnings of car thefts door to door

By Steve Plunkett

Prompted in part by a wave of car thefts, the town will soon hire an additional police officer to combat crime.

Police Chief Edward Allen reported two cases of grand theft auto at the Town Commission’s July meeting. At the August meeting he said one had been recovered but three more were stolen, making a total of eight this year. Two other vehicles were burglarized.

“We’ve gone door to door really, requesting people, reminding them to be safe and remove their belongings and lock their cars,” Allen said.

Mayor Scott Morgan aimed some “finger-wagging” at residents who leave keys in their vehicles or leave them running or with doors open. Most late-model cars come with key fobs that make starting easy, he said.

“You leave it in the car — all you have to do is depress the brake and push a button and off they go,” the mayor said.

“We find them driving down the road, we catch them on the cameras either north or south. But there’s nothing you can do after that point but locate the car at some point.”

Last year Gulf Stream had only one automobile stolen and in 2018 none, Morgan said.

The budget for fiscal 2021, which starts Oct. 1, includes $88,812 in salary and benefits for the new officer. The addition will allow three cruisers to be on patrol at the same time instead of two.

“That’s a 50% increase in coverage in our town,” Morgan said.

Commissioners also approved spending $28,058 from this year’s budget for 12 body cameras for its police force. Last year they set aside $25,000 to replace aging in-car cameras, but Allen and Town Manager Greg Dunham decided body cameras were more beneficial.

With a car camera, if you do like a traffic stop and you step 2 feet out of the range, you’re out of the picture, you have no more picture at all,” Allen said.

A body camera “stays with the person.”

Commissioners also set a tentative tax rate for the coming fiscal year at the rollback rate, $3.76 per $1,000 of taxable value. It was the fifth year in a row they have set taxes either at or below the rollback rate. The levy will generate $4.6 million for town operations, the same amount as the current fiscal year.

Big-ticket items include $200,000 for “smart” water meters and $200,000 for planning road and drainage work in the north Core area, part of the 10-year capital improvement plan. Virtual public hearings on the 2020-2021 budget will be at 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 11 and Sept. 22.

In other business, commissioners learned that the new water main on State Road A1A from Golfview Drive to Sea Road would need to go under the southbound lane instead of next to the highway.

“The area between the road and Gulf Stream’s Australian pines was too crowded with other utilities, their engineering consultant said. The entire lane will be resurfaced as part of the project.”

LETTERS: The Coastal Star welcomes letters to the editor about issues of interest in the community. These are subject to editing and must include your name, address and phone number. Preferred length is 200-500 words. Send email to news@thecoastalstar.com.
Dr. Ligotti profited by requiring businesses that received his signature on standing orders to send their insured patients to Whole Health, investigators allege. He charged for office visits and routinely ordered unnecessary urine and blood samples from patients at his own in-house lab, and billed hundreds of millions of dollars in fraudulent and unnecessary treatments, including nonexistent therapy sessions.

He billed one patient’s insurer $25,800 for a single day’s work, and another insurer was billed $707,056 in less than four years for a single patient. Ligotti, who earned an undergraduate degree from Nova Southeastern University, was the purported medical director for more than 50 addiction treatment facilities, and signed 137 standing orders authorizing fraudulent tests, investigators say.

Business partner identified

One target of the probe, identified as a “business partner and close friend of Ligotti,” told the FBI last year that he was a “matchmaker” who introduced Ligotti to drug testing lab operators, according to the FBI affidavit. He was identified in court as Donte Stewart. Stewart, who earned about $1.6 million from four labs over a span of 14 months, the complaint alleges. He invested the money in Arrow Passage, a recovery, a drug and alcohol treatment center in Massillon, Ohio, in which he and Ligotti were co-owners, investigators say. The company’s website says Stewart is the CEO. He lives in Fort Lauderdale, according to his Facebook page.

Patients were often brought to Ligotti’s office in passenger vans — “druggy buggies” — by Whole Health patients, according to the affidavit.

The Ligottis also placed the nurse practitioners to write fraudulent prescriptions for drugs that patients didn’t need, the FBI alleges.

In addition to leveling the fraud charges, investigators suspect that Michael and Christine Ligotti, his wife, have tried to conceal assets.

In May, the seven-bedroom home the Ligottis own and live in with their three children on Seagate Drive in Delray Beach was listed for sale at nearly $10.5 million. Earlier this year, they used the proceeds from a different property to buy a house in Boynton Beach for $3.3 million. The federal government, however, will seek to take the properties through forfeiture if Ligotti is convicted.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.

The Ligottis also placed the Whole Health medical building up for sale in May for $4 million. It was listed at three times the properties fetched close to their listed prices, they would total more than $10.5 million. But and his co-conspirators, not for use in insurance companies, the FBI affidavit states.

One of them is Eric Snyder, who owned a halfway house and treatment center and pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit health care fraud and was sentenced last December to 37 months in prison. In pleading guilty, he agreed to testify against others suspected of involvement in patient brokering and insurance fraud.

Snyder’s outpatient program was a walked down street the from Whole Health. Ligotti’s parents and a pet pig live there.
Delray Beach

City foresees more cuts to cover $9 million budget shortfall

By Jane Smith

Delray Beach commissioners sent staff back to find more cost savings at an Aug. 11 budget workshop, even though the interim city manager advised that additional cuts could lead to layoffs. Commissioners were against using reserve money to cover the entire $9 million budget shortfall.

The commission was opposed to balancing the proposed $151.1 million budget by raiding the reserves by about $4 million to pay for ongoing operations. But they did agree to take about $4.6 million out of reserves for one-time expenses, such as the proposed $1.05 million software purchase that will allow the city to be done online permitting.

City staff had found $4.6 million in possible cuts. Interim City Manager Jennifer Alvarez told commissioners, and suggested dipping into the reserves to cover the additional $4.4 million in operating costs to make up the difference. “We went back to the departments and asked them to cut more,” Alvarez said. “We have a hiring freeze, trimmed contracts and reduced travel and training budgets.

“We may have to cut jobs to get it down (more),” Alvarez added. “It is what it is.”

The reserves fund is expected to hold an estimated $39.3 million at the start of the next budget year, Oct. 1.

The commission, though, insisted more cuts could be made.

“We still don’t know all of the COVID effects on our economy,” said Mayor Shelly Petrolia. Delray Beach and other cities statewide shut down on March 13 with gradual reopenings. Palm Beach County has a mandatory mask ordinance as part of the reopening, with restaurants and shops limited to 50% capacity during Phase 1.

“The timing is wrong to raid the reserves, which should be about 25% of the general fund,” Petrolia said. “We do not have to have that level, but it is proper to carry that much because we are sitting along the coast and subject to hurricanes.”

She pointed out that the city has been waiting nearly four years for reimbursement for Hurricane Matthew expenses. The hurricane brushed the coastline in October 2016.

Finance Director Marie Casale said cuts could be found in the Fire Department wants 12.8% more for the next financial year. Casale said cuts could be found in that department.

She compared Boynton Beach to Delray Beach in terms of size — both are approximately 16 square miles. Boynton Beach has 10,000 more residents. To make her point, she cited the number of battalion chiefs and captains each fire department has. Delray Beach has 42 battalion chiefs and captains, while Boynton Beach has 17 total.

Then, Casale launched into a critique of the SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. She called the grant “lawful and deceptive.” We traded our hiring authority for five years for a $1.6 million grant.”

The grant covers partial salaries of eight firefighter-paramedics and expires in three years. But the grant requires the city to maintain the firefighter staffing level for five of the eight for two years beyond the grant period.

That’s one reason Casale and Petrolia voted against accepting the grant retroactively in May. At the time, they were told four of the hires would be assigned to the Highland Beach station. But the town of Highland Beach did not want the four extra firefighters because it could not afford the increased cost, Casale said.

Kalka told commissioners that FEMA gave them a one-year reprieve from not hiring five of the eight positions, saving the city $305,000. But the city will be required to retain the positions the following year.

Both health insurance and pension costs are rising in Delray Beach, which has a large impact on budget planning. Health insurance will increase by $1.35 million, Kalka said, and union negotiations would be required to change how insurance plans are structured.

“To increase employee contributions, the extra cost would have to be negotiated by our unions,” she said.

Pension costs are another big-ticket item in the budget. Pension costs for police and fire went up $2.03 million because of reduced rates of return on investments, Kalka said. The city is funding only about 60% of its retirement funds, she said. Even so, the forecast for the next budget year is not entirely gloomy. The city will still put up its 100-foot Christmas tree, Alvarez said. But the surrounding events may be canceled because of COVID-19 restrictions on crowd size.

In July, the commission approved using $2.3 million from the reserves to cover unexpected shortfalls in the current budget year that ends Sept. 30. Most of the expenses were from coronavirus-related impacts.

The city’s revenue was also reduced by franchise fees that it had to reimburse.
Manalapan

By Dan Moffett

Manalapan’s high property values likely won’t be enough to insulate the town from a modest increase in the tax rate for the next fiscal year.

Like all Florida municipalities, Manalapan faces a reduction in state and county revenue streams because of economic damage done by the COVID-19 pandemic. But the biggest hit to the town’s budget comes from its neighbor to the north.

This year South Palm Beach’s property values shot up 32% because of the opening of the $70 million 3550 South Ocean building and its 30 luxury condos. While South Palm had the county’s highest valuation increase, Manalapan had the lowest at a mere 1.23%.

The impact of the South Palm condo opening on Manalapan is a significant increase in the cost of paying for fire rescue services from Palm Beach County. The town and South Palm Beach partner on the same contract with the county, and it has an annual price tag based on property values. So, next fiscal year, the two towns’ taxpayers will have to split evenly a bill for about $3 million from the county. For Manalapan, that $1.5 million represents a $274,402 increase over last year.

“I have no control over the fire rescue cost,” Town Manager Linda Stumpf told commissioners during their July budget meeting. “There’s nothing I can do about reducing that number.”

To cover the fire rescue increase, the Town Commission is considering raising the current property tax rate of $3.03 per $1,000 of taxable value to about $3.17 and taking roughly $175,000 from reserves to balance the 2020-2021 budget.

“My personal preference is not to raise the millage rate at all,” said Mayor Keith Waters. “I call that the September goal.”

Waters and the commissioners grudgingly approved a tentative millage maximum rate of $3.30 per $1,000 of valuation and set the first public budget hearing for Sept. 18 at 5:01 p.m. The commission held no meeting in August.

Stumpf anticipates Manalapan’s final rate to come in significantly lower, probably around $3.17. The rollback number, the rate that would hold taxes flat year-over-year, is $3.01. She expects the current budget year to end with a surplus of about $700,000, so there should be plenty of cash on hand to patch the holes in next year’s fiscal plan.

The new proposed budget includes a 3% raise for town employees and covers the full staffing of the Police Department, which has undergone a major expansion over the last two years.

In other business, commissioners unanimously approved an ordinance that revises the town’s rules on signs. The changes set new size and placement of signs and satisfy constitutional concerns, said Town Attorney Keith Davis.

“While the main thrust of the ordinance is to deal with temporary signs,” Davis said. Commissioners wanted to complete the changes before the election season, when the placement and size of campaign signs have often raised complaints in previous years.

Tentative tax rates

South County taxing agencies have proposed budgets for 2020-2021. Here are their tentative tax rates per $1,000 of taxable value, the rollback rates and percent change.

- Boca Raton city* $3.68 $3.35 6.6%
- Boca Beach & Park $0.88 $0.88 0%
- Briny Breezes $10.00 $9.02 10.8%
- Delray Beach $6.85 $6.40 4.2%
- Gulf Stream $3.76 $3.76 0%
- Highland Beach $3.79 $3.74 1.7%
- Lantana $3.50 $3.31 5.6%
- Manalapan $3.30 $3.01 9.1%
- Ocean Ridge $5.35 $5.17 3.48%
- South Palm Beach $3.59 $3.54 1.4%

* Boca Raton households also pay a $145 fire assessment fee.
Briny Breezes

Briny adjusting budget to account for revenue losses from pandemic

By Dan Moffett

When it comes to preparing municipal budgets, Bill Thrasher has seen about every extreme South Florida has to offer.

Before taking over as Briny Breezes town manager in January, Thrasher spent 21 years as the manager next door in Gulf Stream, one of the state’s most affluent enclaves.

Before that, he started his career in government as the financial director of Pahokee, a hardscrabble town next to Lake Okeechobee.

Now Thrasher has to deal with Briny’s unusual marriage of municipal and corporate interests as the mobile home community tries to navigate through a period of often uncertain property valuations and unreliable revenue streams.

The COVID-19 pandemic added one more complication.

Like municipalities across the state, Briny faces loss of revenue-sharing funds from the state, Briny faces loss of revenue-sharing funds from the state, and unreliable revenue streams.

The COVID-19 pandemic has some costly repairs to share from the state is also estimated lower.

From about $35,000 to $25,000. Revenue to be down from about $35,000 to $25,000.

County sales tax revenue is likely to be down from about $35,000 to $25,000. Revenue sharing from the state is also estimated lower.

Even with the losses, Briny has some costly repairs to make. The town has seven lift stations that pump stormwater from streets and yards.

Thrush said the development has significantly contributed to worsening drainage problems in the neighborhood. In May, thunderstorms sent torrents of rainwater off the elevated property, flooding adjacent streets and yards.

The cost of repairing and rebuilding each lift station runs between $10,000 and $15,000, and the council wants to phase in the work over the next several years.

“It would be nice to make sure all of them are in top condition,” Thrasher said of the stations during the council’s meeting on July 23. “I think this is a priority.”

Briny has maintained the maximum tax rate of $10 per $1,000 of taxable value since 2009. The town counts on a contribution from the Briny corporation to cover its largest operational costs.

The corporation is expected to pay about 36% of the $192,300 bill for police services from Ocean Ridge and 36% of the $417,451 for fire rescue services from Boynton Beach.

Briny’s property values were up 11.1% year-over-year, one of the largest increases among Palm Beach County municipalities.

“This is a positive thing we have that’s going to help us offset some of our losses,” Thrasher said.

Briny plans to use some of the $60,000 set aside for legal services to pay lobbyists in Tallahassee to seek grants and persuade legislators to give more relief assistance to smaller municipalities.

“We’re going to have increased expenditures to lobby for things we might get paid back on in the future,” Mayor Gene Adams told Thrasher. “I support the direction you’re moving in fully.”

During the town’s monthly meeting on Aug. 27, the council scheduled a first hearing on the tentative budget for 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 10 and a final budget hearing for 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 25.

Residents in Briny Breezes and the County Pocket say the development has significantly contributed to worsening drainage problems in the neighborhood.

In May, thunderstorms sent torrents of rainwater off the elevated property, flooding adjacent streets and yards.

The cost of repairing and rebuilding each lift station runs between $10,000 and $15,000, and the council wants to phase in the work over the next several years.

“It would be nice to make sure all of them are in top condition,” Thrasher said of the stations during the council’s meeting on July 23. “I think this is a priority.”

Briny has maintained the maximum tax rate of $10 per $1,000 of taxable value since 2009. The town counts on a contribution from the Briny corporation to cover its largest operational costs.

The corporation is expected to pay about 36% of the $192,300 bill for police services from Ocean Ridge and 36% of the $417,451 for fire rescue services from Boynton Beach.

Briny’s property values were up 11.1% year-over-year, one of the largest increases among Palm Beach County municipalities.

“This is a positive thing we have that’s going to help us offset some of our losses,” Thrasher said.

Briny plans to use some of the $60,000 set aside for legal services to pay lobbyists in Tallahassee to seek grants and persuade legislators to give more relief assistance to smaller municipalities.

“We’re going to have increased expenditures to lobby for things we might get paid back on in the future,” Mayor Gene Adams told Thrasher. “I support the direction you’re moving in fully.”

During the town’s monthly meeting on Aug. 27, the council scheduled a first hearing on the tentative budget for 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 10 and a final budget hearing for 5:01 p.m. on Sept. 25.

Haynie trial to start no sooner than late October

By Mary Hladky

Former Boca Raton Mayor Susan Haynie’s trial on public corruption charges has been pushed back for the third time.

The new trial start date is Oct. 26, but there is no certainty it will begin then.

Palm Beach County Chief Circuit Court Judge Krista Marx in early July extended her suspension of all trials until further notice because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Circuit Judge Jeffrey Gillen set the new date on July 10 after both the prosecutor and Haynie’s criminal defense attorney agreed on the change.

In both instances, they said the pandemic has made it difficult to complete pre-trial discovery and expressed concern that not enough potential jurors would be available.

The original date for Haynie’s trial was March 23.

Haynie, 64, was arrested on April 24, 2018, on charges of official misconduct, perjury, misuse of public office and failure to disclose voting conflicts.

Prosecutors contend that Haynie used her position on the City Council to vote on six matters that financially benefited James Batmasian, the city’s largest downtown commercial landowner, and failed to disclose income she received from him.

She has pleaded not guilty. Her attorney, Bruce Zimet, has repeatedly said she will not accept a plea deal.

Silhouette Instalift™ – A Game Changer for Non-Surgical Facial Contouring

Why choose Silhouette Instalift™?

• Non-surgical procedure
• Minimal down time
• Immediate lifting effects
• Volumizing in addition to lifting effects due to PLLA collagen stimulation
• Sutures are entirely re-absorbable
• Natural looking
Delray Beach

Commission reviews charges against Gretsas, sets hearing date

By Jane Smith

Delray Beach city commissioners unanimously levied nine misconduct charges against suspended City Manager George Gretsas at their Aug. 24 special meeting.

The charges, though, do not include the bullying and intimidation accusations that led to his suspension on June 24. Gretsas allegedly badgered Assistant City Manager Yvonne Odom so much that she went on medical leave May 15.

The new charges were made because the city was following the terms of its contract with Gretsas, City Attorney Lynn Gelin said. In October 2019, she had warned the commission of his lengthy termination process: notice to terminate, meeting 60 days later to decide written charges and then a special hearing 60 days later. He refused to come to Delray Beach without them, Gelin said. The City Commission plans to hold the public hearing at 10 a.m. Oct. 23.

Gelin outlined some of the charges against Gretsas:

• Improperly hired two people he knew at inflated salaries without going through the city’s hiring process and providing written justification for paying them extra.

• Created potential violations of the state’s Public Records Act by installing a private network in his office, outside the administration of the city’s Information Technology Department. The department should have been involved to maintain the safety and security of the city’s information.

• Wrote a 66-page presentation on Fisher that violated her privacy rights. Gretsas shared that document with certain staff members and one leaked it to the media.

• Created a television studio at the Arts Garage, a city-owned property, to broadcast daily updates on the COVID-19 pandemic. To outfit the studio, Gretsas directed staff to buy various pieces of equipment, costing more than $25,000 total. Even though it was an emergency, Gretsas did not document the reasons for the studio.

• Sent a 12-page letter on July 31 to the mayor and city commissioners, bashing Fisher, the reclaimed water program and the drinking water system. Fisher had been removed from City Utilities Department. He wrongly compared the city-drinking water quality to that of Flint, Michigan, where lead was found in the water. Gretsas widely distributed that letter to Delray Beach residents, who became fearful of drinking city water.

• The uncovering of what we have found is just mind-blowing,” Mayor Shelly Petrolia said. “I can’t understand how someone — in just six months — can get in so deep into the dark areas of nondisclosure.”

Gretsas joined Delray Beach on Jan. 6. He is the fifth city manager in just eight years. The previous city manager, Mark Lauzier, was fired on March 1, 2019. He sued the city for breach of contract and filed a whistleblower’s complaint on April 29, 2019. The whistleblower’s complaint was dismissed, but the breach of contract count is proceeding.

“The machine gun is now aimed at me,” Gretsas said Aug. 25. “This (proceeding)damages my reputation and creates a revolving door of city managers.” If the constant turnover is very damaging to the public.

His attorney, Carmen Rodriguez, spoke at the Aug. 24 meeting.

“The computer was purchased and installed through the city,” she said. “You all have private networks, too. It’s called a cellphone.”

Rodriguez called the charges administrative issues, not fireable offenses. “They are more Mother-May-I issues,” she said, referencing the kids game of asking for permission before moving.

The commission had voted on June 24 to suspend Gretsas, based on a summary of an investigation into bullying and intimidation charges brought up by Fisher. The vote was 4-1.

Fisher has since agreed to resign from the city on Sept. 7. Her attorney negotiated a separation package that includes payment for all unused vacation days and 50% of her unused sick time. Until she leaves, she will be paid her salary of $65,692.80. In return, Fisher agreed to not bash the city.

Vice Mayor Ryan Boylston and Commissioner Adam Frankel initially voted against suspending Gretsas. Both wanted the bullying accusation included in the charges.

The June investigation into Fisher’s complaint “created a divisive and disruptive environment. It became a situation of whose team you are on,” Gelin said. “Why put the city in a negative light when you have policy violation that are valid?"

Then, she added, “It’s up to the commission whether to include the bullying charges.”

The city issued a news release about staff intimidation after the June 24 meeting, but it is not legally binding. Gelin said.

“On July 7, the commission directed its internal auditor to lead the investigation,” Gelin said, referring to Julia Davidyuk. Frankel called the whole process “troubling.”

“As we are here because of the bullying allegations, I understand Gelin’s point that to add that charge to be would be much too stress on staff in the middle of a pandemic,” he said, then told Rodriguez, “But I believe your client’s due process rights have been violated.”

Davidyuk said she was looking at just one charge. “Gretsas had a pattern of ignoring policies,” she said.

As an example, she said, Gretsas had installed the Basecamp software program on his computer to discourage public access.

The project management program assigns tasks and deadlines to individuals and alerts the manager about the status of projects, including deadlines. Gretsas told investigators the file’s contents are deleted from their servers,” Davidyuk said she learned after emailing the Basecamp customer service people in the UK. “You must have asked the right question,” Gretsas said on Aug. 25.

“Basecamp has an archive function and it is searchable.”

Boylston, who uses Basecamp daily in his marketing business, asked Gelin for some examples of public records not been filled because they were not accessible in Basecamp. Gelin said she would search for an example before the Oct. 23 hearing.

Gelin said he has emails with the then-purchasing director about buying TV studio equipment quickly. She suggested an out-of-state vendor with the lowest price, but it would be held up in the mail because the Postal Service has special conditions for mailing electronics with lithium-ion batteries installed.

Staff then used the city’s purchase cards to buy the equipment locally, Gretsas said.

Boylston continues to receive his $265,000 salary until his hearing Oct. 23.

“I don’t see a genuine acceptance of the magnitude of this proceeding,” Rodriguez said Aug. 24. “It’s absurd to say we’re going to give you notice that we intend to fire you and then we will figure out the charges.”

Sea grape dispute

Delray Beach — mid-August

The iconic sea grape tunnels near the Atlantic Avenue certain staff members and one leaked it to Delray Beach without them, Gelin

Sea grape dispute

Delray Beach — mid-August

The iconic sea grape tunnels near the Atlantic Avenue pavilion likely will be spared from the chain saw, following an outcry from some Delray Beach residents. Conflicting environmental views and a wish to keep the beachscape character in place are the main issues. ABOVE: Elsewhere in the public beach dune, trimmed sea grapes soon will sprout branches and limbs. The trims kept with the decades-long tradition to provide habitat for migrating songbirds and a buffer from streetlights for sea turtles. — Jane Smith

Commission votes itself large raise

By Jane Smith

Delray Beach city commissioners narrowly agreed on Aug. 18 to give themselves hefty pay raises.

They all said it was not the proper time to raise their pay in the midst of a pandemic. The vote was 3-2, with Vice Mayor Ryan Boylston and Commissioner Adam Frankel voting no.

“I don’t disagree it’s bad timing,” Mayor Shelly Petrolia said. “But if we don’t do this now, we will have to wait another 2.5 years.”

The raises will take effect after the March 2021 elections, according to the city charter. That means Petrolia, Boylston and Frankel would have to be re-elected to receive the new salaries.

The commission salaries will be increased from $9,000 annually to $24,000. The mayor’s annual pay will go from $12,000 to $30,000.

Staff said they will receive the new salaries paid to elected officials in Boynton Beach and Boca Raton.

Both cities pay their elected officials much more than Delray Beach does.

In Boynton Beach, commissioners are paid $20,000 a year, and the mayor’s annual salary is $24,000. In Boca Raton, council members receive $28,000 annually and the mayor makes $38,000.

Commissioner Juli Casale voted yes, as long as the pandemic situation eased at the beginning of next year.

Petrolia said they could vote to postpone raises for six months if that was still the situation.

“The timing is bad,” Boylston said. “We are freezing raises, looking for layoffs.”

Interim City Manager Jennifer Alvarez said the city is not freezing raises. The city has a hiring freeze, she said.

Retired teacher Yvonne Odom told the commission “to vote your own conscience. That’s what you were elected to do.” Odom runs youth sports programs with her husband and is the grandmother of two Delray Beach kids.

“Make sure essential workers are paid well,” Odom said. “But I’m not in favor of cutting Personnel.”

Frankel agreed with his fellow commissioners that they are “woefully underpaid” when he voted for the raises in the Aug. 11 on the first reading. He also said he wanted to think about it and changed his mind when voting Aug. 18.
Consultant to examine cost of starting a fire department

By Rich Pollack

Faced with another year of rising costs for fire rescue service from Delray Beach, Highland Beach is once again exploring alternatives to the multimillion-dollar annual contract with the neighboring city, including starting its own fire department.

During an August meeting, town commissioners agreed to pay $40,000 to have California-based Matrix Consulting Group look into the feasibility of Highland Beach providing its own fire department or having a hybrid system where it receives some services from a private provider.

“We’re looking for a properly funded fire-rescue response,” Town Manager Marshall Labadie said. “The costs should be proportional to the services provided.”

Since signing a new 10-year contract with Delray Beach for fire service in 2016, Highland Beach officials have raised concern about continued escalating costs that they fear could be unsustainable.

During fiscal 2019, for example, costs for service jumped 8.6% to $4.26 million. During fiscal 2020 costs are expected to increase by about 5% to $4.47 million. And for the upcoming fiscal 2021, costs are expected to jump between 5% and 7% to $4.78 million.

Following a presentation by Robert Finn, a lead analyst for Matrix Consulting, commissioners agreed that looking at alternatives to fire service from Delray was a necessary step.

“We have no choice,” said Mayor Doug Hillman. “We’re obligated to our residents to do what’s best for our town.”

During a subsequent presentation to the commission, Delray Beach Fire Chief Keith Tomey said he welcomed the consultant study commissioned by Highland Beach.

“We’re happy to see you are hiring a consultant,” Tomey said. “We feel we are the best force for you and believe the consultant will point that out.”

Tomey noted that the town is considered part of Delray Beach’s service area and as such receives a long list of services both direct and indirect — ranging from backup vehicles in case of a major fire to apparatus repair.

Hillman, in responding to the fire chief, made it clear that Highland Beach is pleased with the quality of services it receives from Delray.

“The service we get is top-notch,” he said. “This is purely a financial situation. It’s nothing more than dollars and cents.”

Currently, Delray Beach provides all fire rescue services in Highland Beach and staffing for the town-owned fire station, with the town paying for the cost of 22.5 firefighters/paramedics and some administrative services.

Delray Beach had originally requested that Highland Beach amend the contract to add four more personnel, with part of the cost for the first three years being covered by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In all, the grant would have covered the partial cost of eight Delray Beach firefighters over three years — four assigned to Highland Beach — with the portion paid by Delray Beach and Highland Beach increasing each year.

Highland Beach rejected the amendment and Delray Beach appealed to FEMA, asking for a hardship case because of the coronavirus pandemic. FEMA is now allowing Delray Beach to fill only three of the eight positions for the first year, a reduction of $350,000 to the city’s expense, but will require the city to fill all eight positions — including the four in Highland Beach — the following year.

In addition to giving Highland Beach a detailed plan for forming its own fire department and listing the expected cost — Matrix will review the services provided by Delray Beach over the last three years.

The audit will look at the costs and examine Delray Beach performance compared to the requirements in the agreement with the town. The commission wants to be sure we are being charged correctly pursuant to the contract,” Labadie said.

Matrix, which several years ago was hired to explore the possibility of creating a barrier island fire department in South County, expects to have a study completed in three or four months. The barrier island fire department concept was dismissed as too costly. Labadie believes the findings of the new report could help the town decide how best to proceed and that could include finding a way to continue the relationship with Delray.

“We’re hopeful that the study will bring the parties together and we’ll come up with an amicable solution for a long-term partnership,” Labadie said. “We’re happy to see you are hiring a consultant,” Tomey said. “We feel we are the best force for you and believe the consultant will point that out.”

During a subsequent presentation to the commission, Delray Beach Fire Chief Keith Tomey said he welcomed the consultant study commissioned by Highland Beach.

“We’re happy to see you are hiring a consultant,” Tomey said. “We feel we are the best force for you and believe the consultant will point that out.”

Tomey noted that the town is considered part of Delray Beach’s service area and as such receives a long list of services both direct and indirect — ranging from backup vehicles in case of a major fire to apparatus repair.

Hillman, in responding to the fire chief, made it clear that Highland Beach is pleased with the quality of services it receives from Delray.

“The service we get is top-notch,” he said. “This is purely a financial situation. It’s nothing more than dollars and cents.”

Currently, Delray Beach provides all fire rescue services in Highland Beach and staffing for the town-owned fire station, with the town paying for the cost of 22.5 firefighters/paramedics and some administrative services.

Delray Beach had originally requested that Highland Beach amend the contract to add four more personnel, with part of the cost for the first three years being covered by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In all, the grant would have covered the partial cost of eight Delray Beach firefighters over three years — four assigned to Highland Beach — with the portion paid by Delray Beach and Highland Beach increasing each year.

Highland Beach rejected the amendment and Delray Beach appealed to FEMA, asking for a hardship case because of the coronavirus pandemic. FEMA is now allowing Delray Beach to fill only three of the eight positions for the first year, a reduction of $350,000 to the city’s expense, but will require the city to fill all eight positions — including the four in Highland Beach — the following year.

In addition to giving Highland Beach a detailed plan for forming its own fire department and listing the expected cost — Matrix will review the services provided by Delray Beach over the last three years.

The audit will look at the costs and examine Delray Beach performance compared to the requirements in the agreement with the town. The commission wants to be sure we are being charged correctly pursuant to the contract,” Labadie said.

Matrix, which several years ago was hired to explore the possibility of creating a barrier island fire department in South County, expects to have a study completed in three or four months. The barrier island fire department concept was dismissed as too costly. Labadie believes the findings of the new report could help the town decide how best to proceed and that could include finding a way to continue the relationship with Delray.

“We’re hopeful that the study will bring the parties together and we’ll come up with an amicable solution for a long-term partnership,” Labadie said. “We’re happy to see you are hiring a consultant,” Tomey said. “We feel we are the best force for you and believe the consultant will point that out.”

During a subsequent presentation to the commission, Delray Beach Fire Chief Keith Tomey said he welcomed the consultant study commissioned by Highland Beach.

“We’re happy to see you are hiring a consultant,” Tomey said. “We feel we are the best force for you and believe the consultant will point that out.”

Tomey noted that the town is considered part of Delray Beach’s service area and as such receives a long list of services both direct and indirect — ranging from backup vehicles in case of a major fire to apparatus repair.

Hillman, in responding to the fire chief, made it clear that Highland Beach is pleased with the quality of services it receives from Delray.

“The service we get is top-notch,” he said. “This is purely a financial situation. It’s nothing more than dollars and cents.”

Currently, Delray Beach provides all fire rescue services in Highland Beach and staffing for the town-owned fire station, with the town paying for the cost of 22.5 firefighters/paramedics and some administrative services.

Delray Beach had originally requested that Highland Beach amend the contract to add four more personnel, with part of the cost for the first three years being covered by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In all, the grant would have covered the partial cost of eight Delray Beach firefighters over three years — four assigned to Highland Beach — with the portion paid by Delray Beach and Highland Beach increasing each year.

Highland Beach rejected the amendment and Delray Beach appealed to FEMA, asking for a hardship case because of the coronavirus pandemic. FEMA is now allowing Delray Beach to fill only three of the eight positions for the first year, a reduction of $350,000 to the city’s expense, but will require the city to fill all eight positions — including the four in Highland Beach — the following year.

In addition to giving Highland Beach a detailed plan for forming its own fire department and listing the expected cost — Matrix will review the services provided by Delray Beach over the last three years.

The audit will look at the costs and examine Delray Beach performance compared to the requirements in the agreement with the town. The commission wants to be sure we are being charged correctly pursuant to the contract,” Labadie said.

Matrix, which several years ago was hired to explore the possibility of creating a barrier island fire department in South County, expects to have a study completed in three or four months. The barrier island fire department concept was dismissed as too costly. Labadie believes the findings of the new report could help the town decide how best to proceed and that could include finding a way to continue the relationship with Delray.

“We’re hopeful that the study will bring the parties together and we’ll come up with an amicable solution for a long-term partnership,” Labadie said.

Currently, Delray Beach provides all fire rescue services in Highland Beach and staffing for the town-owned fire station, with the town paying for the cost of 22.5 firefighters/paramedics and some administrative services.

Delray Beach had originally requested that Highland Beach amend the contract to add four more personnel, with part of the cost for the first three years being covered by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

In all, the grant would have covered the partial cost of eight Delray Beach firefighters over three years — four assigned to Highland Beach — with the portion paid by Delray Beach and Highland Beach increasing each year.

Highland Beach rejected the amendment and Delray Beach appealed to FEMA, asking for a hardship case because of the coronavirus pandemic. FEMA is now allowing Delray Beach to fill only three of the eight positions for the first year, a reduction of $350,000 to the city’s expense, but will require the city to fill all eight positions — including the four in Highland Beach — the following year.

In addition to giving Highland Beach a detailed plan for forming its own fire department and listing the expected cost — Matrix will review the services provided by Delray Beach over the last three years.

The audit will look at the costs and examine Delray Beach performance compared to the requirements in the agreement with the town. The commission wants to be sure we are being charged correctly pursuant to the contract,” Labadie said.

Matrix, which several years ago was hired to explore the possibility of creating a barrier island fire department in South County, expects to have a study completed in three or four months. The barrier island fire department concept was dismissed as too costly. Labadie believes the findings of the new report could help the town decide how best to proceed and that could include finding a way to continue the relationship with Delray.

“We’re hopeful that the study will bring the parties together and we’ll come up with an amicable solution for a long-term partnership,” Labadie said.
During these unprecedented times, the Leslie L. Alexander Foundation wishes to acknowledge the hard work of local charities that are making a difference in the lives of so many.

The Foundation sincerely thanks these organizations for their tireless efforts and dedication to the local community.

Leslie L. Alexander Foundation
110 E. Atlantic Ave. Suite 320
Delray Beach, FL 33444
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Holy Ground Shelter for Homeless</td>
<td>$105,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement Centers for Children &amp; Families</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmworker Coordinating Council of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida's Children First</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Karma Pet Rescue</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living Hungry</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach Police and Fire Foundation</td>
<td>$100,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best Foot Forward Foundation</td>
<td>$85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida Humane Society</td>
<td>$85,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Riviera Beach Community Outreach</td>
<td>$84,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoned Pet Rescue</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back to Basics</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jessica June Children's Cancer Foundation</td>
<td>$80,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morningday Community Solutions</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Dog Rescue</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darbster Foundation</td>
<td>$68,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awesome Greyhound Adoptions</td>
<td>$66,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary</td>
<td>$62,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covenant House Florida</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DePorres Place</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elite Greyhound Adoptions</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For the Children</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.R.I.E.N.D.S. Horse Rescue &amp; Sanctuary</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion for Paws</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poverello Center</td>
<td>$60,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wounded Veterans Relief Fund</td>
<td>$57,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinics Can Help</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humane Society of Florida</td>
<td>$55,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Our Father's Soup Kitchen</td>
<td>$54,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheels from the Heart</td>
<td>$53,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everglades Angels Dog Rescue</td>
<td>$51,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flamingo Gardens</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seagull Industries for the Disabled</td>
<td>$50,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAGE of South Florida</td>
<td>$49,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Foster Children of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>$48,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vets Helping Heroes</td>
<td>$46,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Rescue Force of South Florida</td>
<td>$44,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boca Raton Society for the Disabled</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broward Coalition for the Homeless</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daniel D. Cantor Senior Center</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everglades Golden Retriever Rescue</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends of Youth Services and Palm Beach County</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Showering Love</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation 120</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kidsafe Foundation</td>
<td>$37,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kitty Karma of Delray</td>
<td>$35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Center for Child Counseling</td>
<td>$32,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt a Cat Foundation</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hands Together for Haitians</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pet Project for Pets</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepherd Help and Rescue Effort</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doberman Rescue League</td>
<td>$28,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida's Forgotten Felines</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palm Beach Island Cats</td>
<td>$27,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash 4 Canines</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gentle Giants Great Dane Rescue</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality Helping Hands</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milos Dog Rescue of South Florida</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Paw Left Behind</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paws 4 Liberty</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peaceful Ridge Rescue</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rising Star Rottweiler Rescue</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities in Schools of Palm Beach County</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naia's Pet Rescue</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paws South Florida Rescue</td>
<td>$20,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Better Life Rescue</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AHA Animal Rescue</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dogs Rule Rescue Group</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glimmer of Life Foundation</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuggetville Brigade</td>
<td>$15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feline Rescue</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genesis Assistance Dogs</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Island Retriever Rescue of the Palm Beaches</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forster Foundation</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Star has made or directed donations to more than 110 nonprofit organizations in our counties, all in support of the health and well-being of area families and animals.
I n these trying times, hospitals need more friends like Mason Slaine. Slaine moved from Greenwich, Connecticut, to coastal Boca Raton in 2014 and very quickly became involved with Boca Raton Regional Hospital, being named to its board of directors a year later.

“I wanted to participate in the community, which I’ve done in other places I’ve lived,” he said. “I’ve always been interested in health care, and particularly in South Florida, where the predominance of elderly people makes the need for top-notch health care more intense.”

Slaine has held a number of high-profile positions in the information and technology realm over the years, including CEO of business information publisher Thomson Financial (now Thomson Reuters) from 1994-96. He said conversations with medical professionals prompted him to become one of Boca Regional’s most prominent donors.

His first significant donation went to the Marcus Neuroscience Institute at Boca Regional, where the adjacent courtyard bears his name. And his most recent gift, in the amount of $1.5 million, has become a driving force in the hospital’s ongoing fundraising campaign titled “Keeping the Promise.”

“Mr. Slaine has been an extraordinary advocate and very active in our plans since he became involved with Boca Regional a few short years ago,” said Lincoln Mendez, CEO of Boca Raton Regional Hospital. “We are delighted to have him as a member of our family, as a foundation board member and as a lead donor to our campaign.”

Slaine, 67, said he has been involved in “some big decisions” since joining the board, including the hospital’s aligning itself with Baptist Health South Florida a year ago.

“That was a big issue, and the building on the (Boca Raton) campus in the coming years is going to be significant,” Slaine said.

The ongoing pandemic has intensified the spotlight on Boca Regional and other area hospitals.

“Dealing with COVID-19 is a very serious thing,” Slaine said. “So aside from giving my time, I give money, and I have an emotional interest in making sure we have good health care in the area.”

Slaine’s other investments include purchasing a 7% share in Tribune Publishing earlier this year. According to Thomson Reuters, the company between Feb. 3 and March 17, received immediate acceptance into many colleges throughout the world and was president of Thomson Financial (now Thomson Reuters) for many years. Slaine has held a number of high-profile positions, including CEO of Thomson Financial (now Thomson Reuters) for many years. Slaine has participated in developing and building many businesses, including Paradigm, a plagiarism detection device, is used in many high schools. He helped build Interactive Data Corporation, the leading provider of fixed income pricing data in the world. Slaine was a brilliant businessman and was also a great fighter for justice. He was also in many high schools. He helped build Interactive Data Corporation, the leading provider of fixed income pricing data in the world. Slaine was a brilliant businessman and was also a great fighter for justice. He was also a world-class bird photographer. Ted marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and wrote two books on how to improve business opportunities for people of color: Black Capitalism and The Black Power Imperative. He also published The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education and Business and Society Review.

Ted was a brilliant businessman and was also a great fighter for justice. He was also a world-class bird photographer. Ted marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and wrote two books on how to improve business opportunities for people of color: Black Capitalism and The Black Power Imperative. He also published The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education and Business and Society Review. Ted was Caucasian. Learning from a true Renaissance man who combined interests in science, social well-being and business provided me with the “weltgeist” to become the person I have become.

Q: What advice do you have for a young person seeking a career today?
A: Get the prerequisite training first and study hard and long!

Q: How did you choose to make your home in coastal Boca Raton?
A: I have friends and family in the area and like the weather.

Q: What is your favorite part about living in coastal Boca Raton?
A: Being near the water. Obviously, Florida has a great climate most of the year, and I love being outside as much as possible. I do a little boating and haven’t gone fishing for a while, but I just like being there, walking on the beach, that kind of thing.

Q: What music do you listen to when you want to relax? When you want to be inspired?
A: I generally like ’80s music and find Dvorak and Tchaikovsky inspiring.

Q: Have you had mentors in your life? Individuals who have inspired your life decisions?
A: I was fortunate to have had a mentor at the beginning of my career named Theodore “Ted” Lamont Cross. Ted was a brilliant businessman and was also a great fighter for justice. He was also a world-class bird photographer. Ted marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and wrote two books on how to improve business opportunities for people of color: Black Capitalism and The Black Power Imperative. He also published The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education and Business and Society Review. Ted was Caucasian. Learning from a true Renaissance man who combined interests in science, social well-being and business provided me with the “weltgeist” to become the person I have become.

Q: If your life story were to be made into a movie, who would play you?
A: Matt Damon — he would get the accent right!

Q: Is there something people don’t know about you but should?
A: My life story could be made into a movie, but I prefer to keep it short.

Q: What music do you listen to when you want to relax? When you want to be inspired?
A: I generally like ’80s music and find Dvorak and Tchaikovsky inspiring.

Q: Have you had mentors in your life? Individuals who have inspired your life decisions?
A: I was fortunate to have had a mentor at the beginning of my career named Theodore “Ted” Lamont Cross. Ted was a brilliant businessman and was also a great fighter for justice. He was also a world-class bird photographer. Ted marched with Martin Luther King Jr. and wrote two books on how to improve business opportunities for people of color: Black Capitalism and The Black Power Imperative. He also published The Journal of Blacks in Higher Education and Business and Society Review. Ted was Caucasian. Learning from a true Renaissance man who combined interests in science, social well-being and business provided me with the “weltgeist” to become the person I have become.

Q: If your life story were to be made into a movie, who would play you?
A: Matt Damon — he would get the accent right!

Q: Is there something people don’t know about you but should?
A: My life story could be made into a movie, but I prefer to keep it short.

Q: What music do you listen to when you want to relax? When you want to be inspired?
A: I generally like ’80s music and find Dvorak and Tchaikovsky inspiring.
Librarian making a name for herself by winning grants

By Mary Thurwachter

Kristine Kreidler hasn’t even been at her job a year and already Lantana’s new library director has amassed six grants worth $98,000.

Her good work isn’t going unnoticed. During a municipal meeting in July, Town Manager Deborah Manzo announced one of Kreidler’s most recent wins, a Library Services and Technology Act grant awarded by the state from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

“Kristine, you have been such a tremendous asset since you’ve been here for the town, I really appreciate everything you’ve been doing,” Manzo said. Kreidler started working for the town last November.

The grant money will be used to create a 21st century community library and to fund the LABtana concept with early literacy computers for the youngest patrons, coding robots for kids, and recording equipment and Apple computers for teens, according to Kreidler.

“For the adults, we will be purchasing a smartboard for the meeting room, along with a camera and podcasting equipment,” she said. “The idea is that the space could be used for patrons who are trying to start small businesses, whether that is online or traditional brick-and-mortar businesses.

“We also want to hire instructors who mirror Lantana’s population and create a thriving space where they can bounce ideas off of each other and more.”

Other grants the library has secured this year are a Young Adult Library Association Collection Development Grant; a Public Library Association Inclusive Internship Initiative Grant, which funds a summer internship and travel for the mentor and student to attend workshops in Washington, D.C., and Chicago; an American Library Association Census Equity Fund Grant; Florida’s State Aid to Libraries Grant; and a CARES Act grant from Florida Humanities for COVID-related supplies and a virtual homework helper. It is designed for kids who may be having problems with distance learning.

Kreidler, 38, who grew up in Lantana and attended Lantana Elementary School, Lantana Middle School and Santaluces High School, said she enjoys the grant application process.

“I have always loved writing and once upon a time, I wanted to be a creative nonfiction/memoir writer. My bachelor’s specialization was in English/creative writing and women’s studies,” she said. “I love grant writing and trying to find that unique angle that catches the eye of grant panels.”

The library, at 205 W. Ocean Ave., is about to undergo a $748,636 renovation expected to begin this fall.

“Hopefully, it will be complete in time for Lantana’s centennial in April,” Kreidler said. “If we are lucky enough to be through our COVID days, we would like to have an exhibit opening here and programs to help celebrate the centennial.”

Kristine Kreidler has received $98,000 in grants for the library in less than one year on the job. Coastal Star file photo

General Landscaping Corp.

A design build Landscape Architectural firm that follows “Florida-Friendly Landscaping” principles.

- Sustainable landscaping
- Hedge replacement with natural buffers
- Specialist in Chicago brick patios

Clint Oster, President
Registered Landscape Architect
561-994-3755
Cell 561-239-8280
Email: GeneralLand@bellsouth.net
Member American Association of Landscape Architects

CANDACE FRiiS
EXCELLENCE. REDEFINED.

1465 N OCEAN BLVD | GULF STREAM  5 BR | 5.1 BA | 7,058 TOTAL SF

901 NE 4TH AVE | DELRAY BEACH  6 BR | 3.1 BA | 4.045 TOTAL SF

1847 S OCEAN BLVD | GULF STREAM  4 BR | 4.1 BA | 5,948 TOTAL SF

800 SEAGATE DR | DELRAY BEACH  5 BR | 5.3 BA | 7,240 TOTAL SF

TO REPRESENT YOUR BEST INTERESTS AND ACHIEVE THE HIGHEST VALUE FOR YOUR PROPERTY, CONTACT CANDACE.

Candace Friis
561.573.9966
candace.friis@corcoran.com

Phil Friis
561.706.1922
phil.friis@corcoran.com
Reflections from the front line

Julie O'Brien
Kindergarten teacher at St. Vincent Ferrer School in Delray Beach

There are no high-fives in Julie O’Brien’s kindergarten class at St. Vincent Ferrer School. Ditto for circle time and close encounters.

Students, teachers and staff don masks, classes are smaller and there’s social distancing — not the easiest concept to explain to 5-year-olds.

Desperate many modifications, O’Brien is glad to return to the private Delray Beach Catholic school after more than five months.

She also learned that students had plenty of resources for remote learning and she held frequent one-on-one Zoom sessions, it wasn’t an ideal learning environment and she missed the in-person interaction.

“The toughest part was that my son was home watching me give my time to other kids and he couldn’t play with me. It was very stressful trying to balance school and home life.”

But being back on campus presents other challenges.

“My biggest concern is the crying child. My first instinct is to get on my knees and snoop in for a hug,” says O’Brien, 43.

“Human beings need to touch. ‘It wipes away all your sins.’”

Her biggest concern is the crying child. My first instinct is to get on my knees and snoop in for a hug,“ says O’Brien, 43.

“Human beings need to touch. It is something I am used to doing out in spades. I usually have someone on my lap and two right next to me. It’s going to be different, but I will explain everything in ways they can understand.”

Versatility is key, she says, including a mask with a clear strip over her mouth so students can see her pronounce words.

“Teachers are nothing if not flexible and ingenious. We will make it work,” she says emphatically.

Her message to others?

“Teachers are doing the very best that we can. As scared as people are to send their children back to school, I have my own worries about going back and having my son start kindergarten.”

But there is much to be grateful for. “I get to go to school and pray because I am in a Catholic school where we depend on God, too.”

— Linda Haase

The Rev. D. Brian Horgan
Pastor of St. Lucy Catholic Church in Highland Beach

The Rev. D. Brian Horgan of St. Lucy Catholic Church in Highland Beach has been on the front lines of war before as a chaplain in the Air Force early in his pastoral career. Now, with COVID-19, he feels like he’s in a war again.

The pandemic has changed how we worship God and the way we bury our loved ones, Horgan said. About 60% of parishes in the area and socially distanced Mass each week, but funerals are a different story.

“Most funerals have been with just the funeral director and the deceased,” Horgan said. “It’s been challenging, but we can do tremendous work with the families at home.”

In this small parish, which has lost more than a dozen members of its congregation to the virus, goodbyes are by telephone, and even clergy can’t bridge that gap.

“Sometimes we get in and sometimes we don’t,” Horgan said.

“But if they’re sick before their death, Horgan explained, and “it brings great comfort to the dying.”

Horgan can perform last rites weeks before a person dies or if someone is facing a serious medical procedure, but COVID usually arrives unexpectedly. Loved ones not receiving that final Communion weighs heavily on the hearts of some families. But Horgan finds a way to comfort his parishioners. A priest isn’t needed for someone to be absolved of sins, he said. If he or she simply repents and asks forgiveness, “God is full of mercy and love.”

Horgan, who earned medals for his work during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008, says COVID-19 is “a clever enemy shrouded in mystery.”

He senses an underlying fear that reminds him of war.

“But don’t be afraid. Fear is a ‘false experience appearing real’,” Horgan says, spelling out an acronym associated with the word. “It teach God and serving God’s people is the most important thing I do. Fear won’t hold me back.”

— Janis Fontaine

Dr. Bill Benda
Emergency room physician at St. Mary’s Medical Center, Bethesda Hospital East and Delray Medical Center, associate professor of emergency medicine at FAU

Bill Benda is less stressed than he was early on in the pandemic.

Doctors knew very little about the novel coronavirus or how to treat it in March. But the country’s stay-at-home lockdown slowed the contagion, buying them time to learn.

When the county eased restrictions and cases spiked this summer, Benda, who lives in the County Pocket near Briny Breezes, knew much more about how to manage the disease.

“With this first hit, we had no idea how dangerous this was and how contagious this was,” he said.

Now, “People are much more experienced with how it works, so it is not nearly as stressful as it was in the early days.”

“When something is unknown, it is scary. Now we don’t have that overarching fear we had initially.”

As the number of infected people mounts, Benda, 66, said the hospitals and doctors are better able to cope.

“Hospitals now have special units for COVID-19 patients, which take pressure off ICUs. Several treatment options are available, which include dexamethasone, which take pressure off ICUs.”

As the number of infected people mounts, Benda, 66, said the hospitals and doctors are better able to cope.

“Hospitals now have special units for COVID-19 patients, which take pressure off ICUs.”

Several treatment options are available, which include dexamethasone, which take pressure off ICUs.

“Sometimes we get in and sometimes we don’t,” Horgan said. That means some don’t receive last rites, an important final sacrament that includes confession and absolution.

“It wipes away all your sins” before death, Horgan explained, and “it brings great comfort to the dying.”

Horgan can perform last rites weeks before a person dies or if someone is facing a serious medical procedure, but COVID usually arrives unexpectedly. Loved ones not receiving that final Communion weighs heavily on the hearts of some families. But Horgan finds a way to comfort his parishioners. A priest isn’t needed for someone to be absolved of sins, he said. If he or she simply repents and asks forgiveness, “God is full of mercy and love.”

Horgan, who earned medals for his work during Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2008, says COVID-19 is “a clever enemy shrouded in mystery.”

He senses an underlying fear that reminds him of war.

“But don’t be afraid. Fear is a ‘false experience appearing real’,” Horgan says, spelling out an acronym associated with the word. “It teach God and serving God’s people is the most important thing I do. Fear won’t hold me back.”

— Janis Fontaine

Kevin Saxton
Delray Beach Fire Rescue Battalion Chief

The threat of COVID-19 is always on Kevin Saxton’s mind, but the Delray Beach Fire Rescue battalion chief won’t let the highly contagious disease prevent him from fully serving the community.

“It’s something I think about all the time,” says Saxton, who is 38 and in his 17th year with the department. “I’m going to take the precautions I need to take. Along with changing the way the department handles calls, the virus has affected how firefighters interact with one another when they’re not responding.”

Kevin Saxton
Delray Beach Fire Rescue Battalion Chief

The threat of COVID-19 is always on Kevin Saxton’s mind, but the Delray Beach Fire Rescue battalion chief won’t let the highly contagious disease prevent him from fully serving the community.

“It’s something I think about all the time,” says Saxton, who is 38 and in his 17th year with the department. “I’m going to take the precautions I need to take. Along with changing the way the department handles calls, the virus has affected how firefighters interact with one another when they’re not responding.”

To minimize the spread of the virus, all are required to wear masks in the station while in common areas. And, instead of everyone eating at one long table, the shift is split by squad into two tables with everyone maintaining 6-foot separation.

“We’ve just not spending as much time together,” Saxton says.

Even when they are on a call, firefighters and paramedics are maintaining a safe distance, especially on medical calls.

One member of the three-person crew will make contact with the caller and another will be available if needed. The third person remains in the truck.

“It’s one fewer person who is exposed,” Saxton says.

As shift supervisor, Saxton is vigilant to make sure everyone takes necessary precautions.

“You want to make sure we don’t put our guard down,” he said.

— Rich Pullock

Sue Brown
Restaurant general manager at Oceano Kitchen in Lantana

Sue Brown has undoubtedly encountered nearly every challenge in the restaurant business.

“COVID-19 is a game changer. Brown, the general manager of Oceano Kitchen in Lantana, had a lot more to worry about than inventory when the eatery had to hold in-person dining.

“The Ocean Avenue restaurant shifted to takeout — for the first time. “We weren’t set up for it. It was a learning curve, but we figured it out pretty quickly,” says the Hypoluxo Island resident, who did not want to reveal her age.

Everything was uncertain, but staff was buoyed by customers checking in with encouraging words, homemade masks and even monetary donations.

“Our customers tell us how grateful they are that we are open. We are even more grateful to them for coming in.”

Dining on the open-air deck has resumed, but for Brown — along with other servers — things aren’t the same:

“Not following what they say is disaster.”

Masks are stifling, cleaning is constant, and hands are washed repeatedly.

“We are like anyone else, just doing our jobs. We might be a little slower because we have to wash our hands more, so patience is a good thing,” she says.

“We when resumed dine in it was a little nerve-racking, but I knew the majority of my customers so there is a trust level,” she says. “As time went on, I got more comfortable with it.”

“I feel safe. I trust my fellow workers and customers.”

The staff is conscious of health protocols when off-duty, she says. “We know if one of us goes down all of us go down. We are a team and it in together,” Brown says. “It’s been hard for everyone. But we still laugh a lot.”

Although some customers are comfortable only with takeout, Brown looks forward to the day when she’ll see them dining at one of her tables.

“When everybody feels comfortable coming back, then I will be happy.” — Linda Haase
These are just a few of your neighbors who are working on the front line to keep you safe from COVID-19

Valerie Jacoby
Lead postal clerk at the Highland Beach Community Post Office

During the 20 years that Valerie Jacoby has been behind the counter of the Highland Beach Community Post Office, she’s gotten to know many of the residents.

Over the years, folks would come into the small-contract postal station, established in 1964 as a convenience for people who didn’t want to cross the bridge to Boca Raton, and catch up on what was happening around them.

Some, who might bump into neighbors, would stay for a few minutes talking about everything from the impertinent to the important.

“When my co-workers used to compare it to Mayberry,” says Jacoby, 60.

Now, with COVID-19 as a backdrop, the atmosphere is more like that of a regular post office. Amid constant concerns about contagion, conversations have been converted to shorter chatter in an environment where safety is a top priority.

“One of the changes I’ve made is the clinical approach,” says Jacoby, who worked for the U.S. Postal Service in Illinois for several years before moving to Florida.

Run by the town of Highland Beach, the post office behind Town Hall has offered residents — those wishing to buy stamps or mail packages — an alternative to visiting a larger, potentially more crowded postal station.

With the arrival of the virus, town leaders have made necessary changes and instituted precautionary measures while hoping to keep the post office open.

“They’ve really done a lot to keep everyone safe,” Jacoby says.

One of the most obvious changes has been a rearranging of the small lobby. A tempered glass partition separates customers from clerks and a pullout drawer makes it easier to mail a package.

Customers are required to wear masks and hours have been cut from a full day to 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

With just two customers allowed in the 500-square-foot building at a time and social distancing expected, the post office remains a safe haven for residents and a safe place to work for Jacoby.

— Rich Pollack

Michael Varesio
Shipt shopper serving coastal communities

When Michael Varesio joined the ranks of Shipt shoppers in January, he never anticipated a pandemic that would turn him into an essential worker.

It was overwhelming. The 47-year-old Boynton Beach resident worked 61 days straight, took a day off, then toiled 21 more days, frantically buying groceries for people who feared leaving their homes.

“Nobody was ready for this. The orders were insane. I felt bad if I didn’t take an order, I was worried someone wouldn’t be able to get groceries. I tried to do too much and had to cut back,” he admits.

“Low inventory made the job stressful. Toilet paper and paper towels were scarce. Then the bread aisle was empty for weeks. After that, flour was gone. I haven’t seen anything with the word Lysol on it for months,” says Varesio, a father of two. “I felt bad texting people every two seconds to update them. I didn’t know what they were doing. They might have been working or feeding the baby. Most said not to worry (if I was late), that they weren’t going anywhere, which made things easier.”

Although the workload decreased and inventory increased, risks linger.

“I’m aware of the possibilities of getting COVID and I take all the precautions and follow the rules to stay healthy. And after I put the groceries in the car, I sanitize my hands and clean my phone,” he explains.

The outpouring of appreciation is an enormous perk. From Ziploc bags filled with masks to thoughtful handmade thank-you notes, customers’ gratefulness is heartwarming, Varesio says.

“The most surprising thing is the gratitude. I keep the thank-you notes. They mean so much,” he says.

“I’m putting myself at risk, but I know I am helping people. I am not a nurse or a doctor, but I know that I am helping others and it feels good. I’m making a difference during a tough time.”

— Linda Haase

Property Damage Attorneys Ready To Protect Your Rights

Insurance companies almost always deny or under pay claims.

Protect your Home or Business.

Ged Lawyers, LLP
ATTOURNEYS AT LAW
SUCCESSFULLY RECOVERED OVER $100 MILLION REPRESENTING CLIENTS AFFECTED BY INSURANCE COMPANIES

www.gedlawyers.com
561-500-6000
7171 North Federal Highway • Boca Raton, FL 33487 • 561.995.1966

• PIPE BURSTS & LEAKS • HURRICANE DAMAGE • ROOF LEAKS • WIND DAMAGE

The COASTAL STAR
September/October 2020
News 21
Overdose deaths double in Delray during pandemic

By Charles Elmore

Tony Allerton calls it a situation “we’ve never been through before.”

Amid a COVID-19 pandemic, overdose deaths have doubled in Delray Beach in 2020 and emergency response calls for opioids have climbed by a third in Palm Beach County, reports from police and rescue agencies show.

“It’s a time of survival, whether it’s from the drug of choice or the pandemic,” said Allerton, executive director of the Delray Beach-based Crossroads Club, formed in 1982 to help people cope with drug and alcohol addiction.

Support groups and agencies say self-isolating efforts every day by people to help themselves and others, but these are conditions that virtually no one anticipated. The virus not only threatened lives and jobs, but in many cases it also closed meeting spaces for 12-step and other recovery groups.

Organizers scrambled to hold meetings by way of Zoom or other online services, racing to stay connected with people at risk. Some groups met outside.

Because of fears of COVID-19 exposure, virtual meetings remain common even as some in-person gatherings have resumed in recent months, typically with masks and distancing. But it has been a difficult battle to break through isolation and despair.

In the third week of March in Delray Beach, “when everything was shut down, there were 17 reported overdoses in one week,” said Ariana Ciancio, service population advocate for the Delray Beach Police Department.

That was roughly triple the weekly average for the first seven months of 2019, when the department responded to a total of 171 overdose calls.

In the first seven months of 2020, the city recorded 229 overdose calls, an increase of 34%.

Overdose deaths in 2020 tracked by Delray Beach police doubled to 42 through July 31, compared to 21 in the same period of 2019.

“No one was prepared for coping with this kind of situation,” Ciancio said. “I have spent years talking about learning proper coping skills, but a global pandemic isn’t something that is frequently discussed in relapse-prevention planning or discharge planning.”

It is a difficult situation for everyone experiencing it and the only way to get through it is together.”

Her advice for people struggling with addiction: “Utilize support systems, either in person or by Zoom. Utilize family friends, old connections and sponsors.

Even though you are physically distant you have to remain socially connected.”

Nationwide, there are signs the problem may be getting worse as the pandemic drags on.

Preliminary data shows suspected overdoses nationally increased 18% in March, 29% in April and 42% in May, compared to year-earlier periods, according to a Washington Post report.

It cited the Overdose Detection Mapping Application Program, a federal initiative that collects information from ambulance teams, hospitals and police.

Other parts of Florida have seen similar spikes. By July, Jacksonville was reporting a 40% increase in overdose calls. Manatee County reported an 44% rise.

An annual fundraiser for Crossroads Club in Delray Beach organized by chef and restaurant owner Louie Bossi and colleagues had to be canceled in June because of the coronavirus.

Bossi, who speaks frankly about his own recovery from addiction, said at least three employees at his restaurants relapsed during the pandemic.

Bossi is a partner in restaurants including Louie Bossi’s Ristorante in Boca Raton and Fort Lauderdale and Elisabetta’s Ristorante in Delray Beach.

Workers came to him to express “fear and difficulty,” Bossi said. “I relate to everything they talk about. I’ve been there and done that.”

Born in New York and raised in New Jersey, Bossi has talked about his own previous years of addiction as daily “torture” before he began a different path at Crossroads.

He sees the stress in the eyes of people he wants to help.

“It’s caused a lot of relapses and a lot of deaths,” he said.

A different story from 2019

A little more than one year ago, things looked different.

Palm Beach County Fire Rescue reported a 21% decrease in opioid overdose patients in the first half of 2019, compared to the first six months of 2018.

Since then, there had been a 61% decrease in county emergency responses to overdoses, State Attorney Dave Aronberg, working with a Sober Homes Task Force, announced at the time.

By July 31, 2020, Palm Beach County Fire Rescue had logged 1,063 overdose calls for 1,086 patients during the calendar year, according to the department. That compared to 799 calls for 814 patients in the first seven months of 2019, a 33% increase in calls.

A spokesman said he did not have information on overdose deaths.

People who count on meetings for support said isolation was a big factor as the initial impact of COVID-19 began to hit.

“The most immediate concern was meetings — meetings generally held in public spaces,” said one participant, who asked not to be identified, in a recovery group that gathers regularly in southern Palm Beach County.

“Once public spaces were shut down, it was challenging. Some people weren’t as open to trying Zoom.”

The pressure has not let up, with one participant in the group dying of an overdose in July, she said. “He had started to get to know people and was really excited about making a new life.”

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected people in different ways, she said.

“Some people are like, ‘oh my God, I have to get out of my house,’” she said. “There are others saying, ‘oh my God, I have to go to work every day in public.’

“Some individuals for their recovery are now in a life-and-death struggle,” said Jeffrey Fiorentino, CEO of KiplingHealth in Coral Gables, a software provider serving the substance abuse, mental health and eating disorder communities.

Palm Beach County’s Sober Homes Task Force posted written remarks from him in meeting materials.

“The two great epidemics of our generation — opioid addiction and COVID-19 — are intersecting in ways that impact and worsen each other,” Fiorentino said. “For individuals in recovery, the social distancing, lack of work, homelessness, anxiety, shattered treatment models, fear of the future and the crushing loneliness of isolation has, in many cases, derailed sobriety.

That requires a ‘reset,’” he said, of efforts to help. Jane Smith contributed to this story.
COVID-19 has slammed the Wyndham Boca Raton.

“It is grim,” said general manager Phillip DiPonio. His average occupancy rate has plummeted to just 10%, which clearly does not pay the bills.

About one quarter of his staff has been laid off or furloughed. The bellman is gone. The shuttle service is on ice.

Nearly all his corporate business has canceled for the end of the year. Weddings are way down, and the couples who are booking have dramatically downsized their guest lists. International travelers have disappeared.

One recent bright spot was the arrival of parents bringing their children to start classes at Florida Atlantic and Lynn universities, boosting his occupancy to nearly 40%.

DiPonio has an advantage, though. His Wyndham franchise hotel at 1950 Glades Road is locally owned by Mitchell Robbins, who also is co-owner of the hotel’s Towers restaurant adjacent to the hotel. “I know our owner will sustain us,” he said.

His plight is shared by hoteliers across the country and county. “Things are probably the worst for the hotel business in its history,” said Peter Ricci, director of FAU’s hospitality and tourism management program. He expects a very slow recovery, with a return to a “reasonable” amount of business in 2-2.5 years. But a return to pre-pandemic occupancy, room rates, profit margins and staffing levels will take five to seven years, he said.

A June forecast by hospitality industry data firm STR and Tortoise Analytics was only a bit more optimistic, saying that U.S. hotel demand will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023, and average daily hotel rates will not fully recover in the next five years.

For hotels, pre-pandemic success may be 5-7 years away.

Along the Coast

By Mary Hladky

For hotels, pre-pandemic success may be 5-7 years away. It is grim,” said general manager Phillip DiPonio. His average occupancy rate has plummeted to just 10%, which clearly does not pay the bills.

About one quarter of his staff has been laid off or furloughed. The bellman is gone. The shuttle service is on ice.

Nearly all his corporate business has canceled for the end of the year. Weddings are way down, and the couples who are booking have dramatically downsized their guest lists. International travelers have disappeared.

One recent bright spot was the arrival of parents bringing their children to start classes at Florida Atlantic and Lynn universities, boosting his occupancy to nearly 40%.

DiPonio has an advantage, though. His Wyndham franchise hotel at 1950 Glades Road is locally owned by Mitchell Robbins, who also is co-owner of the hotel’s Towers restaurant adjacent to the hotel. “I know our owner will sustain us,” he said.

His plight is shared by hoteliers across the country and county. “Things are probably the worst for the hotel business in its history,” said Peter Ricci, director of FAU’s hospitality and tourism management program. He expects a very slow recovery, with a return to a “reasonable” amount of business in 2-2.5 years. But a return to pre-pandemic occupancy, room rates, profit margins and staffing levels will take five to seven years, he said.

A June forecast by hospitality industry data firm STR and Tortoise Analytics was only a bit more optimistic, saying that U.S. hotel demand will not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2023, and average daily hotel rates will not fully recover in the next five years.

For hotels, pre-pandemic success may be 5-7 years away.
Gerald Allen ‘Jerry’ Goray

By Sallie James

OCEAN RIDGE — Longtime Ocean Ridge resident Gerald Allen ‘Jerry’ Goray, the dedicated chairman of the town’s Planning and Zoning Commission and a devoted philanthropist, died on June 30 of heart disease. He was weekly shy of his 81st birthday. “He will be sadly missed,” said Mark Marsh, a colleague on the Planning and Zoning Commission who took over after Mr. Goray stepped down. “It was a pleasure to work with him. His heart and soul were in Ocean Ridge.”

The real estate developer had lived in the quiet beachside town for 30 years with his wife, Donna, and kept close watch on what type of development was permitted there. His goal was to preserve the quality, character and uniqueness of Ocean Ridge, Marsh said. Mr. Goray was also chairman of the town’s Infrastructure Surtax Citizens Oversight Committee.

“I worked with him at least seven years. Our Planning and Zoning Commission was quite parochial and we both worked to try to get it where it is today, where we have some say as to what is developed in the town,” Marsh said.

Mr. Goray was a Michigan native, born Aug. 22, 1939, in Detroit. He grew up there, attending Detroit Catholic Central High School, the University of Detroit and the University of Michigan Law School. He married his high school sweetheart, Donna, in 1958 and spent the next 62 years with her.

His wife remembers her husband as a complicated, brilliant person who loved to talk, and always tried to do better than he had done before.

“He was constantly thinking more should be done, more can be done, let’s do some more,” Donna Goray said. “Quiet wasn’t him. He loved to talk.”

Mr. Goray practiced law in Detroit for several years, became area counsel for HUD, and then co-founded a law firm specializing in real estate law.

His career in real estate development began in the 1970s, when he began building houses and developing subdivisions in suburban Detroit. The couple moved to Florida in 1981 and built their house in Ocean Ridge in 1989. In Florida, Mr. Goray developed self-storage units, apartments, senior housing and other properties.

In 1979, Mr. Goray founded In the Pines, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing affordable housing for low-income, immigrant farmworkers. The organization operates two low-income housing complexes in Delray Beach.

“He was always very proudful when he told about it, but you never felt pressure to participate,” Ocean Ridge Mayor Kristine de Haseth said.

Donna Goray said her husband completely rebuilt the two apartment buildings because he was always driven to do more.

“They are absolutely lovely. Very well maintained, and really beautiful,” she said. He worked until he died, she said, his son Brian.

“No one ever knew he was sick until he had to quit coming to meetings. He was very humble in that way. He never wanted the limelight on himself,” de Haseth said.

Mr. Goray loved cars, contemporary art and his work.

“He enjoyed what he did,” his son Brian said. “He had a lot of friends and he enjoyed life. All of his adult life he owned some sports car or another, starting with a Corvette. His last car was a Porsche.”

People who knew him described him as witty, thoughtful, dedicated and inclusive.

“He was dedicated to the town, he was dedicated to his family or any project he got involved with, whether it was assisted living, his nonprofit, or the McCormick Mile Beach Club. Anything that was community-minded he supported,” de Haseth said.

“He always made everyone feel very warm and welcome. He was very active in the community not only in a leadership role but was also very supportive of the McCormick Mile Beach Club. Every year he would sponsor a Ben and Jerry’s ice cream truck in front of his house so the community could watch Fourth of July fireworks in his front yard.”

De Haseth also remembered Mr. Goray as forward-thinking and respectful of varying opinions.

“That made our job much easier to have that kind of leadership — well thought out, very even-handed and very well-researched. I really appreciated it. I had an even deeper respect for what Jerry did for the town after I became mayor,” she said.

Mr. Goray is survived by his wife; sons Brian and Greg; a brother, David; a sister, Christina, and numerous nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

Johan Erik Hvide

GOLF — Johan Erik Hvide died at home July 15, surrounded by loved ones. He was 71.

Born Sept. 5, 1948, in Glen Cove, New York, son of Hans Johan and Elise Mose Hvide, Mr. Hvide led his life with quiet dignity. He possessed the stubborn determination of a true Viking.

He was diagnosed at age 7 with polio and his doctors said that he would not survive — but he did. His doctors said that he would never get out of an iron lung — but he did. His doctors said that he would never get out of a wheelchair — but he did, going on to become a varsity golfer for Saint Andrew’s School in Boca Raton, where he graduated in 1965.

He went on to the University of Miami, where he was president of the Kappa Psi business fraternity and a member of the university’s highest national leadership and scholastic fraternity. He graduated in 1970 with a BBA. He did continuing education through Harvard.

But, as the Beach Boys sang, Mr. Hvide loved and was true to his (high) school for the rest of his life.

He married his sweetheart, Betsy Frances Schmidt, in the Chapel of Saint Andrew on May 29, 1971, and both of their sons, Leif-Erik and Johan Anders, were also graduates. He served on the board of trustees for 12 years, including as chairman. Under his leadership, the school began a new era, calling the Rev. George Andrews as the new headmaster, implementing a long-range master plan, and successfully launching its first capital campaign.

Mr. Hvide’s donations were responsible for the construction of the Saint Andrew’s Lower School, but true to his quiet modesty, he would not permit the facilities to be named in his honor.

Mr. Hvide was a consummate businessman, dedicated to work with absolute passion. He joined his father at Hvide Marine in 1970 and went on to become its president in 1981, CEO in 1991, and chairman in 1994. Under his leadership, the company grew from a small family tugboat operation into a global shipping company with offshore and harbor tugs, offshore supply vessels and chemical tankers. He led the company in an initial public offering in 1996, raising $1.5 billion in capital and growing the company from 23 vessels to one of the world’s leading providers of global marine support services with a fleet of 273 ships, 2,500 employees, operations in 20 countries and revenues of $4.0 billion.

Hailed by Maritime Executive as an “unquestionably brilliant” leader in the maritime industry, Mr. Hvide invented the revolutionary Catug tugboat and the SDM tugboat for which he held two patents in vessel design.

His accolades include induction into the International Maritime Hall of Fame, Master Entrepreneur of the Year by Ernst and Young, International Executive of the Year by the Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce, congressional appointee to the U.S. Coast Guard, council member of the American Bureau of Shipping, and member of various industry, corporate and bank boards.

Mr. Hvide also loved to serve his local and religious communities, having served for various parishes in South Florida as well as having lobbied the state of Florida to protect the natural tree corridor along A1A in Gulf Stream, and was made mayor for the day.

He was a member of the Greenwich Yacht and Tennis, Lauderdale Yacht Club, Royal Palm Yacht & Country Club, Country Club of Florida and Cat Cay Yacht Club, where he spent many years at his home, Manor House.

He is predeceased by his parents and sister Elsa. In addition to his wife and sons, he is survived by grandchildren Magnus Johan, Hans Kristoffer and Håkon.

Mr. Hvide will be remembered as a giant among men, but his greatest accomplishments were not the ones that made the papers but rather the quiet ones he shared with friends and family.

To him we say: “For you we were a truly special husband, father, and grandfather and a shining example of how one should lead all our lives. We want to say thank you. Thank you for all of the sacrifices you made, teaching us to put others first and that family is more important than anything. Thank you for teaching us the art of something: you always had us hanging at your every word and we can only hope to be as captivating as you.”

“Thank you for all of the incredible adventures: together we learned to appreciate the journey and the world around us. Thank you for teaching us the value of dedication and hard work; the standard set you is golden. Thank you for your determination and perseverance; you had the heart of a lion and we can only strive to be as brave as you. Thank you for teaching us to listen. You were always 110% in the moment, and there is nothing more powerful than to hear what others have to say.”

“Thank you for your unflappable calmness in the face of adversity; you are the original ‘keep calm and carry on.’ Thank you for showing us that anything is possible if you put your mind to it; there is nothing more satisfying than defying the odds and the critics. Thank you for your kindness — you always found time for anyone and everyone. Thank you for teaching us faith, forgiveness and unconditional love; you are the perfect example of Christ’s teachings. You will be greatly missed and eternally loved.”

— Obituary submitted by the family
By Dan Moffett

M N ALAPA N — Tom Gerrard became Manalapan’s mayor in 2008 and quickly earned the respect of the town staff and residents. “That was his life, always on a mission to help others, always wanting to add a voice where others couldn’t. He had a personal touch in all his ways that left lasting positive impressions to all whom he came in touch with,” said Jeffrey Bliemeister, executive director of the Antique Automobile Club of America. Mr. Gerrard lived in Delray Beach most of his adult life and was instrumental along with Maury Power in starting the legendary St. Patrick’s Day Parade. He transitioned from cranes into telecommunications, owning Radio Services and Advanced Radio Communications Services, companies that grew to rank among the industry’s largest. In 2003 he became chairman of the museum’s board, Intertaken Inc., which specialized in Everglades restoration work for the South Florida Water Management District. Martin Conroy said his mother was always trying to help others and when she learned that the Coastal Star church was reluctant to baptize her three grandchildren because he was divorced, she stepped in. “My mother took it upon herself to make sure they were baptized,” Mr. Conroy said. Mrs. Conroy left the world of academia when Francis Conroy’s construction business took off. He transitioned from cranes into telecommunications, owning Radio Services and Advanced Radio Communications Services, companies that grew to rank among the industry’s largest. In 2003 he became chairman of the museum’s board, Intertaken Inc., which specialized in Everglades restoration work for the South Florida Water Management District. Martin Conroy said his mother was always trying to help others and when she learned that the Coastal Star church was reluctant to baptize her three grandchildren because he was divorced, she stepped in. “My mother took it upon herself to make sure they were baptized,” Mr. Conroy said. Mrs. Conroy left the world of academia when Francis Conroy’s construction business took off. He transitioned from cranes into telecommunications, owning Radio Services and Advanced Radio Communications Services, companies that grew to rank among the industry’s largest. In 2003 he became chairman of the museum’s board, Intertaken Inc., which specialized in Everglades restoration work for the South Florida Water Management District.
Boca Raton

Diversifying diamond interchange safer, FDOT assures city
By Steve Plunkett

After some back-and-forth communications between city and state transportation officials, the plan for a "diverging diamond interchange" at Interstate 95 and Glades Road is back on track.

"Our engineering staff raised a number of questions, and [state workers] have gone back and made modifications and adjustments, and talked to the staff," City Manager Leif Ahnell said. "And I believe everybody’s happy now, and we're all fully supportive of the project."

In March the City Council threatened to call on its state and federal lobbyists to fight the plan after the city’s municipal services director and traffic engineer raised concerns about safety and traffic operations.

A diverging diamond interchange makes vehicles switch sides of the road at multilane X crossings guarded by traffic signals at either end of the diamond.

Paul Lampley of the Florida Department of Transportation told council members Aug. 24 that the goal of a DDI is "to improve traffic operations and system performance, reduce congestion and increase safety."

Another benefit: The design will replace 4-foot-wide bike lanes on Glades Road to 7-foot-wide, buffered bike lanes with a 10-foot-wide "shared-use" lane for bicyclists and pedestrians in case of an exchange, he said, answering one of the city’s primary questions.

Other FDOT representatives said plans are also being made to convert the I-95 interchanges at Lantana Road and 45th Street in West Palm Beach to DDIs.

Design engineer Jose Otero said the Glades project will reduce crashes by 9% and reduce the severity of crashes. It will increase throughput of traffic along Glades and decrease delays, he said. And it eliminates 8,000 linear feet of retaining wall that would have been needed for a no-longer-planned "flyover" ramp.

The agency expects work on the DDI will begin in the first three months of 2021. The schedule calls for 700 days of construction.

The Glades Road interchange is part of a $148 million project to add express lanes to Interstate 95 through Boca Raton and into Delray Beach. The overall project is supposed to open in late 2023.

In other transportation news, council members endorsed a plan to add a 12-lane Federal Highway south of Southeast Mizner Boulevard from six lanes to four while adding bike lanes and widening sidewalks. Money to design that project will not be available until 2024.

Delray Beach

Utility director: ‘Safest reclaimed water system in country’ once all service is restored
By Jane Smith

Delray Beach barrier island residents have endured three reclaimed water shutoffs in less than a year.

The first two were short, under 10 days. This year, the city’s reclaimed water system was shut down for months, starting in early February.

By late August, slightly more than a month after the barrier island homes were still waiting to have the reclaimed water service restored.

"A reclaimed water system in the country," said Hassan Hadjimiry, new utilities director for Delray Beach, "it was inspected, and every installation was inspected and surveyed for crossed connections before the parcel was placed back into service."

Delray Beach has spent at least $65 million to bring its reclaimed water system into compliance with state standards by its introduction of every reclaimed water connection in the city.

At the Aug. 11 City Commission meeting, Hadjimiry broke down the expense into three categories: $254,876.13 for materials, including backflow preventers; $588,000 for labor; and $228,845.83 for staff overtime.

He also said 55 of the 68 online accounts had switched to drinking water for irrigation. Most of the switched accounts sit along South Ocean Boulevard.

"The properties there are complex. They are large, 2 to 3 acres, with lots of concrete," Hadjimiry said. "Homeowners are too hard to bring them into compliance."

The estates also sit below 801 S. Ocean Blvd., where a resident called the Florida Department of Health on Jan. 2 to say she was not adequately informed of a crossed connection issue in December 2018.

Some of the South Ocean residents were getting sick from drinking the contaminated water between October and December 2018. Those complaints were not reported to the Florida Department of Health, as required.

That investigation led to notes compiled by a Utilities Department inspector who was hired in June 2017. Christine Ferrigno claimed whistleblower status in early January.

On Feb. 3, three Utilities Department managers — including an assistant city attorney met with five representatives of the Florida DOH. The six included two department inspectors, city staff "felt intimidated by the unexpected firepower they were confronted with," according to a Feb. 20 draft letter to Rafael Reyes, environmental director at the Florida DOH.

The health agency wanted Delray Beach to issue a citywide boil water order.

Instead, the city offered to shut down its entire reclaimed water program, which was accomplished on the evening of Feb. 4.

With approval of the Florida DOH, the city is restoring the reclaimed water service in phases.

The reclaimed water lines provide a cross-connected treated wastewater meant solely for lawn watering. The lines were installed as part of a settlement with state and federal regulators to stop sending raw sewage into the ocean.

The city must reuse 4.6 million gallons a day by 2025, according to the settlement. By current levels, it is about 2.6 million gallons a day, which can fluctuate depending on the rainfall received, Hadjimiry said.

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

A crossed connection happens when reclaimed water pipes are mistakenly connected to the drinking water supply.

The reclaimed water can be used only on landscaping, not for watering vegetable plants, filling pools or connecting with outside showers.

Backflow preventers are needed to stop the reclaimed water from mixing with the city’s drinking water supply.

When Delray Beach contractors inspected every reclaimed water location earlier this year, they reported 194 backflow preventers were missing on the barrier island — a little over 25% of the required installations.

It was also discovered that 130 city water customers were never connected to the Delray Beach reclaimed water program, despite the city rule that mandates connection to the reclaimed system if lines exist in front of the homes.

Most sit on the barrier island, Hadjimiry said. No records exist to explain why they were not connected.

Investigation underway

Delray Beach hired a forensics firm in late April to investigate the reclaimed water shutoffs since April 2018, Hadjimiry said. That report will determine responsibility of the city — including construction and inspections — by early August, he said.

The city also is trying to avoid civil fines from the Florida DOH, which sent a warning letter to Delray Beach on July 1. That letter listed 13 possible violations of the reclaimed water program in Delray Beach.

The city has responded to the Florida DOH, which has created a Regulatory Compliance Section with four employees who report directly to the utilities director. They will carry out the city’s cross-connection control program and audit all the city’s systems requiring backflow preventers.

The city expects full implementation in about 12 months. Interim Utilities Department Director Jennifer Alvarez wrote in her July 16 reply to the Florida DOH.

Alvarez also said the city will supply reclaimed water customers with annual notices about the origin, nature and characteristics of reclaimed water; how it can be safely used; and limits of its use.

In Delray Beach, the city will provide instructions for complying with the reclaimed water design standards for homeowners and businesses, according to the July 16 letter. The city standard calls for reclaimed pipes and fixtures to be dark blue, while drinking water pipes and fixtures to be dark blue.

City leaders, including Hadjimiry and Alvarez, met on July 22 with Florida DOH staff to review the possible violations and Delray Beach’s response.

DOH is "currently reviewing the city’s responses," Gina Carter, city spokesperson, wrote in an Aug. 18 email. The Florida DOH declined to say when it will issue a final report.

Meanwhile, the city has found two other crossed connections this year at two barrier island condominum buildings.

In April, inspectors discovered the reclaimed water pipes were wired incorrectly to the drinking water pipes at 120 S. Ocean Blvd. The city issued a boil water order for that 30-unit building on April 22.

The Ocean Place property manager can use the drinking water service while it investigates the crossed connection, Carter wrote.

The other condo building, known as Commodore Apartments, has eight units and sits at the northeast corner of Gleason Street and Langer Way. The cross connection was discovered July 7 by city inspectors.

The city notified the Florida DOH, as required.

As long as the backflow device was installed, inspected and certified, the city did not have to notify the Commodore Apartments residents within 24 hours, according to a July 8 email from the Florida DOH.

Hadjimiry sent a July 10 email asking the city water manager "please notify the eight residents at 1029 Langer Way and advise them that we discovered an onsite cross connection."
WATER

Continued from page 1

“It’s not unhealthy, it’s just visually unacceptable,” says Chris Helfrich, Boca Raton’s director of utilities. “It’s not common, but it’s something that happens more than it’s advertised.”

Still, the slug that made it into Delray Beach’s drinking water on March 27 may have helped to bring attention to maintenance and operational issues plaguing Delray Beach’s aging water plant — which has not seen a major upgrade since the early 1990s.

The city says it plans to improve cleaning and other maintenance at the aging plant, watching for trouble more closely than ever before.

Sediment in the water

It was about 10:30 p.m. March 26 when a telemetry system, which uses an automated communication process to collect and send remote data, failed to forward real-time information about a storage tank abnormality to plant operators, according to information provided by the city.

A low-level shut-off system at the groundwater storage tank serving the city’s north side also failed to work properly, allowing water levels in the tank to drop to about 3 feet, far below the normal 7- to 12-foot level, according to the city.

When that occurred, sediment that accumulated at the bottom of the tank seeped into the drinking water. The plant operator at the time noticed that the telemetry system was not working but didn’t visibly inspect the tank, according to Deputy Utilities Director Bryan Heller.

The problem was not noticed until 7 a.m. the next day when the day shift came in, and city utility leaders didn’t become aware of the issue until after residents began calling to complain about cloudy or discolored water, according to information obtained from the city.

The Utilities Department was able to move the water from the north storage tank to another tank and discharge it into a pond from there.

Heller said that senior utilities department managers were not notified of the incident shortly after it was discovered. He said that had the information been forwarded sooner, hydrants could have been flushed before the slug reached customers.

A notice was sent to residents of the north end of the city, who were told that the water was safe but not treated to the city’s color and taste standards. The city advised residents who continued to have problems to run their water for about 10 minutes and flush the system.

The sediment that entered into the tank was likely from an accumulation at the bottom of the storage tank of tiny particles of minerals found in water, particularly lime, which is used in the city’s softening treatment operation.

“There’s nothing in that tank that isn’t already in the water,” said Colin Groff, Boynton Beach’s assistant city manager for public services, who oversees water treatment operations.

Maintenance issues

What may have been an issue in Delray Beach, however, is the quantity of the sediment in the tank — which has a capacity of about 2 million gallons — and how long it had been there.

Under state Department of Environmental Protection regulations, groundwater storage tanks must be inspected and cleaned every five years.

Yet in an April 20 memo to then-City Manager George Gretzsch through an assistant city manager, Heller wrote that the slug may have been caused by noncompliance.

“The sediment was the result of the north storage tank having not been cleaned every five years as required by regulation,” Heller wrote in the memo, in which he recommended disciplinary action against then-water plant manager John Bullard.

In the memo, Heller also noted that two other water storage tanks at the main water plant did not appear to have been cleaned every five years.

The memo also makes reference to a failure of the water plant operations team to clean the clear well — a large tank below a series of filters that contains water as it flows through the treatment process. The clear well, however, is not subject to the same five-year inspection requirements as are water storage tanks.

“The tank inspection report for the clear well, dated May 12, 2016, specifically indicates the presence of ‘large accumulations of silt, sediment, and other debris. This accumulation of debris should be removed immediately to help prevent future water quality testing issues,’” Heller wrote. “When Bullard was questioned about the clear well sludge, he indicated it had not been cleaned since 1972.”

The city since has cleaned the north tank and has scheduled cleanings of the two south tanks at the end of this year or early next year. It also has scheduled the cleaning of the clear well, which is expected to take a week and should not interfere with service to residents.

Bullard, who started with the city in 1982 and became water treatment plant manager in 2000, resigned on his own, Heller said.

Delray Beach utilities also made several corrections after a December 2019 state-mandated “sanitary survey” by the health department found 27 deficiencies in five areas. That number is considered high, according to utilities directors from other communities, but they say most of the deficiencies didn’t affect water quality issues.

Three of the deficiencies were considered significant. They included several wells not properly sealed, filter walls leaking and vents missing proper screens, city records show.

In a Feb. 13, 2020, memo, Heller addressed each of the issues and documented improvements to the three significant issues as well as all others, which ranged from labeling unmarked chemical storage areas to removing algae and bio-growth from exterior portions of the plant.

The city says it plans to improve cleaning and other maintenance at the aging plant, watching for trouble more closely than ever before.

The Delray Beach water treatment plant, a few blocks south of downtown, has not seen a major upgrade since the early 1990s.

The city says it plans to improve cleaning and other maintenance at the aging plant, watching for trouble more closely than ever before.

The city says it plans to improve cleaning and other maintenance at the aging plant, watching for trouble more closely than ever before.
By Mary Thurwachter

After hearing residents’ complaints about house parties at suspected short-term rental properties, the Lantana Town Council, at its July 13 meeting, said it would add a separate short-term rental problem, but warned that a resolution won’t be easy.

In a letter to the Town Council, Hypoluxo Island resident Lyn Tate said that on the weekend of July 11 a house on Atlantic Drive appeared to be rented out for Saturday night only.

"When it got dark, seven cars arrived and parked all over the front lawn," Tate wrote. "Various young people poured out of the cars and the occasional music until midnight and then left the next morning. A single guest was the property’s housecleaner and drove off. This makes the third weekend in a row that the property has been rented out as a short-term vacation getaway."

Lantana does not permit rentals for less than 30 days in the residential zoning districts (R-1 and R-1A).

Additionally, Palm Beach County restricted short-term rentals at the start of the pandemic. Those restrictions continued as COVID-19 cases began to surge. But Hypoluxo residents suspect some houses are being used for short-term rentals. Realtor Patricia Towle, who lives next to the party house Tate mentioned in her letter, said she had observed several houses on the island being advertised as rentals.

"I found one property that was posted for $2,000 a night. There are various prices and locations, but I really see it as a health and safety issue with COVID-19. I don’t know whether property owners are required to clean, what their standards are. Just before I came here tonight, I saw something in the news about house parties in various states where young people gather to tempt fate."

She said she hoped that wasn’t happening here.

Towle said enforcement seems to be a problem.

“Since most of these rentals take place on the weekends when code enforcement isn’t around, and they seem to happen at night, is there a way that you envision we can enforce this?” she asked.

Town Manager Deborah Manzo said it didn’t matter that the parties took place on the weekend and explained how the town handles illegal short-term rentals. She said once code enforcement officers are aware of a suspicious house, they check to see if the property is being advertised on online sites such as Airbnb and Vrbo.

"Then code enforcement will send a letter," Manzo said.
Seven letters have already been sent to property owners. The letters are friendly reminders advising that this is not permitted, she said. "If the rentals continue, a notice of violation is issued."

If sufficient evidence is found, the case goes to the special magistrate, who could fine the property owner up to $5,000.

Nicole Dritz, the town’s director of development, said code enforcement is proactive.

"We check the regular sites and we do that for reaching out to the property owners to try to gain compliance from them. A lot of times, educating them is our best first step."

Proving the violations is difficult, Dritz said. "Just seeing cars outside with out-of-state license plates is not evidence enough for the magistrate to rule against them. Firsthand knowledge when an officer is on the magistrate is looking for."

That knowledge may be gained when an officer is someone at the house pertinent questions, such as how long the renter is staying on the property. "If the renter says, ‘I’m just here for a night or two,’ that is firsthand evidence that we can take to the magistrate," Dritz said.

Dritz has issued a department rule that each of the town’s three code enforcement officers needed to be perusing the properties in given week visiting the properties in question.

There are seven or eight properties now on the list. ★

By Larry Barszewski

A $65 million complex of apartments and stores with a free, public-access parking garage could become a pivotal part of Boynton Beach’s downtown revival efforts.

The proposed eight-story project on 2.6 acres owned by the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency includes 229 apartments, with 29% dedicated to workforce housing, ground-level and upper-deck pools, a clubhouse, gym, 18,000 square feet of commercial space and a 544-space public-private garage.

Developers said they would enhance the city’s Dewey Park, incorporate it into the overall project and make the alley used by Ocean Avenue businesses on the project’s south side more pedestrian friendly.

Two years ago, the CRA paid $3 million for the land on the west side of Federal Highway that is to the north and south of Northeast First Avenue. It is being used as surface-level parking and includes the Congregational United Church of Christ building, which most recently served as the city’s temporary library.

City commissioners, meeting Aug. 11 as the CRA board, unanimously approved giving Ocean Avenue Residences and Shoppes, LLC, 90 days to work with the city. CRA staff, adjacent property owners and the public to refine its unsolicited proposal.

During that time, others can submit their own project proposals. Commissioners could then move forward with the proposal or any other proposal received, open the process to more proposals, or leave the property as is.

We submit this is the center of the doughnut, something that will activate this whole area," said William Morris of Southcoast Partners, who proposes developing the project with Harold and Max Van Arsen of Van Arsen Properties. "It’s going to be a real people place."

Morris compared the project to Worthing Place, which "has become an incredible catalyst for the whole downtown area of Delray Beach." The mixed-use residential and commercial project includes public parking and is connected to Worthing Park on East Atlantic Avenue.

"The fear of some businesses is that is to the north and south west side of Federal Highway. In the way that you envision we can activate this whole area," said William Morris of Southcoast Partners.

"The site currently has 114 properties now on the list. ★

Lantana/Hypoluxo Island

Council hears complaints about illegal short-term rentals

Developers pitch mixed-use downtown project

Council hears complaints about illegal short-term rentals

Developers pitch mixed-use downtown project

After hearing residents’ complaints about house parties at suspected short-term rental properties, the Lantana Town Council, at its July 13 meeting, said it would add a separate short-term rental problem, but warned that a resolution won’t be easy.

In a letter to the Town Council, Hypoluxo Island resident Lyn Tate said that on the weekend of July 11 a house on Atlantic Drive appeared to be rented out for Saturday night only.

"When it got dark, seven cars arrived and parked all over the front lawn," Tate wrote. "Various young people poured out of the cars and the occasional music until midnight and then left the next morning. A single guest was the property’s housecleaner and drove off. This makes the third weekend in a row that the property has been rented out as a short-term vacation getaway."

Lantana does not permit rentals for less than 30 days in the residential zoning districts (R-1 and R-1A).

Additionally, Palm Beach County restricted short-term rentals at the start of the pandemic. Those restrictions continued as COVID-19 cases began to surge. But Hypoluxo residents suspect some houses are being used for short-term rentals. Realtor Patricia Towle, who lives next to the party house Tate mentioned in her letter, said she had observed several houses on the island being advertised as rentals.

"I found one property that was posted for $2,000 a night. There are various prices and locations, but I really see it as a health and safety issue with COVID-19. I don’t know whether property owners are required to clean, what their standards are. Just before I came here tonight, I saw something in the news about house parties in various states where young people gather to tempt fate."

She said she hoped that wasn’t happening here.

Towle said enforcement seems to be a problem.

“Since most of these rentals take place on the weekends when code enforcement isn’t around, and they seem to happen at night, is there a way that you envision we can enforce this?” she asked.

Town Manager Deborah Manzo said it didn’t matter that the parties took place on the weekend and explained how the town handles illegal short-term rentals. She said once code enforcement officers are aware of a suspicious house, they check to see if the property is being advertised on online sites such as Airbnb and Vrbo.

"Then code enforcement will send a letter," Manzo said.
Seven letters have already been sent to property owners. The letters are friendly reminders advising that this is not permitted, she said. "If the rentals continue, a notice of violation is issued."

If sufficient evidence is found, the case goes to the special magistrate, who could fine the property owner up to $5,000.

Nicole Dritz, the town’s director of development, said code enforcement is proactive.

"We check the regular sites and we do that for reaching out to the property owners to try to gain compliance from them. A lot of times, educating them is our best first step."

Proving the violations is difficult, Dritz said. "Just seeing cars outside with out-of-state license plates is not evidence enough for the magistrate to rule against them. Firsthand knowledge when an officer is on the magistrate is looking for."

That knowledge may be gained when an officer is someone at the house pertinent questions, such as how long the renter is staying on the property. "If the renter says, ‘I’m just here for a night or two,’ that is firsthand evidence that we can take to the magistrate," Dritz said.

Dritz has issued a department rule that each of the town’s three code enforcement officers needed to be perusing the properties in given week visiting the properties in question.

There are seven or eight properties now on the list. ★

Boylnton Beach

Developers pitch mixed-use downtown project

A $65 million complex of apartments and stores with a free, public-access parking garage could become a pivotal part of Boynton Beach’s downtown revival efforts.

The proposed eight-story project on 2.6 acres owned by the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency includes 229 apartments, with 29% dedicated to workforce housing, ground-level and upper-deck pools, a clubhouse, gym, 18,000 square feet of commercial space and a 544-space public-private garage.

Developers said they would enhance the city’s Dewey Park, incorporate it into the overall project and make the alley used by Ocean Avenue businesses on the project’s south side more pedestrian friendly.

Two years ago, the CRA paid $3 million for the land on the west side of Federal Highway that is to the north and south of Northeast First Avenue. It is being used as surface-level parking and includes the Congregational United Church of Christ building, which most recently served as the city’s temporary library.

City commissioners, meeting Aug. 11 as the CRA board, unanimously approved giving Ocean Avenue Residences and Shoppes, LLC, 90 days to work with the city. CRA staff, adjacent property owners and the public to refine its unsolicited proposal.

During that time, others can submit their own project proposals. Commissioners could then move forward with the proposal or any other proposal received, open the process to more proposals, or leave the property as is.

We submit this is the center of the doughnut, something that will activate this whole area," said William Morris of Southcoast Partners, who proposes developing the project with Harold and Max Van Arsen of Van Arsen Properties. "It’s going to be a real people place."

Morris compared the project to Worthing Place, which "has become an incredible catalyst for the whole downtown area of Delray Beach." The mixed-use residential and commercial project includes public parking and is connected to Worthing Park on East Atlantic Avenue.

The fear of some businesses is that is to the north and south west side of Federal Highway. In the way that you envision we can activate this whole area," said William Morris of Southcoast Partners.

"The site currently has 114 properties now on the list. ★

The fear of some businesses is that is to the north and south west side of Federal Highway. In the way that you envision we can activate this whole area," said William Morris of Southcoast Partners.

"The site currently has 114 properties now on the list. ★
City goes to hourly rates for waterside parking

By Jane Smith

Parking at Oceanfront Park and Harvey Oyer Jr. Park will become more expensive in some cases starting Oct. 1.

At Oceanfront Park, four meter kiosks will be added and in operation from 7 a.m. until 9 p.m., Boynton Beach city commissioners decided Aug. 4. The kiosks will replace the beach tollbooth, which had been staffed from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily.

The new fee will be $1.50 per hour, or about $10 for an average beach stay of 6.67 hours, Andrew Mack, Public Works director, said at the Aug. 4 meeting. The kiosks accept cash or credit cards. The in-season fee and year-round weekend and holiday fee were a flat $10. The $5 fee for summer weekdays will no longer be offered.

Boynton Beach’s new beach parking rate is comparable to the hourly rate in Delray Beach. Lake Worth Beach, though, charges $3 per hour and Boca Raton charges $2 an hour on weekdays and $3 an hour on weekends, Mack said.

He said the kiosks will be installed in September and then go live on Oct. 1. Park rangers will enforce the parking times with a laptop that will check each vehicle, Mack said.

“The proposed revenues from daily parking fees will be $680,000 in the next financial year,” Mack told commissioners. “The current revenue is $320,000.”

“The city will see an additional $150,000 from parking citations,” he said. Parking pass income will remain at $170,000.

“Boynton Beach residents will still be able to buy a beach parking pass for $50. Ocean Ridge residents can buy a beach parking pass at the same rate. The cost for annual passes stayed the same after the mayor and vice mayor, at the July 21 commission meeting, objected to the residents’ paying more. The city will no longer sell decals, starting Oct. 1. Instead, the system will be based on the vehicle license plate, Mack said.

During a July 29 Facebook live video, Mack said there should not be backups on State Road A1A to get into the park. Searching for a place to park is similar to searching for a space in a packed shopping center, he said.

“You ride around until you see someone leaving, then follow the person to the vehicle. Put on your blinker and allow that car to back out until you can pull in safely,” Mack said on the video.

The toll booths workers’ last day will be Sept. 30. They can apply to be park rangers. The two full-time and two part-time positions were advertised in late August, Mack said.

Hal Hutchins, Ocean Ridge police chief, said he talked with the former Boynton Beach Recreation and Parks director about installing the kiosks about one year ago. Ocean Ridge patrols Oceanfront Park.

“The ParkMobile program is a concern for me when thinking of a parking strategy,” Hutchins said. “We don’t have too many times when Oceanfront Park needs to be closed because there are no more parking spaces. When that happens, we will work with Boynton Beach to close it down.”

At Harvey Oyer Jr. Park, on the Intracoastal Waterway, Boynton Beach will charge up to $10 on weekdays and $25 on weekends to park boat trailers in the town docks. Ten shorter spaces will be free to park users, commissioners decided Aug. 4 after Susan Glaze, manager of the late Harvey Oyer Jr., who served as mayor, told commissioners that residents’ taxes already paid for the park.

“Boaters take up extra space,” she said. “It’s wrong that families will pay a fee for parking there when they come to play or have picnics.”

Currently, boaters pay $50 for an annual boat decal that allows free parking on weekends and holidays. Without a decal, the fee is $10 on weekdays and holidays. Boynton Beach does not charge for weekday parking at Oyer Park.

That will change in October, Mack said.

The city will charge any vehicle that uses these spaces $1.50 per hour, payable at the two parking kiosks. The maximum daily charge is $10 and $25 on weekends. The rates are effect 24 hours. Boynton Beach will offer boat owners an annual parking pass at $50.

The city also will find free spaces for the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary volunteers to use at Oyer Park. Environmental officers will offer free boat inspections and teach boating safety classes.

Boyston Beach

RIGHT: June 30 was the first day for many shipments of books and DVDs to the new library location.

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

ABOVE: Librarian David Lucas selects titles to highlight on the end caps of the bookshelves.

New library opens

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

Commissioners by 3-2 vote threaten to end deal with partner in Town Square

By Jane Smith

Boyston Beach City Commissioners narrowly voted on Sept. 1 to direct city staff to whether JKM Developers can fulfill its contract on Town Square construction or else end it.

John Markey, principal of JKM Developers, wanted until Sept. 15 to present an additional option — using the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency tax dollars to help underwrite the private portion of the project.

That pledged money would be used to finance two parking garages and three residential buildings with retail and restaurant space on the ground floor. In return, JKM promised a community benefits package of workforce housing, a rent-to-own program and a scholarship fund.

“I don’t think we can be in this position,” Commissioner Justin Katz said about talking about a hard line with the city’s development partner. “I implore my colleagues to make a decision tonight and stop us from listing in the sea.”

Commissioner Christina Romelus was equally frustrated: “I’m at my wit’s end. I want to throw in the towel. This makes no sense to me.”

Katz, Romelus and Vice Mayor Ty Pinsenga felt the city already has given JKM too much.

Commissioner Woodrow Hay and Mayor Steven Grant voted to hear another presentation and underground utilities at no cost.

Hay said the kiosks will be in place. Then, if it does not pan out, we long time, decades even,” he said. “I would like to see his plan. Then, if it does not pan out, we can do what Katz suggested.”

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

ABOVE: Librarian David Lucas selects titles to highlight on the end caps of the bookshelves.

New library opens

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

Commissioners by 3-2 vote threaten to end deal with partner in Town Square

By Jane Smith

Boyston Beach City Commissioners narrowly voted on Sept. 1 to direct city staff to whether JKM Developers can fulfill its contract on Town Square construction or else end it.

John Markey, principal of JKM Developers, wanted until Sept. 15 to present an additional option — using the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency tax dollars to help underwrite the private portion of the project.

That pledged money would be used to finance two parking garages and three residential buildings with retail and restaurant space on the ground floor. In return, JKM promised a community benefits package of workforce housing, a rent-to-own program and a scholarship fund.

“I don’t think we can be in this position,” Commissioner Justin Katz said about talking about a hard line with the city’s development partner. “I implore my colleagues to make a decision tonight and stop us from listing in the sea.”

Commissioner Christina Romelus was equally frustrated: “I’m at my wit’s end. I want to throw in the towel. This makes no sense to me.”

Katz, Romelus and Vice Mayor Ty Pinsenga felt the city already has given JKM too much.

Commissioner Woodrow Hay and Mayor Steven Grant voted to hear another presentation and underground utilities at no cost.

Hay said the kiosks will be in place. Then, if it does not pan out, we long time, decades even,” he said. “I would like to see his plan. Then, if it does not pan out, we can do what Katz suggested.”

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

ABOVE: Librarian David Lucas selects titles to highlight on the end caps of the bookshelves.

New library opens

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

Commissioners by 3-2 vote threaten to end deal with partner in Town Square

By Jane Smith

Boyston Beach City Commissioners narrowly voted on Sept. 1 to direct city staff to whether JKM Developers can fulfill its contract on Town Square construction or else end it.

John Markey, principal of JKM Developers, wanted until Sept. 15 to present an additional option — using the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency tax dollars to help underwrite the private portion of the project.

That pledged money would be used to finance two parking garages and three residential buildings with retail and restaurant space on the ground floor. In return, JKM promised a community benefits package of workforce housing, a rent-to-own program and a scholarship fund.

“I don’t think we can be in this position,” Commissioner Justin Katz said about talking about a hard line with the city’s development partner. “I implore my colleagues to make a decision tonight and stop us from listing in the sea.”

Commissioner Christina Romelus was equally frustrated: “I’m at my wit’s end. I want to throw in the towel. This makes no sense to me.”

Katz, Romelus and Vice Mayor Ty Pinsenga felt the city already has given JKM too much.

Commissioner Woodrow Hay and Mayor Steven Grant voted to hear another presentation and underground utilities at no cost.

Hay said the kiosks will be in place. Then, if it does not pan out, we long time, decades even,” he said. “I would like to see his plan. Then, if it does not pan out, we can do what Katz suggested.”

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

ABOVE: Librarian David Lucas selects titles to highlight on the end caps of the bookshelves.

New library opens

City Hall complex, Boynton Beach — July 27

Commissioners by 3-2 vote threaten to end deal with partner in Town Square

By Jane Smith

Boyston Beach City Commissioners narrowly voted on Sept. 1 to direct city staff to whether JKM Developers can fulfill its contract on Town Square construction or else end it.

John Markey, principal of JKM Developers, wanted until Sept. 15 to present an additional option — using the city’s Community Redevelopment Agency tax dollars to help underwrite the private portion of the project.

That pledged money would be used to finance two parking garages and three residential buildings with retail and restaurant space on the ground floor. In return, JKM promised a community benefits package of workforce housing, a rent-to-own program and a scholarship fund.

“I don’t think we can be in this position,” Commissioner Justin Katz said about talking about a hard line with the city’s development partner. “I implore my colleagues to make a decision tonight and stop us from listing in the sea.”

Commissioner Christina Romelus was equally frustrated: “I’m at my wit’s end. I want to throw in the towel. This makes no sense to me.”

Katz, Romelus and Vice Mayor Ty Pinsenga felt the city already has given JKM too much.

Commissioner Woodrow Hay and Mayor Steven Grant voted to hear another presentation and underground utilities at no cost.

Hay said the kiosks will be in place. Then, if it does not pan out, we long time, decades even,” he said. “I would like to see his plan. Then, if it does not pan out, we can do what Katz suggested.”
Business Spotlight

**Boca’s IMI moving into part of iPc space in Delray Beach**

I nternational Materials Inc., an international trading and logistics provider, signed a lease on a 20,052-square-foot space in early July to relocate and expand its corporate headquarters. Moving from Boca Raton to The Offices at 4th & 5th Delray Beach, the company will occupy nearly two-thirds of the maxi

Economic woes led to the collapse of the iPc Theater, but International Materials Inc. signed a lease to move its corporate headquarters into the third floor of the building in downtown Delray Beach. Photo provided

**LaSalle Multifamily LLC, a Freddie Mac Optigo lender. The property is undergoing $1.3 million in renovations, and to date, Rosemary Properties has contributed $2 million in upgrades.**

A recently completed ocean-to-lake estate at 640 S. Ocean Blvd., Manalapan, sold for $41.75 million in July. A revocable trust named after the property’s address was on the seller’s end of the transaction, with West Palm Beach real estate attorney Maura Ziska as the trustee.

On the buyer’s side, City National Bank of Florida acted as trustee of the 2401-3315-00 Trust. The listing broker was Lawrence Moens of Lawrence A. Moens Associates.

The nine-bedroom estate and guest house, with 23,187 total square feet, features 150 feet of waterfront on its east and west sides. The 1.9-acre property was listed for $41.75 million in January and last sold in March 2017 for $11 million.

**Delray Beach’s Frank McKinney sold his latest spec home for $30.1 million on July 2. This project, a contemporary residence at 3492 S. Ocean Blvd., South Palm Beach, with 90 feet of oceanfront, was bought by Republic First Bancorp Chairman Vernon Frank McKinney’s wife, Shirley, with Corcoran Group agent Steven Presson handling both sides of the deal.**

Last year, McKinney told The Coastal Star that this was to be his “final masterpiece,” and he shared changes he’s seen in Florida real estate over his 30-plus years in the business. A lot of trends that start at the top trickle down and make their way into the everyman’s home,” he said. “Examples include granite countertops, stainless steel and the under-the-counter coffee makers. Three decades ago, these features could only be found in luxury homes; today, they are a must in nearly every home, thanks to demand and cost reduction.”

In this five-bedroom, 7,850-square-foot residence, sold furnished with interior design by McKinney’s wife, Nilsa, he went above and beyond. Highlights include a kitchen equipped with a made of 11,000-year-old azure-blue lava; a sphere-shaped aquarium filled with jellyfish in the living room, rooftop terrace, and a beachfront pool.

**The Thousand for 2020, an annual national award ranking the top 1% of the nation’s real estate professionals, published its results in July, with a number of agents who are with firms serving the coastal area in south Palm Beach County included.**

Here are the results:

| No. 30, Pascal Liguori, Premier Estate Properties Inc., Delray Beach, $121,360,000; No. 15, Marcy Javor, Signature One Luxury Estates LLC, Boca Raton, 879,545,500. | Small teams by volume: No. 14, David W. Roberts, Royal Palm Properties, Boca Raton, $335,116,000. |
| No. 6, David W. Roberts, Royal Palm Properties, Boca Raton, $335,116,000. | No. 6, David W. Roberts, Royal Palm Properties, Boca Raton, $335,116,000. |

**LaVerriere, Boynton Beach city manager, is serving as the secretary/treasurer on the Florida City and County Management Association board for the financial year of 2020-2021. She was elected in May. An association member for more than 20 years, she has served as a District IV director for the past three years. After serving as secretary/treasurer, LaVerriere is slated to serve as president-elect and ultimately as president of the association in the next three years. With more than 30 years of public service, LaVerriere has worked for three Palm Beach County towns. Since 2008, she has served the city of Boynton Beach, where she became city manager seven years ago. With 16 departments, she leads a team of more than 800 employees who serve nearly 80,000 residents.**

She has a bachelor of arts degree from Florida International University in business administration and a master’s in business administration from Palm Beach Atlantic University.

**Hadjimyri has more than 38 years of management and engineering experience in the water utilities industry. He started as a staff engineer at the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department in early 1982. Over the years, he progressed to become deputy director for the third-largest water utility in Florida.**

At the county department he developed and implemented a reclaimed water program that provides more than 30 million gallons per day to local golf courses, residential areas and constructed wetlands. Reclaimed water is treated wastewater suitable for irrigation but not for human consumption.

Hadjimyri holds a master of science degree in water resources engineering from Florida Atlantic University, was named the 2009 Water Reuse Person of the Year in Florida, and is a five-time winner of the County Administrator’s annual Golden Palm Award, the highest level of recognition for county government employees.

Rocco Mangel, founder of Rocco’s Tacos and Tequila Bar, was appointed by the Delray Beach City Commission on Aug. 11 to serve on the board of the Delray Beach Downtown Development Authority. Mangel operates nine restaurants throughout Florida and New York. He has been an active member of the downtown Delray Beach community as a business owner since 2010.
Max Weinberg, the longtime drummer for Bruce Springsteen’s E Street Band and a four-year resident of Delray Beach, was appointed to the Delray Beach Planning & Zoning Board by the City Commission on Aug. 18. Weinberg has purchased and restored old homes on the East Coast and in Delray Beach. Weinberg also serves on the board of the nonprofit Delray Beach Preservation Trust.

The commission also appointed Allen Zeller, a land-use attorney and Delray Beach resident since 2003, to the P&Z Board. He has also served as a board member of the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, president of the Martin Historic District and serves on the Preservation Trust.

Incumbent P&Z Board members Jolen Blankenship and Robert Long were reappointed. A fifth board member will be appointed at the commission’s Sept. 10 meeting.

The Seagate Hotel & Spa in Delray Beach announced the addition of two new members to its leadership team: Jamie Erler, director of membership, marketing and communications for The Seagate Clubs, and Sonny Grosso, director of golf for The Seagate Country Club.

In August, John M. Campanola was named a member of the 2020 executive council of New York Life. The council recognizes the top 21% of New York Life’s field force of more than 12,000 licensed agents in sales achievement. Campanola, a Boynton Beach resident, has been a New York Life agent since 2012. He is associated with New York Life’s South Florida General Office in Sunrise, and he works out of its offices at 401 W. Atlantic Ave., Suite 09, Delray Beach.

Debbie Abrams, president of the Gold Coast PR Council, announced in July this year’s Bernays Awards winners, honoring excellence in local public relations campaigns, marketing programs and media coverage.

The council’s Presidents Award, which goes to a person or organization for outstanding performance, was given to Sandy Collier of Hey Sandy PR & Communications in Wellington for her work on behalf of evacuees from the Bahamas following Hurricane Dorian.

Other awards include: PR Campaign/Large Company or Firm award went to The Moore Agency; PR Campaign/Small Company or Firm award went to Katinup Marketing; Crisis Communications award went to Loggerhead Marinelife Center; Nonprofit Project or Campaign award went to The Buzz Agency; Corporate Campaign/Nonprofit award went to Florida Atlantic University; Social Media Campaign/Corporation award went to Muggy PR; Special Event award went to Food For The Poor; Marketing Material/Print award went to Clerk & Comptroller, Palm Beach County; Marketing Material/ Digital award went to Clerk & Comptroller, Palm Beach County.

The council’s PR Star Award went to Scott Benarle, for the reopening of the Norton Museum of Art, the Founders Award went to Abrams, who is also senior vice president of The Buzz Agency, and Judges Awards went to Blufly Communications and Labor Finders International.

The council paid special tribute to two previous award winners who recently died: John Shuff of JES Media, publisher of Boca Raton magazine, who was also remembered by Group Editor-in-Chief Marie Speed; and Jay Van Vechten, founder of the Boating and Beach Bash for People with Disabilities in Boca Raton, a four-time Bernays Award recipient, who was eulogized by his widow, Lowell Van Vechten.

In response to increasing dependence on reliable internet connectivity due to COVID-19 stay-at-home precautions, QXC Communications’ fiber-optic network technology is offering a solution for South Florida customers. QXC designs and installs fiber-optics using Active Optical Network direct fiber-to-the-home architecture to deliver internet, WiFi, HD TV, and VoIP phone services to condominium communities, businesses, outdoor events, and U.S. military bases. Unlike coaxial cable, QXC’s AON fiber installations run a dedicated fiber strand to every home or condo directly. With this technology, in the event of a power outage, customers connected to the wireless backup won’t lose service.

QXC’s service contracts include Villa Magna Condominiums in Highland Beach, Seagate of Highland Beach, and East Wind Beach Club in Delray Beach.

Founded in 2011, Boca Raton-based QXC Communications serves customers throughout the United States. For more information, visit www.qxc.us.

Dana Romanelli Schearer, general manager for retail for Mizner Park owner Brookfield Property Partners, did not respond to a voicemail seeking information on what Brookfield will do with the Lord & Taylor building.

Lord & Taylor’s website stated in early August that returns would no longer be accepted at the Mizner Park store and that all closing sale purchases were final. As of Aug. 14, the Mizner Park store would not accept online returns. The store also would not honor coupons, mall certificates, Lord & Taylor Reward/Award Cards or prices offered at other Lord & Taylor locations.

Customers could continue to shop on the Lord & Taylor website.

Lord & Taylor stores dotted South Florida in the early 2000s. But the company exited the state in 2004, closing stores in Boca’s Town Center mall, the Mall at Wellington Green and the Palm Beach Mall, among others, in the wake of an ill-fated expansion strategy.

As the chain regrouped, Lord & Taylor opened in Mizner Park in 2013. It is the chain’s only brick-and-mortar store in Florida.

But Le Tote, which purchased Lord & Taylor last November from Hudson’s Bay Company, struggled to breathe new life into the chain before COVID-19 forced the temporary closure of many stores in March. The Mizner Park store reopened in May.

It is not clear how long the Mizner Park store will remain open. The Aug. 3 release did not specify, and the company did not respond to an inquiry by The Coastal Star.

Lord & Taylor is closing its Boca Raton store in Mizner Park and has filed for bankruptcy court protection along with its new owner, clothing rental company Le Tote.

The venerated retailer, which traces its roots to 1826 in New York, joins a long list of companies that have filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy since May as the coronavirus pandemic takes its toll on those that were already teetering. Others include Neiman Marcus, J. Crew, J.C. Penney and Brooks Brothers.

Le Tote and Lord & Taylor are seeking a new owner, the companies said in an Aug. 3 release.

Lord & Taylor initially announced that it was closing 19 of its 38 stores, including its Mizner Park location. On Aug. 27, the company said it is closing all of its stores. All are holding closing sales.

“Today, we announced our search for a new owner who believes in our legacy and values,” the company said in a full-page ad appearing in the Aug. 4 New York Times. “Part of our announcement also includes filing for Chapter 11 protection to navigate the unprecedented strain the COVID-19 pandemic has placed on our business.”

At an Aug. 3 bankruptcy court hearing, Lord & Taylor received a judge’s permission to close all of its 38 stores if that became necessary. Forbes reported. Its existing stores are down from 45 in 2019.

Dana Romanelli Schearer, general manager for retail for Mizner Park owner Brookfield Property Partners, did not respond to a voicemail seeking information on what Brookfield will do with the Lord & Taylor building.

Lord & Taylor’s website stated in early August that returns would no longer be accepted at the Mizner Park store and that all closing sale purchases were final. As of Aug. 14, the Mizner Park store would not accept online returns. The store also would not honor coupons, mall certificates, Lord & Taylor Reward/Award Cards or prices offered at other Lord & Taylor locations.

Customers could continue to shop on the Lord & Taylor website.

Lord & Taylor stores dotted South Florida in the early 2000s. But the company exited the state in 2004, closing stores in Boca’s Town Center mall, the Mall at Wellington Green and the Palm Beach Mall, among others, in the wake of an ill-fated expansion strategy.

As the chain regrouped, Lord & Taylor opened in Mizner Park in 2013. It is the chain’s only brick-and-mortar store in Florida.

But Le Tote, which purchased Lord & Taylor last November from Hudson’s Bay Company, struggled to breathe new life into the chain before COVID-19 forced the temporary closure of many stores in March. The Mizner Park store reopened in May.

It is not clear how long the Mizner Park store will remain open. The Aug. 3 release did not specify, and the company did not respond to an inquiry by The Coastal Star.

Dana Romanelli Schearer, general manager for retail for Mizner Park owner Brookfield Property Partners, did not respond to a voicemail seeking information on what Brookfield will do with the Lord & Taylor building.

Lord & Taylor’s website stated in early August that returns would no longer be accepted at the Mizner Park store and that all closing sale purchases were final. As of Aug. 14, the Mizner Park store would not accept online returns. The store also would not honor coupons, mall certificates, Lord & Taylor Reward/Award Cards or prices offered at other Lord & Taylor locations.

Customers could continue to shop on the Lord & Taylor website.

Lord & Taylor stores dotted South Florida in the early 2000s. But the company exited the state in 2004, closing stores in Boca’s Town Center mall, the Mall at Wellington Green and the Palm Beach Mall, among others, in the wake of an ill-fated expansion strategy.

As the chain regrouped, Lord & Taylor opened in Mizner Park in 2013. It is the chain’s only brick-and-mortar store in Florida.

But Le Tote, which purchased Lord & Taylor last November from Hudson’s Bay Company, struggled to breathe new life into the chain before COVID-19 forced the temporary closure of many stores in March. The Mizner Park store reopened in May.

It is not clear how long the Mizner Park store will remain open. The Aug. 3 release did not specify, and the company did not respond to an inquiry by The Coastal Star.

Dana Romanelli Schearer, general manager for retail for Mizner Park owner Brookfield Property Partners, did not respond to a voicemail seeking information on what Brookfield will do with the Lord & Taylor building.

Lord & Taylor’s website stated in early August that returns would no longer be accepted at the Mizner Park store and that all closing sale purchases were final. As of Aug. 14, the Mizner Park store would not accept online returns. The store also would not honor coupons, mall certificates, Lord & Taylor Reward/Award Cards or prices offered at other Lord & Taylor locations.

Customers could continue to shop on the Lord & Taylor website.

Lord & Taylor stores dotted South Florida in the early 2000s. But the company exited the state in 2004, closing stores in Boca’s Town Center mall, the Mall at Wellington Green and the Palm Beach Mall, among others, in the wake of an ill-fated expansion strategy.

As the chain regrouped, Lord & Taylor opened in Mizner Park in 2013. It is the chain’s only brick-and-mortar store in Florida.

But Le Tote, which purchased Lord & Taylor last November from Hudson’s Bay Company, struggled to breathe new life into the chain before COVID-19 forced the temporary closure of many stores in March. The Mizner Park store reopened in May.

It is not clear how long the Mizner Park store will remain open. The Aug. 3 release did not specify, and the company did not respond to an inquiry by The Coastal Star.

Dana Romanelli Schearer, general manager for retail for Mizner Park owner Brookfield Property Partners, did not respond to a voicemail seeking information on what Brookfield will do with the Lord & Taylor building.

Lord & Taylor’s website stated in early August that returns would no longer be accepted at the Mizner Park store and that all closing sale purchases were final. As of Aug. 14, the Mizner Park store would not accept online returns. The store also would not honor coupons, mall certificates, Lord & Taylor Reward/Award Cards or prices offered at other Lord & Taylor locations.

Customers could continue to shop on the Lord & Taylor website.

Lord & Taylor stores dotted South Florida in the early 2000s. But the company exited the state in 2004, closing stores in Boca’s Town Center mall, the Mall at Wellington Green and the Palm Beach Mall, among others, in the wake of an ill-fated expansion strategy.

As the chain regrouped, Lord & Taylor opened in Mizner Park in 2013. It is the chain’s only brick-and-mortar store in Florida.

But Le Tote, which purchased Lord & Taylor last November from Hudson’s Bay Company, struggled to breathe new life into the chain before COVID-19 forced the temporary closure of many stores in March. The Mizner Park store reopened in May.
Live the Coastal Lifestyle

New Listing | Spectacular estate with 100’ waterfrontage | $3,900,000 | 4 BR, 4.5 BA | Approx. 6,200 sf. Web#: RX-10644983

Elegance New Construction | Separate guest house | $3,800,000 | 5 BR, 5.5 BA | Approx. 6,200 sf living, approx. 7,500 sf total. Web#: RX-105797661

Oceanfront Condo | Newly Priced | $1,925,000 | 3 BR, 2.5 BA | Approx. 2,912 sf. Web#: RX-10579027

Listed and Under Contract In One Week | $1,900,000 | 4 BR, 5 BA | Golf course estate home on over one acre. Web#: RX-10644908

Rarely Available | 3 BR, 2 BA | $1,445,000 | Corner unit 180-degree water views in full amenity building. Web#: RX-1025444

Oceanfront Townhomes | 3 BR, 2.5 BA | $1,495,000 | Located on the sand, completely updated and designer finished. Offered turnkey. Web#: RX-10648095

Build Your Dream Home | $1,299,000 | Half-acre waterfront lot across from the beach with protected views of the lagoon and nature preserve. Web#: RX-10665549

Sold | Listed and under contract In 3 days | $925,000 | 3 BR, 2 BA | Charming beach area Bermuda-style home. Web#: RX-10644427

Val Coz
Director of Luxury Sales
M 561.386.8011
val.coz@ellieman.com

Call me today. I specialize in the coastal communities of Ocean Ridge, Palm Beach, Manalapan, Gulfstream and Delray Beach.

ellieman.com
On July 14, 1920, a Wednesday that year, 50 qualified voters gathered to decide whether their little Florida community should incorporate. Forty-eight of them said yes, one said no, and one apparently said nothing. They adopted a town seal, elected a mayor, five aldermen, a marshal and a clerk, and a week later, on July 21, the town of Boynton (pop. 602) made it official.

See BOYNTON on page AT4

The city’s evolution from incorporation in 1920 to a dazzling new $118 million Town Square in 2020

By Ron Hayes

Sun worshippers relax near the Boynton hotel, which opened in 1897 and was torn down in 1925.
Sun Capital gives $1 million to Boca Regional Hospital campaign

A $1 million donation has been made to the Boca Raton Regional Hospital Foundation’s Keeping the Promise Campaign to support the current and future needs of the medical facility.

The monetary source: Sun Capital Partners Foundation founders Rodger Krouse and Marc Leder.

“This generous gift from the Sun Capital Partners Foundation, Rodger and Hillary Krouse, and Marc and Lisa Leder, will enable our hospital to better serve the evolving health care needs of our community for years to come,” Boca Raton Regional Hospital CEO Lincoln Mendez said. “We are deeply appreciative of the support of the Krouse, and Marc and Lisa Leder, founders Rodger Krouse and Marc Leder and the Sun Capital Partners Foundation, Rodger and Hillary Krouse, and Marc and Lisa Leder.

The money — $85,000 total — comes from the pooled resources of trustees who contribute a minimum of $2,000 annually. Through an intensive, hands-on process, the philanthropists decide which organizations will most effectively achieve the agency’s goals.

“I am very proud to be part of JWF,” said Amy Rosenberg, grants chairwoman. “Reviewing grants, researching organizations and having in-depth discussions about key issues are an empowering experience for our trustees. We come from varied backgrounds and experiences, yet we all bring a strong desire to collaborate together to help improve the lives of Jewish women, children and strengthen Jewish families.”

For more information, call 561-452-6027 or visit https://www.jewishboca.org/jwf.

Community Foundation awards 88 scholarships

The Community Foundation for Palm Beach and Martin Counties has awarded 88 local students more than $1 million in scholarships, averaging $11,000 per recipient. The recipients were evaluated by an advisory committee based on applications, essays, interviews and résumés.

“The process of choosing who will be awarded each of these scholarships is undertaken with dedication and discipline,” said January Reissman, the foundation’s vice president for community impact. “The process is never easy because our student applicants are outstanding.”

Since 1983, the organization has awarded $45 million in scholarships and helped nearly 2,500 youths.

For more information, call 561-659-6800 or visit www.yourcommunityfoundation.org.

Amid pandemic, nonprofits share $250,000 allocation

The Quantum Foundation has distributed $250,000 to select area charities to help their clients pay the bills and put food on the table.

A total of 20 nonprofits assisting the community’s most vulnerable residents were allocated funds in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

“The COVID-19 pandemic brought forward longstanding health inequities in disinvested communities, exposing the impacts of the social determinants of health such as economic and social conditions that influence a group’s health status,” Quantum Foundation President Eric Kelly said. “Health is not the absence of illness but rather a positive state of physical and mental well-being, and these grants are a step in the right direction.”

For more information, call 561-422-7497 or visit www.quantumfdn.org.

Delray beach museum selected for $50K grant

To maintain operations and staffing during the pandemic, the Spady Cultural Heritage Museum landed $50,000 in grant funding from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The nonprofit was one of three arts organizations in Palm Beach County — and one of 855 nationwide — to receive funding from the NEA through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act.

“The nonprofit was one of three arts organizations in Palm Beach County — and one of 855 nationwide — to receive funding from the NEA through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act.”

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

Impact 100 Palm Beach County awards grants

Impact 100 Palm Beach County has named Emily McMullin and Nicole Maguero of Boca Raton and Lisa Warren of Boynton Beach to serve on the board for the 2020-21 season.

The women will help advance the nonprofit’s mission of elevating philanthropy by combining members’ donations to create high-impact grants.

Impact 100 Palm Beach County welcomes Emily McMullin and Nicole Maguero to the board of directors,” President Kathy Adkins said. “With all of their combined nonprofit leadership experience as well as their passion for giving back and many years of volunteer work with Impact 100 PBC, they will be exceptional assets to the board.”

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

Diabetes foundation names execs, board members

Dr. David Lubetkin, former chief of staff at West Boca Medical Center, has been named president of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation’s Greater Palm Beach chapter.

In addition, Donna DeSanctis, a financial adviser who has served in several roles at the chapter, has been named vice president.

Joining Dr. Lubetkin and DeSanctis on the board are RoseMarie Adkins, an attorney; Dennis, Neil Efroin, Steven Fried, Scott Meece, Deborah Morawski, Nicole Oden, Dr. Miladys Palau, Dr. Michael Patiuk, Mark Patten, Debbie Reosth, Ryan Rothstein, Dane Sheldrick, Marc Taha, Tumba and Bryan Weinstein.

For more information, call 561-686-7701 or visit www.jdf.org/southernflorida.
Lantana

History buff debuts self-guided tour of Hypoluxo Island

By Mary Thrurwachter

Not long after the coronavirus prompted stay-at-home orders last spring, Michelle Donahue noticed how many people from both the Manalapan and Lantana sides of Hypoluxo Island took advantage of the time to walk, jog or bike around the neighborhood. Beaches and parks were closed, and residents were eager to get outside.

Donahue, a history buff who is president of the Hypoluxo Island Property Owners Association and author of the Brown Wrapper newsletter, used the quarantine to fast-track a project that she had been considering for a while — creating a self-guided tour of Hypoluxo Island.

The island, just 3 miles long and a half-mile wide, boasts fascinating history that few seem to know, she says. Her online guide came out just before the Fourth of July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time.

The island has a long and a half-mile wide, boasts fascinating history that few seem to know, she says. Her online guide came out just before the Fourth of July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time, Donahue determined, since July — an appropriate time.

Donahue's guide points out many historical sights, from McKinley Park, originally known as Beach Curve Park but renamed in the mid-1970s for Floyd Charles McKinley to honor his many years of community service to Lantana; to Casa Alva, the 26,000-square-foot, Maurice Fatio-designed home built for Consuelo Vanderbilt Balsan.

Producing both the Brown Wrapper — a local history publication that debuted in 2017 — and the self-guided tour are labors of love, she says. The Property Owners Association pays printing costs of the newsletter, an annual publication.

“When you’re passionate about something, it’s more enjoyable than anything else,” Donahue says. “I really have gotten such great pleasure out of doing this and learning from it.”

She particularly enjoys connecting history with people who still live on the island, such as Marine Ebersold, who has lived on Hypoluxo since 1946; and Don Edge, an architect who helped create Manalapan’s La Coquille Club, where the Eau Palm Beach Resort & Spa stands today.

Both have become great sources of information for Donahue, who delights in visiting with them, even now when it’s socially distanced through screen doors and wearing masks.

“It’s so important because if we don’t capture it now, we’re going to lose it forever,” she says. “It’s too important not to tell the story of the island. I just feel like we really never had that opportunity.”

Donahue and her husband, Sean, live in an Addison Mizner home built in 1927. The historic house is called Casa Lillias, after Lillias Pipper, a nationally known interior decorator who first owned the house. Since 1999, it has been declared the oldest house on the island.

Donahue’s day job keeps her very busy, and to keep in shape she runs in the morning.

“As much as I love to run, that’s my passion every day, this is just as much my passion,” Donahue says of her historical research and writing. “After dinner, when things settle down here at the house, I’ll just jump on the computer and do some more research. It’s always so fun. Especially when I find articles that are so relative to what I find to write in the papers.”

The online brochure and the Happy Hour History Tour can be found on the Historic Hypoluxo Island Facebook page, www.facebook.com/groups/1819427479712. Printed versions of the tour are available at the Lantana and Manalapan libraries.

“Of course, I don’t want to put anything out there that I haven’t totally documented or researched and … sometimes it can take days to get the answers. But it’s a good journey to be on.”

September/October 2020 The COASTAL STAR History AT3
Continued from page A1

BOYNTON

History doesn’t record if the occasion was toasted with food and drink, but a century later, on July 21, 2020, in the towering lobby of a gleaming new City Hall, 100 vanilla bean cupcakes topped with buttercream frosting offered themselves to anyone in the city (pop. 79,000) who wanted to celebrate its centennial. “Boynton Beach,” a sign behind the cupcakes boasted. “100 Years In The Making.” Of course, some might argue that there should have been 125 cupcakes that morning.

Or at least 125.

Actually, the making of Boynton Beach began long before July 21, 1920.

Sometime in 1895, a charter boat called the Victor carried a former Union Army officer named Nathaniel Smith Boynton of Port Huron, Michigan, down what would become the Intracoastal Waterway in search of real estate. Major Boynton liked what he saw, bought some land on an ocean ridge, and started building a beachfront hotel.

“The Boynton” opened two years later — 45 rooms, six cottages, a place to eat.

A waiter, on Sept. 26, 1898, Birdie and Fred Dewey recorded a plat to be known as “The Town of Boynton.”

By 1920, when the town finally incorporated, Nathan Boynton had already been dead nine years.

The town of Boynton had incorporated just in time to enjoy the Florida land boom of the 1920s.

That first year, a Police Department was organized and a bridge built across the Intracoastal Waterway. The town got electric lights, a sewer system and a Chamber of Commerce.

By 1925, Dr. Nathaniel Marion Weems Sr. had opened the town’s first doctor’s office. A Woman’s Club building designed by Addison Mizner was being built. Nathan Boynton’s hotel was being torn down, and an inlet was being cut between the waterway and the ocean to flush out the brackish water flowing in from the Lake Worth inlet to the north. Completed in 1927, the inlet was 130 feet wide, 8 feet deep and cost $225,000.

That would be about $3,331,000 today.

Historians agree that Boynton was thriving, unless you weren’t white.

• Of the 620 total residents counted in the 1920 census, 157 were Black.

The oldest church in town was the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church, founded on Feb. 5, 1892. The original building, built in 1906, stood at the northeast corner of what is now U.S. 1 and Boynton Beach Boulevard, along a stretch of Black-owned homes and businesses. But it didn’t stay there.

On Feb. 19, 1924, the town passed Ordinance 37, which created a “Negro section” west of town.

“The Black citizens living along U.S. 1 packed their belongings, put their small church building on a wagon and hauled it over to the new ‘Boynton Colored Town’ along Wells Avenue, on land platted by Robert Wells.

My great-grandfather helped build the church,” says Victor Norfus. “It was the family church on my mother’s side.”

Norfus, 57, is the great-grandson of Allen Meeks, who came to the area from Tallahassee in 1896 to work for the Florida East Coast Railway when it ended in West Palm Beach. He is the author, with Odessa Holt, of Foundations of Faith, a privately published history of Boynton’s Black community.

“The value of land went up in the early 1920s,” Norfus says, “so all the Blacks living on Boynton Beach Boulevard were forced to live in that area. It was like a reservation.”

But even then, some thought Black property rights mattered.

On July 18, 1924, the town sued James Butler, Nebraska B. Lee and Rhodia Lee for refusing to sell their property in the new “whites only” part of town. The property had been condemned so a new city hall could be built. The town won and was ordered to pay the Black landowners $2,500 for the two lots.

On Oct. 5, the town sued again to have the payment reduced to $2,000, which Butler and the Lees accepted.

Boynton hadn’t been incorporated two years when Charles Stanley Weaver was born on Jan. 19, 1922, in a wood frame house on South Federal Highway, just north of Southeast Fifth Avenue. The young Weaver, the son of Marcus A. Weaver, who owned a small dairy farm west of town, was only 6 when the great “Okehonce hurricane” of 1928 struck. “The wind was so strong that even with the windows closed, water was coming in,” Weaver recalled in an oral history recorded for the Boynton Beach City Library in 1992. “In our dining room, which was on the east side of the house, Dad finally got a carpenter’s drill and drilled a couple holes in the floor. We had about 2 inches of water in the dining room.”

On May 15, 1931, the small community on the ocean ridge that had dubbed itself “Boynton Beach” split from the town of Boynton. Each municipality agreed to take on half the debt.

Boynton and Boynton Beach remained separate municipalities until 1938, when Boynton Beach, on the ocean ridge, changed its name to Ocean Ridge.

Three years later, by a vote of 153 to 3, the town of Boynton became the city of Boynton Beach.

Boynton’s Black citizens had been forcibly moved to a segregated district along Wells Avenue, but they didn’t stay in their place.

On Nov. 7, 1933, the town fathers passed Ordinance 136, a “sunset law” making it unlawful for any “person of the Negro race over the age of 18 years to loiter, wander, stroll or be about” in the “White District” after 9 p.m. in the winter months or 10 p.m. in the summer. To be fair, the law also prohibited any person of the Caucasian race “from loitering in the Black District after dark.”

The first of Dr. Nathaniel Marion Weems’ seven children arrived in 1927 and grew up to become Dr. Nathaniel Marion Weems Jr. When he was a teenager in the 1940s, his hometown still had only 1,357 residents.

“It was a lot slower pace,” he would recall for the library’s oral histories. “Boynton was sort of a small town between Delray and Lake Worth. There was a movie usually at both of those places and not one in Boynton. A municipal swimming pool over on the beach in both Delray and Lake Worth, but not in Boynton.”

“I’m not sure when the first red light went in between here and Fort Lauderdale,” Dr. Weems said. “I think it was probably in the ’50s.”

“There was a caution light in Boca.”

In 1956, C. Stanley Weaver’s younger brother, Curtis, married Nathaniel Weems’ younger sister, Alice.

A year later, they had Curtis Weaver Jr.

Between 1950 and 1960, the city burgeoned from 2,542 residents to 10,487, and the Weaver Dairies had grown to 3,000 cows, and 1,500 cows.

Bethesda Memorial Hospital opened in 1959.

Boynton Beach may have called itself a city, but even in the 1960s it was still a small town to Curtis Jr.

“We used to take our horses into town once or twice a month in the summer and ride them on the beach,” he recalled recently. “Right down Boynton Beach Boulevard all the way into town, up and over the bridge where the Two Georges restaurant is now and go right up to the beach. All that wasn’t developed in the 1960s.

“We sold the horses and got motorcycles when I was 13 or 14.”

The 1960s were a decade of change, and Boynton Beach changed a lot in the coming decades.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 ensured African-Americans’ right to stroll, eat and swim where they wished. In the 1970s, the Negro Civic League served as an unofficial Black city commission, because Black residents had no formal representation in government.

Today, the five-member Boynton City Commission has two Black members.

Interestate 95 was completed through the city in 1977, and in 1985 the Boynton Beach Mall opened. The St. Paul AME Church was destroyed in the 1928 hurricane. A new church building was built on the site a year later, and in 1954 the present church building rose directly across the street.

Wells Avenue is now called Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

Along with those 100 cupcakes, the centennial brought a proclamation from Mayor Susan Beck.

“As significantly important it is for the city of Boynton Beach to celebrate its beginning,” the proclamation read in part, “it is equally as important to our future and future legacies.”

And then, 100 years to the day after the city was incorporated, he cut the ribbon on the new City Hall/Library complex called Town Square, which cost $118 million to build.

On July 21, 1920, it would have cost about $8.6 million.

As in many Southern communities, Boynton Beach schools were segregated in the early years.

LEFT: In 1924 teacher Ella Lakin posed with her class of sixth-graders at the Boynton Beach Elementary School. RIGHT: Still segregated in 1950, teacher Blanche Girtman with her class at Poinciana Elementary.
BOYNTON BEACH —
When Alice Weems Weaver and Curtis Weaver Sr. died five days apart in late June, the city of Boynton Beach lost a treasury of local memories, and their love story found a bittersweet ending.

Alice, known to all since childhood as Nainie, died at home on June 25. She was 89.

Curtis, 92, died at home on June 30 — their 64th wedding anniversary.

Trying to separate their lives from the city where they were born, lived and died would be as fruitless as trying to separate their love for each other.

Nainie Weems was born March 24, 1931, the daughter of Dr. Nathaniel Marion Weems Sr., the town’s first physician, who opened his practice in 1925. Among the 7,500 babies Dr. Nat delivered during his 40-year career was the boy who would grow up to become her husband.

Curtis A. Weaver was born on March 18, 1928, the son of Marcus A. Weaver and Marion Grace Knuth. The Weavers owned a 90-acre dairy farm at what is now Old Boynton Road and Military Trail.

Both families were founding members of the First Methodist Church, where Curtis and Nainie were baptized, met and married.

As children, they attended the town’s one-room schoolhouse for the entire 12 years. As adults, they worked with others to resurrect the aging building as the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum.

After graduating from the University of Miami, Mrs. Weaver taught history and home economics at Seacrest High School in Delray Beach. Mr. Weaver graduated from the University of Florida with degrees in milk chemistry and animal husbandry and, after service in the U.S. Air Force in the early 1950s, returned to work at the Weaver Dairies.

The couple were married in 1956, saw 350 friends and relatives attend the reception at the Boynton Woman’s Club, and honeymooned in Cashiers, North Carolina.

Their first child, Curtis Weaver Jr., was born in 1957, and a second, David, two years later.

Weaver Dairies grew into a 3,000-acre farm with 1,500 cows and nearly 100 employees.

“We moved to town when I was 4 years old, when David was born,” Curtis Weaver Jr. recalled recently. “Before that we lived on the farm in a small house — very, very small, wood-frame on cinder blocks with a wood joist floor with a porch patio. I would call it a shanty house or a row house.

“There were two roads built with housing, just for employees, where they lived with their families. I remember going to the barn and riding in the truck to pick up the employees.”

In the mid-60s, the Weavers sold much of the dairy land to developers from Miami.

“And the western corridor of Boynton went from cows to townhouses,” their son said.

In 1970, the couple renovated a small hotel in Cashiers, where they had spent their honeymoon 14 years before. For the next 20 years, they rented rooms and cabins at the Silver Slip Lodge to fellow vacationers from Boynton Beach.

In retirement, they traveled to Europe and Alaska, New England and the Canadian Rockies. But Boynton Beach was always their home, and their history.

Mr. Weaver was a president of the Boynton Beach Historical Society and a 35-year member of the local Rotary Club.

In addition to their sons Curtis Jr. and David Weaver, they are survived by their daughters-in-law, Diane and Eileen; grandchildren Josh and Brittany Weaver; Chelsea Weaver and her fiancé, Thomas McKeen; Leslie and Nate Beals; Lauren Weaver and her fiancé, Cage Regneris; and four great-grandchildren.

“My parents took a great deal of pride in being from Boynton and having been a part of the history of Boynton," Curtis Weaver Jr. said. “They were tremendously loyal people to the town, and to their church.

A memorial service will be held at a later date at the First Methodist Church of Boynton Beach.
Dining

New Boynton eatery looking forward to offering bar service

**Partners in The Butcher and The Bar worked through the COVID-19 shutdown and have managed to open — at least partially — their new eat-in butcher shop in Boynton Beach.**

Eric Anderson, business partner, says the old-school, retail butcher shop and sandwich counter are open for takeout, and diners can sit inside or out and eat, but as of late August there was no table service.

“We were kind of supposed to open in April, but then contractors couldn’t send as many people at once to a job so there was a delay. We opened early August,” he said. “Once Phase 2 is in place... we’ll be able to open the bar. We’ll start serving small plates there.”

In late August, the partners were still waiting for their liquor license to be approved. From the counter, they serve breakfast biscuits from 9 a.m. until they’re sold out, and offer a variety of sandwiches and other prepared foods at lunch. The retail butcher case is open all day.

First and foremost, TBBT is a whole-animal butcher shop, Anderson said. “We bring in whole cows, pigs, chickens, and butcher them on site.” Fresh meats and poultry, most sourced in Florida, are cut to order in the retail side.

Jason Brown, a junior partner, is the butcher. He is largely self-taught but has taken classes in butchering from noted chefs. He and others from the shop visited several farms in Florida to see animal operations before choosing farms in Florida to see animal from the shop visited several farms in Florida to see animal operations before choosing farms in Florida to see animal operations before choosing farms in Florida to see animal.

“We get our hogs from HertaBerkSchwein Farms in Groveland, and cows from Watkins High Pasture Ranch, and Fort McCoy near Zolfo Springs,” Anderson said. For now, Bell and Evans chickens from Pennsylvania are on the menu until they find a quality poultry producer in Florida, he said.

All ground and smoked meats from the kitchen are house-made, including pork and chicken sausages, smoked bacon, tasso ham, porchetta, chicken meatballs and kielbasa.

“Everything is from scratch,” Anderson said. “All our condiments — our mayonnaise, ketchup, bone broth — we make everything here.” They have a ‘pickle program’ as well.

Daniel Ramos, of the critically acclaimed Red Splendor Bone Broth, is a chef-partner, overseeing the menu, which changes daily.

Anderson said despite the name and concept, the shop has vegetarian and even vegan offerings.

“We had a party of three vegans who came in, and Chef Dan made them a whole vegan meal. There’s a joke there,” he laughed. “Three vegans walk into a butcher shop...”

Hours for the shop are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, but once Phase 2 is initiated and the bar is open, hours will change.


**Feeding South Florida,** the food bank that partners with other nonprofits throughout the county, has expanded with a 5,000-square-foot kitchen and food prep area that can now handle the production of 10,000 hot meals weekly. The Boynton Beach facility on Park Ridge Boulevard opened in July.

“It’s just in time to meet much greater needs, said Sari Vatske, executive vice president. “The need has doubled because of COVID,” Vatske said. She listed as recipients homebound older adults, school kids out on summer break, and numerous nonprofits that help food-insecure populations across the county.

Add to that people who are newly unemployed in the food and hospitality business, who find themselves needing basic help, and a potentially threatening hurricane season.

The organization also took over serving Boynton Beach’s homebound seniors for the Community Caring Center of Boynton Beach. “We’re doing 1,000 meals weekly for CCC,” Vatske said.

The new facility has a pantry up front. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients can come in and get cleaning supplies, canned goods and dairy peripherals as part of the program. The facility acts as a drive-through distribution center as well, providing boxes of SNAP benefit food weekly.

In the main production area, a gleaming new commercial kitchen line is in place.

“This is the culinary training kitchen,” Vatske said. “We’re going to have 10 to 12 people at a time, for 16 weeks, training here.”

Feeding South Florida chefs, led by Chrissy Benoit, will team with volunteer guest chefs from the community.
community to train people to work in the culinary field, both kitchen and front-of-house positions.

The goal is for graduates to find work in commercial restaurants. The program is open to anyone with at least a GED who wants to get into the culinary field or improve his or her career, she said. The plan is for classes to be sponsored, Vatske said, with the goal that they are free for the trainees.

For now, the teaching kitchen is idle because of COVID-19. “We are hopeful by October we’ll have teaching and training,” Vatske said.

The organization also will add commercial events, such as catering large affairs.

“We will have a revenue-generating component. The money earned will be reinvested into our program,” she said.

In the past, Feeding South Florida relied on vendors to help produce its meals; FSF now will become a vendor to others, supplying hot meals for recipients of other programs. For special events and catering work, the agency will hire from its grad pool.

“We’ll also have an incubator program for food products,” Vatske said. Entrepreneurs can learn to make and market their own products in a commercial environment.

“Right now, we’re focusing on scaling our production. We’re still hiring and training for current production,” Vatske said. Workers on the production side are cooking and packing meals for distribution. Soups are prepared in one of the giant tilt skillets — cream of celery was the choice on a recent day. The menu rotates through a four-week plan.

Meals are cooked rapid-fire in the new combi ovens. These are high-volume ovens that perform multiple functions such as baking, steaming, poaching and roasting. “These are amazing,” Vatske said. “They are state-of-the-art,” allowing them to turn out hundreds of complete meals much faster.

Volunteers are used to pack and seal the food trays. A cold storage area is being added; for now, it shares space with the major distribution area. There’s also a small laundry room where kitchen linens and uniforms are laundered, keeping everything in house.

The agency also works with FEMA and Florida’s CERT (the emergency response team coordinators), as well as community groups to provide meals for emergency workers and people in shelters during disaster relief efforts.

Hurricane Harvey, a Category 4 storm that devastated parts of Texas and Louisiana in 2017, wiping out resources for food, spurred a new program for Florida, Vatske said.

The state funds FSF and other organizations, which have high-production meal-distribution plans ready whenever a storm approaches. Other funding comes from federal agencies, as well as a number of local partners such as Publix, the Quantum Foundation and other private groups.

Volunteers and donations are still needed from the community, she said, more than ever to help people outside the government programs.

Vatske said FSF is grateful for all donations. “Absolutely. We have general programs and supplies to fund.

For information about the programs or volunteer opportunities, go to feedingsouthflorida.org.

Chef James Strine has taken the helm at Taru, the new moniker for the restaurant at the Sundy House.

It is billed as “New Florida Cuisine,” and puts a twist on Florida influences from the Caribbean ( jerk ribs with tamarind barbecue sauce); Cuba’s croquettes (turkey and stuffing croquettes with cranberry mayo), or a Florida bouillabaisse (local fish, clams, shrimp, grits). He also dips into Asian influences, with Dynamite rice (furikake, crab, pork belly) and rice noodles and clams, with wine, garlic, bone marrow and Thai basil.

Taru also gives a nod to a hot trend by offering poutine (fries covered with burrata and foie gras).

Though Strine is a master at meats — he’s noted for charcuterie and his butchering skills — he knows vegetarian plates as well (cauliflower steak and waffles).

Strine comes from a string of noteworthy kitchens, including Cafe Boulud, Buccan and Grato, as well as his most recent gig at The Trophy Room in Wellington.

The restaurant is still open for its acclaimed Sunday brunch in the garden — a romantic setting on any occasion.

Taru at the Sundy House, 106 S. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Phone 561-272-5678; 106 S. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Phone 561-272-5678; www.sundyhouse.com. Open for dinner Monday-Saturday; brunch Saturday (a la carte) and Sunday (prix fixe buffet).
GULF STREAM OCEANFRONT WEST INDIES CONTEMPORARY ESTATE | $17.995 M

Direct oceanfront (121 ft), new construction, 6 bed/7.2 bath, 8,925 total sq ft residence represents the pinnacle of coastal contemporary elegance. Designed by Randall E. Stofft, offers an open layout & maximum privacy on the beach. Features ocean views with floor-to-ceiling impact windows, fireplace, club room, media room, wine cellar, chef’s kitchen, elevator and 3-car garage. 1,643 sq ft of outdoor living space including 3 terraces and a loggia overlooking the 825 sq ft beachfront infinity pool, separate guest house & entry pavilion.

Preston Barta 561-305-9426 | Prestonbarta@gmail.com | Drew Barta 561-350-1198 | Shane Barta 561-271-2597

19 WORLD-CLASS OCEANFRONT RESIDENCES | $5.800 TO $9.000 M

The most extraordinary oceanfront development Delray Beach has ever seen is coming to life on 220 feet of prized shoreline. Intelligent living spaces, beautiful surroundings, and extraordinarily chic design mark a new standard of luxurious living. It’s the first and only opportunity for contemporary, modern style on the ocean in Delray Beach. To learn more or schedule a visit, call us today: 10 UNITS REMAINING, CALL US TO SCHEDULE YOUR PRIVATE TOUR.

Preston Barta 561-305-9426 | Prestonbarta@gmail.com | Drew Barta 561-350-1198 | Shane Barta 561-271-2597

OPTIONAL: Acquire Buildable Adjacent Lot for additional privacy $2.1 M or ONE-OF-A-KIND OPPORTUNITY, Home and Land for $6.5 M

OCEAN RIDGE CROWN JEWEL | MAJOR PRICE REDUCTION! $4.995 M

European inspired oceanside estate on a charming, private, one-way street along the beach. Unrivaled lifestyle with commanding, panoramic views of the ocean. A picturesque, secluded, resort style heated pool and spa awaits you. Perfect for entertaining. Plus, a fabulous detached guest suite.

Sheldon Jaffee 561-395-8244 | luxuryhomeexpert@aol.com | www.SheldonJaffee.com

1839 S OCEAN BLVD 4A | $3.000 M

WOW! DIRECT unobstructed panoramic OCEAN views. Live an inspired life, directly on-the-sand in Delray Beach. Just 2 units per floor. The coveted A-stack in 1839 S. Ocean Condo.

Geoff Braboy 561-699-3455 | geoff@sellssouthflorida.com

David Gunther 954-651-4789 | david@sellssouthflorida.com

POINT MANALAPAN | $1.395 M

Situated on 1/2 Acre of Perfect Privacy, this 3 BD/3.1BA residence offers a semi-attached 2-car garage plus a beautiful heated pool with 2 covered lanai areas and a full house generator. Ownership conveys with Guests Membership to LaGorceille Club.

Diane Duffy 561-767-0860 | dianeduffy@comcast.net
Theater

Area directors vow commitment to adding diversity to offerings

By Hap Erstein
ArtsPaper Theater Writer

With the coronavirus so pervasive in Palm Beach County, surviving the shutdown dictated by the pandemic is foremost on the minds of area theaters. But the next priority, artistic directors say, is putting an added emphasis on diversity — in their programming and casting.

Most theaters think they have done a pretty good job at diversity, but agree there is still room for improvement. As Florida Atlantic University’s Matt Stabile puts it, “I’m proud of our work, but there’s a lot more for us to be doing. We’ve made mistakes in the past, I think, in terms of what we chose to program and what we didn’t.”

Still, he can point to Motherland, When She Had Wings and The Glass Piano as examples of productions that featured performers of color, even though the playwrights did not specify racial characters.

The same goes for Palm Beach Dramaworks, which recently gave Ernest Thompson’s On Golden Pond a new look by making the central aged married couple bi-racial.

“I’m not trying to be color-blind here,” notes PDW’s producing artistic director Bill Hayes. “There’s nothing in the play that making it a mixed marriage won’t work. I wanted to say, ‘This is a play about family and love and the complications that go along with them,’” a theme that he felt was relevant regardless of race.

“And it will demonstrate that we have more in common than differences. Still, I called the playwright, because I wanted his blessing,”

-Diversity casting may be easier in new works or in the classics, but The Wick Theatre is proud of its efforts in mainstream musicals. “We are so color-blind here,” says executive managing producer Marilynn Wick. “We meet great people and if they’re talented, they get cast. If you’re talented, no matter what color you are — you can be purple — you’ll be on my stage. When we did Evita, we had like six cast members that were African-American in that show alone.”

Although the production had its difficulties, Wick is also proud of having cast Leslie Uggams in Mame, which she believes is the first time a black performer ever played that title role. And when you factor in gender among the ways a production can be diverse, she also makes a point of mentioning another first her theater had with a Jerry Herman show — Lee Roy Reams as the meddlesome matchmaker in Hello, Dolly!

Across town in Boca Raton, intimate Primal Forces feels that it is naturally drawn to plays with black in diversity. “I like to do plays about how baby boomers have lost their ideals,” says artistic director Keith...
Theater

Maltz cancels 2020-21 season, will complete $32M expansion

By Hap Erstein
Theater Writer

While most area theater companies are still mulling the possible impacts of the recent historic live theater in some form in the upcoming season, the Maltz Jupiter Theatre has announced a firm postponement of its 2020/2021 shows. Instead, it will start construction this month to complete the expansion of its playhouse complex, previously reported to have a $32 million price tag.

The goal is to expand the current stage to Broadway scale to accommodate future pre-Broadway tryouts of plays or musicals as well as full-sized national tours. In addition, plans call for three floors of state-of-the-art production facilities, an innovative dining experience dubbed Scene Café, expanded lobby and conservatory spaces, a redesigned entrance area, and a 199-seat second auditorium.

The $4.2 million first phase of the expansion began in spring 2019 and was completed that fall. Although the next phases were scheduled to begin until April 2021, the Maltz Jupiter’s board of directors decided to jump-start construction now. The aim is to compress the final two phases into 13 months, working through what would normally be the 2020-2021 season and finishing the work before the 2021-2022 season begins.

“Completing the work now will ensure that we can come back stronger than ever when we reopen,” said producing artistic director and chief executive Andrew Kato in a written statement. This expansion is bringing us even closer to reaching our goals of producing the next Broadway-bound play or musical right here in South Florida.”

The projected lost revenue from ticket sales has forced the theater to furlough 80% of its staff, to slash its annual budget for the upcoming season by 80% and to cease operation of its conservatory training program, which historically served 600 students annually.

All of these factors made the decision to forge ahead with the expansion particularly gutsy.

“We are determined to keep looking toward the future and focusing on transforming our theater into the best regional theater in the nation that will be ready for guests as soon as it’s safe to reopen again,” said Maltz Jupiter board chairman W. Scott Seeley.

The fast-tracked construction plan has been made possible by a $5 million top-off grant from founding board members Milton and Tamar Malz, in addition to a $5 million matching challenge grant through The Milton and Tamar Malz Family Foundation previously pledged to the project. Kato concedes that the theater’s fundraising efforts have not yet brought in the entire amount needed for all elements of the expansion. If necessary, such finishing touches as the plumbing and electrical work for the conservatory, Scene Café and 199-seat second space might occur in subsequent years.

The previous season ended abruptly when a statewide shutdown order caused the postponement of the final show, Hawai’i in Concert: Without Really Trying. The Maltz is considering mounting it in the spring at an offsite venue if the local COVID-19 situation measurably improves.

Those who purchased tickets for the season have been contacted about their options. For further box office inquiries, email questions@jupitertheatre.org. For questions on the construction, email staff Laurie Stanton at lstanton@jupitertheatre.org.

Music

Teacher has second career as songbird

By Janis Fontaine
Contributing Writer

Rhea Francani isn’t a tough-talking Texan or a boot-scooting Okie but she loves country music like one. Born in Buffalo, N.Y., the youngest of three sisters in a close-knit Italian family that put on “full-blown concerts” in their living room. Francani, 28, of Boca Raton, just released the first single from her soon to be released country album.

“We’re a very musical and creative family,” Francani said. “We listened to Motown and R&B, Earth, Wind and Fire, Stevie Wonder, Whitney, Mariah. We dabbed in a lot of genres.”

That dabbling included a love of musical theater, and Francani breathed life into Belle in her high school production of Beauty and the Beast. Active in choir and jazz band, after high school, Francani moved to New York City to pursue music. “We’ve always been very close,” Francani said. “Family is important.”

The high-achieving songbird graduated with honors from Wagner College on Staten Island with a degree in music theatre and continued her love with teaching when she helped her sisters in their work. Francani decided to work toward her master’s degree at Columbia University’s Teachers College specializing in music education, which surprised no one.

But as much as Francani loves the theater and teaching, when she sits down to create her own music, Francani feels at home in country music. She says she became a fan of country/pop group Lady Antebellum when the trio released its blockbuster crossover hit “Need You Now” in 2009, and she has followed Taylor Swift’s trajectory from country pop to Folklore.

After Columbia, Francani went to Nashville, where she co-produced a self-penned 12-track debut album called, appropriately, Now or Never. Two singles from the album, “Dizzy” and “Shotgun Baby,” showed fans her grasp of two of country music’s staples: catchy hooks and upbeat, toe-tapping rhythms.

But the reality of working hand-to-mouth as a singer/songwriter in dog-eat-dog Music City when you have a passion for teaching — and a master’s degree from a prestigious conservatory — doesn’t make financial sense. So, Francani accepted a challenge from the Alexander D. Henderson University School, a public elementary and middle school on the FAU campus, to rejuvenate its music program performance.

Francani joined the middle school in 2016, starting with 65 students in her elective classes; she now has more than 200, in chorus, dance and musical theater.

Henderson has chosen to begin instruction this year virtually because of the COVID-19 pandemic. One advantage Henderson has, Francani says, is “We’re great with technology.”

When she’s not teaching, Francani composes music, mainly for friends and family. And when she’s not writing, she’s gigging. “I’ve grown up a lot since then.” Francani says that her second album will be quite different from her first. “The first one was super-raw. I was young and those were the first songs I’d written. I’ve grown up a lot since then.”

Francani says “a lot happened to me in my life” since the first album. For one thing, Francani fell in love for the first time, and that love inspired the first single from her upcoming album. “I’ll Go,” a romantic pop-country road song, showcases her strong vocals, with a splash of country and a catchy hook. It’s the kind of tune that makes you roll the windows down, turn up the volume and sing along.

Francani says she plans to release a ballad next. And that’s one key to her success: Always keep ‘em guessing.

Books

A call to action to defeat Parkinson’s

By Bill Williams
ArtsPaper Books Writer

By 2040, the number of people battling Parkinson’s disease will have doubled to more than 13 million worldwide.


By Bill Williams
ArtsPaper Books Writer

2040, the number of people battling Parkinson’s disease will have doubled to more than 13 million worldwide.


By Bill Williams
ArtsPaper Books Writer

2040, the number of people battling Parkinson’s disease will have doubled to more than 13 million worldwide.

The Boys
like and do what it takes to cast it.”
You have to commit to the work to cast the show. And that’s the decision to do (August Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain"
Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain"
To get those prestigious shots for the Marlboro project, Cattelle traveled through Arizona, Utah and Nevada, capturing through provoking images. The project again in his exhibit-ready customized 1994 Chevy Astro van, for a photography project he titled Bare USA, which juxtaposed nude women models among urban areas of decay.
And even if such a play did not originally have a diverse cast, it probably will at Primal Forces. Consider Lanford Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain." "The part of the disillusioned war vet was originally played by Jeff Daniels and we cast (African-American) Ethan Henry," says Garsson. "That gave it a whole different spin.
Garsson. "Y'know, the folks from the '60s and '70s, where are they now? Well, if that's what I like to do, a huge percentage of those plays are racially themed.
"That gave it a whole different spin.
The Boys
like and do what it takes to cast it.”
You have to commit to the work to cast the show. And that’s the decision to do (August Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain"
Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain"
To get those prestigious shots for the Marlboro project, Cattelle traveled through Arizona, Utah and Nevada, capturing through provoking images. The project again in his exhibit-ready customized 1994 Chevy Astro van, for a photography project he titled Bare USA, which juxtaposed nude women models among urban areas of decay.
And even if such a play did not originally have a diverse cast, it probably will at Primal Forces. Consider Lanford Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain." "The part of the disillusioned war vet was originally played by Jeff Daniels and we cast (African-American) Ethan Henry," says Garsson. "That gave it a whole different spin.
Garsson. "Y'know, the folks from the '60s and '70s, where are they now? Well, if that's what I like to do, a huge percentage of those plays are racially themed.
"That gave it a whole different spin.
Ethan Henry," says Garsson. ""That gave it a whole different spin.
To get those prestigious shots for the Marlboro project, Cattelle traveled through Arizona, Utah and Nevada, capturing through provoking images. The project again in his exhibit-ready customized 1994 Chevy Astro van, for a photography project he titled Bare USA, which juxtaposed nude women models among urban areas of decay.
And even if such a play did not originally have a diverse cast, it probably will at Primal Forces. Consider Lanford Wilson's post-Vietnam drama, "Redwood Curtain." "The part of the disillusioned war vet was originally played by Jeff Daniels and we cast (African-American) Ethan Henry," says Garsson. "That gave it a whole different spin.
Garsson. "Y'know, the folks from the '60s and '70s, where are they now? Well, if that's what I like to do, a huge percentage of those plays are racially themed.
"That gave it a whole different spin.
COVID-19 vaccine trial enrolling more volunteers

Dr. Anthony Fauci is one of the government’s top advisors on the coronavirus pandemic. “This is a randomized, double-blind trial, which means that volunteers are randomly assigned to either receive the vaccine or a placebo, and neither the vaccinated person nor the researcher knows which was given to each person until the end of the trial.”

Dr. Lloyd Zucker, who has more than two decades of practice in South County, was named medical director of neurosurgery for Delray Medical Center and Good Samaritan Medical Center. An honor graduate of Johns Hopkins University, Zucker was invited as an undergraduate to do research at the National Institutes of Health.

A neurosurgical residency at the University of Connecticut-Hartford Hospital followed his medical training at Rutgers University/University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey. His extended training was completed by a fellowship in complex spinal surgery at the University of South Florida/Tampa General Hospital.

**COVID-19 vaccine development is in the works across the globe with one Phase 3 trial — the final step before U.S. government approval — in progress locally.**

Massachusetts-based Moderna Inc. — in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health — aims to enroll 30,000 adults in Phase 3 of its testing with volunteers from all over the country. In West Palm Beach, at the Palm Beach Research Center, a clinical trial began July 31 and has already enrolled and vaccinated hundreds of volunteers. It is still enrolling, said David Scott, president and CEO of the research center.

The study will continue for two years. The first visit takes 3-4 hours, with other quicker visits at days 28, 57, 209, 395 and 759, plus or minus a couple of days, he said. Participants will be paid up to $1,190.

Scott describes the vaccine: “Moderna uses a biodegradable lipid nanoparticle, which allows it to more effectively be absorbed by the body than any current vaccine technology. It carries a messenger RNA, which creates a protein that looks like COVID-19’s outer shell. “It causes the body’s immune system to create proteins that look like COVID-19 (with spikes), but they are empty — they don’t have COVID-19. Since it looks like COVID-19, the body will be prepared; in the future it can recognize COVID-19 and eliminate it.”

While the trial is ongoing, if the data shows it’s effective, Dr. Fauci is confident vaccines will be absorbed by the body than any current vaccine technology. It carries a messenger RNA, which creates a protein that looks like COVID-19’s outer shell. It causes the body’s immune system to create proteins that look like COVID-19 (with spikes), but they are empty — they don’t have COVID-19. Since it looks like COVID-19, the body will be prepared; in the future it can recognize COVID-19 and eliminate it.”

**Health Notes**

**COVID-19 vaccine trial enrolling more volunteers**

Dr. Anthony Fauci is one of the government’s top advisors on the coronavirus pandemic. “This is a randomized, double-blind trial, which means that volunteers are randomly assigned to either receive the vaccine or a placebo, and neither the vaccinated person nor the researcher knows which was given to each person until the end of the trial.”

To volunteer, go to https://palmbeachresearch.com/2020/03/02/covid-19-vaccine-study/ or call 561-689-0666.

Researchers at Brain Matters Research are looking for participants age 50 and older with no memory loss to take part in the Alzheimer Prevention Trials web study, an online study that detects if changes are observed, volunteers may be invited to in-person evaluations to determine eligibility for additional Alzheimer’s studies. To learn more and enroll, visit www.APTWebstudy.org.

Four researchers from Florida Atlantic University received the National Science Foundation Early Career Awards in August. The awards support early-career faculty members who have the potential to lead advance and serve as academic role models.

The award winners are Waseem Aghaah, Ph.D., associate professor; Behnaz Ghorai, Ph.D., associate professor; Feng-Hao Liu, Ph.D., assistant professor; all within the Department of Computer and Electrical Engineering at FAU’s College of Engineering and Computer Science; and Marianne E. Porter, Ph.D., assistant professor of biological sciences in FAU’s Charles E. Schmidt College of Science.

Asghar received $500,000 over five years to develop a low-cost disposable point-of-care platform to detect current and emerging infectious diseases. Ghorai, who is also a fellow in FAU’s Institute for Sensing and Embedded Network Systems Engineering, was given $524,191 over five years to develop a cognitive screening tool for the early detection of Alzheimer’s disease using wearables and a smartphone.

Liu got $580,000 over five years to develop new ways of coding to enhance cybersecurity. Porter’s $625,943 over five years is for research to better understand how marine animals tune, or dynamically adjust their movements using their skin and skeletons.

In July, Boca Raton Regional Hospital received certification from DNV GL Healthcare as a comprehensive stroke center.

This signifies that the hospital’s Marcus Neuroscience Institute meets standards for providing care to all stroke patients, including endovascular embolization and surgical clipping of brain aneurysms, IFA administration and mechanical endovascular thrombectomy, a procedure used to remove a blood clot from the brain during an ischemic stroke.

JFK Medical Center received the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association’s Stroke Honor Roll Elite Plus Gold Plus Quality Achievement Award in July, recognizing the hospital’s commitment to ensuring stroke patients receive the most appropriate treatment.

Additionally, JFK Medical Center received the association’s Stroke Honor Roll Elite award, recognizing that the hospital meets quality measures developed to reduce the time between the patient’s arrival at the hospital and treatment.

JFK was also recognized by Healthgrades with a Five-Star Recipient Award for Treatment in Stroke for three consecutive years, 2018-2020.

The Palm Beach Health Network’s Delray Medical Center also earned the American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association’s Stroke and Heart Quality Achievement Award.

The hospital achieved high performance marks in a category of heart failure and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease for the state of Florida in the U.S. News & World Report’s 2020-2021 Best Hospitals rankings for adult clinical specialties.
Lantana woman finds gratitude sustains her during pandemic

Gratitude swept into Carol Ann Keller’s life in “full force” in 1993, when she felt she had absolutely nothing to be grateful for. “Everything was a giant mess, mostly of my own making,” says Keller, a Lantana resident who works in the interior design field. “I had to make extreme life changes in order to change my own life. It was introduced to me that maybe a power greater than myself existed — whatever that looked like, whatever that would be called — and that was very humbling. And once humility started entering into my existence, the gratitude just came up, and I really learned … what gratitude looks like.”

She started with baby steps, acknowledging her good fortune at having a roof over her head and food in the refrigerator — basic but life-sustaining needs. Keller says as her gratitude practice grew, so did her sense of peace and well-being.

While skeptics may regard practicing gratitude as woo-woo, a phalanx of researchers says otherwise. Keller’s experiences mirror findings reported in “The Science of Gratitude,” a 2018 report from the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley, a locus for research into the psychology, sociology and neuroscience of well-being.

“In general, more-grateful people are happier, more satisfied with their lives, less materialistic, and less likely to suffer from burnout. Additionally, some studies have found that gratitude practices, like keeping a gratitude journal or writing a letter of gratitude, can increase people’s happiness and overall positive mood,” writes author Summer Allen in the report, which documents more than two decades of research. (To read more, visit ggc.berkeley.edu/images/uploads/GGSC-TF_White_Paper-Gratitude-FINAL.pdf)

One cited study, Robert Emmons and Michael McCullough define gratitude as having two components: “Recognizing that one has obtained a positive outcome and recognizing that there is an external source for this positive outcome.” That external source can be a higher power, as it is for Keller, or someone whose actions have bestowed a kindness, or gift.

The important part, experts say, is to get outside of ourselves, acknowledging that navigating life does, indeed, take a village. Expressing thanks to others directly is another way to practice gratitude. It can come in many forms, such as a letter of thanks. (And you can say thanks to the U.S. Postal Service at the same time by ordering its “Thank You” stamps, just issued in August.)

You might share appreciation in a conversation or as a random act of kindness. The nightly cheering, clapping and pots-and-pans clanging to honor front-line workers during the coronavirus pandemic upped the feel-good ante by the coronavirus pandemic upped the feel-good ante by giving thanks and building community.

“As the pandemic enveloped life as it was, it prompted many of us to reflect on what we previously may have taken for granted — from lingering with a friend over lattes to visiting far-distant family members or hugging loved ones just across town. With gratitude, surely hindsight counts, too. Keller says gratitude is helping to sustain her through the fear and uncertainty of the pandemic.

“When everything just kind of blew up, and nothing looked like it ever did before, I had to take myself down a notch to relieve that inner angst, because when I get anxious, it’s usually because I’m trying to control things that are out of my control,” she says. “And so, I go back to gratitude. Gratitude brings me back and I have so much to be grateful for in my life, I really do.”

Michelle Maros, co-founder of Peaceful Mind Peaceful Life in Boca Raton, a nonprofit organization offering mindfulness classes and workshops and other inspiration activities, believes gratitude is especially beneficial during times of crisis.

“Finding things to be grateful for, no matter how small, can allow us to feel a sense of optimism, hope and peace,” she says. “During difficult times, our minds may convince us that everything is going wrong. Gratitude can help shift that mindset and allow us to remember that there is still so much light in the world, even when it feels dark.”

If you have room in your life to grow your gratitude, the good news is that you already have everything you need. Think about the people, pets, places and things for which you’re grateful. You decide on the where, when and how. Some jot down their thanks on paper, a couple of nuggets at a time. Keeping a running list builds a storehouse of goodwill that may boost your mood when you review it.

Others, like Keller, make it part of a meditation practice, “an inner journey” that starts and ends her day. “Gratitude keeps me out of the headspace of, oh, why does that person have that, and I don’t,” she says. “It really alleviates any of that because when I’ve been grateful for really small things, bigger things have come along. And I don’t know how that works, I don’t know why that works, but it’s worked.”

“My gratitude is increasing by leaps and bounds the older I get. I don’t know. Maybe I’m growing up at 66. Hopefully not,” she says, laughing. “But I’ll still be grateful.”

Joyce Reingold writes about health and healthy living. Send column ideas to joyce. reingold@yahoo.com.
Religion News

Amid churches’ challenges comes a story of divine intervention

Just as the response to the coronavirus varies in different cultural, social and political arenas, the same is true in local churches. The one thing they share is a desire to serve and help, and they are on the front lines when families are in crisis.

Here’s what’s happening at some churches.

At St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Delray Beach, Father Paul Kane reports that “our Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida has mandated closure of all churches at least until there is a 14-day, gradual decrease in COVID-19 cases in Palm Beach County. So far, our numbers are not heading in the right direction.”

Kane says the church has a reentry plan that gives details on the plan that gives people permission to return, when it is deemed safe to reopen for in-person worship. In the meantime, Kane says that online giving, the backbone of the church’s community support, has increased. People who used to put cash in the collection plate have signed up to give online.

The church’s needs have increased as well, but its members have stepped up to help. Kane says the complexity of the pandemic, and the myriad issues driving the demand for church support, make everything harder to manage. “Consider,” he says, “we’re dealing with the health and well-being of our congregants, especially those living in nursing homes and crowded public housing facilities; the mental health of our entire community, especially those who live alone and those who suffer from addictions; the strain on our health care system; the economic impact, especially on small businesses and newly unemployed people; and the spiritual impact of not being able to gather in-person for worship.”

To help, Kane says, “Our clergy provide ongoing pastoral care by phone, and we have six ministries who have dedicated themselves to praying for those people on our parish prayer list. We have also initiated a Prayer by Phone ministry, with prayer partners available five days per week.”

Kane said the church hasn’t lost any members to COVID as of mid-August, but members have lost family, friends and co-workers to the virus. The prayer partners have been especially helpful to people who are grieving, he said.

Advent Lutheran Church reports in-person worship resumed at both its locations — Boca Raton and Lantana — under CDC and local guidelines. In Boca, attendance was increasing in August. One happy first: Andrew Hagen, lead pastor for Advent Life Ministries, says the church performed its first socially distanced baptism in the church since the crisis began. Hagen says donations are up slightly over previous years.

At Unity of Delray Beach, the Rev. Laurie Durgan reports, “We’re keeping members and guests close via digital virtual means.”

Programs to help keep people connected include:
- Sunday: Guest speakers, meditations, minister talks and children’s videos and music by musical director D. Brian Horgan and soloist Daniel Cochran.
- Tuesday: Prayer services
- Wednesday: Meditation services
- Thursday: The Morning Prosperity Class with Charlene Wilkinson, and the Lunch Prosperity Class with Dynim Dyer (Zoom).

If you need prayer, listen to new prayers on the Dial-a-Prayer line at 561-910-2559, email a prayer request to unitychurch@unityschool.com or speak to a prayer chaplain at 561-276-5796. Info at www.unityofdelraybeach.org.

Hot news! In early August, Pastor D. Brian Horgan of St. Lucy Catholic Church in Highland Beach says divine intervention woke him in the middle of the night to alert him to an electrical fire in the rectory, “right outside my bedroom door.”

The parish priest likes to play the radio to fall asleep at night, and the radio, plus the breathing device he uses for his sleep apnea, prevented him from hearing the smoke alarm. Instead, he says, God woke him.

Horgan tried to use a fire extinguisher he keeps on hand to fight the flames, but the fire was too big. He called the Fire Department, which quickly traveled the quarter-mile to the church to take care of the blaze.

“The place is mess,” Horgan said, and his clothes all smell like smoke, but he’s grateful. “I was very lucky,” Horgan said. “I used to joke about divine intervention. I don’t anymore.”

— Janis Fontaine
Coronavirus alters services for High Holy Days

In late September.

and Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement — both take place in late September.

In Judaism, these are two of the most important holidays for financial support throughout the year, as many synagogues depend on the sale of tefillin for these two important holidays. Many synagogues are offering a wide variety of tefillin and Acharon services for Yom Kippur — services at the synagogue. Leader of Temple Beth El in Boca Raton said that with so many in the congregation suffering as a result of COVID, members who have purchased High Holy Day tickets in the past should consider making a donation in the amount they would have spent.

With so many people suffering, we should make an effort to be more compassionate,” he said.

“Also, I want to remind them to be grateful for what they have. I want to tell them to have hope, to pray and stay in faith.”

To Fishof, Yom Kippur is about “chetochon hanechem,” a spiritual accounting of the soul. Self-improvement, perfecting one’s character and forgiving closer relationships with God and our fellow men are the essence of Yom Kippur.

“About introspection,” Fishof said. “Look inside yourself and ask, ‘How can I be a better person? How can I be more compassionate, more understanding this year?’”

Local services

• Temple Beth Ami — 1401 NW Fourth Ave., Boca Raton. www.hucho.ca.

Temple Beth Ami will hold both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services by reservation only and by following CDC guidelines. Masks will be required. Bring your own hand sanitizer. Temperatures will be taken at the door. Two 90-minute services are planned and at 1 p.m., with cleaning planned in between. Call for tickets: 561-391-8033.


Temple Beth El’s services will be celebrated online. The synagogue invites everyone to watch services livestreaming on the website, Facebook page or YouTube channel. For members, there are additional benefits, like a special High Holy Day gift package for pickup and the ability to borrow a High Holy Day machzor (prayer book). For more info, call 561-391-9800.

• Boca Beach Chabad — 120 NE First Ave., Boca Raton. 561-394-7770 or www.chabadboca.com.

Rabbi Ruvi New said the synagogue plans to host its services at Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton, instead of its facility. He said Mizner Park has enough room to accommodate everyone even with social distancing. Ages 12 and older programs require tickets. Services are as follows:

- Rosh Hashanah evening: 7:05 p.m. Sept. 18
- First-day Rosh Hashanah: 9 a.m. Sept. 19
- Mincha: First-day Rosh Hashanah: 7:05 p.m. Sept. 19
- Second-day Rosh Hashanah: 9 a.m. Sept. 20
- Shofar sounding: 11:30 a.m. Sept. 20
- Mincha: 6 p.m. Sept. 20, followed by tashlich and second shofar blowing at the Intracoastal at the northwest corner (Wildflower) of east Palm Beach Park and Fifth Avenue, Boca Raton, at 6:45 p.m.

Kol Nidre: 7 p.m. Sept. 27. Reservations required. Seats are $120.

• Yom Kippur morning: 9 a.m. Sept. 28
• Yizkor memorial: Noon Sept. 28. Reservations required. Seats are $72.

- Mincha: 5:15 p.m. Sept. 28
- Neilah closing service: 6:15 p.m. Sept. 28

Additional events: The synagogue will host Mincha at 3:15 p.m. Sept. 27 at the synagogue.

Three special children’s programs are planned at the synagogue: first-day Rosh Hashanah at 10:30 a.m. Sept. 19; second-day: 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Sept. 20; and Yom Kippur: 10:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sept. 28.

• Chabad of East Delray — 50 SE First Ave., Delray Beach. www.jewisheastdelray.com.

An outdoor shofar-blowing and shortening services in both Hebrew and English are planned complying with social distancing guidelines. All seats are reserved. Adults only. Masks required. Between services, the shul will be cleaned and disinfected thoroughly. A donation of $50 is suggested.

For congregations members who feel more comfortable staying at home, kits are available for pickup with a selection of the key prayers and insights, and apple, honey, challah and candles. To reserve a kit, email rabbis@jewisheastdelray.com.

Services are:

- First-day Rosh Hashanah: 10-10:45 a.m. Sept. 19.
- Second-day Rosh Hashanah: 10-10:45 a.m. Sept. 20.
- Outdoor shofar blowing: 5 p.m. Sept. 20 (location TBA).

Kol Nidre: 7:15-7:45 p.m. Sept. 27

- Yom Kippur day: 10-10:45 a.m. Sept. 28
- Neilah: 7:15-7:45 p.m. Sept. 28

Janis Fontaine writes about people of faith, their congregations, causes and events. Contact her at janisfontaine.com.
Paws Up for Pets

Stuck inside? Perhaps it’s time for playful getaway with your pet

Raise your paw, er hand, if you are feeling a little stir-crazy. Got a dose of cabin fever due to the worldwide pandemic that seems to hover over Florida? The silver lining for many stuck at home since mid-March is having a safe companion who never disagrees on which Netflix show to binge watch next. Yep, I’m referring to our dogs and cats, who have sacrificed oodles of me-alone-at-home nap time to cuddle and console us during our many moods.

Paws up for pets, for sure. At this stage of the coronavirus, opportunities are growing for us with pets to engage in safe activities and to take short getaways to pet-welcoming places. If you are ready to sport your mask, bring plenty of gloves and hand sanitizer, the Visit Florida team may have a fit for you.

Visit Florida represents more than 13,000 tourism industry businesses throughout the Sunshine State. Recognizing that pet adoptions have surged by more than 300% since April, this group is promoting “fur-babymoon” opportunities exist for you and your well-mannered pets. A place to safely walk pets and that we would have enough room (a suite) for us and both pets,” she says. “Factors to consider when traveling with your pets these days definitely include the ability to have space for the pets, a place to safely walk pets and pet-friendly restaurants and attractions nearby.”

Equally important is knowing your pet’s temperament and adaptability to being in new places with new sights, sounds and smells. When they arrived, their normally easygoing Maverick had issues with the hotel elevator. But having a veterinary behaviorist for a pet parent helped as Radosta steadily built up Maverick’s exposure to elevator rides.

“Your husband and I are pretty fit, so we took the four flights of stairs up and down as much as possible to give Maverick a break from the elevator,” she says. “We learned that he needed treats before he got on the elevator and tolerated the ride much better if I asked him to lie down. He rides the elevator just fine now.

If you want to bring your pet on a day trip or overnight at a hotel, vacation rental, RV campground or cabin in a park, Radosta advises making a pros/cons list with your pet’s needs and personality in mind. Some pets are genuine homebodies, who prefer staying at home under the care of a professional pet sitter who is practicing CDC health and safety guidelines. Dogs feeling stressed may chew or damage hotel furniture or bark excessively.

“You can’t come and go as you please on vacation, because you have to go back to the RV or hotel to take care of your pets,” Radosta adds. “You know your pet’s likes and dislikes.

“Going out with your dog is really fun — for you! Is it fun for your dog?” she says. “If not, some time to get your dog used to going to the beach or getting on the kayak before you expect him to spend significant amounts of time in that activity.”

For well-socialized pets, however, such trips are viewed as added adventures spent with their favorite humans. Never before has the unconditional love unleashed on us by our pets felt so good.

Lisa Radosta, DVM, a veterinarian who operates the Florida Veterinary Behavior Service in West Palm Beach, recently spent a month living in a pet-friendly hotel while her family’s new house was being completed. Their old home sold quickly, so the entire family, including Maverick, a Labrador retriever, and a cat named Chewie were hotel dwellers.

“We chose the hotel based on the fact that they took pets and that we would have enough room (a suite) for us and both pets,” she says. “Factors to consider when traveling with your pets these days definitely include the ability to have space for the pets, a place to safely walk pets and pet-friendly restaurants and attractions nearby.”

Equally important is knowing your pet’s temperament and adaptability to being in new places with new sights, sounds and smells. When they arrived, their normally easygoing Maverick had issues with the hotel elevator. But having a veterinary behaviorist for a pet parent helped as Radosta steadily built up Maverick’s exposure to elevator rides.

“My husband and I are pretty fit, so we took the four flights of stairs up and down as much as possible to give Maverick a break from the elevator,” she says. “We learned that he needed treats before he got on the elevator and tolerated the ride much better if I asked him to lie down. He rides the elevator just fine now.

If you want to bring your pet on a day trip or overnight at a hotel, vacation rental, RV campground or cabin in a park, Radosta advises making a pros/cons list with your pet’s needs and personality in mind. Some pets are genuine homebodies, who prefer staying at home under the care of a professional pet sitter who is practicing CDC health and safety guidelines. Dogs feeling stressed may chew or damage hotel furniture or bark excessively.

“You can’t come and go as you please on vacation, because you have to go back to the RV or hotel to take care of your pets,” Radosta adds. “You know your pet’s likes and dislikes.

“Going out with your dog is really fun — for you! Is it fun for your dog?” she says. “If not, some time to get your dog used to going to the beach or getting on the kayak before you expect him to spend significant amounts of time in that activity.”

For well-socialized pets, however, such trips are viewed as added adventures spent with their favorite humans. Never before has the unconditional love unleashed on us by our pets felt so good.

Lisa Radosta, DVM, a veterinarian who operates the Florida Veterinary Behavior Service in West Palm Beach, recently spent a month living in a pet-friendly hotel while her family’s new house was being completed. Their old home sold quickly, so the entire family, including Maverick, a Labrador retriever, and a cat named Chewie were hotel dwellers.

“We chose the hotel based on the fact that they took pets and that we would have enough room (a suite) for us and both pets,” she says. “Factors to consider when traveling with your pets these days definitely include the ability to have space for the pets, a place to safely walk pets and pet-friendly restaurants and attractions nearby.”

Equally important is knowing your pet’s temperament and adaptability to being in new places with new sights, sounds and smells. When they arrived, their normally easygoing Maverick had issues with the hotel elevator. But having a veterinary behaviorist for a pet parent helped as Radosta steadily built up Maverick’s exposure to elevator rides.

“My husband and I are pretty fit, so we took the four flights of stairs up and down as much as possible to give Maverick a break from the elevator,” she says. “We learned that he needed treats before he got on the elevator and tolerated the ride much better if I asked him to lie down. He rides the elevator just fine now.

If you want to bring your pet on a day trip or overnight at a hotel, vacation rental, RV campground or cabin in a park, Radosta advises making a pros/cons list with your pet’s needs and personality in mind. Some pets are genuine homebodies, who prefer staying at home under the care of a professional pet sitter who is practicing CDC health and safety guidelines. Dogs feeling stressed may chew or damage hotel furniture or bark excessively.

“You can’t come and go as you please on vacation, because you have to go back to the RV or hotel to take care of your pets,” Radosta adds. “You know your pet’s likes and dislikes.

“Going out with your dog is really fun — for you! Is it fun for your dog?” she says. “If not, some time to get your dog used to going to the beach or getting on the kayak before you expect him to spend significant amounts of time in that activity.”

For well-socialized pets, however, such trips are viewed as added adventures spent with their favorite humans. Never before has the unconditional love unleashed on us by our pets felt so good.

Lisa Radosta, DVM, a veterinarian who operates the Florida Veterinary Behavior Service in West Palm Beach, recently spent a month living in a pet-friendly hotel while her family’s new house was being completed. Their old home sold quickly, so the entire family, including Maverick, a Labrador retriever, and a cat named Chewie were hotel dwellers.

“We chose the hotel based on the fact that they took pets and that we would have enough room (a suite) for us and both pets,” she says. “Factors to consider when traveling with your pets these days definitely include the ability to have space for the pets, a place to safely walk pets and pet-friendly restaurants and attractions nearby.”

Equally important is knowing your pet’s temperament and adaptability to being in new places with new sights, sounds and smells. When they arrived, their normally easygoing Maverick had issues with the hotel elevator. But having a veterinary behaviorist for a pet parent helped as Radosta steadily built up Maverick’s exposure to elevator rides.

“My husband and I are pretty fit, so we took the four flights of stairs up and down as much as possible to give Maverick a break from the elevator,” she says. “We learned that he needed treats before he got on the elevator and tolerated the ride much better if I asked him to lie down. He rides the elevator just fine now.

If you want to bring your pet on a day trip or overnight at a hotel, vacation rental, RV campground or cabin in a park, Radosta advises making a pros/cons list with your pet’s needs and personality in mind. Some pets are genuine homebodies, who prefer staying at home under the care of a professional pet sitter who is practicing CDC health and safety guidelines. Dogs feeling stressed may chew or damage hotel furniture or bark excessively.

“You can’t come and go as you please on vacation, because you have to go back to the RV or hotel to take care of your pets,” Radosta adds. “You know your pet’s likes and dislikes.

“Going out with your dog is really fun — for you! Is it fun for your dog?” she says. “If not, some time to get your dog used to going to the beach or getting on the kayak before you expect him to spend significant amounts of time in that activity.”

For well-socialized pets, however, such trips are viewed as added adventures spent with their favorite humans. Never before has the unconditional love unleashed on us by our pets felt so good.
Boca girl, grandmother create book to stay close during pandemic

By Janis Fontaine

Patricia Maguire of Ocean Ridge and her granddaughter Daniella Maguire of Boca Raton have always been exceptionally close, so the social distancing protocols of the coronavirus had them both craving more of a connection than FaceTime and phone calls could offer.

At the same time, Dani, 9, was empathizing with her mother, Viviana, who is Pati’s oldest daughter. She was struggling to virtual-school Dani while caring for Dani’s brothers, Mikey, 1, and Noah, 3. When Viviana’s birthday came around, Dani wanted to make her a special gift and enlisted Pati, whom she calls “Noni,” to help.

Dani wanted to write a story that portrayed her mom as the heroine and she wanted Pati, an accomplished artist, to illustrate it. “I wanted my mom to know how much I appreciate her,” Dani said. “Dani is very creative, and I’d been wanting to get her involved in a game or a project to stay in touch,” Pati recalled, and so she jumped on board.

Dani had learned to write essays in the fourth grade at Addison Mizner Elementary. “I wanted to be the author,” Dani said, but neither realized how big the project would become or how much work it would take.

In the end, the duo created \textit{Fiona the Fox and the Magic Crystal}, an 18-page book with 14 color illustrations. Pati learned to use a medium called gouache, an opaque watercolor-like paint thickened with a binding agent. Many discussions took place over the phone. Dani would write a few pages, and send the story to Noni, who would type it up. They would discuss how to best illustrate each of the scenes. Later they met a few times outdoors — at the beach or the pool, practicing social distancing — to work on the project.

“I kept it a surprise from my mom,” Dani said, so they had to be secretive. Afterward Dani apologized to her mom for “being mean and shutting her out.” But such is art!

Dani loves most animals (“I don’t like reptiles”) and knew they would be central to the story. Her story was inspired by the pandemic and something she saw happening around her. Dani noticed there were more birds singing and squirrels playing. The news reports said air pollution was clearing up in the biggest cities because people were traveling and driving less. “We noticed how nature responded,” Pati explained.

Their central theme — if nature could cause the pandemic, nature could fix it — depended on Fiona the Fox and the brave and brilliant mom solving a mystery together, with the help of all the forest animals and a bit of magic, of course. In all, it took Dani and Pati almost three months to complete their book, which Pati had self-published at www.blurb.com.

“I was so excited to see it and I was so proud of her,” Pati said. Dani had stuck with the project long-term, which can be tough when you’re not even in fifth grade yet.

“Dani got to experience the creative ebb and flow,” Pati said. “We motivated each other.”

“I was really proud of myself,” Dani said, “and my mom was really happy.” Now if we could just find that magic crystal.

Note: Events are correct as of 8/26. Please check with organizers for any changes.

**SEPTEMBER 5**
Saturday - 9/5 - Sensory Saturday: Special Exploration Hours at South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, 4801 N Dixie Hwy, West Palm Beach. For families affected by autism spectrum disorder. Not a heavy crowds, softened generalighting, decreased noise level & visual stimulation on interactive exhibits whenever possible. Held again 10/17, 11/21 10 am - 4 pm. $10/child; $5/student/age 3-12, free member/museum. 713-366-7676; visitsandiego.org

**SEPTEMBER 6-12**
Monday – 9/7 - STEM Learning Lab at South Florida Science Center and Aquarium, 4801 N Dixie Hwy, West Palm Beach. Each student provided with sanitized learning space, Wi-Fi connection, technical support. program uses same health/safety protocols developed for summer camp. Temperature checks upon arrival. Ages 7-12. Program runs w/thirds school weeks for families & children 8 am-2 pm, $20/week. 266-0194; delraylibrary.org

**SEPTEMBER 13-19**
Tuesday – 9/15 - Bellfish the Lines Zoom Readers Club presented by Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Grades K-1. 1st M 3:30-4:15 pm. Free. 266-0194; delraylibrary.org

**SEPTEMBER 20-26**
Monday – 9/21 - Story Chasers Zoom Book Club presented by Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. 1st T 3:30-4:15 pm. Free. 266-0194; delraylibrary.org

**SEPTEMBER 27-OCT. 3**
Monday – 9/28 - Tween Zoom Book Club presented by Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Grades 4-6. 1st F 3:30-4:15 pm. Free. 266-0194; delraylibrary.org

**OCTOBER 1-7**
Monday – 10/1 - 2020 Discovery Series: Ocean at Sandy Hook Discovery Center, 142 5 Ocean Blvd, Delray Beach. Program takes place outdoors; limited to 5 families per class. Geared for families with children age 3-6. Every Th through 10/22 5-10:15 am. $5/class child; $5/class accompanying adult. RSVP: 274-7250; sandyhookcenter.org

**OCTOBER 8-24**
Monday – 10/19 - Story Chasers Zoom Book Club presented by Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W Atlantic Ave. Grades 1-3. 1st M 3:30-4:15 pm. Free. 266-0194; delraylibrary.org

**OCTOBER 25-31**
Tuesday - 10/27 - Florida Treasures at Lake Worth Playhouse, 731 Lake Ave. Grades K-6. 11 am-3 pm. Tix: 586-6410; lakeworthplayhouse.org

**Halloween at the YMCA**
Saturday - 10/24 - Halloween at the YMCA at Peter Blum Family YMCA, 9600 S Military Tr, Boynton Beach. 6-9 pm. $5/adult; $15/child/member. 395-9622; ymcaspbc.org. Program uses limited indoor space; program uses outdoor space & will be held again 10/31. Program uses outdoor space; limited indoor space.

**Lifeguard honored**
Lantana — July 27
Lifeguard honored
Lifeguard Tanner Thielemann received the Lantana Police Department’s Life-saving Award from Chief Sean Scheller at Town Hall. Thielemann, a 34-year-old South Palm Beach resident, rescued an 18-year-old man from a rip tide off the shore in early August. The man was rescued by Town Hall staff and the Lantana Police Department. The man was then taken to the hospital and is expected to recover.

**Winning Wahoo**
The crew of the Hypoluxo-based Southern Comfort IV holds the 53.3-pound wahoo caught July 11 to win the Big Dog/Fat Cat KWD Shootout. From left are mate Josh Joyner, Capt. Bill Cox and mate Ashley Mann. Winning angler Mark Boydstun reeled in the wahoo, which hit a trolled bonito strip/sea witch. Wahoo were the combination in 250 feet off Sloan’s Curve. It was the heaviest fish of the 233-boat tournament. Photo provided by Southern Comfort Charters.

**Hurricane Isaías**
Hurricane Isaías passed Florida as a tropical storm. It provided a morning of rough seas, then an afternoon of beautiful surf and spectacular dismounts. Thousands of surfers hit the beaches along Florida coasts, including these off Ocean Ridge and Briny Breezes. By the following day, the surf was back to its normal summertime flatness. Photos by Jerry Lower/The Coastal Star.

**Winning Wahoo**

© 2020 JC Jackson

---

**Outdoors**

In wake of Hurricane Isaías
Ocean Ridge/Briny Breezes — Aug. 2

**Tots & Teens Calendar**
**FAMILY LAW EXCLUSIVELY FOR OVER 16 YEARS**

**Expert College Guidance in the Disruptive Covid-19 World**

College admission has changed. Please contact me for a complimentary virtual consultation to discuss the current college landscape and how we can best position your student to optimize their potential.

Hilary F. Sullivan, MBA
VBJ & ASSOCIATES
206-987-5838
WWW.BLCFL.COM

**Winning Wahoo** photo credit: JC Jackson.
Note: Events are current as of 6/29. Please check with origin for the most current information.

SEPTEMBER 5
Saturday - 9/5 - New Visitor Experience at Flagler Museum, One Whitehall Way, Palm Beach. Free admission to Flagler Museum of Public Life and Government. Guests must pre-purchase general admission tickets using credit card or PayPal by 4:30 PM on Thursday, 9/3. Guests will be greeted at the door on Friday and enter the museum with timed entry tickets. Visitors are required to choose an entry time between 10 AM and 3 PM. No reserved timed entry tickets. On Friday, guests will be directed to the Flagler Museum visitor center for their entry ticket. Hours: 9:30 AM to 5:15 PM. 369-2229; publicrelations@bhinc.org

9/5 - 9/6 - Raton Museum of Art at Art of FLorida, 501 Plaza Real. Free admission through 10/31. 779-1779; marthestreas@bch.info

SEPTEMBER 6-12
Monday - 9/7 - Labor Day
Tuesday - 9/8 - Great Directors Documentary Series: Recursion - presented by Old School Square, Actor's Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 10:30-11:30 AM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org Registration fee $10 - $5 creditable towards Anna's book or murderonthebeach.com

Wednesday - 9/9 - Friends of Raton Library Book Group Meeting: Group will review What Haunted: A True Story of Murder on the Beach Bookstore, 104 W Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach. Discussion w/ Neil Schulhoff. Adults. 10:30-11:30 AM. Registration: 393-7968; bocalibrary.org

Thursday - 9/10 - 10th Annual Film Screening: free film at Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Friday - 9/11 - Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. W-Sun 9/5 - Free Museum Admission at Boca Raton Public Library, 400 NW 2nd Ave. 10 AM-5 PM. Free. 393-7968; bocalibrary.org

Saturday - 9/12 -けんか!ディーゼル!瀬戸内国際芸術祭・他: Street Art at Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 11 AM-9 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

September 13-19: SUNSHINE STATE OPEN
Sep 13-19 - Open at Delray Beach Tennis Club; 2350 E. North Ave., Delray Beach. Tennis tournaments for players at all levels, including one over 60 and one for players with disabilities. Cost $25-$50. For more information, visit 276-4898; morikami.org

September 16-26: JAPANESE LANGUAGE
SEPTEMBER 16-26 - 10th Annual Film Screening: free film at Mizner Park Cultural Arts Center, 201 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 11 AM-9 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

SEPTEMBER 18-24
Tuesday - 9/18 - The Silent Conspiracy - Presented by Old School Square, Actor's Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Wednesday - 9/19 - The Opioid Crisis - Presented by Old School Square, Actor's Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Thursday - 9/20 - Great Directors Documentary Series: Source Code - presented by Old School Square, Actor's Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Friday - 9/21 - The Government of the People - Presented by Old School Square, Actor's Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Saturday - 9/22 - Color Create Craft Program at Morikami Japanese Museum and Gardens, 4000 Morikami Park Rd, Delray Beach. negativity. 10 AM. Instructor: Aiko Bock. Age 8-10. Registration: 935-2000; morikami.org

Sunday - 9/23 - Museum at the Beach Bookstore, 104 W Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach. Discussion w/ Neil Schulhoff for virtual discussion. Adults. 10:30-11:30 AM. Link to GoToMeeting emailed prior to the discussion. Registration: 393-7968; bocalibrary.org

SEPTEMBER 27-28
Sunday - 9/27 - Toy Kippur
Monday - 9/28 - One Day in a Million by Jessica Wood - part of Virtual ArtBook Fair Group at Delray Beach Public Library, 100 E Atlantic Ave. 1 PM. Free. Zoom link on website: 266-4978; delibrary.org

SEPTEMBER 27-OCT. 3
Tuesday - 9/27-28 - Monday's in Motion: Dive into the World of Coffee, presented by The Ethical Bean, 515 W. Palmetto Park Rd., Boca Raton. 393-7906; bocalibrary.org

Wednesday - 9/27 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 9/27 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 9/27 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

October 1-7
Tuesday - 10/1 - Great Directors Documentary Series: The Grand Budapest Hotel - presented by Old School Square, Actor’s Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Wednesday - 10/2 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 10/2 - Great Directors Documentary Series: The King’s Speech - presented by Old School Square, Actor’s Workshop & Repertory Company, 1000 S.E. Mizner Blvd., Boca Raton. 7790; murderonthebeach.com 7:30 PM. 243-9722; oldschoolsquare.org

Wednesday - 10/4 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 10/4 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 10/4 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

Wednesday - 10/4 - 7-11:00 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner

September 10-16 - 10-6:30 PM Happy Hour at Downtown Delray Beach presented by Downtown Delray Beach Partnership, 9 E. Atlantic Ave. 7-11 PM. 279-2891; fauf.fau.edu/PBBF-Weiner
Prestigious Beachfront Home
5000 OLD OCEAN BLVD | OCEAN RIDGE
- 4 Bedroom, 4.1 Bathroom Home on Corner Lot
- Located Directly Across from Atlantic Ocean
- Polished Slate & Wood Flooring Accented by Imported Italian Marble Throughout
- Gourmet Chef’s Kitchen
- Impact Windows
- Air Conditioned 2 Car Garage

Enchanting Waterfront Retreat
45 CURLEW ROAD | MANALAPAN
- 5 Bedroom, 5.1 Bathroom Pool Home
- Waterfront 25’ Dock
- Lot Faces Nature Preserve - Ultimate Privacy
- Renovated Dive-In Gourmet Kitchen
- Stainless Steel Appliances and Dual Wine Fridges
- First Floor Oversized Master Bedroom Suite
- Membership to the Exclusive La Coquille Club

MCCORMICK MILE DIRECT WATERFRONT
4 BR | 4 BA | 4,753 SF | $2,825M

MCCORMICK MILE WATERFRONT
5 BR | 5.1 BA | 3,901 SF | $3,02M

PERFECT BOATING LIFESTYLE
4 BR | 3.1 BA | 4,856 SF | $1.875M

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY
3 BR | 4 BA | 4,745 SF | $1.195M

MODERN WATERFRONT NEW CONSTRUCTION
5 BR | 4 BA | 4,000 SF | $3.695M

CHOOSE THE WATERFRONT LIFESTYLE
4 BR | 4.5 BA | 6,240 SF | $2.795M

RENOVATED DEEP WATERFRONT LOT
4 BR | 3 BA | 4,020 SF | $2.595M

MEDITERRANEAN WATERFRONT ESTATE
6 BR | 7.2 BA | 12,460 SF | $7.985M

ULTIMATE GULF STREAM WATERFRONT
5 BR | 5.5 BA | 6,638 SF | $5.995M

STEVEN PRESSON 561.843.6057 | steven.presson@corcoran.com
Follow Steven on Facebook: @PRESSSONGROUP