Along the Coast

Tempting Fate?
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Coastal Star

Blum and his Lady are a hit in therapy settings

By Arden Moore

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Then he turned the corner and spotted a Chow-collie mix sitting quietly and making direct eye contact.

The sign on her cage said that her name was Lady and that she truly was a lady,” recalls Blum. “I put my hand in and she licked it. I took her for a walk and she walked nicely by my side. I adopted her that day.”

Little did Blum know at the time that this dog was a lady — and more. She has proved to be an emotional lifeline to him and many others.

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Kitesurfers and sharks often mix

By Emily J. Minor

These days, news travels fast “even when you’re a bohemian sort like Billy Blackman” and that’s how Blackman found out a man died while kitesurfing up in Martin County.

He has a day job, sure. He runs a tree-trimming business. But if the wind is kicking up, even just a little, Kitesurfer Billy Blackman takes to the sky off Dog Beach. Photo by Krishna Espanet

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Editorial

Life-saving agreement deserves speedy resolution

None of us is happy with the speed of change.

Many of our neighbors who live in the Tradewinds and Place Au Soleil neighborhoods are upset at how quickly the city of Boynton Beach embraced and approved a Walmart where the former Gulfstream Mall sits crumbling today.

While no one debates the need to replace this strip-mall eyesore, there is a strong feeling that the approval process was fast-tracked with too little public discussion.

Contrast that with the painfully slow process to approve a policy that could unite Boynton Beach Fire Rescue and Palm Beach County Fire Rescue to protect the lives of the people who live in the unincorporated area between Briny Breezes and Gulf Stream.

Right now, if you live in — or happen to be in — this county pocket and require medical attention, fire-rescue county pocket and require medical attention, fire-rescue crew is dispatched to the closest available rescue crew (Boynton Beach) should be dispatched, while the county rescue crew is dispatched to the Federal Highway station for backup. This provides the critical response time needed for most cardiac or respiratory issues, while still providing coverage in the rest of the Boynton Beach service area.

Representatives from Boynton Beach suggest this inter-local agreement may take some time and could include a fiscal component, so is not yet scheduled to go before the Boynton Beach City Commission. Once Boynton approves the agreement, it will return to the County for final approval.

Both government entities are working to move this agreement forward, but in contrast to the speed of the Walmart approval process, the wheels of government are moving slowly.

There are elderly people and infants living in the unincorporated area. Let’s pray that another resident (or visitor) does not have a grave medical issue arise before this life-saving agreement can be approved.

Jerry Lower, Publisher
Mary Kate Leming, Editor

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Life-saving agreement can be written an agreement, but nothing yet has been signed. In oversimplified terms, here is how this mutual aid agreement should work:

When a life-threatening event happens in the unincorporated area, the closest available rescue crew (Boynton Beach) should be dispatched, while the county rescue crew is dispatched to the Federal Highway station for backup. This provides the critical response time needed for most cardiac or respiratory issues, while still providing coverage in the rest of the Boynton Beach service area.

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Jerry Lower, Publisher
Mary Kate Leming, Editor
Community must keep eye on developers picking up pieces of failed plans

By Robert Ganger

This month, the Florida Coalition for Preservation celebrates its third anniversary. Our mission remains unchanged: to champion responsible development on the barrier island and in our coastal communities. We remain grateful to the readers of The Coastal Star who have supported our ongoing involvement in the potential redevelopment of Briny Breezes, as one of many initiatives.

We are your watchdog. Our members often ask how we can remain active in these difficult economic times. After all, large-scale development has ground to a halt throughout the region. Behind the scenes, state and local permitting authorities are making it easier for developers to launch projects. We all share a common nightmare, that standards for building near the ocean or Intracoastal Waterway might be relaxed to make it easier for a developer to overbuild.

The mantra in the building industry now states: “The best position is to be the first son, the second wife, or the third position is to be the first son, the second wife, or the third wife.” Nimble developer/investors are now emerging to pick up the pieces of failed or failing projects for pennies on the dollar.

Case in point: The new Walmart development in Boynton Beach will assume a decrapt commercial/entertainment site on South Federal Highway, directly across from the western border of Gulf Stream and only a few hundred yards from the Intracoastal. City taxpayers have invested more than $2 million to “stabilize” the site, and future incentives are promised to Wal-Mart Inc.

The Coalition and several civic groups are committed to seeing that the plan recognizes legitimate concerns for the safety and quality of life in surrounding quiet residential neighborhoods. Another case involves the Sea Horse Club on A1A, just south of Briny Breezes. Plans for a three-story, 42-unit condominium on a 3.5-acre site went away when the market collapsed. A respected developer recently purchased the property out of bankruptcy, hoping to substitute a seven-story building on the ocean, and possibly other residences on what had been tennis courts west of A1A.

The developer is exploring avenues to stretch the spirit or language of existing codes to maximize economic return on his investment. As with Walmart, a new Sea Horse will emerge on an abandoned site. A responsible development will respect the collective will of barrier island residents to limit building height and unit density.

Let us know how you feel and we will do our best to preserve the essence of our unique coastal community. Please visit our website at www.preservationfla.org for the latest news and how to become involved.

Robert Ganger is president of the Florida Coalition for Preservation.

Manalapan

Three vie for manager

Three town manager candidates, selected from about 300 resumes received in a search after Greg Dunham resigned from the job, will face Manalapan commissioners at a March 22 interview.

Commissioners set a salary range of $80,000 to $120,000, but agreed that they could stretch higher or lower depending on the experience of the candidate when they finally make an offer. Each candidate will be interviewed separately by the panel during a special meeting that begins at 9:30 a.m., followed by a group lunch. Each commissioner will submit evaluations of the candidates and the results will be assembled at the commissioners’ regular meeting March 23.

The candidates are: Michael W. Alvis of Roanoke, Va., a vice president of ITT Corp., Anthony G. Otte of Lake Wales, former city manager for Lake Wales; Ronald W. Stock of Lamar, Colo., city administrator of Lamar and a former Leedsburg city manager.

— Margie Plunkett
Letters to the Editor

Small businesses have a big impact

Vivian Brooks really needs an education on our economy, and the sooner the better for Boynton Beach. I believe small businesses are responsible for more than 50 percent of the United States economy and that recent data show that figure to be even higher in the state of Florida. For an assistant director of the Community Redevelopment Agency to view the days of shopping at mom-and-pops as long gone is ludicrous. She needs to embrace the small businesses that pump money into the city that pays her salary.

LaRonda Denkler
Vince Canning Shoes
Delray Beach

Articles and ads both have appeal

I just wanted you to know that you publish a quality paper. The stories and articles are interesting and I usually find something new that I want to buy. (Shame on you!) I always let the people I speak to know that I found them in your paper. We business owners need to look out for one another. All the best for a great 2010!

Kimberlee Duke Marshall
Ocean Ridge

Crime prevention requires partnership

I contacted the Ocean Ridge Police Department in January and requested a representative come to talk to Colonial Ridge Club about crime prevention. On Feb. 4, Lt. Chris Yannuzzi and Investigator Hal Hutchins presented a crime prevention workshop. Topics included identity theft, Internet theft and personal protection. With 35 people in attendance, Yannuzzi and Hutchins provided useful and common-sense information to make us safer. Ocean Ridge is a safe community, but crime doesn’t stop at the Intracoastal and crime prevention is a partnership between the police and citizens. In addition to the presentation, handouts were provided. The response from the residents was very positive. The Ocean Ridge Police Department should be commended for the quick response to our request for crime prevention information and the professional workshop.

Keep your doors, windows and cars locked, and if you get the feeling that something isn’t right, call the police.

Norm Provost
Ocean Ridge

Letters:
The Coastal Star welcomes letters to the editor about issues in the community. These are subject to editing and must include your name, address and phone number. Mail to 5011 N. Ocean Blvd., #2, Ocean Ridge, FL 33435 or email editor@thecoastalstar.com.
The campaign was started after a reported conflict between bicyclists and motorists in Boca Raton and following the death of a young woman who was biking a year ago, Schweiger said.

Carmen Li, senior engineer in training at FDOT in Fort Lauderdale, said that the point is to "better educate bicyclists and motorists to ease the conflict.

The state has approved the signs' content, including one that tells motorists to give cyclists a 3-foot berth when passing. The other says cyclists should not ride more than two abreast.

It also approved, with minor modifications, a motion proposal that includes the placement of 16 signs, two in each of eight areas.

"The state was very supportive," Schweiger said. "We don't want it to overkill. If we have a lot of signs, it will lose its target value," Li said. The state will study the effectiveness of the signs once they're in place, he said.

ZMotion has spoken with municipalities in the area, Schweiger said. "They are all very supportive." If all goes well with permitting and fabrication, Schweiger hopes to have signs in place in a month or two. The cost of posting the signs could amount to roughly $15,000 to $20,000, he estimated.

Jim Smith, chairman of Safety As A Florida Expect, said he was glad to hear the test will go forward. Especially out-of-state motorists won't become familiar with the requirement to give cyclists 3-foot clearance until signs are posted, he said.

"The onus of safety isn't just on the motorist, however, Smith said. "It's a shared responsibility."

Bike safety signs
The proposed A1A locations where proposed bicycle safety signs would be placed.

1. South of Camino Real at Boca Inlet
2. South of Spanish River near Spanish River Park
3. Near ambassador East condo in Highland Beach
4. North of Pelican Lane and south of George Bush Boulevard in Delray Beach
5. North of Ridge Boulevard in Ocean Ridge
6. At the intersection of Ocean Avenue in Ocean Ridge
7. Just over the border into Manalapan, just north of the bridge at Ocean Inlet Park
8. Just south of the Carlisle and Ocean Avenue

WPB firm developing Seahorse project

By Margie Plunkett

The Seahorse Bath and Tennis Club, a $90 million oceanfront condominium project scrapped by the housing downturn, is being resuscitated by the Kolter Group LLC.

The West Palm Beach-based developer is in the process of taking title to the property, Kolter Residential President Bob Vail said.

"Once that happens," he said, "we will begin a completely new design process in earnest, with the intention of creating a property that's respectful of the location and surrounding communities."

The Seahorse, with 42 proposed residential units on a 3.5-acre plot of unincorporated county property between Gulf Stream and Briny Breezes, was scrapped in 2008. A foreclosure suit filed in 2009 resulted in a $21 million judgment for Bank of America Corp. The beach property that straddled A1A was cleared after Cincinnati developer JFP in the 1950s or '60s, was cleared after Cincinnati developer JFP

But Ganger made clear the highest offer was just a minimum bid of $15.5 million.

\[ \text{Price and yields are as of 02/19/10 and are subject to availability and may change at any time. Credit ratings shown are derived.} \]

\[ \text{1Interest on municipal bonds is generally exempt from federal income tax. However, some bonds may be subject to the alternative minimum tax (“AMT”).} \]

\[ \text{municipal bonds will fluctuate and, upon a sale, may be worth more or less than their original cost or maturity value. Insurance does not pertain to market values that will fluctuate over time.} \]

\[ \text{higher of insurer or issuer, and are subject to change. Insurance does not pertain to market values that will fluctuate over time.} \]

\[ \text{1} \]

Gorgeous water views from expansive wrap-around 2nd floor terrace. Master bedroom with Jacuzzi tub, raised fireplace, and wide balcony overlooking water. Full kitchen, sauna room, covered Loggia and great pool area all with expansive water Views. Offered for $2.595M.

1419 Lands End Road: Remarkable Intracoastal home. Gorgeous water views from expansive wrap-around 2nd floor deck. Gigantic master suite with private office, media room, ocean views & sauna. Contemporary $2.8M to $3.5M to $5.9M to a newsletter published by the Florida Coalition for Preservation.

The newsletter also says that a new developer of Seahorse, which it doesn’t name, may try to gain approval of a seven-story building, twice the height of the initial design, and has talked with Boynton Beach about possible annexation. The developer has talked with a few people that he can design a building that maintains the density that’s approved by the county and give a considerable more land space than was the case with the Seahorse that was approved several years ago," said Robert Ganger of the Coalition. "You could argue that it is not more than the Coalition. "You could argue that it is not more than

To learn more about this municipal bond opportunity, please contact a Morgan Stanley Smith Barney Financial Advisor.

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Footnotes

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Along the Avenues

Spring? Spring!

Chilly temperatures be damned, we’re warming up. I mean, what else are we supposed to do in South Florida? Fortunately, a little chilly weather here is better than most of the weather up north, and the folks who live and work along the beach avenues don’t let a few degrees get in the way of a good time.

There are not too many places this time of year where you’d find John McEnroe playing tennis in the middle of the street. But there he was in Delray Beach on the usually bumper-to-bumper Atlantic Avenue, on Feb. 18, trading shots and banter with Davis Cupper and Top 20 player Ronald Agenor. They were promoting the following week’s Delray International Tennis Championships.

“Do we have to stop when the light turns red,” McGrore joked to umpire du jour Woodie McDuffie, also known as Delray’s mayor.

“We can fix the road, mayor? We got a problem here,” McEnroe persisted good-naturedly. Of course, were this the real world and a quarter of century earlier, McDuffie might have longed for the civility of City Hall politics. But this time it was just for fun when hizzoner called a return out and Johnny Mac conjured up the past, tossing his racquet and uttering those famous words, “You cannot be serious.”

The weekend before, despite rain on Friday and the chilly weather, Delray’s Street Festival was a winner, thanks largely to the ‘no problem, mom’ music of The Wailers. A week later, a reported 400 artists at Lake Worth’s 16th annual Street Painting Festival paved the streets with chalk works.

With a crowd estimated near 100,000, perhaps the city needs to look at limiting the crowds, limiting the artists, increasing the space or all of the above. Too bad the art is temporary.

More art is on the way in Lake Worth, for a cause — Haitian earthquake relief. Area artists have pledged to craft and decorate at least 500 bowls for the Haitian Empty Bowl project. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on March 20, purchasers can get in the way of a good time.

The Office has a green theme, and it’s already recycled its typewriter. In their quest for green, the Maneros have gone green. They bottle their own water, distilled through a triple filtration system. The fireplace is powered by ethanol. All paper products, from the place mats to restroom towels, are made from recycled paper.

Manero has worked hard to get the word out. Business has been brisk. Ultimately, his success could be determined by a phone call: “Hi, honey. Don’t fix dinner for me, I’m working late at The Office.”

Before you know it, summer will be here and Florida Stage will be gone… at least from Manalapan. Rehearsals are in full swing for Dr. Radio, the penultimate production at the playhouse in Plaza del Mar, running March 24 through May 2. That will be followed by When the Sun Shone Brighter, and then the company will move it to new home at the Kravis Center.

The current production, Sins of the Mother, which is sold out, is the most popular non-musical in the 23-year history of Florida Stage.

“I think our fans see this as the beginning of the end and the beginning of the beginning,” marketing director Michael Gepner said. “There is some nostalgia — that there won’t be many more shows here — but ultimately, it’s the quality of the show. If it isn’t a good production, people aren’t gonna come.”

Incidentally, Florida Stage recently attracted the attention of The Wall Street Journal, which reviewed Sins of the Mother and offered: “The cast is ideal, the staging ferociously right. This is a show with no weak links, one that in a better-regulated world would now be playing on Broadway.”

Biologists are citing at least one positive from the recent Arctic blasts: They weren’t kind to nuisance non-native reptiles such as pythons and, yuck, iguanas, which apparently died in record numbers.
Unfortunately, the cold also hurt manatees and sea turtles, but if awareness can help, several beachfront hotels do their part by protecting nests and offering information to their guests.

Now the Ritz Carlton Palm Beach has gone a flipper further. In cooperation with the Loggerhead Marinelife Center in Juno Beach, the Ritz has adopted Gilda, a leatherback that has been fitted with a satellite-tracking device. Guests, staff and children in the resort’s AquaNuts program will be able to follow her movements on the Internet.

And the Academy Award goes to ... Oscar parties on March 7.

Guests at Cafe L’Europe in Palm Beach dress as their favorite movie stars or screen characters. Four-course dinner, plenty of champagne, big-screen TV for $115. Reservations a must at 655-4020.

The Fifth Annual Delray Beach Film Festival throws its own Oscar party that night from 7 p.m. to midnight at Bluefish Restaurant. Red carpet, live auction, dinner and one cocktail for $30. The festival, running March 22-28, will honor Barry Bostwick (Rocky Horror Picture Show) as its creative chair and Sharon Gless (Cagney & Lacey) and Jessica Walter (Play Misty for Me) with lifetime achievement awards. Tickets online only at www.dbff.us. The new Omphoy Ocean Resort Palm Beach will host Oscar Night America Live from Hollywood, a benefit for the Palm Beach International Film Festival (April 22-26), at 7 p.m. Oscar attire. Cocktails and dinner at Michelle Bernstein Restaurant for $250, or cocktails and Oscar party with “an array of heavy hors d’œuvres,” whatever they are, for $125. Info at pbifilmfest.org.

Call it a consolidation. Boynton Beach’s green markets have moved east. Formerly at the Boynton Mall and the Schoolhouse Museum, everything now will be held every Friday, Saturday and Sunday through May 8 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Green Market Cafe at 400 E. Boynton Beach Blvd. The program now includes a bakery, a deli, produce and an urban farming project with plans to establish a permanent downtown public marketplace (561-752-4598). Thom Smith is a freelance writer. He can be reached at thomsmith@ymail.com

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Manalapan

Library’s fund-raising and planning move briskly

By Margie Plunkett

The Manalapan library’s refurbishment wish list could soon take shape if the newly-kicked-off fundraising effort continues at the current pace: "We’re very fortunate to have this library. We want to make it more comfortable, inviting for people to come," said Joan Bernstein, who is heading coordination and fundraising for the volunteer committee behind the project for the J. Turner Moore Memorial Library.

Committee members Mary Thornton of MET Interiors and Sophy Isaac are volunteering design services.

The committee detailed refurbishments with a total price tag of an estimated $75,000 in a Feb. 9 letter asking residents for contributions to fund the project. "This will be a work in progress," Bernstein said. "We’re hoping to start this summer with the ceiling, electric and lights and maybe this summer with the ceiling, Thornton said.

The drop ceiling that’s been in the library since it was built in 1981 would be replaced with new raised panel tiles and recessed lighting would replace the current fluorescents at a cost of about $35,000.

In addition to providing books and other material for members to check out, the library hosts presentations, group meetings including the book club, a reading hour for children and computer classes.

A resident fundraising effort is underway to refurbish the interior of Manalapan’s library. Photo by Jerry Lower

The refurbishment list also includes replacing paneling on the library’s round wall — a reminder that the library was built around a 400,000 gallon municipal water tank — with Sheetrock at an estimated $5,000. The carpet would be replaced, either with vinyl hardwood or new carpeting for about $15,000. Painting would cost $10,000 and replacing or reupholstering furniture, $10,000.

Because Manalapan has its own library, residents don’t pay the Palm Beach County Library Tax, which the library committee estimated would be $550 a year for each $1 million of assessed home value — or a total $500,000 for the whole town, the letter to residents says. Library members pay an annual dues of $25 for residents and $35 for nonresidents.

The library welcomes all donations and will give special recognition to those who donate $2,000 or more at the benefactor level or $5,000 or more at the Friends of the Library level, Bernstein said. The committee asks that contributors make checks to the Town of Manalapan, but also note on the check it’s for Library Refurbishment.

About $14,800 has been collected for the refurbishment fund, Finance Director Linda Stumpf told Manalapan commissioners at their Feb. 23 meeting. The balance of pledges hasn’t yet been received.

"The response from the community is extremely positive," Bernstein’s husband, Commissioner William Bernstein, said at the meeting.
Local Voices

‘All politics is local’: Municipal elections March 9

By Pamela Goodman and Corinne Miller

Suppose they held an election and no one came. That is exactly what will happen on March 9 when 29 municipalities elect mayors and governing bodies in this year’s round of nonpartisan municipal elections.

Of the 75 elected positions to be filled only 23 are contested. In 13 communities the polls will be closed, as no challenges were filed for any of the open spots.

While this may save some money, what does it say about our democracy? Is everyone perfectly satisfied with the mostly unchallenged incumbents? Does no one care to serve in local government because they think it doesn’t matter?

Combined with low voter turnout for local races, the lack of political contests is telling commentary on the state of public understanding of our system of government.

Sometimes the decisions on the local level have a more profound effect on the quality of our daily lives than those of the Tallahassee or Washington crowd.

It is at the local level that we can influence such questions as these: Should we build a library in town or hire more police officers? What is the cost of garbage collection? Do our zoning laws protect the community from overdevelopment?

Who makes these decisions where you live?

If you live in Boynton Beach, Delray Beach, Manalapan, Ocean Ridge or South Palm Beach, be sure to vote on March 9.

Be sure to learn who is running so that you can make an informed choice. Many community Web sites have lists of candidates or sample ballots.

Additionally, beyond this month’s election, try attending your local town commission meeting as an observer. You will be amazed at what you will learn about your community in only one meeting.

Better yet, volunteer to sit on a town commission committee. In addition to the donation of your time and civic engagement, your participation and knowledge gained could make the next best decision when you cast your municipal election ballot!

Pamela Goodman is on the board of directors for the League of Women Voters of Florida and Corinne Miller is a member of the League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County.

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Manalapan

SEAT 2

Robert Evans, unopposed incumbent

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SEAT 4

Louis DeStefano

PERSONAL: 67; single; bachelor’s in English; Long Island University.

PROFESSIONAL: CEO of Thermatix company.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND: Serves on town zoning commission, former chair and vice chair of Manalapan; former architectural commission vice chair; former library board member.

POSITION ON ISSUES: Favors single-family homes over development of parcels with multiple dwellings and town homes. Wants to keep setbacks and height restrictions and maintain and continue the style of living. Would be vigilant regarding the new sand transfer plant and maintaining the beauty of the beach.

QUOTE: “I am the only candidate who is a homeowner both on the Point and on the barrier island on the ocean. That has made me uniquely sensitive to issues that pertain to both.”

Howard Roder

PERSONAL: 73; married; one child; bachelor’s degree in accounting and master’s in administration; University at Albany-State University of New York.

PROFESSIONAL: Retired; formerly one of largest independent propane dealer in New York State.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND: Serves on town architectural commission; no previous elected office.

POSITION ON ISSUES: Against any townhouses or multiple-family dwellings in any part of Manalapan. Priorities are to aggressively guard against fiscal waste, and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the water department operation that he considers the town’s most important asset.

QUOTE: “The main thing is not to accept the status quo. We need people that have the time, the knowledge and the expertise to make sure we’re carrying out all these functions in the best interests of all the residents. I’m retired. I have the time and the knowledge.”

Gerald Kent Shortz

PERSONAL: 73; divorced; two children; premed degree; Babson College; medical degree, Northwestern University.

PROFESSIONAL: Former Air Force flight surgeon; retired orthopedic surgeon.


POSITION ON ISSUES: Opposes any density increase. Priority is beach preservation, on which he has long worked, including currently developing protocols for the new sand transfer plant at the inlet. Also strongly supports refurbishment of the new library through private funds rather than public funds.

QUOTE: “The hot button in this town right now is density, and I’ve always been opposed to any increase in density. I’m a great believer in green space, adequate setbacks for buildings, etc.”

SEAT 6

Tom Thornton (incumbent)

PERSONAL: 61; married; two children; BA Notre Dame; MBA Long Island University.

PROFESSIONAL: Consultant in restaurant and retail industry; former CEO of several retail and restaurant chains.

POLITICAL BACKGROUND: Seeking fourth two-year term.

POSITION ON ISSUES: Very important how to handle two major pieces of property, the Benjamin property and Plaza Del Mar. In best of worlds, Plaza Del Mar would have all retail, and Benjamin only single-family homes. Also the large water plant that serves the town and almost all of Hypoluxo. It’s tough to be as efficient as we’d like to be, because of the very small amount of customers. We’re a small town with a large water plant. Normally you wouldn’t find that. So we really have to focus and pay very close attention to the water plant in terms of the infrastructure, in terms of the age of the pipes, in terms of what we build. All of that needs constant scrutiny. So that’s an issue for the future in terms of the future spending of this town.

QUOTE: “As far as I know Manalapan has the lowest millage rate in Palm Beach County. That’s been a lot of hard work by the current commission, in tough times economically. We’re very strict with our money and consequently able to get the lowest millage rate.”

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Tuesday, March 9th 1pm

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EVELYN & ARTHUR

JEWELRY ARTISANS

NATIVE SUN

STEEPING OUT VIA CONDOTTI

Located in the heart of Manalapan on the corner of 5. Ocean Blvd & Ocean Ave across from the Ritz Carlton • (561) 762-5340
Man digs into trash bills looking for the bottom line

By Ron Hayes

One day in January 2009, a neighbor on Del Haven Drive asked Ken MacNamee a casual question.

“Do you realize we pay more for trash pickup than people on the other side of the Intracoastal?”

That can’t be,” MacNamee thought. But he decided to investigate.

His monthly charge was $23.60. On the mainland, it was $13.50.

MacNamee kept investigating, and a year later, the Delray Beach City Commission has unanimously approved a vote of “no confidence” in City Manager David Harden and Finance Director Joe Safford, and a nine-member Financial Review Board is exploring MacNamee’s claim that Waste Management Inc. has overbilled the city about $500,000 over several years while underpaying $52,989 in commercial franchise fees.

“I have a file of work here that proves it,” MacNamee says, plopping on his kitchen table an Office Depot file storage box filled with printouts, contracts, utility bills and letters to and from city and county officials.

“I’m an anal-retentive,” he announces without apology. “I’m a tough sell. I’m a nonbeliever. I’m from Missouri — show me.”

Actually, he’s from Philadelphia, a certified public accountant and the former chief operating officer and chief financial officer of Corcoran Federal Savings & Loan.

At 59, he is the father of two grown children, and shares the house on Del Haven Drive with his wife, Mary, and a friendly poodle named Dutch. When not wading into the veritable quagmire of garbage pickup, he’s a volunteer referee at high school lacrosse, basketball and soccer games.

When he reviewed his pickup charge, MacNamee says, he was told the $10.10 discrepancy was because residents in coastal Delray Beach get rear-door pickup service. “Most of us didn’t know we were entitled to that,” he says. MacNamee told all his neighbors to stop bringing their garbage to the curb. “The city asked how the city verified the number of rear-door pickups waste management was billing. ‘We don’t,’ he says he was told.”

He kept digging, and the Office Depot box kept filling. “This has nothing to do with my ten bucks a month that MacNamee insists. ‘It’s that I live in a city that’s been taken to the cleaners. This city is looking out for Waste Management’s interests and not the residents.’

He is quick, however, to distinguish between the bureaucracy and the men on the trucks.

“The guys who pick the stuff up are good workers,” he says. “My problem is with management, the guys we use to call the suits.”

He is not, he insists, planning on running for office, SEE TRASH on page 11

Ocean Ridge

Inlet bridge painting project will disrupt A1A

By Margie Plunkett

A1A motorists, gather your patience.

The Boynton Inlet Bridge is about to undergo some sprucing up that will mean single lane closings through July 30.

The state contracted to sandblast and paint the steel structure underneath the bridge, according to Kay Worth, president and owner of Worth Contracting in Jacksonville, which has put up signs, is mobilizing equipment and expects to start work this month.

Signs along A1A near the inlet — as well as notices on Manalapan and Ocean Ridge Web sites — warn motorists of possible lane closures from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. through the end of July.

The contractor is at the mercy of the weather, which accounts for the duration of the project. Worth said the company can only work certain hours, and can’t do the job in high humidity or rain, she said.

Other news from Ocean Ridge’s commission meeting March 17.

• The Town will give retiring Police Chief Edward Hillery a bonus of $1,700. But the chief, whose retirement is effective April 1, told Commissioners he will donate the cash back to Ocean Ridge to have the fish pond at Town Hall repaired.

• When commissioners debated whether to keep the pond later that evening, one asked: “Who feeds the fish?” The response: Hillery. The chief voluntarily left the room while commissioners discussed his bonus, during which time a resident suggestion was made to consider collecting donations to replace the bonus the chief gave away.

• Resident Jeff Lee proposed having Ocean Ridge designated a bird sanctuary. Commissioners will contemplate an ordinance on the recommendations, which Town Manager Ken Schenck said did not require approval by any group including the Audubon Society.

• Signs telling motorists to stop for pedestrians were posted March 2 in the center of A1A at four crosswalks.

C.B. Hanif interviewed candidates for the March 9 Ocean Ridge Town Commission election. Candidates in the order of their appearance on the ballot (below):

Lynn Allison

PERSONAL: 59; two children; married; B.A. psychology, American University; M.S.W., Howard University, Ph.D.

management and administration, Indiana University Watson Institute.


POLITICAL BACKGROUND: Ocean Ridge commissioner since 2004; vice mayor 2007; served on school and charter school boards; administers Northwest Pompano Beach Business Loan Fund; on Education and Government Programming Advisory Board for Palm Beach County public station Channel 20.

POSITION ON ISSUES: Priority is ensuring enough revenue to keep our outstanding police force and staff because the revenue for each town has been drastically reduced. Focus should be on protecting and preserving the community in light of tough economic times. Traffic and traffic patterns on Old Ocean Boulevard, and natural gas and sewage are two concerns the community would like to resolve. Few issues are in great dispute right now. When I came in we were battling the state on bike lanes. We have resolved almost all, if not all of our disputes. I think there is very big issue when I came in.

We have a new Town Hall which has been completed during my tenure, and that was huge.

QUOTE: “We have a wonderful commission right now and we want to keep it. We will get along, we all work well together. This is an extremely strong commission with outstanding staff. We have a great town manager and a good team. That’s why I’m staying.”

Nancy L. Hogan

PERSONAL: 62; married; two children; business degree from the College of Saint Rose; masters in public administration from the State University of New York.

PROFESSIONAL: Real estate broker.


POSITION ON ISSUES: The town has needed to shore up fiscal oversight and professionalism since 2005 when I first was elected. If you don’t have your fiscal house in order, you can’t do anything else with good efficiency and the right planning. So fiscal responsibility and the financial oversight of expenditures out of Town Hall would be one major thing. The commission since 2005, and going back to 2001, has been very willing to spend at way above the inflation rate every year and burden the town with an immense amount of debt. You can’t just go out and burden a municipal system, especially with what we have with the police costs and retirement costs, then have a brand new Town Hall so there’s a deficit of $11 million. Terms limits have got to come to Ocean Ridge.

QUOTE: “Fiscal accountability and responsibility are far by my two biggies, and until the day that they wheel me away to a nursing home, and I live here and I’m working hard every day so I can afford to live in this wonderful town. I’m going to make sure that Town Hall is being fair, honest, efficient with my money.”
City pays trash bill, gives review board time to work

By Margie Plunkett

Commissioners in Delray Beach will pay Waste Management in full for last month’s bill, declining to pay the bill until we know no other reason to act differently,” he says. "I’m a passionate person. I don’t do things half-baked. I want to go to sleep tonight knowing I got something done. It’s not personal. I just want to see the city run properly." But now that his work has inspired an official review board, MacNamee is cautious. I’m not a firm believer in big committees unless you clearly define the duties of each committee member,” he says. "If you're just going to sit around talking in generalities and platitudes, that’s not how work gets done.” He ponders the Office Depot box. "I'm a little over halfway done," he says. "I've got a lot of work to do yet."
In South Palm Beach, two incumbents aren’t seeking re-election March 9. The top two vote recipients among six candidates will win two open seats on the Town Council.

C. B. Hanif interviewed the candidates. They appear below in order of appearance on the ballot:

Richard Akin
PERSONAL: 64; married; no children; journalism degree Georgia State University.
PROFESSIONAL: Retired television producer and writer.

Stella Jordan
PERSONAL: 70; widowed; three children; coursework in business and finance at Florida State University; courses in banking.
PROFESSIONAL: Retired; former first vice president of Sunflorn Bank Tampa Bay; former president, Rzon East Condominium Association for three terms; currently treasurer, Rzon East Condominium Association, serving fourth term. No prior elected office.

Political background:
Member of South Palm Beach code enforcement board; former president, Rzon East Condominium Association for three terms; currently treasurer, Rzon East Condominium Association, serving fourth term. No prior elected office.

POSITION ON ISSUES:
Running united campaign with Susan Lilibyck to ensure comprehensive plan is not changed to allow high-rise condo hotel redevelopment on Oceanfront Inn site. Favors reasonable development with residents’ input. Favor keeping Beachcode Department. Favors breakwateras to protect the beach. Favors fiscal responsibility and transparency.

QUOTE: “The issue of beach restoration is a top priority.”

Susan Lilibyck
PERSONAL: 59; married; one child; attended Millennium University.
PROFESSIONAL: Owner for 28 years of Donut Delite in Mokule, HI; former rate analyst for the Rock Island Lines.

Political background:
Worked on gubernatorial campaigns in Illinois; no prior elected office.

POSITION ON ISSUES:
Running united campaign with Stella Jordan to keep the current comprehensive plan and not allow a high-rise condo hotel on the Oceanfront Inn site. Wants to keep the Police Department; use business experience to promote fiscal responsibility; push for beach restoration to protect condos. Would work diligently with the entire council and seek input from all residents to build a consensus on the town’s goals.

QUOTE: “I strongly believe in the town’s present land development regulations, which regulates future development to a height restriction of 60 feet.”

Isabella Raiston-Charnley
PERSONAL: 66; single; no children; attended King’s School in England.
PROFESSIONAL: Worked in administration in family-owned private hospital in England; retired from health-care administration in U.S.

Clare M. Semer
PERSONAL: 70; widowed; two children; associate’s degree in business, Orange County Community College.
PROFESSIONAL: Former legal secretary; former medical office manager; owner of harness racing and breeding business, Realtor.

Political background:
Former elected New York state fire commissioner; former alternate on South Palm Beach screening board; currently on community affairs advisory board; served on condo board.

POSITION ON ISSUES:
Wants to remain in compliance with the existing comprehensive plan regarding hotel zoning. Would pay attention to renourishing the beaches and preserving the shoreline. Wants to be fiscally responsible with tax money.

QUOTE: “Watching over the budget hasn’t really been a hot item right now. People really are on the hotel, that’s their main focus, and there’s nothing on the table right now about the hotel. The community is making that apparently the hot issue.”
By Christine Davis

Quiet please. Counting calories is voluntary. Taking part in the census count is mandatory.

South Palm Beach’s ice cream social on Feb. 21 at Town Hall, offered an opportunity for free ice cream and cookies, free U.S. Census T-shirts and a free talk explaining the census.

“We have been pushing hard since day one — Jan. 6.” Town Councilman Donald Clayman said about his group of 16 volunteers.

“We want to make sure residents know how important it is. It will affect our congressional representation and Florida has millions to lose in federal funds, if enough people don’t fill out their census forms.”

Town Manager Rex Taylor asked Clayman to organize a volunteer group in conjunction with the National Census Bureau to ensure that South Palm Beach residents are informed on the census and its impact.

The federal government allocates $400 billion annually to states and communities based partly on census data.

“That is money spent on infrastructure, schools, hospitals — the Lantana bridge is an example,” Clayman said. “We lost out on $160,000 in the last census,” adds Lee Zimmerman, a past councilman and vice mayor from 2002 to 2008, who was attending the social. “If we don’t fill out the forms correctly, we will lose out again.”

South Palm Beach is comprised of 1,849 condominium units, four single-family homes and one business: a hotel, the Palm Beach Oceanfront Inn, with 58 units. According to the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research estimates for 2009, South Palm Beach had a permanent population of 1,523. The town’s estimate of its seasonal is 3,200.

“Last Census, 45 percent of South Palm Beach residents filled out their forms,” Clayman said. “We are going for 80 percent this time.”

“If you are residing in South Palm Beach at the time of the census, we want you to fill out the forms for South Palm Beach. If you are a vacationer for a short period of time — two to three weeks — you would fill out your form at your permanent residence. You do not have to be a citizen. Anybody who resides at the house where the census form is delivered should be included on that form. An accurate count can do good for our community. It can help us get more services, which means a brighter future for everyone,” Clayman told the full house at the social.

South Palm Beach residents who have questions can find Clayman and volunteers wearing census T-shirts at Town Hall on Fridays during Bookmobile visits, from 10 a.m. to noon.

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Additional talks are scheduled to coincide with community events from 2 to 4 p.m. on March 7, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on March 9, 10 a.m.-noon on March 10 and 10 a.m.-noon on March 12.

These events are held at South Palm Beach Town Hall, 3577 S. Ocean Blvd., South Palm Beach. For information, call (561) 588-8889.
Briny Breezes

Briny ponders police protection providers

By Margie Plunkett

Briny Breezes residents and government leaders rallied their pros and cons of Boynton Beach and Ocean Ridge police departments, both contenders for the town’s police contract, pondering factors such as policing style, patrol frequency, training and price at the February council meeting. The town will decide by its May or June meeting which police department will win the contract, Briny Breezes President Sharon Kendrigan said. It must notify Boynton Beach police whether the current contract will be renewed within 90 days of its October expiration.

The difference between the two contracts, besides price, Kendrigan said, is that Boynton Beach provides an eight-hour shift, has a marine patrol, greater police academy and a monthly report. Ocean Ridge will drive through at least six times a day, but if both towns have simultaneous emergencies, it will tend to Ocean Ridge’s first, she said.

The Boynton Beach contract is now $212,000 annually and will increase 4 percent to about $220,000. Ocean Ridge police — the smaller department, which served Briny Breezes previously — is offering protection for $185,000 annually with a 4 percent yearly increase.

Alderman Nancy Boczon raised concerns that members of Ocean Ridge’s Police Department have retired from previous positions and she didn’t know about that force’s training. Boynton Beach’s training gives them the wherewithal to deal with issues including gang violence, she said.

“We’re lucky they don’t come here,” Boczon noted, adding, “If you’re here in the summer and alone on the street, it’s nice for (Boynton Beach police) to come by every couple of hours. I’m happy with what they do.”

A resident who favored Ocean Ridge, Dave Westgate, said, “I’m more influenced by the cost factor, the $35,000 we save by going with Ocean Ridge. We all had good service with Ocean Ridge. They’re familiar with our lifestyle. They’re our age.”

The Ocean Ridge Police Department provided the tip that resulted in the arrest of a suspect in a recent crime spree, he pointed out, when GPS devices, cash and other belongings were swiped from unlocked cars in Briny Breezes.

Cost was an important factor to several residents, who said they faced steep increases when the town hiked the tax rate to the maximum $10 per $1,000 of assessed value. The town said the increase was necessary to cover rising costs of services including police and water, replace reserves tapped when negotiating its sale and ensure adequate revenues if a statewide voter referendum passes to limit municipal revenue increases.

Boynton Beach police are “insanely high” for the size trailer she bought. She said it was fairer for Briny Breezes’ corporation to pay for police, which would distribute the cost by share rather than by tax assessment. Another said the tax burden was unfairly placed on residents without a homestead exemption.

Turning police costs over to the corporation, however, could threaten the town’s justification for existence, Town Clerk Kathy Bray said.

The visibility of the police force favored the Ocean Ridge Police Department. “It’s a well known fact that the greatest crime protection is visible police presence,” she said. “I feel the more advertised presence you have, the better it is.”

“Boynton said they’re here every hour,” Taylor said. “I happen to know when Ocean Ridge says they’ll patrol a minimum twice on every shift that means on every street every time. That doesn’t include when they come for a call. On A1A it’ll be more than that.”

Boynton Beach police are trained to perform in their atmosphere of retail, bars and go-go, Taylor said. She added that she didn’t believe they should have been retrained to fit Briny Breezes’ lifestyle — nor was it fair to expect them to. And Taylor said, according to her calculations, the ratio of Ocean Ridge officers to Briny Breezes’ population would be better than Boynton Beach’s.

“I favor Ocean Ridge because the type of policing they do is more fitting for the type of town we have,” Taylor said.
Ocean Ridge
Police chief bids farewell after 17 years of leading force
By Kelly Wolfe

In this seaside village Police Department, sunlight floods every room, coffee is offered in a real mug with a coaster and a choice of creamers (vanilla or regular). “The guy who runs this place — Chief Edward Hillery Jr. — is a relaxed presence in a white, polo-style shirt with a badge embroidered over his heart. It’s pulled tight and tucked into dark blue shorts. He’s been here 17 years, and said in that time he’s received more complaints about bicyclists on A1A than anything else.

But Hillery’s last day is March 31. He’ll pass the torch to Lt. Chris Yannuzzi, who is happy to take over.

Sitting, being chief of police of Ocean Ridge is not the biggest torch in the world — if you want to go around comparing torches — but it burns bright with history and stories that are funny, endearing and, for some people, infuriating. These are told they same way a typical family might rehash the past around the Thanksgiving table.

“We’re very protective of our police,” said Gail Adams Aaskov, Ocean Ridge’s unofficial historian and publisher of the Ocean Ridge Reporter. If she recognizes the irony of this statement, she doesn’t let on. Everything she’s

Reporter
publisher of the
unofficial historian and
Aaskov, Ocean Ridge’s

around the Thanksgiving table.

are funny, endearing and, for

torches — but it burns bright

torch in the world — if you

happy to take over.

vice versa.

pin. Always working on it.”

“Keeps his house as neat as a

Ridge homeowner and Hillery

knows Doc. An outsider

his residents as well as Sophie

Doc,” is Senior Officer

Warnke said.

called Ocean Ridge, media officer known for

keeping dog biscuits in his

driver’s license.

the bikes over to the side of the

on a loudspeaker: “Please pull

bicycling with a friend on

It was about 8 a.m. on a

Saturday and Cerabino was

bicycling with a friend on

A1A when they both cruised

through a yellow light, he said.

Soon, they were being

followed by a cruiser. And then,

on a loudspeaker: “Please pull

the bikes over to the side of

the road.”

The police officer asked for a

driver’s license.

“I don’t have a driver’s

license, I’m riding a bike,”

Cerabino answered.

That’s when the police officer

took Cerabino’s fingerprints —

right there on the side of A1A.

Then he was given a $206

ticket for running a red light.

But Cerabino wasn’t

going to let it go that easy.

So he took his ticket to

court.

“The judge laughed,” he said.

He ordered Cerabino to pay

$100 and court costs — which

the judge laughed,” he said.

Back then, he said, Ocean

Ridge was best known for being

the regime of Ocean Ridge

resident. He was a teen during

Tom Warnke, a lifelong area

effort.”

Chief Edward Hillery

17 years as chief of police

Past Life:

Known for:

Directing the new building’s construction.

First day as chief of police: April 1

Lt. Chris Yannuzzi

16

Years in Ocean Ridge: four, hired to be Ocean Ridge’s first full-time investigator.

Past Life: Spent 25 years with the Boynton Beach Police Department; Spent four years as a police officer in Bound Brook, N.J., before fleeing the snow and coming to Florida; began his career as a police dispatcher in Watchung, N.J.

Biggest hurdle: It may be ahead. He’s going to have to figure out how to offer the same level of service with fewer tax dollars to spend.

Known for: Hiring a psychic to help solve a murder while chief of Boynton Beach Police Department. The psychic didn’t help solve the crime, but when an inmate later confessed to the crime, he admitted to what the psychic told Hillery. The psychic knew the woman was a twin, that she’d been killed with a knife with a wooden handle, where the knife had been hidden, and what the killer was wearing.

Last day as chief of police: March 31

Chief Edward Hillery — 1993 to 2010. Retires March 31. A retirement dinner celebrating his 17 years of dedicated service with the Ocean Ridge Police Department and 48 years in law enforcement will be held April 16 at Bemevuto in Boynton Beach.


Bruce Schroeder — 1992 to 1995. Resigned after town found evidence he had fixed tickets and mismanaged money.


James Kelly — Start date unknown, but published reports show him as police chief in 1991. He was fined in 1995 for “lack of proper management and administration.

Kenneth O’Rourke — 1989 to 1992. Resigned after town found evidence he had fixed tickets and mismanaged money.

Ray Newmann — June to September 1958. Newmann was the first Ocean Ridge police chief. Previously the town received law enforcement and protection from Boynton Beach.


Ocean Ridge has seen considerable changes since this photo was taken of Police Chief Kenneth O’Rourke (left) at the old town hall. Courtesy of Grace Brawner

Past Ocean Ridge Chiefs of Police
Police station move on hold, for now

By Thomas R. Collins

After a majority of Boynton Beach city commissioners pursued, full-throttle, a new police building along Congress Avenue, all five are now practically falling over themselves to postpone that effort.

Plans for a move of the police station to the Renaissance Commons development on Congress Avenue — a controversial switch from east to west — have been put off indefinitely.

Most likely, city commissioners will review plans in the budget process later this year, City Manager Kurt Bressner said.

“I guess what we’ll do is wait and see what happens and as part of the budget discussion we will ask the commission whether they want to consider any manner of police facility,” he said.

That will be after the March 9 elections, when voters will choose a new mayor to replace term-limited Jerry Taylor and two new commissioners will replace Ron Weiland and Jose Rodriguez, who are running for mayor along with five others.

The decision to postpone the move, made at a time of particular sensitivity to voter unrest, was just the latest twist in a complicated string of events.

Commissioners last year put out a request for proposals for a new City Hall and police station. Then they brought up the idea of having voters settle the question of whether to build them.

They then chose developer James Comparato’s Renaissance Commons location.

Then they essentially dropped the City Hall project but finalized a referendum question on whether to build the police station, leaving it up in the air whether the Comparato project would happen.

Then, with a 3-2 vote, they dropped the referendum and decided to go with Comparato’s deal, which, at $15 million, they said was a bargain.

Now, they’ve thought better of it and postponed it.

Weiland, who originally pushed for skipping the referendum and going straight to a deal with Comparato, now has changed his mind.

“Weiland stole her thunder. And Rodriguez, who has consistently panned the idea of moving either the City Hall or the police station from his eastern district, jumped into the mix, saying the whole project should be dropped for good.

“At this point in time, I don’t want to waste any more taxpayer dollars on negotiating this contract,” he said.

“Enough is enough.”

Walmart approved despite objections

By Thomas R. Collins

Attention Walmart shoppers: In about a year, you’ll be able to shop at a new store at Federal Highway and Gulfstream Boulevard — to the chagrin of some residents.

Residents from nearby Gulf Stream, particularly residents from the Place Au Soleil neighborhood across the street from the site, urged commissioners to delay a vote and work to make the store more aesthetically pleasing.

They also implored that the store not be 24 hours, a request that was rejected.

Commissioners approved the plans, along with requests from Wal-Mart to build farther away from the road than city regulations require. There was no zoning change needed, since that location is already a commercial zone.

Wal-Mart is planning to open the store in the spring of 2011, Community Redevelopment Agency Executive Director Lisa Bright said.

“Construction would likely be close to eight to 12 months,” Planning Director Mike Rumpf said in an e-mail.

The store will replace a property that includes an abandoned strip mall, nightclub and strip joint.

The planning department imposed a litany of conditions on the 93,000-square-foot store’s design, mainly in an attempt to give it a more urban feel. They include awnings, more windows and other features to make it appear that there’s more than one storefront rather than one big box of a store.

CRA officials in the city pointed to the 150 full-time and 50 part-time jobs that will be created, saying that employment opportunities along Federal are needed as part of the urban fabric the city is trying to create there.

“I think it’s an excellent project — that’s what we’ve been talking about for three years,” Bright said. “It’s the brand-new prototype for Wal-Mart so we’re excited to have the new model.”

The CRA will pay Wal-Mart $500 per full-time job — in addition to $2,500 per job from the state Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development. The CRA’s $75,000 will be paid over five years, Bright said.

Bob Ganger, head of the Gulf Stream Civic Association, said he was happy to have been included in talks with Wal-Mart representatives and city officials, but wished more changes would have been made to the design.

And he remains concerned about crime.

Police Chief G. Matthew

See Walmart on page 17
East Ocean bridge replacement may take two years to complete

By Margie Plunkett

The East Ocean Avenue bridge will rise higher and open less frequently when it’s been newly reconstructed, but some nearby neighbors worry that will mean more noise.

Town Manager Mike Bornstein presented the new design of the county-owned bridge, on which construction will begin in summer 2011, to council members last month. The bridge, which will cost the county about $30 million to rebuild, won’t reopen for about two years.

“The span is still safe, but it has to be replaced,” Mayor David Stewart said, explaining that a rating of 30 represents the threshold of safety — and the Lantana bridge is rated 32.

The bridge will rise from 13 feet to 21 feet, its noisy metal grating will be filled and its railings will be opened to allow the beautiful views to show through, said Bornstein. The added height will mean the bridge will need to open 40 percent less often to let boats through.

The widened bridge deck creates a wide sidewalk with a concrete barrier separating pedestrians and traffic, he said. The bridge keeper’s cupola is six-sided to provide visibility, with a tin roof and porches. And the design beneath the bridge incorporates far fewer pilings, creating a clearer view.

There will be room for two boats to pass underneath the bridge at the same time.

The town doesn’t intend to alter traffic from the bridge, hoping to provide a permanent structure underneath for anglers, Stewart said.

The new East Ocean Avenue bridge will rise to 21 feet, 8 feet higher than the current bridge. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2011. Rendering provided.

“The county has incorporated many of our concerns” in the new design, Bornstein said, noting at the end of the meeting newly raised concerns that he planned to bring to the engineers’ attention.

“I’m pleased with the bridge,” said council member Elizabeth Tennison. She praised the design elements that left intact views of the shimmering Intracoastal Waterway and lush shores.

Some bridges, when you drive across, you can’t see anything,” Stewart said. The structure also drew praise from other council members, including Tom Deringer, who said, “I think it’s a great bridge.”

But while one resident who lives right next to the bridge said the design perspective was nice, he said, “There is a need here to study noise mitigation to address how we can best meet the needs of the people living on the island,”

Mitch Mirchandani said because the bridge is three feet higher, the road noises won’t be absorbed by existing shrubbery and will travel farther. Gone will be the whirring sound of cars rolling across the grate and the rhythmic thud when they cross joints in the concrete.

Nothing will stop the sound of rubber on the road, Mirchandani said. In fact, because the bridge will open less means there will be more car noises.

Fewer bridge openings will mean less noise, however, Bornstein pointed out. But Mirchandani disagreed.

“When you live near a bridge, the only time you get quiet is when the bridge is up.”

The mayor asked Bornstein to send Mirchandani’s concern to county engineers. The town manager will also refer requests including to make the bridge the same color.

The logistics of closing the bridge for construction are immense, involving making new arrangements for garbage collection, fire and rescue services and water, but less obvious provisions such as finding a place for the Traumahawk helicopter to land when needed.

“Simple things that you take for granted will be cut off for two years for Hypoluxo Island,” Bornstein said.

Two docks planned for Sportsman’s Park

By Margie Plunkett

Lantana’s plan to build two docks to provide access for the boat launch at Sportsman’s Park will cost about $244,000, part of $300,000 county funds earmarked for the project.

Council approved the design — presented by Kimley-Horn & Associates Feb. 22 — consisting of a new dock structure built with timber decking and concrete piles.

“The goal of the project is to provide slips to reduce the congestion and to provide day slips to let boaters come and enjoy the shops and restaurants,” said Kevin Schanan of Kimley-Horn.

The eastern pier is primarily for staging, and a breakwater underneath it is designed to quell waves, he said. The other provides four slips for boats to dock for the day.

The timber decking raised concern from Council member Elizabeth Tennison, who pointed out the hazards of splinters and maintenance costs — and well as replacement costs if the materials are washed away in the storm.

A more expensive material is available that would extend the life of the docks, Town Manager Mike Bornstein pointed out. Mayor David Stewart noted that council’s approval was only for the initial design, that Kimley-Horn would return many times as the project progresses and council would have the opportunity to change materials used.

Public comments on the dock noted the project could benefit from making the space for the entrance ramp wider to facilitate movement into and out of the ramp.

Environmental concerns raised included whether the pressure-treated wood would leach into the Intracoastal Waterway.

The county granted Lantana the funds for Sportsman’s Park from $300,000 that was unused from another project.

The cost of the staging docks also includes a 24 percent contingency, according to Kimley-Horn.

WALMART: Continued from page 16

Immer said the Boynton Super Walmart had 989 calls for service last year. The main crimes were shoplifting, fraud and forgery, traffic accidents and auto burglaries. That compared to about 800 calls for service at the Boynton Mall, a difference Immer attributed to Walmart’s extended hours and the presence of mall security.

The round-the-clock schedule is what most displeases residents. Ganger said: “That’s the one outcome we’re not satisfied with.”
Here's an up-to-date read on area book clubs

**South Palm Beach**
Meet in town hall at 10:15 a.m. on the third Sunday of each month. For information, call Penny Davidson at (561) 547-9374.

**Manalapan**
Meets in the J. Turner Moore Library at 3 p.m. on the third Wednesday of each month. For information, call the library at (561) 588-7577.

**Ocean Ridge**
Meets at town hall at 5:45 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. For information, call John Wootton at (561) 369-3369.

**Delray Beach**
The Mules, a book discussion group for men only, meets monthly at the Boheme Bistro. For information, call Steve Leveen at (561) 716-0793.

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By Ron Hayes

Don’t believe everything you read about how nobody reads anymore.

Those good-old-fashioned book lovers are still out there, hungry for intelligent novels, literate histories, provocative biographies, and eager to share their delight — or disappointment — in the latest feast.

From South Palm Beach to Delray, book clubs are thriving.

In February, they read "The Help," novelist Kathryn Stockett’s tale of black domestic workers and the white women who hire them in 1960s Mississippi.

“The morning after I finished it, I came downstairs and it was like all my friends had moved away,” one fan said. But then she gathered with a dozen real friends at the Manalapan Library Book Club to discuss the book.

“We’re very informal,” says discussion leader John Tegano. “You can have the book or not. If you like the meeting you can come back.”

Ocean Ridge readers also read "The Help." It’s the only book everybody’s liked,” says club leader John Wootton. The book club strives to find quality fiction, Wootton says, but it’s not above slumming once a while.

Not long ago, they tackled "Twilight," from Stephanie Meyer’s hugely successful vampire series.

“We said, ‘Let’s read this as a sociological phenomenon,’” explains Wootton, “and it turned out to be fascinating. We all thought it was dreadfully written, but it got us talking to children and teenagers and asking ‘What do you see in this?’”

Usually, the club favors more literary works, such as Olive Kitteridge, last year’s Pulitzer-prize winner, or John Steinbeck’s classic, "The Grapes of Wrath.”

“The only things we try to stay away from are strong religious themes, and we don’t want to get into political discussions,” Wootton says. And then there’s … sex!

After all, one reader’s sensuality is another’s smut.

“Some ladies in our group didn’t finish one book or another because it was full of dirty words,” concedes Penny Davidson of South Palm Beach, "If I’ve chosen something that goes against the grain, they won’t vote for it — or they won’t come — but that’s life.”

Ask the club leaders, and usually their views of life” vary widely, they concede that their groups are predominantly, if not overwhelmingly, female.

In 2002, Susan Hurlburt started an informal book club with 10 women friends in Delray Beach.

“I just invited some friends I knew were literate, and I was basically the dictator. I picked the books,” she recalls. Seven years later, the club is still active, but without a dictator.

Nowadays, they work from a list of genres — memoirs, prize-winners, plays, nonfiction — and the member who chooses the book hosts a meeting in her home. They are not currently accepting new members.

“We’re 10 women with 10 different views of life,” says Hurlburt, “and we’ve only chosen one book that was a dog.”


“Yes, the book clubs tend to be invariably women,” says Steve Leven, the founder of the Levenger book accessory stores and author of The Little Guide To Your Well-Read Life. "I got a little envious that women were having all these great meetings, so I started a book club for men only.

The result is The Mules, a Delray Beach discussion group inspired by a couplet from poet Ogden Nash: In the land of the mules, there are no rules.

While the women read Maeve Binchy or The Help, Leveen and his fellow Mules favor more manly fare, such as Ernest Hemingway and Cormac McCarthy.

“I made the mistake once of inviting some women to our meeting,” Leveen says, “and frankly, the level of discussion was raised to such a high level it was intimidating and the men made me promise I wouldn’t do it again.”

Laughter mixes with literature during the February book club discussion of The Help held at the Manalapan Library. Photo by Jerry Lower
The COASTAL STAR
March 2010
News 19

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The Book Thief may steal the heart of County readers
By Ron Hayes

For the 2010 “Read Together Palm Beach County” campaign, almost 3,000 area book lovers have reached back to Nazi Germany, to choose a title they hope will steal readers’ hearts this year.

They also made local history by choosing, for the first time, a young adult novel for the “One Book, One Community” project.
The Book Thief, a 2005 novel by Australian author Markus Zusak, is the story of 9-year-old Liesel Meminger, who falls in love with reading when she finds a “Grave Digger’s Handbook” buried in the snow by her brother’s grave. Soon she is stealing books wherever possible and sharing them with a Jew her family is hiding in their basement.

The widely praised book beat out Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet by Jamie Ford, The Things They Carried by Tim O’Brien, Run by Ann Patchett and The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society by Mary Ann Shaffer and Anne Barrows in voting at local libraries, bookstores and Starbucks coffee shops.
The official reading campaign will kick off March 26 and end April 30.
For more information, call the Palm Beach County Literacy Coalition at 1-800-273-1030 or visit www.literacypbc.org.

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Seaside Dining

It’s a Shore Thing

8 local restaurants with great sea views

By Mary Thurwachter

We appreciate restaurants with scrumptious food, good service and a pleasing ambience. But if a dining spot comes with an ocean view, we’re really cooking! Fortunately for us, our islands are blessed with several such gems, where we can share good food and conversation while taking in beautiful ocean views. They range from elegant and pricey dining rooms to casual flip-flop friendly cafes. Check out these eight seashore treasures. A1A will lead your way.

The Seafood Bar at The Breakers
Palm Beach

You don’t have to be a guest at this historic five-star hotel to enjoy its many restaurants, including one of our favorites, The Seafood Bar. The bar itself is an aquarium, so you can watch the tropical fish swimming about as you toast the day with glass of wine. The ocean view here is spectacular, and since the restaurant is enclosed, there’s no need to worry about the wind blowing your hair into your face while you’re eating calamari. The menu includes fresh fish, clams, oysters, lobster, shrimp and crawdads. Vaulted beamed ceilings, plantation shutters and elegant furnishings help make this bar a cool spot for dining or drinks. Casual dress, but no torn jeans, cut-offs or tank tops.

Phone: (561) 655-6661. Address: 1 S. County Road.

Dune Deck
Lantana

You never know who you’ll run into at the Dune Deck. It’s next door to the Ritz-Carlton and attracts some of its guests, like The Who’s frontman, Roger Daltrey, who was in the area for a Super Bowl halftime performance. Mostly, it’s everyday folks, tourists and natives. It’s like being in the Greek Isles or the French Riviera. From most tables, you’re almost eye level with the lifeguard. Fish sandwiches and burgers are good here, but one of the specialties is a Greek salad with grilled pita. Casual dress is fine. Note: Cash only; no credit cards.

Phone: (561) 582-0472. Address: 100 N. Ocean Blvd.

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Phone: (561) 582-0472. Address: 100 N. Ocean Blvd.
The Upper Deck at Boston’s Delray Beach
Boston’s and its neighbors Caffé Luna Rosa and Surf Sliders are all fun beach-side spots to dine, but for the best ocean view you have to go to The Upper Deck at Boston’s. A spacious veranda provides lots of tables for diners to eat, take in the breeze and watch the waves roll in. They can also see surfers riding the waves at the south end of the beach, sailboats cruising by, and beach-goers swimming and sunbathing on the sandy shores below. More formal in décor than Boston’s first floor, inside tables are covered with white clothes and high-top tables permit the same great ocean views you get outside. The menu features lots of seafood, but you can get Boston’s famous New England style lobster salad, Ipswich steamers, fried clams, live Maine lobsters, sandwiches, burgers and salads, too. A sleek bar comes with all the libations you’d expect at this Delray Beach hotspot.
Phone: (561) 278-3364. Address: 40 S. Ocean Blvd.

Mary Thurwachter writes about Florida B&Bs and other small inns at www.InnsideFlorida.com.

Benny’s on the Beach
Lake Worth
You can have breakfast, lunch or dinner in your bathing suit here, if that’s what you want. Benny’s is, as its moniker says, “on the beach.” More precisely, it’s on the Lake Worth pier. Chow down on a stuffed croissant, juicy hamburger or maybe the Captain’s fried platter. Arrive early enough in the day and you can watch the sunrise. After eating, you can always burn off the calories by walking the beach, going for a swim, or strolling out on the 488-foot William O. Lockhart Municipal Pier.
Phone: (561) 582-9001. Address: 10 S. Ocean Blvd.

Photos at Upper Deck, Tides, Dune Deck and Benny’s by Tim Stepien, Mary Thurwachter, Jerry Lower; others provided.
While many Floridians were running their heaters and complaining about the recent cold fronts, dozens of hardy surfers took advantage of the surf it kicked up to enjoy the waves off Delray Beach. Photo by Jerry Lower
10 Questions

MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR: Barbara Cook

Barbara Cook of Ocean Ridge considers gardening her calling and describes herself “a farmer at heart.”

“I’ve done many things in my adult life, and the garden is where I am the happiest. I’m not tired when I’m in the garden, and I’m never blue. It’s something that I love to do — and have to do.”

A good thing she never got tired or blue, because her garden took time (21 years), study (she’s now a certified Master Gardener), and a lot of hard work (more than 12 hours a week in her own garden, plus volunteer gardening).

Because her acre of garden is a Florida hammock, machinery could not be used to clear the grounds, she explains. “I did it with rake and hoe and bare hands. It wasn’t so terribly hard, but it was time-consuming.”

Over the years, she methodically coaxed her jungle into a garden and got “it all cleaned up.”

Now, she gladly shares her garden and, if asked, offers advice. “I’d hate to think about putting in all that time and effort and not share it,” she said. Here are some of her tips:

“When planning a garden, don’t try to do it all at once. That would be too overwhelming, so take your garden section by section. “I’d take a section to the bare dirt and I’d check the sun and the shade elements. I would think about what I’d want to see, and visit the nursery and tell them my situation. The people in the nurseries were fabulous. They trained me.”

“Don’t be too concerned with your failures. “There are plenty of plants and holes in the ground where the dead plants came from. Killing plants is to be expected.”

• Just get started. “Even if you have a small, intimate setting, it can be beautiful with containers and a choice of plants. With the right little table and chairs, you can have a beautiful getaway of a garden right there.”

• A garden has personality and one must honor it. Hers, she said, is uplifting and inspirational.

“I love beauty. When I had to define the rest of my life, I realized it was to create beauty and restore order. In turn, my garden inspires others to create beauty and restore order and this is my mission and I will do it forever.”

Her garden will be one of six on the Delray Beach Secret Garden Tour and Luncheon, on March 20.

Q. Where did you grow up and go to school? How do you think that has influenced you?
A. The boot heel of Kennett, Mo., on the Arkansas-Tennessee border, cotton and watermelon country. The Southern influence kept me grounded in home and family values.

Q. How and when did you become a gardener?
A. Twenty years ago, my husband, Stan, and I were at the wonderful Bok Towers in Lake Wales. He said, “Find me a Bok Tower.” After much searching, we had to settle on a Florida hammock in Ocean Ridge. It was a jungle. It took five years to clear the ground and find out what would grow in the dense shade and little sun. I started studying and reading every book I could, and picking the brains of every nursery owner. Finally, after 15 years of creating my dream garden, I took a course at the County Extension to become a Master Gardener. Then, the real learning began. In the meantime, the gardens have been on numerous large group tours, including one bringing in 615 people.

Q. Have you had other careers or hobbies? What were the highlights?
A. My husband and children were my career for the first 20 years. All along, I was involved in gourmet cooking and entertaining clients, decorating, taking college courses in English lit, the stock market, cooking with favorite chefs who came to the area. A favorite was Jacques Pepin. The most valuable hobby was taking the horticultural course to become a Master Gardener.

Q. Tell us about your garden.
A. My gardens are in five themes, each flowing gracefully into each other. I start a tour by showing the guests a huge bass chime hanging in a century-old strangler fig. When rung, it announces that visitors are coming in to visit the gardens. There is an orchestra of chimes that entertain us daily. There is no grass anywhere.

About gardening, Cook says, “Create beauty and restore order. This in return will inspire others to create beauty and restore order in their own lives.”

Photo by Jerry Lower

Delray Beach Secret Garden Tour and Luncheon
When: Saturday, March 20
What: 6 private gardens
Transportation: Trolley takes you around; meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W. Atlantic Ave, Delray Beach, in the parking lot. Cost: $47 if you RSVP before March 15, and later than that, $52. Continental breakfast and lunch are included. RSVP: (561) 276-0715, Carolyn Zimmerman;
Proceeds go to the Lightup Delray Beach Holiday Decorating Contest and the Easter Bonnet Stroll. Make checks payable to Carolyn Zimmerman, and mail to 212 SW 2nd Ave., Delray Beach, FL 33444;
Lunch will be in Carolyn Zimmerman’s garden. Breakfast will be in Ann Koplas’ garden.

Q. What book are you reading now?
A. An Irish novel by Maeve Binchy called Tara Road.

Q. What music do you listen to when you need inspiration or want to relax?
A. Smooth jazz and New Age jazz. I feel artistic with Enya or Andrea Bocelli.

Q. If your life story were made into a movie, who would play you?
A. Now, that is a fantasy, but I would choose Elizabeth Taylor. She would portray me much spicier than I am. I would like to see how she would handle getting grimy in the garden, cooking and attending volunteer meetings and weed-pulling parties. I’m sure she would walk off the set and my movie would be trashed.

About the garden, Barbara says “My gardens are in five themes, each flowing gracefully into each other. I start a tour by showing the guests a huge bass chime hanging in a century-old strangler fig. When rung, it announces that visitors are coming in to visit the gardens. There is an orchestra of chimes that entertain us daily. There is no grass anywhere. Only paths that lead to each theme with a “discovery” around every bend. There is “Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil,” flowing into “Birdhouse Lane,” with 16 houses on posts. On that lane are sculptures of a life-sized mamma and baby zebra, a prehistoric leopard, a lion and a bear. The sculptures were done for us by artists. Five exotic 6-foot birds of limestone are seductively slipped into the greenery. I include some plants familiar to most, then push the appreciation and education of species they probably aren’t familiar with, i.e. Vil Mariniana, or by the common name, “Octopussy,” a huge, intriguing agave. People are welcome at any time to come and stroll through.

Q. What is your favorite part about living in Ocean Ridge?
A. The ocean across the street is a magnate for tranquility, the setting of the property.

Q. Have you had mentors in your life? Individuals who have inspired your life decisions?
A. Being from a family of 10 children, I had many brothers and sisters to tap ideas from, but I was especially attracted to three aunts who left the home front to become very successful women when it was unappreciated for women to break the role of housewife: One was a writer who regaled me with history and tales of our ancestor, Stonewall Jackson, one aunt became a principal of the high school of our town, and one became a nurse. When one of us contracted a childhood disease, all 10 of us did. So, we had the benefit of a private nurse.

Q. Who or what makes you laugh?
A. I love comic strips. I think there is genius in an artist who can convey in three frames a whole humorous story that takes an author to do in 300 pages. People with a genuine sense of humor thrill me.

Q. What book are you reading now?
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Q. What music do you listen to when you need inspiration or want to relax?
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Q. What is your favorite part about living in Ocean Ridge?
A. The ocean across the street is a magnate for tranquility, the setting of the property.
Brimming with vitality and bounding with energy, Gina and Garrett Bender’s charming Mediterranean-style, two-story home on Andrews Avenue will be one of the stops of the March 11 Delray Beach Home Tour. The tour will include seven homes in the beach area of Delray Beach and benefits the Achievement Centers for Children & Families. “We have a full house,” Gina Bender said of her six-bedroom, seven-bath waterfront home with more than 9,000 total square feet. The Benders have three children: Draper, 17, Quillen, 15 and Olivia, 14. Also part of the family are a cat, Zazu, and three dogs: Molly, a springer spaniel; Milkshake, a West Highland white; and Layla, a pit bull. “We are just missing a goat and a chicken,” she adds. The home was a collaborative effort between Garrett, a real estate developer, and Gina, a designer and antiques dealer. They came from Atlanta and moved into their new home in 2005. Randy Stofft of Randall E. Stofft Architects was the architect and Curtis House of Louis Anthony & Associates, designed the interiors. Set up perfectly for this family, the house is divided into rooms in the main part of the house (the dogs move pillows around and settle into the comfy sofas and chairs in the living room) as well as offices for Gina and Garrett. The big kitchen opens to the family room, where the children enjoy hanging out, even though they have a family room, just outside their cluster of bedroom suites upstairs. The guest room, also on the second floor and overlooking the water, is often taken over by friends.

**New ‘old’ family home a highlight of tour**

By Christine Davis

Gina Bender stands outside her home with her dog Milkshake. The house, and its murals, will be on the Delray Beach Home Tour. **Photos by Tim Stepieen**

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By Christine Davis

Brimming with vitality and bounding with energy, Gina and Garrett Bender’s charming Mediterranean-style, two-story home on Andrews Avenue will be one of the stops of the March 11 Delray Beach Home Tour. The tour will include seven homes in the beach area of Delray Beach and benefits the Achievement Centers for Children & Families. “We have a full house,” Gina Bender said of her six-bedroom, seven-bath waterfront home with more than 9,000 total square feet. The Benders have three children: Draper, 17, Quillen, 15 and Olivia, 14. Also part of the family are a cat, Zazu, and three dogs: Molly, a springer spaniel; Milkshake, a West Highland white; and Layla, a pit bull. “We are just missing a goat and a chicken,” she adds. The home was a collaborative effort between Garrett, a real estate developer, and Gina, a designer and antiques dealer. They came from Atlanta and moved into their new home in 2005. Randy Stofft of Randall E. Stofft Architects was the architect and Curtis House of Louis Anthony & Associates, designed the interiors. Set up perfectly for this family, the house is divided into rooms in the main part of the house (the dogs move pillows around and settle into the comfy sofas and chairs in the living room) as well as offices for Gina and Garrett. The big kitchen opens to the family room, where the children enjoy hanging out, even though they have a family room, just outside their cluster of bedroom suites upstairs. The guest room, also on the second floor and overlooking the water, is often taken over by friends.

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of the children, which is just fine with Gina as that makes it easier to keep track of her teens.

The master suite is privately located in the north of the house on the second floor—and includes a gym, large bathroom and closets, and a sun-filled bedroom with French doors that open to a balcony offering water views.

For Gina, moving gave her the opportunity to create the “new old” home of her dreams, using ideas from Addison Mizner’s architecture and pictures of old Palm Beach homes that she collected from books and magazines.

Architectural features include a tower staircase topped with a dome and adorned by a hand-painted mural, highly decorated Moorish columns, wrought-iron railings and grillwork, French doors, archways, deep brown natural woodwork, tea-stained stucco, stone floors as well as plank floors, decorative ceiling treatments, and tiles of all types, colors and sizes that Gina enjoyed finding.

Thank goodness, Gina said, that some wares from her Atlanta shops didn’t sell. Those pieces worked perfectly in her home’s décor, an eclectic mix of Indian and Spanish antiques, with rich woods and jewel-toned fabrics.

Outside, the grounds are a tropical paradise. Enclosed in a courtyard are patios, a summer kitchen, pool, spa and fountains. Along the waterfront of their home is a dock.

“I loved creating this house,” Gina said. “It came together beautifully and the location is perfect. It’s great for entertaining, and, since it’s close to the beach, our house is where the kids’ friends come. Actually, they are doing more entertaining than Garrett and I.”

Molly and Milkshake enjoy the living room of the Bender’s Delray Beach home.

**IF YOU GO**

The tour, which benefits the Achievement Centers for Children & Families, is 10 a.m.-4 p.m., Thursday, March 11. Homes are between the ocean and Intracoastal Waterway, from Vista Del Mar to Pelican Lane. The Achievement Centers for Children & Families in Delray Beach, a social services agency serving 700 children and 110 adults, aims to help families achieve self-sufficiency, as well as providing the children of these families with the educational resources to help them succeed in school. The tour, in its eighth year, is the centers’ signature fund-raiser.

Ticket price is $500 and includes parking with continuous trolley service between the homes and a “taste of Delray” catered lunch. Reservations are required. Confirmed guests will receive a map of the homes one week before the event. Call (561) 266-0003.

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Haiti’s hold: Aid mission still haunts and inspires

By Kathy Skipper

Haiti is on my mind. Like a newfound love, it is the prism that colors everything I see. Like the old and familiar, it is a comfort and a treasure. Day and night, I think of Haiti.

It’s been like this since I traveled there in December and then saw the country shockingly rocked to its knees on Jan. 12. You are not supposed to get this attached, I think. Don’t let yourself become obsessed by this. But it is too late. I have fallen in love with the Haitian people.

When I traveled there as an employee of Food For The Poor, it was with 20 others looking to see the situation in Haiti firsthand, and to serve the poor. Some of us were staff; others, from around the country, took time out during the busiest season of the year to feed the hungry and visit the sick. They came from Texas and New York, from Michigan and from Georgia. My husband, a journalist who has traveled to Haiti many times, told me what to expect: the streets, the smells, the very air of destitution. My co-workers counseled me on food, water, on the outpouring of love we would receive from the Haitian people. I listened carefully, and tried to prepare myself. Despite all that, nothing truly readied me for what we saw after a two-hour flight from South Florida. I felt like a time-traveler.

The infamous poverty was everywhere. Yet so was the hope and love. As we fed lunch to children at a home for the handicapped, they were all over us, head to toe, touching our hair, and blessing us with their smiles. We witnessed market day in Gressier, a town where we could not distinguish the mud pens from the houses. Children begged for food. Even though we learned many of the people soon would be moved to Food For The Poor houses, the bottle of water I was drinking choked me.

In Cité Soleil, the worst slum in the Western Hemisphere, we washed the feet of the poor and gave them new shoes, while they sang hymns to us in Creole. They prayed for us.

When I left, I made two commitments: to work harder for the poor, and to return as soon as possible.

Then the news of the earthquake came, and our hearts broke. With each call came more news of devastation. Most of downtown Port-au-Prince was destroyed. The Hotel Montana, where we stayed in December, had fallen. We would learn that one of our staff members would be rescued after 17 hours in the rubble, and that six members of our January mission trip with Lynn University were lost.

We also learned that we were able to serve hot meals, that aid was getting in and that most of our houses had withstood the quake. I still can’t wait to return to Haiti and to the people who refuse to let love and hope die. They persevere. And so will we.

Kathy Skipper works for Food For The Poor.
Workplace provides comfort to grieving Haitian staff

By Dianna Smith

On the day his world fell apart, Kivland Lubin turned to the only place where he feels at peace.

His work. At Harbour’s Edge, a retirement living facility nestled along the Intracoastal in Delray Beach, more than 80 employees are Haitian. So when a powerful earthquake rocked Haiti on Jan. 12, it rocked the lives of those here, too.

Many workers lost family members, including Lubin, whose six relatives are still missing in the country’s capital, Port-au-Prince. He believes they all are dead. And though he felt weak and helpless in those first few days after the earthquake, it was the people at Harbour’s Edge who gave him strength.

“When I came here, I felt better,” Lubin, 49, of Boca Raton, said. “I feel like I’m with my family.”

So Lubin and the rest of the Haitian staff did what they would do with their own families — they prayed. A prayer service was quickly organized with Harbour’s Edge Executive Director Theresa Bertram nearby.

She brought in grief counselors and offered counseling to those who told their stories that day. Bertram still recalls the sadness that poured from their voices over and over again.

Employee Jean Delva had been in Port-au-Prince for a funeral and left just hours before the earthquake hit. In Haiti, he spent time with his family before returning to Florida. He tried calling it. Still, no one answers.

“I don’t know where my family is,” Delva, 35, of Delray Beach said. “My house collapsed.”

Another man, Joselyn Viau, mourns the loss of his entire town, Leogane, about 30 miles outside the capital. Like hundreds of thousands of others, Viau’s family is sleeping on the street and, with the rainy season fast approaching, many are fearful that one bad rain could trigger mudslides and more death.

“This is very hard,” Viau, 36, of Delray Beach, said. “My heart is over there.”

These stories touched the executive director so much that Harbour’s Edge started an employee assistance fund just for the Haitian employees. The money can be used to pay for cell phone calls to Haiti or to help them travel there. So far, almost $7,000 has been raised.

“Our commitment is to be there with them, so they don’t feel alone,” Bertram said.

But the people of Harbour’s Edge want to be there for the people of Haiti, too.

Which is why the residents raised more than $12,000 for the American Red Cross Greater Palm Beach Area Chapter. The local Red Cross alone has received more than $600,000 in donations, all of which have gone directly to Haiti, according to Larry Casey, CEO of the local chapter.

Lubin, Viau and Delva sat nearby as Casey was presented the check. He spoke of Haiti and the people suffering there, including their families.

“A lot of lives will be touched by this,” Casey said of the donation, adding, “I know how it tears at you, not being able to be there.”

But the men said they are thankful to be here. At Harbour’s Edge. Where work feels like home and the people are like family.

Where they always feel at peace.
Curls of wood turnings flutter through the air. Machines whirl and buzz, slicing through conversations. In the din of this two-story 1,800-square-foot shop, crafters are transforming wood into works of art. When the dust settles, intricate bowls and boxes, realistic looking birds, detailed birdhouses and other remarkable objects emerge.

The Chislers, an inspired group of Briny Breezes woodworkers, are preparing for their annual show, set for March 17 at the community center (the 150 to 200 items for sale can be previewed from 4 to 5 p.m., March 16.)

This year, the 12-year-old event, held from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., will be open to the public. “It gives our neighbors a chance to see what we do with woodcraft,” said Linc Musto, who carves decoys and shore birds.

Lunch and a raffle with a twist also are on tap. The $1 raffle tickets allow would-be winners to designate their ticket for the item of their choice.

Fun and ingenuity are cornerstones of this 200-member group, which formed in 1958. There are few hard and fast rules here — but admittance to the club does come with strings: prospective members must attend two consecutive 45-minute meetings — and clean up the shop four times between meetings. Cleanup, which includes sweeping, putting things outside for recycling and emptying shop vacs, takes about 20 minutes each time, says Musto, who quips: “We are always looking for new members because we don’t like to clean.”

Membership is limited to residents of Briny and there’s a $25 initiation fee and dues are $5 a year, but when members turn 80, dues are free.

Membership has perks: Not only can members use the equipment whenever they want, (the shop rivals Home Depot), they can borrow it for three days for home projects — a real boon since Briny residences have little storage. It’s also a place to learn, make friends, and be creative — members make everything from picture frames to chairs.

“People don’t want to sit in front of a TV. They have to be doing something and this is a perfect outlet for them,” explains Musto, who says woodworking relieves his stress. “We take a big piece of wood, cut it into pieces and then put it back into a big piece again,” quipped Ernie Propp, as he pieced together a walnut/ambrosia maple wood bowl. “I spend three to four hours a day here. It’s a good group of people.”

In another workspace, Paul Stewart was industriously building birdhouses. He’s made about 100 and is aiming for 200 — some for the Chislers show, others for shows in North Carolina. “It’s my first year in the club,” says Stewart. “I’m here about 20 hours a week. The guys are fun and you learn a lot of stuff.”

Members also pitch in to build or repair ramps for handicapped Briny Breezes residents.

The group’s leader, Don Eschler, also the go-to guy when equipment breaks, infuses a southwestern style in his projects, which are often made of hundreds of pieces of wood. “This (12-inch) bowl has 355 pieces of wood in it,” he says.

Says member Curt Mosher: “There’s a lot of satisfaction in seeing what you can make.” Eschler agrees. “The people here come up with classy, quality items.”
**March 6**

- **3rd Annual Sand Beach Cleanup**
  - 3/6 & 7 - Lake Worth Art League
  - 3/7 - Art Exhibit Opening

- **Boys & Girls Club, 1451 SW 7th St., Delray Beach.**
  - Activities such as sand sifters, beach cleanups, and more.
  - 8:30-11 am. 276-6347.

- **Women’s Fellowship at the Church of the Epiphany, 213 S. Ocean Blvd.**
  - 3/6 - Evening on Antique Row
  - 3/6 - 7th Annual Palm Beach Mental Health Expo. 9 am/10:30 am. 775-9954.

- **Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. Ages 15 and over.**
  - 3-4 pm. $8/advance, $10/door. 793-4547.

- **Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., West Palm Beach.**
  - 12:30-3 pm. $8/advance, $10/door. 793-4547.

- **March 7-13**
  - **Magical Laservision Luncheon benefiting Take Stock in Children of Palm Beach County is held at the Beach Club, 755 S. Ocean Blvd., Palm Beach.**
  - Reception, luncheon and performance by Gary Goodman, magician and entertainer. 11:30-1:30. 563-1074; 563-2420. Free. Afternoon, exhibit can be seen by appointment.

- **Parrot Cove in Delray Beach, Ocean Blvd.**
  - 3/7-10:30 am. 702-1130; 702-1131. Reservations. 391-8170.

- **Beach Art Market - A1A and Lake Ave., Lake Worth Open Saturday year-round.**
  - 8 am-4 pm. 547-1300.

- **Surf campus, 100 N. Ocean Blvd., Ocean Ridge, Beach.**

- **Wakodahatchee Wetlands Women’s Festival of the Palms.**
  - 3/6 - Sand Sifters Beach Cleanups. 9 am-noon. Free. 742-6390.

- **Walk to Cure Diabetes in Downtown Delray Beach.**
  - 3/6 - 7th Annual Palm Beach Mental Health Expo. 9 am/10:30 am. 775-9954.

- **Community Calendar**
  - **Community Calendar**
  - **BRINKY BREEZE BOAT SLIPS** Enjoy easy ocean-access from Boynton Inlet, not commercial service.

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3/9 & 3/12 - Lantana: Meets second & fourth Mondays of each month at Lantana Town Hall, 50 Geyserworks Circle. 7 pm. Agenda at www.lantana.org

3/12 - Gulf Stream: Meets first & third Tuesdays of each month at Delray Beach City Hall, 100 W. Atlantic Ave. 1st fl. 7:30 pm. Agenda at www.myeasybeach.com

3/23 - Manalapan: Meets fourth Tuesday of each month at Manalapan Town Hall, 600 S. Ocean Blvd., Boynton Beach 9:30 am. Agenda available online.

3/23 - South Palm Beach: Meets fourth Tuesday of each month in the South Palm Beach Town Hall Council Chambers, 3577 S. Ocean Blvd. 7:30 pm. Agenda available online at www.southpbfl.com

3/25 - Briny Breezes: Meets fourth Thursday of each month at Briny Breezes Town Hall, 4820 S. Ocean Blvd. 4 pm. Agenda at www.townofbrinybreezes-fl.com

4/5 - Ocean Ridge: Meets first Monday of each month at Ocean Ridge Town Hall, 640 S. Ocean Blvd. 7:30 pm. Support groups for local school clubs and high school students. 363-8583.


3/11 - Read with Hogan the Reading session course. 266-9490.

$35/Each 3-4 session course, $45/each 5-6 session course. 266-9490. Second in a three-part series. Class continues 3/17 & 24.

- Mass Acrities in Sudan and the Road to Elections: New Risks and Responses is presented by Jeanne Friborg of the President of Save Darfur Coalition at the Northern Trust Bank Building, 770 E. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach. 6:30-7:30 pm. First in a three-part series. Classes continue 3/17 & 24. Premier memberships available for $15. 335/Ex 4-3 session course, $45/ex 5-6 session course. 266-9490.

3/11 - Wine Dinner & Auction is presented by Jerry Fowler, President of the World Affairs Council of the Florida. Atlantic. The event features wine from around the world with related hors d’oeuvres, and musical entertainment. 7:30-10 pm. $200/Person (Wine, Steak and Salad) $300/Person (Wine, Steak, Salad & Dessert) $450/Person (Wine, Steak, Salad, Dessert & Premium Seating) 683-3287.

3/12 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.


3/14 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.

3/16 - Gulf Stream: Meets fourth Tuesday of each month at Gulf Stream Town Hall, 140 S. Ocean Blvd. 7:30 pm. Free. 664-6380 or www.boyntonlibrary.org.


3/18 - Gulf Stream: Meets fourth Tuesday of each month at Gulf Stream Town Hall, 140 S. Ocean Blvd. 7:30 pm. Free. 664-6380.


3/19 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.

3/21 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.

3/23 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.

3/24 - Avery Sommers performs a concert from America’s Songbook and discusses her close relationship with Bars and Strips. 4 pm. 279-0907.
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COMMUNITY CALENDAR
March 10

17 - Enchanted Garden is presented as the 12th annual spring benefit and auction for the Friendship Club of Palm Beach. 511 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Auction preview, wine and hors d’oeuvres and silent auction from 6:30-7 pm; live auction at 7 pm. 512-7957.

Monday - Tuesday - Brown Bag Series - Presented by The Friends of the Boynton Beach Public Library. 8-10 am. Free. 243-7400.

3/15 - Self Defense Class for Teens and Young Adults is held at St. Mark Catholic Church, Boynton Beach. 7 pm. $325. 395-6766, Ext. 101.

The Garden of Forking Paths is presented at the Great Decisions Series at the Beacon Center at the Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. 1-2:30 pm both days. Free. 243-7400.

The Persian Gulf - part of the Great Decisions Series at the Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. 2-4 pm. $15. 731-2764.

3/19 - Howard Fineman is senior Washington correspondent and NBC/MSNBC analyst. His book "All the Presidents’ Men" focuses on politics at the turn of the century. The New England School of Art and Design hosts a discussion group. 3-5 pm. Free. 266-8572.

3/20 - Dominoes Tournament is held at the Boca Raton Historical Society. Mizner Park Amphitheatre, 590 Plaza Real, Boynton Beach. Noon-3 pm. $2.50 plus $1 donation. 742-6246.

3/20 - Coral Reefs is held at St. Andrew’s by-the-Sea Episcopal Church. 175 S. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. 18 and over. 10 am-Noon. $25. 781-2229.

3/20 - Annual Boca Bocchanal Grand Tasting is held at the Mizner Park Amphitheatre, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton. 5-9 pm. $150 per person. 206-3150.


3/21 - Association of Performing Arts of India is hosted at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in downtown Lake Worth. Music by sitar, santoor and tabla with classical Indian dance. Concert followed by wine & dessert reception. 4-10 pm. Adults $25, students under 18. 582-6607.

3/22 - Making of a PBS Documentary is presented by Steve Caras as part of the Lunch & Learn lecture series at the Weiner Center Bar and Grill at Morikami Museum and Japanese Gardens, 701 North State Road 7, Delray Beach. 11 am-1 pm. $24.95. 561/472-6792 or 561/733-7922.

3/23 - H1N1 Facts is presented by Dr. Laundra. The Garden of Forking Paths is presented at the Great Decisions Series at the Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. 1-2:30 pm both days. Free. 243-7400.
**Protests inspire different beach attire**

TOP: The “South Florida Ragtime Grannies” head a group of over 30 participants in joining harlequin drag queens of the beach to protest off-shore oil drilling in Florida on Feb. 13.

**BOTTOM:** Delray Beach Police Officer Adam Whittington makes a traffic stop while potatoes for the 7th Annual Pride Fest are held at Bryant Park, Lakeside Dr., Lake Worth, Food, merchandise and entertainment. 12-4 pm. Parade at noon. Food and drink. 536-0230.

**PROTESTS CONTINUE**

Children under 5, $657-2255 or www.asian- fair.com.

**Friday**

3/29 - 17th Annual Pride Fest is held at Bryant Park, Lakeside Dr., Lake Worth, Food, merchandise and entertainment. 12-4 pm. Parade at noon. Food and drink. 536-0230.

MARCH 28-APRIL 3

- **Sunday - 3/28 - Ice Cream Social at South Palm Beach.** 215 S. Ocean Blvd. 2-4 pm. Free. 588-8889.

- **Monday - 3/29 - Passover begins at 6:42 p.m.**

- **3/29 - The Palm Beach Passover, First Seder** is held at the Palm Beach Jewish Center, 3070 Dixie Highway, Palm Beach. $36/adult, $18/child. Second Seder. 3/29-7:30 pm. RSVP: 569-3842.

- **3/29-4/2 - Surf & Surf Teen Camp is held at the Ezez Hester, Jr. Community Beauch. 1801 N. Seacrest Blvd., Boynton Beach. Outdoor garden, swimming and video fun. 7:30-5:30 pm. $104/adult, $63/10 non-resident. Registration: 742-4550.

- **3/29 - Spring Break Surf Camp for ages 8-16 is held at Ocean Blue, 4415 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. 8:30-2 pm. $75/resident, $225/non-resident. Cost includes entrance fee and airfare for surfboards. Bring sunscreen and lunch. 742-6210.


- **3/31 - 4/2 - Leaf Printing is held at the Main Street Library at the Norton Museum of Art, 515 S. Olive, West Palm Beach. Show. Mask and science activities created and make prints with a variety of edible plants. 10 am. $10 for one child, free for accompanying adults. Also offered 4/2. Reservations: 742-4560.

- **3/31 - Drop-in Craft Day is at the Bryant Park City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. 7-9 pm. Free. 742-6650.

- **3/31 - Understanding Solar Energy for Your Home is presented by a state certified solar installer as part of the Green Series at the Delray Beach Playhouse, 455 NW 6th St. through 4/1-7:30 pm, 5/5-7:30 pm. $50. 742-6210.

- **4/1 - Poet Forrest Gander is held at Bryant Park, Lakeside Dr., Lake Worth. Food, merchandise and entertainment. 12-4 pm. Parade at noon. Food and drink. 536-0230.

- **4/1 - Forest Garden Speaker is held as part of Florida Atlantic University’s Earth Week. 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. 5 pm-7:30 pm. $15 members, $20/ non-members. Reservations: 391-8190.

- **3/31 - 4/2 - Surgical Weight Reduction Symposium is presented by Miguel Lopez-Viejo, M.D., Medical Director of Delray Center for Weight Loss. 3/31-5 pm, 4/1-7:30 pm. $35 members, $50 non-members. Reservations: 391-8110.

- **3/31 - Social Studies Summer Workshop is held at the Big Island Center for Education, 100 W. Atlantic Ave. at 11 am. Free. 734-9128.

- **2/28-28/16 Annual Asian Food Fair is held at Coastal Café, 11th Street. 9:30 am-5 pm. Admission to the exhibit is free. 805 Ocean Blvd. 561-7357.

- **3/29 - Palm Beach Opera Ball is held at Cafe Boulevard, the Brazilian Court Hotel, 301 Australian Ave., Palm Beach. Cocktail, dinner, dancing and opera performances. 7 pm. 800-233-7929 or www.pbo.org.

- **3/29 - Showcase the Writing introduces new writers from the Writer’s Academy to the public at the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts, 701 Okeechobee Blvd., West Palm Beach. All genres of work are presented by professional actors who create “story-then.” 7 pm. 510-832-7669.

- **3/29 - Tom Lowe speaks and signs his new book, The 24th Letter at the Boynton Beach Club, 273 NE 2nd Ave., Delray Beach. 7 pm. Free. 779-7790.

- **3/30 - Night Explorers Walk is held at Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. Families explore with the center’s naturalists and specialists for ages 6-11. 3/30 at 7 pm. 51 members, 315 non-members. Reservations: 391-8190.

- **3/30 - Gumbo-Limbo Prisoner of Second Avenue (A Comedy by Neil Simon) is performed at the Norton Museum of Art, 515 S. Olive, West Palm Beach. Show. Mask and science activities created and make prints with a variety of edible plants. 10 am. $10 for one child, free for accompanying adults. Also offered 4/2. Reservations: 742-4560.

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Blackman’s on the water. Of course, when your playground is the ocean, things happen and what happened recently was this: Stephen Howard Schafer, 38, himself a bit of a bohemian sort, was attacked by sharks Feb. 3 while kitesurfing off Stuart Beach. He died after a lifeguard pulled him to shore. Unusual? Yes. Unnerving? Perhaps. “We were in the water at the very same time that happened,” said Blackman, also an inventor who was giving a lesson to local Internet entrepreneur John Ferber at the time. “That part was pretty weird.” Blackman said the day after the accident, he took his 81-year-old mom to the grocery story and steered her clear of her usual stop at the newspaper rack. He didn’t want her reading about Schafer. “She heard about it anyway on TV,” he said.

Ferber, 36, admits the timing left him a bit unsettled. “You’re always thinking, ‘I hope there’s not a shark out there.’” But he’d been watching folks like Blackman and another local kitesurfer, Tyron Halhill, 38, of Briny Breezes, go out as often as they can. “That just got to me,” he said.

Blackman said the way they’re positioned “up on the board, skimming the surface, legs not dangling in the ocean” he feels it’s safer than surfing, shark-wise. “But of course — as we learned from the recent Olympics — for every daredevil kid, there’s a supportive parent. Mikee Rulli, Tyron Halhill’s mother, said she’s whispered a lot of prayers through the years. “I have four sons,” Rulli said. “And every one of them has told me, ‘Mama, if anything ever happens to me, I’ll die doing what I love doing.’”

“That young man up in Stuart, he died doing what he loved best.”

Real Estate

Former Pope house sells at nearly half-price

A Manalapan home purchased last year for $22.4 million has sold for about half its previous sale price: $12 million. The eight-bedroom, 15-bathroom estate at 1370 S. Ocean Blvd. was sold to Illinois-based MGM Design LLC.

Bunny Hiatt and Jack Elkins of Engel & Volkers in Manalapan represented the buyer. According to Hiatt, “Timing and market conditions played greatly to our clients’ favor in acquiring the property, even at the asking price... it was a tremendous value for the area.”

The 31,000-square-foot house is on three acres of ocean-to-Intracoastal Waterway land. It has 305 feet of ocean and lake frontage, a tennis court and a dock. It has a market value of $20.2 million according to the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser’s Office and had been offered by Germantown-Seneca Joint Venture, for $16.9 million. Carol Hickman of Sotheby’s International Realty, represented the owner.

The home was built by National Enquirer founder and publisher Generoso Pope Jr. and his wife, Lois, in the early 1970s. In 1995, Delray Beach developer Frank McKinney reacquired the estate for $19 million and then sold it for $22.4 million to Peter and Tamara Lowes. The Lowes sold the house in June 2009 to Germantown-Seneca for an amount almost equal to existing Bank of America liens on the property, according to Palm Beach County tax records.

— Mary Kate Leming
Along the Coast

Be alert to turtles’ needs during nesting season

By Nirvi Shah

Although the weather feels like anything but spring, sea turtles are already arriving along the coast for the year’s nesting trek.

Sea turtle nesting season officially began March 1 and lasts until Oct. 31, but the first reports of a leatherback crawling onto shore happened Feb. 11 in Miami-Dade County, according to Paul Davis, environmental manager for Palm Beach County’s Environmental Resource Management Department.

Most sea turtle species — leatherbacks, greens, hawksbills and Kemp’s ridley turtles are endangered, with one, loggerheads, listed as threatened. That makes each year’s egg-laying event critical to the animals going.

Many fragile hatchlings continue to be led astray by distracting beach lighting, which lures them toward the mainland instead of the sea. Going off course means losing precious energy the tiny turtles will need when they hit the water, where they spend hours swimming into open waters, safe from predators close to shore.

“This is the time to turn the lights off,” Davis said. “Check your property. Take a walk along the beach at night. If you can see lights, then the turtles can see lights.”

A county study completed last year showed 40 percent of properties along the county’s 45-mile coast were violating the county’s sea turtle lighting ordinance in some way. The county only polices 6 miles of the coast, including cities that have agreed to let the county do so, leaving other coastal municipalities to handle lighting issues on their own.

“Our goal is not that there not be any lights out there. There are ways that you can illuminate your property by redirecting the lights, placing lights at lower elevation, and changing out the bulb type and the fixture type,” he said.

In Ocean Ridge, Town Manager Ken Schenck said residents have already received a reminder about lighting via the town newsletter and Web site.

“Most of the residents are aware of it,” he said. “Sometimes, vacationers are down here and aren’t aware.”

Beachgoers should steer clear of sea turtle nests, Davis said. It’s unlawful for anyone but permit holders to touch nests, signs or stakes around sea turtle nests. If you see a turtle laying her eggs, leave her alone. It could take up to three hours for her to lay more than 100 eggs the size of pingpong balls.

When you leave the beach, take toys and lounge chairs with you and make sure sailboats and other vessels or watercraft are out of sea turtles’ way to keep the creatures from running into them or becoming entangled.

People who want to build sand castles or dig in the sand shouldn’t do so on the sandy part of the beach, where they could disturb the turtles.

“If you want to build a sand castle,” he said, “do it on the wet part of the beach.”

If you see a dead sea turtle or a sea turtle in distress, call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation toll free, 1-888-404-3922.

For questions or advice about beach lighting, call the Department of Environmental Resources Management, 561-233-2400.
“Laugh with the Library Chapter 4” was held Jan. 29 at the Delray Beach Marriott and raised over $40,000 to enhance the Delray Beach Public Library’s programs for children and teens. Enjoying the casual night of dining, drinks and comedy, were board members John Burke, Robert Currie, Brian Cheslack, Elaine Roege, comedian Rocky LaPorte, Co-Chairpersons Heidi Sargeant, Becky Walsh, comedian Angela Manfredi and Sandy Simon. Photo provided

Elaine Morris, Andrea von Etzzen, Lisa Tiernan and JoAnn Peart enjoyed the The Sandoway House Nature Center’s Dancing with the Sandoway Stars annual gala Feb. 6 at the Ocean Club in Ocean Ridge. The gala raised $40,000 through silent auction and ticket sales. Photo provided

Gulf Stream School eighth-grader Olivia Gaudree is one of only four students in America recognized by the USA Today Sportsmanship Essay Contest on March 2. Read her touching winning essay at www.thecoastalstar.ning.com. Family photo

Michael and Lisa Tiernan of Delray Beach and Charles and Sheryl Ranson of Tallahassee are delighted to announce the engagement of their children, Elizabeth Whitaker Tiernan and Alexander Hunter Ranson.

Whitney is a graduate of Lawrenceville School, Lawrenceville, N.J., and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C. Alex is a graduate of Lawrence Free State High School, Lawrence, Kan. and the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, N.C.

The couple resides in New York City where she is a director of merchandise planning at Polo Ralph Lauren, and he is employed by Credit Suisse, working in the area of leveraged finance capital markets.

Whitney is the granddaughter of Douglas Warner Shook (deceased) and Elizabeth Shook Howell and H. Scott Howell of Alexander City, Ala., and John William Tiernan (deceased) and Lynda Tiernan Stokes of Gulf Stream. Alex is the grandson of the Rev. Arthur Jones Ranson, Jr. and Lillian Rigby Ranson (both deceased) of Apopka and Harold Alfred Scott (deceased) and Letitia Scott Sanders (deceased) and V. Troy Sanders of Long Beach, N.Y.

The wedding will take place at the First Presbyterian Church of Delray Beach in late April. After a wedding trip to the Caribbean the couple will reside in New York City.
Listening in as the 14th Dalai Lama of Tibet spoke at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, it didn’t take me long to decide on nuances to share that might be different from others in the crush of media. Among the most striking was the juxtaposition of the man and the kids. Students comprised the majority of the 3,000 at the FAU Center Feb. 24. Elsewhere on campus, another 2,500 students and faculty watched a simulcast in the auditorium. What a good thing, I thought as I watched them pay rapt attention, that they are getting to hear this wonderful human being.

The 74-year-old exiled Tibetan Buddhist leader is the personification of humility spawned of wisdom. “Some people regard me as all-knowing,” he said. “But I don’t know what is going to happen tomorrow.”

Most pleasantly surprising was the sage’s humor. No stuffed robe he. That became apparent a few minutes into his hour-long talk-and-question session as he removed his shoes to adopt a lotus position in the oversized chair.

This was not the occasion to discuss Tibet’s occupation by China that has made him an exile. His message was about how compassion leads to peace and begins in each individual. “We need peaceful resolution,” he said, “in order to carry out real dialogue.”

I was aware that as a result of meetings of major world religious leaders, the Dalai Lama was close with two of my recently deceased heroes: Chiara Lubich, who became known as the “Blessed Lady” of the worldwide Catholic lay movement the Focolare, and Imam W.D. Mohammed, who was eulogized as “America’s Imam.”

I wished I could have asked him about the loss of his friends. I also lamented who could replace such spiritual giants among humanity including him, who many call “His Holiness.”

Initial cloudy thoughts quickly gave way to sunshine musings about the kids who shared such a rare space with him.

It was a joy to see the students’ pensive faces as His Holiness the Dalai Lama planted good seeds for what comes next.

Not to make any comparisons, but who, when he was in college, predicted the presidency of Mrs. Obama’s son? The message of the sage of Tibet, and the students’ respect for it, served as yet another reminder that for humanity, the best is yet to come.


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InterFaith21

The Dalai Lama speaking to students and faculty at FAU.
Photo by Carey Wagner, Sun-Sentinel

Pensive student crowd hears message of peace
Years ago, I attended the Palm Beach County Fair and, on impulse, adopted a dwarf silver-coated bunny who’d received a second-place ribbon. I was a reporter for the Sun-Sentinel, fated to finish second in many journalism contests. As a byline bridesmaid, I felt an instant affinity for this bridesmaid bunny, whom I named Huny Buny (misspelled on purpose). Although I had grown up with dogs and cats, I was clueless on how to care for a rabbit. Quickly, I learned that baseboards and phone cords are no match for her need to chew, chew, chew. Huny Buny was sweet and smart — she learned on her own how to use a litter box — but she was lonely. She loved quietly hopping behind my cat Samantha and lightly nipping her fur to send her skyward in a flight that could only be described as Bunny Humor 101. For several months, I was a lousy bunny owner, I was fortunate to place Huny Buny with a savvy bunny expert in Lake Worth, who was looking for a buddy for her male bunny, who was neutered. Huny Buny adapted easily to her new home, probably relieved to be rid of my rookie bunny mistakes. I make this confession in an effort to prevent the same adopt-a-bunny impulse in readers as the celebration of Easter approaches. In fact, if Megan Chaney or Luisa Sheer had their wish, people in Palm Beach County would heel the motto: “Make mine chocolate.” — as in bunny-shaped candy — instead of dashing out and adopting baby bunnies for themselves or their children. “Sure, bunnies are cute when they are babies and it is easy to fall in love with them,” says Sheer, of Ocean Ridge. “But they do grow up and they are a lot of work. You need to be willing to make a commitment to care for them as you would do for a dog or a cat, because bunnies live, on average, 10 years.” Sheer declares her family includes seven rabbits — all rescues — who display a wide range of personalities. “I call them my seven little dwarfs because one is happy, one is sad, one is grumpy and so on,” she says. “Never in my life would I think I would be taking care of a bunny, let alone seven. I love them and know the work involved to keep them happy and healthy.” Part of her bunny savvy is due to her connection to Chaney, of Lake Worth, who is the founder of Luv-A-Bun Rabbit Rescue, a nonprofit group that rescues abandoned and neglected rabbits who are fostered, provided medical care, socialized and spayed or neutered before being adopted. Realizing I was a lousy bunny owner, I was fortunate to place Huny Buny with a savvy bunny expert in Lake Worth, who was looking for a buddy for her male bunny, who was neutered. Huny Buny adapted easily to her new home, probably relieved to be rid of my rookie bunny mistakes. I make this confession in an effort to prevent the same adopt-a-bunny impulse in people at: www.therapydogs.com or call 877-843-7364. It is easy to fall in love with them, says Sheer, of Ocean Ridge. “But they do grow up and they are a lot of work. You need to be willing to make a commitment to care for them as you would do for a dog or a cat, because bunnies live, on average, 10 years.”
Seaside retreat offers grand ocean vista

Located on a private, European style street in Ocean Ridge, this Hamptons’-inspired home has been professionally designed and furnished to exude a casual and relaxed lifestyle.

Respectfully built, this oceanfront cottage-style estate combines a unique location and the convenience of being close to world class shopping, first rate restaurants and Palm Beach International Airport. Surrounded by a picket fence, the warmth and elegance from the interior is carried externally to the outdoor spa, Chicago brick driveway and native beach plantings as well as street-side green space.

Interior details include custom hardware, professionally designed closets, French doors and master carpentry. $9,750,000.

To view this outstanding home first hand; call Tina Smith, Broker Associate: cell 561.414.3177 or Candace Friis, Broker Associate: 561.573.9986. Corcoran Group Real Estate: 1177 George Bush Boulevard, Suite 101, Delray Beach, FL 561-278-0433. www.corcoran.com/southflorida

ABOVE: An open gourmet kitchen with top of the line stainless appliances and granite counters, work island and dramatic copper hood over the 6-burner gas stove.

LEFT: A study to envy: even doing paperwork here would be enjoyable!

FAR LEFT: Entertain a large party with the beauty of the ocean views (and your latest recipe, of course) in the expansive dining area that exudes old world feeling and custom craftsmanship. Saturnia marble floors.

LEFT: Second floor master suite with private oceanside balcony providing unobstructed views of the ocean. Fireplace and spa-inspired bath.
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DREAM HOUSE
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OCEAN RIDGE COTTAGE
A barefoot stroll to the sand from this 1950’s beach cottage east of A1A. 2/1/1 on a 10,000 square foot lot. Enjoy as is or build new, ocean views possible. $895,000

TOSCANA – HIGHLAND BEACH
Watch the sunrise and the sunset from this 3 bedroom 3.5 bath designer decorated condo. Being offered turnkey this 11th floor stunner features 2,880 sq ft of luxury living in a white glove building offering all the amenities including valet parking, concierge service, 2 pools, beach club, fitness center and more. $1,595,000

WALK TO THE BEACH – UPDATED
Great Ocean Ridge property, east of A1A, 3/2 with heated pool, updated kitchen & baths, upstairs master with loft, lovely covered loggia— all just steps to the sand. Move in and head to the beach! $ 815,000

DIRECT OCEANFRONT-DELRAY BEACH
Lowest price direct oceanfront single family home on the beach in Delray. 6000+ sq feet of living space, 6 bedroom home with endless ocean views and 100 ft of beachfront all within walking distance to Atlantic Ave restaurants and shopping. Offered at $4,995,000

LIVE AT THE BEACH
100 FEET OF DEEDED BEACH ACCESS STEPS FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR. Totally updated 4/3/1 pool home on oversize lot. Two master suites- one on 1st floor, one on 2nd; great updated open kitchen, beautiful modern baths, move right in! $1,350,000

DUNE DECK PENTHOUSE
Big ocean views from this 1 bedroom 1.5 bath penthouse directly on the sand in South Palm Beach. Bright, light and airy with large master, open living dining area and spacious kitchen with built-in office area. Owner is motivated and says ‘bring all offers’ Offered at $299,000

SOUTH PALM BEACH CHARMER
Lovely 2/2 with screened & covered patio, this 1st floor charmer at the Intracoastal complex of Palm Beach Villas features tile floors, new plantation shutters, small pets ok, and no age restrictions. Reduced to $189,000

LAS BRISAS TOWNHOME
Fabulous 3 bedroom townhome in great intracoastal community— spacious, bright and totally updated, screened covered porch, private garden, super clean, enormous master suite, pets ok, all ages. Available annually for $2,100/mo.

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