Barrier island towns, each trudging through their individual budget nightmares, have been batting around ideas for saving money that involve more than the usual cutting of library hours or eliminating a job or two.

The towns have been discussing bolder measures that involve closer interaction with other towns: possibly sharing more services with each other or annexing neighboring areas.

The discussions raise the possibility of a more radical cousin of those notions: two or more municipalities merging into one.

Municipal mergers have not been discussed much yet locally and no one has publicly voiced support for it, but the sharing of services is often a precursor to serious discussions about towns joining together to become one town.

More common is the city-county merger — something that surfaced in August when County Commissioners Priscilla Taylor and Shelley Vana said that cities in the Glades are so destitute that the county should consider dissolving them and making them a part of Palm Beach County. The idea met with immediate resistance from leaders in those cities.

Along the Coast

Municipal mergers more talked about than acted on

By Thomas R. Collins

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Around the U.S., mergers of cities are talked about more often than you might
Editorial
Successful change requires open discussion

At every budget workshop along the barrier island, there is a call for looking beyond this year’s spreadsheet to explore how each town might prepare itself for a continuing drop in real estate value — the primary source of revenue for our coastal towns — and a rising cost in services provided by the larger governing bodies to the west.

How we move our towns forward with sustainable local economies is an exercise being discussed throughout America. Since these challenges are not unique to our area, The Coastal Star is beginning a series exploring how similar issues have been raised and addressed in other locations. In this first installment, reporter Thomas R. Collins explores the challenges encountered when merging governing bodies.

Hopefully this series will help our residents — and elected officials — better understand the pitfalls and possibilities of changing the way we do business in our coastal towns.

The challenges are daunting: building unified public sentiment, working within Florida’s open-meeting laws and developing tireless, strong leadership to make changes of this magnitude a reality.

I am not worried about the leadership. Our coastal area may be small in population, but it is huge in intellect and business acumen.

Our local leaders have already taken the first step toward exploring what might be gained by studying potential benefits of consolidation of services. They are on the right track.

I am concerned about negative perceptions regarding Florida’s Sunshine Laws. Our elected officials must keep in mind that these laws allow for the public (and the media) to be openly informed about all changes proposed for our communities.

Can protocol be a challenge in a small town? Absolutely. But, open discussion is an essential part of maintaining public trust.

And trust is critical if we are to work together to build a sustainable quality of life in this very special place we call home.

Mary Kate Leming — Editor

Coastal Star
Activist for a polio-free world gets a shock

By Linda Haase

Betsy Owen has a powerful message: “As long as one child in the world has polio, every child in the world is at risk.”

Owen, a 71-year-old coastal Delray Beach resident, is a polio survivor — and she’s passionate about helping others avoid the disease.

Her efforts are worldwide — including immunizing children in Chandigarh, India, in 2009. “It was such a worthy endeavor,” says Owen, a retired teacher who contracted polio and rheumatic fever when she was 18 months old (her two older brothers also were afflicted simultaneously).

Her tireless work was lauded by the Rotary International board of directors, which recently honored her with its highest honor, the Service Above Self Award, which recognizes Rotarians who embody the group’s motto of “Service Above Self.”

“I knew nothing about getting this award. It was a great honor and I was so shocked, I could not even speak,” recalls Owen, whose father was also a Rotarian. “I opened my mouth to talk and nothing came out — and my friends will tell you that is most unusual.”

Owen, a Florida native, also was given the International Service Award for a Polio-Free World.

Community service has always been a part of Owen’s life. She always had the most community service hours among her peers at school for volunteering at orphanages and other places, and as a child, her family spent every summer in the Bahamian islands where they would help her father, an orthopedic surgeon, offer free medical care for the residents.

And she and her brothers would take turns helping her dad, her mom and other volunteer medical personnel. But when they weren’t helping, they swam in the warm waters along the barrier island, there might prepare itself for a new sport every year. They’ve been ballooning, kayaking, dog sledding and race car driving. They are also avid fishing enthusiasts and sailors.

Owen, who taught English, photjournalism and mass media for more than 40 years (20 of them at Spanish River High School) is also involved with The Children’s Home Society, the Executive Women of the Palm Beaches and many Rotary literacy projects.

She especially loves helping children, and is thrilled when she crosses paths with former students, who called her “Grandma.”

Although she and her husband travel frequently, she has a soft spot in her heart for Delray Beach.

“The people here are very laid back, it’s a hometown attitude. We are here to help each other. That is what life is all about.”

LETTERS: The Coastal Star welcomes letters-to-the-editor about issues of interest in the community. These are subject to editing and must include your name, address and phone number. Preferred length is 200 words or less. Mail to 5011 N. Ocean Blvd. #2, Ocean Ridge, FL 33435 or email editor@thecoastalstar.com.

CLASSIFIED: By tasting samples of Delray Beach’s water gathered from Gulf Stream Town Hall [Whose water tastes best? August 2011] we may have implied that all of Delray Beach’s water would taste the same regardless of where the sample was gathered. A more comprehensive sampling may have been to gather water from the city halls in Delray Beach and Boynton Beach as well from the coastal towns.

The Coastal Star article described a purely subjective taste test and in no way suggested that any municipal water was unsafe to drink.
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Local Voices

September is a transitional month for Americans. We celebrate Labor Day, enjoy the last days of warm weather and football season begins. In Florida, September is also viewed with caution as it’s the peak month of hurricane season.

For all of us, the events that occurred on September 11 changed our lives forever. While we have made great progress since that day, there is still much work to be done. We must continue to honor the memories of those we lost and work towards a future where such tragedies never happen again.

Merger

Continued from page 1

think. But it barely runs up happening, with the proposals often done in, experts say, by concerns over loss of identity and by the complex logistics.

“To my knowledge, which is certainly not exhaustive, this is not something that happens with any frequency at all,” said Scott Paine, associate professor of government and political affairs at the University of Tampa.

Mayraj Fahim, a New York- based governmental affairs advisor, said that it can sometimes make sense for towns to merge, but often with each jurisdiction maintaining some degree of autonomy and with the aim of economic development.

“It’s different for every area of the state. But you need something that gets the region working together and operating with each other and looking to expand on whatever their strengths are.”

Voters have resisted

In Princeton, N.J., voters will go to the polls in November to decide whether the township and the borough of Princeton should join to become the singular Princeton, operating as a borough.

The 16-square-mile township (pop. 17,000) encircles the more densely populated 1.8-square-mile borough (pop. 14,000).

They already share 13 services, including fire protection, planning and recreation — but have separate police forces and zoning departments.

“When you have 13 shared services and two separate governing bodies, it creates a very difficult situation,” said Princeton Township Mayor Chad Goerner, who supports the idea even though his municipality would be eliminated and he’d have to run again to retain public office. “It’s hard on the people who’ve been in their positions for a long time.”

Goerner, who supports the idea of merging Florida’s driver licenses and IDs, said that it can sometimes make sense for towns to merge, but often with each jurisdiction maintaining some degree of autonomy and with the aim of economic development.

“It’s different for every area of the state. But you need something that gets the region working together and operating with each other and looking to expand on whatever their strengths are.”

They have found that the savings don’t always pan out in those cases.

A study of the literature on the subject found that a variety of factors, including one that led to “disconomies of scale,” rather than economies of scale.

Sometimes, labor-intensive services such as police simply have to be replicated when an area is expanded, meaning there isn’t much savings. Plus, larger jurisdictions can put politicians out of touch with residents, leaving them with less incentive to keep costs down; personnel benefits often simply rise to the level of the employees who are most generously provided for; and transition costs to the new consolidated government can be higher than expected.

Cities value uniqueness

On Anna Maria Island off the coast of Florida, the merger of three towns — the cities of Anna Maria (pop. 1,503), Holmes Beach (pop. 3,836) and Bradenton Beach (pop. 1,171) — was discussed as recently as 2009.

The idea, initiated by Holmes Beach, was that the cities could operate with fewer employees. But the talks fell apart when Anna Maria was not interested, said Diane Percy, that city’s treasurer.

In the end, Anna Maria felt that the merged city would be too different — Anna Maria, for instance, has hardly any commercial property compared to the others.

“The island cities here are unique,” she said.

She anticipates that there might be future talk about consolidating certain services, but there are no such discussions.

Tiny towns took the plunge

In some operations of municipalities actually do take place.

One example is the merger of the town of Rockville and the town of Pleasant Lake, northwest of the Minnesota’s Twin Cities.

In 2002, all three became just the city of Rockville, with a total population of 2,500.

Voters in all three municipalities approved the merger.

In that case, there was one clear, primary goal: merging would make it easier to build a new city hall and fire hall, something each jurisdiction wanted.

At the time Pleasant Lake’s “city hall” was just a “small little cabin,” said Rena Weber, the city administrator and clerk in Rockville.

Plus, the areas of Pleasant Lake and Grand Lake outside the city wanted to hook into a sanitary sewer line, something the merger made possible.

Since then, six small sections have de-annexed from the city, Weber said.

Overall, though, the consensus is that the merger has worked well, she said. The key was that voters were open to the idea, Weber said.

“I don’t know that there was a whole lot of opposition to it,” she said. “They think they had open minds.”

Budget-cut reflex not enough

Government experts say that efforts to consolidate usually fail, either at the ballot box or before then. Often, city leaders look to their staffs for input — and those same staff members may be under pressure to do anything to keep their jobs if a merger were to happen, Paine said.

“Even if there would be savings should a city merge, the savings might come from services that had been tailored specifically for a city’s resident and might be considered too important to give up, he said.

Often, it is the worry about loss of identity that sinks a possible consolidation, Fahim said.

“We have sort of a tribal thing,” she said. “They think that consolidating with someone else is going to take something away from them,” even if maintaining that identity means that “they’re going to lose jobs.”

Merging can make sense if it is done thoughtfully and not just as a reflex against budget problems, she said.

“It’s not just about sharing of services because you’re desperate,” she said. “It’s having that mentality you’re not going to get much from it. You have to do it in an ambitious way.”

Cities to study joint emergency response center

South County’s three largest cities have agreed to jointly fund a study to determine the feasibility and benefits of combining police, fire-rescue and emergency 911 calls into a single dispatch center.

Pleasant Lake, Boca Raton and Delray Beach have each agreed to pay one-third of the $88,883 cost — each — to determine whether consolidation of dispatch services would improve service to residents of their three cities as well as reduce costs.

The six-month study will be conducted by RCC Consultants Inc. It will be completed in two phases, with needs assessment and evaluation of alternatives in phase one and conceptual design for a new dispatch center in phase two.

Once the study is complete, a report will be prepared to each city, outlining recommendations concerning equipment, staffing, financing and governing.

— Staff report
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30 years ago, ‘Body Heat’ sizzled with scenes from Lake Worth

“...you’re not very smart, are you? ... I like that in a man.”

The movie may have sizzled, but the weather didn’t.

William Hurt and Kathleen Turner heat up the night during a scene from Body Heat that was shot in Hollywood. Kathleen Turner was getting spritzed to look like she was perspiring” during the filming, remembers Victoria Preuss, one of the extras in the movie.

Turner was getting spritzed to look like she was perspiring during the filming, remembers Victoria Preuss, one of the extras in the movie.

That’s the appraisal of West Palm Beach mayor, now calls himself a retired politician, and wishes he knew then what he knows now. But he isn’t complaining: “It’s one of the high points of my career, but I am still waiting for my first royalty check.”

On those same sidewalks where movie stars once walked (Paul Newman a few years later in Harry Connery’s The Color of Money and the Downtown Cultural Alliance will hold its first Second Saturday Sidewalk Sale on Sept. 10. Bring a card table filled with treasures to support one of the largest yard sales in the region.

The monthly bazaar will range from Dixie Highway to Federal Highway along the curbs of Lake and Lucerne avenues from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. City residents pay $10 per table, non-residents $15. Call 561-533-5272.

11/11/11. The folks who ran Callaro’s in Manalapan hope that’s their lucky day — the opening of their new restaurant in Lake Worth. Sources confirm that they have a verbal agreement to take over the site that had been occupied since Body Heat days by L’Anjou, with an option to buy.

Fans also are hungry for the reopening of John G’s, but they’ll have to wait a bit longer. Forced to leave their home of 37 years on Lake Worth Beach when the city began restoration of the Casino, the Giragos family quickly found a new space — the former Callaro’s in Plaza Del Mar.

The new kitchen is in, See AVENUES on page 7.
Chris Evert thought she was going to have old rival Steffi Graf on the court with her this coming November at the 2011 Evert/ Raymond James Pro-Celebrity Tennis Classic in Delray Beach. But not to worry, she’s lined up plenty of other stars.

Thus far the list includes a healthy list of TV and film stars including Elisabeth Shue (Oscar nominee for *True Lies*), Christian Slater (“Oz” in TV’s *Breaking Bad*), Scott Foley (Grey’s Anatomy, Cougar Town), Jeffrey Donovan (Burn Notice) and NBC’s Hoda Kotb, who’ll no doubt grab some cuddle time with new boyfriend, Boca Raton attorney Jay Blumenkopf. The 22nd annual event is set for Nov. 11-13, with the celebrity gala on Nov. 12 at the Boca Raton Resort & Club. More at www.chrisvert.org.

Down in Delray Beach, David Manero has his second Burger Fi up and running on A1A. Patrons describe the fare as a “more affordable version of The Office”. David’s more upscale spot a few blocks to the west, and just to the north on Second Avenue, in a town 1 thought had just about every kind of bar except the first gay bar in years is open. Tag Bar replaces Paul’s Place Piano Bar, because Paul Mullen, the piano player, took a cruise ship job. Brother Kevin Mullen bought out Paul and changed the tune.

Actually, says Kevin Mullen, Tag Bar welcomes everyone, but will be gay-themed with live entertainment, karaoke nights and even drag queen bingo.

Boynton’s new $300,000 amphitheater is open. Situated just east of the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum and Learning Center, it features a 1,200-square-foot stage and can accommodate 500 guests in lawn chairs. The first scheduled even is a downtown open market on Oct. 16 with local arts and crafts, vintage goods and gourmet food.

We still don’t know who bought his oceanfront Manalapan estate, but boxing promoter Don King is still hanging around. Don didn’t say where he’s living when he stopped for lunch at Scully’s in Boynton Beach, but when asked what happened to the oceanside small-scale Statue of Liberty on his lawn, the old soft sells owner Kevin Scully he took it with him.

“I couldn’t leave Lady Liberty behind,” he confessed.

Taste of Tuscany: It’s scheduled for Oct. 2, but you’d better make your reservations now for a special dinner being whipped up by Four Seasons Palm Beach Executive Chef Darryl Molies. The occasion is a celebration of wines by Antinori, legendary Italian producer since the 14th century. Molies’ 21st century four-course menu is $125 and includes a sampling reception. Call 533-3750.

Tastemakers of Boca … is set for Sept. 13 and 14. The third annual event will feature progressive tastings and cocktails at 11 Mizner Park restaurants. A VIP ticket ($30) is good for one sampling plate and one drink at each spot, including Max’s Grille, Racks, Uncle Julio’s, The Dubliner and Mizner’s newest, Kapow! Noodle Bar. The ticket also includes specials offered at each of the restaurants through Oct. 31. For info, go to www.ggp.com.

Taking civic duty to a new level. Office holders worthy of election should be able to take a few shots, but who’s going to be the first? On Sept. 21 the mayors of south county’s big three — Boynton’s Kevin Mullen, Delray’s Boydon’t forget to take care of your lawn’s drain. If you have a problem, call the experts at Coastal Star at 561-888-1510. They can help you with any drainage issues you may be experiencing.

Thom Smith is a freelance writer. Contact him at thomsmith@ymail.com.
Delray Beach

New restaurant parking requirements back on the table

By Margie Plunkett

Delray Beach commissioners revived the discussion of downtown restaurant parking, voting 3-2 to reconsider whether to remove incentives once designed to attract restaurants. The ordinance will be heard on first reading Sept. 6.

In August, the panel voted down the measure, noting that more information was needed before making the change — which would entail doubling the required parking for restaurants downtown on Atlantic Avenue. The move also boosts costs for new establishments: If they can’t supply the required parking, they must pay fees as required by the in-lieu parking program.

Commissioner Tom Carney asked that the issue be revisited, saying that he felt it had to be addressed sooner rather than later. “Taking it off the table without a full discussion, I think is a mistake,” he said at an Aug. 16 meeting. The measure, which if approved, would not be retroactive and would affect only applications filed after 5 p.m. Sept. 6, the date of the first reading of the ordinance.

The second reading is scheduled for Sept. 20. Also voting for reconsideration of withdrawing the parking incentives for these restaurants were Commissioners Angelita Grey and Jay Alperin, who was appointed in August to fill the seat vacated by Fred Fetzer.

All the necessary information was not discussed when the last ordinance came up, said Alperin, adding, “I happened to have been here in ’93 when we did all this (granted parking incentives).” The new commissioner said he had spoken to staff about getting a lot of the facts he had not heard during the previous discussion. Mayor Woodie McDuffie and Commissioner Adam Frankel opposed reconsideration.

While the discussion was of removing incentives for restaurants, the city doesn’t know what kind of retail it wants to attract, the mayor said, adding the entire issue should be left for exploration by a new economic development director when that person is hired.

The ordinance that commissioners voted down in August would have affected restaurants on Atlantic Avenue from Swinton to Northeast and Southeast Fifth, bringing parking requirements in line with regulations throughout the city.

While the city once worked to lure restaurants to this section, it is now saturated with the establishments, city staff contended. When it ended the incentives, the city also intended to follow up with incentives for retail retention and expansion.

Eateries smaller than 6,000 square feet would have been required to have 12 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet — up from six previously — under the rejected ordinance. Restaurants larger than 6,000 square feet would have been required to have 15 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet.

Costs would have risen for restaurants that couldn’t furnish the required parking and would pay for in-lieu parking — which costs $15,600 per space on Atlantic west of the Intracoastal, $18,200 per space east of the Intracoastal; $7,800 for areas including within the Pineapple Grove Main Street area and $4,000 in the West Atlantic Neighborhood.

City may increase beach parking, marina fees

By Margie Plunkett

Beachgoers may pay a quarter more an hour for parking in Delray Beach in the next budget year, which would raise about $193,000 in new fees for the city.

The parking increase was one of several proposed fee increases presented at the City Commission’s Aug. 30 workshop meeting.

Others were slips at the city marina, beach parking permits for seniors (in exchange for added parking privileges) and for several programs under Parks and Recreation.

The fee hikes still must be approved by commissioners at a regular meeting before they can become effective and weren’t factored in as revenues to the $92.9 million general fund with a $133,000 surplus that’s proposed for next fiscal year.

Commissioners gave City Manager David Harden and the city staff praise for crafting a budget with a surplus.

“The whole staff has worked very hard to put together this budget, realizing we don’t want to raise our millage rate,” Harden said. He said the city may be able to cut the proposed tax rate slightly, from $1.79 per $1,000 of a home’s taxable value to $1.75.

The proposed fees, which will be brought to Commission again later, include the hike to $1.50 per hour for beach parking from the current $1.25.

Beach parking permits would increase $5 to $85 for a standard pass and to $90 for a senior pass, which would allow seniors access to parking areas along A1A in the off season. That measure, which would add $2,100 in revenue, kicked off a discussion among Commissioners about whether seniors with parking permits could be granted some parking privileges during the high season as well.

Boaters taking slips at the municipal marina could pay $17 or $18 a foot, which would be a reversal from last year when the city dropped the fee to $16 from $21.

The marina, which also expects to provide free parking to the boaters, now has a waiting list of 34. Lifting boat fees to $17 per foot would equate to about $12,000 in new annual revenues for the city. The Commission discussed charging even more for slips because of the high number on the waiting list.

Grant provides receptacles for cigarette butts

Grant provides receptacles for cigarette butts

Delray Beach has placed five receptacles for cigarette butts in beach locations in the vicinity of Atlantic Avenue and A1A, thanks to a $1,000 grant from Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful.

Mayor Woodie McDuffie, president of the Beach Property Owners Association, said cigarette butt litter is a problem on the beach. “The beach is covered with them.” She said she couldn’t comment on the receptacles, because she had not seen them, and did not know whether they would help the problem, adding that BPOA members have discussed on numerous occasions the possibility of a no-smoking policy on the beach.

Delray Beach will also use the funding to support a community awareness program including public service announcements and distribution of pocket ashtrays.

Workers put the finishing touches on the almost $1.2 million reclaimed water project along Andrews Avenue in Delray Beach. According to city officials, the project is anticipated to reduce demand on the potable water system, limit watering restrictions for residents and lower water rates for city customers. Photo by Jerry Lower

The Trouser Shop

Grant provides receptacles for cigarette butts

Grant provides receptacles for cigarette butts

Delray Beach has placed five receptacles for cigarette butts in beach locations in the vicinity of Atlantic Avenue and A1A, thanks to a $1,000 grant from Keep Palm Beach County Beautiful. A 2009 grant resulted in the addition of three cigarette receptacles, with the suggestion of cigarette-butt litter by 29 percent in a three-block radius downtown off of Atlantic Avenue, according to city officials. — Staff report

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8 News

City may increase beach parking, marina fees

Grant provides receptacles for cigarette butts
Gulf Stream

Improvements, cameras for Place Au Soleil entranceway

By Steve Plunkett

Place Au Soleil homeowners will install four security cameras to track comings and goings while they widen the entrance road to their community across the street from the Walmart being built in Boynton Beach.

"I think that's all part of a message to the outsiders: This is a class town, and beware!" homeowner association representative Ned McDonald said.

Town commissioners at their August meeting agreed to act as a "bank of Gulf Stream" and lend the homeowners up to $90,000 for the project while the group collects $800 special assessments from its members.

The association voted to pay a discounted $750 before homeowners had already paid a discounted $7,500. McDonald said 15 homeowners had already paid a discounted $750 before letters could go out seeking the money. The association voted 54-6 in favor of the project.

The Place Au Soleil entrance will include wider roadways, homeowners have talked about fixing up the entrance for years, McDonald said.

"We really turned the jets on when we learned that Walmart was coming," he said.

The road on either side of the guardhouse is too narrow for fire engines and some delivery trucks, which run over and crumble the curb or hit the guardhouse's tiled roof. The new curbs will be farther from the guardhouse and swale-shaped to minimize the chance of their breaking.

McDonald said the improvements would be top-notch. "Whether someone is coming in from the east side of Gulf Stream or from the west side of Gulf Stream, your front entrance is going to be an 'ahh' moment. It's going to be. 'This is class, this is really special,'" he said.

The Walmart, at the northwest corner of Federal Highway and Gulfstream Boulevard where the Platinum Gold strip club used to be, is scheduled to open Oct. 26, about two months before the Place Au Soleil project is finished. The store will be open 24 hours a day seven days a week.

"There's a lot of information out there that indicates that crime surrounding a 24/7 Walmart increases," Town Manager William Thrasher said.

Two of the cameras will record pedestrians; the other two will capture license plates.

Delray Beach

Alperin fills commission seat on interim basis

By Paula Detwiller

Former Delray Beach Mayor Jay Alperin has been appointed to fill the City Commission seat left vacant by the early departure of Commissioner Fred Fetzer, who resigned effective Aug. 1 for personal and health reasons.

Alperin, a local dentist, was one of 11 applicants for the commission only until a new commissioner is elected next March.

"In order for the public to have a true choice at election time, we need someone in here temporarily, who will not be using it as a stepping stone," Alperin said.

Citing the previous election, which was canceled when candidate Tom Carney and incumbents Woodie McDuffie and Adam Frankel all ran unopposed, Alperin said Delray citizens deserve the opportunity to select a new Seat 2 commissioner next year from a fresh crop of candidates.

"If someone had been appointed who planned to run in March, they'd have the unfair advantage of an incumbency," he explained.

Alperin previously served on the Delray Beach City Commission from 1990 to 2000, during which time he was elected to serve as mayor from 1996 to 2000.

He currently sits on the Delray Beach Creative City Collaborative and has served on various advisory boards, task forces and committees in Palm Beach County over the past 30 years.

No stranger to the city budget process, Alperin believes his experience will be an asset to the commission as it makes painful spending decisions over the next few months.

"This is probably one of the most difficult budgets the city has had to deal with," he says. "There's a lot of people whose jobs are at risk in the city, and there's a quality of service we've all come to expect. Mishandling the budget could change all that. I don't want us to take one step backwards.

Alperin, 64, was born in Brooklyn, NY. He and his wife, Diane, an associate provost at Florida Atlantic University, have two grown daughters and five grandchildren.
Gulf Stream

Volk house demolition, 6 house subdivision delayed

By Steve Plunkett

In its heyday on the eve of World War II, the British Colonial mansion at 1220 N. Ocean Blvd. was a high-society scene of elegant soirees. Now the estate, which donated an outbuilding for Gulf Stream’s first Town Hall, may become a six-home subdivision.

Representatives of the late Regina Spence are selling the property to Seaside Builders, which is seeking town approval to subdivide the six-plus acres. The Architectural Review and Planning Board deferred the proposal to Sept. 22 to give Seaside time to talk with neighbors in Hidden Harbour.

“This is not something that we’ve faced before,” ARPB Chairman Bob Ganger said. “I’m sure it was done routinely when Gulf Stream was being put together, but this is our maiden voyage.”

Seward Webb Jr., the son of Lila Vanderbillette Webb, bought the land in 1937 from E.F. Hutton, his mother’s former Palm Beach neighbor, said Ganger, a past president of the Delray Beach Historical Society.

“He never liked the design of his mother’s house even though he had done much of it himself,” Ganger said.

So Seward Webb, who founded Webb and Knapp real estate in New York City, had Palm Beach society architect John L. Volk draw up a British Colonial design. Other names on Volk’s client list included Ford, Dodge, Pulitzer and DuPont. He also designed the Royal Poinciana Plaza and Playhouse in Palm Beach.

Gulf Stream Mayor William Koch Jr. remembered in his teen years dating one of Webb’s daughters, dressing up for a formal dinner and afterward puffing on a cigar with the men while the women had tea in another part of the mansion.

“I’d be sitting around, listening to all these powers of the past,” said Koch, who will not vote on the subdivision proposal because his real estate firm listed the estate’s sale.

Koch recalled the elder Webb, who married a daughter of New York City Mayor William J. Gaynor, built a photo lab on the grounds of his home that became the first Town Hall.

“It was the size of a double outhouse,” Koch said, noting a picture of the historic structure hangs in the current Town Hall.

Koch said the more than 9,000-square-foot house, which was bought by Edmond and Regina Spence after Webb died, is a shadow of its former self.

“Today it’s nothing like the old house,” he said.

The proposed subdivision, to be called Hidden Harbour Estates — Plat II, would have two homes with driveways on State Road A1A, two with driveways on the entrance road along the south edge of the property and two with driveways on a private road on the west side. The Spence house would be demolished and the mound it sits on leveled and smoothed into a dip between the house and A1A.

Hidden Harbour neighbors have not fully embraced the plan. Martin O’Boyle researched the 1937 deed and told the architectural board it contains a restriction limiting the parcel to three homes.

“We’d love to see the house remain, but I guess that’s not going to happen,” neighbor Jim Neeves added.

The developer’s architect, former Delray Beach City Commissioner Gary Eliopoulos, said he would help document the house’s architecture before it was demolished.

Original owner Seward Webb “in Delray was heroic. He gave the land for what became the Seacrest School,” Ganger said.

Regina Spence died in December at age 92; her will has not been made public. Ganger said she made generous donations to the Delray Beach Historical Society and the Boca Raton Museum of Art.
TEXACO
Continued from page 1

On one of the chairs, an embroidered throw pillow warns, At The Mention Of My Name, Fish Tremble.

There is no No Loitering sign.

"This is the only place in town where the guys can come and sit down and relax," says Vinny Dinaneth.

Dinaneth, 56, is the president of this exclusive group, a former cop from Trinidad who also owns and runs the station, when not busy presiding.

All together, the club’s membership is limited to about 20 (mostly) men — residents of the county pocket, former residents of the county pocket, ex-cops turned fishermen, retirees. And one dog.

When Sam Malloy got out of the Army, he spent a year in the long-gone Pelican Apartments across the road, working for the station’s former owners. That was in 1981. He still drives over from Boynton Beach.

"It’s Mayberry here," he says. "We’re just hanging out watching the day go by, but it sure beats sitting home watching the news."

Bill Kendi, 37, used to live in the pocket. Now he, too, travels from the mainland to attend the meetings.

"I come here for the fishing and the fish," he says. "I’m not a fisherman, but I like to fish, and I like to watch the guys fish."

"The main rule is, no drugs," says Vinny. "If you’re a druggie, you don’t hang out here."

Actually, the club has one genuine claim to exclusivity. Gulf Stream Texaco is the only gas station on A1A between Fort Lauderdale and Palm Beach. A Marathon station that begat the Texaco, which then begat the Gulf Stream Texaco, is the only gas station on A1A between Fort Lauderdale and Boynton Beach.

A Marathon station that begat the Texaco, which then begat the Gulf Stream Texaco, is the only gas station on A1A between Fort Lauderdale and Boynton Beach.

They don’t really live here, of course. The station closes at seven o’clock. But they come alive here. The language may be rough, but the mood is mellow.

"It’s a pretty eclectic group," says Dergo. "We’ve got a plumber, an Indian, an ex-cop from Trinidad, and a 150-year-old dog."

And no idiots. Say something even mildly idiotic and they pounce. A burst of laughter, followed by a Blizzard of profanity.

Seated by Missy, Bob Osceola takes in the latest outburst with amused detachment. "That’s 150 in dog years. I had her mother, Martha, for 22 years."

These days, Missy presides beside a bowl of water. Her greetings consist of the occasional wag and a friendly disposition. Offered free food, she may deign to rise and lick a hand. At this private club, she is granted the respect owed its oldest member.

"You hungry, Missy?" asks Gehrig Dergo. He crosses to his apartment in the Blue Ocean Lodge and returns shortly bearing a hotdog sandwich slathered with Hellman’s mayonnaise.

"There you go, girl."

As the food is consumed, Dergo announces. "I had a couple old Corvettes and had Vinny cooks there, but he socializes here, and when Vinny has a good day fishing, Oldham smokes the catch, no charge.

"I had a couple old Corvettes and had Vinny cooks there, but he socializes here, and when Vinny has a good day fishing, Oldham smokes the catch, no charge.

Finally, Gulf Stream Texaco owner Vinny Dinareth posted a sign that reads ‘Do not feed the seated’ in the window of his station.

Osceola, 68, is a former parole officer who claims to be a great-, great-, great-grandson of Chief Osceola, the famed Seminole warrior. "I come here for the fishing lessons," he says. "The only problem is, the information’s all wrong."

At the Texaco, Osceola is best known as the human partner of Missy, a black Lab retriever and the club’s ‘official greeter.’

"She’s 22," he says proudly. "That’s 150 in dog years. I had her mother, Martha, for 22 years."

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Dergo, 53, retired Dec. 1 as a deputy with the Grundy County, Ill., Sheriff’s Department.

On his first venture into ocean fishing, he arrived on the dock with a bass rod. Grundy County has no ocean, but Dergo will not be allowed to forget his mistake. He can take a joke.

Hanging out one afternoon, he spots an SUV from page 36 to 756x180
Continued
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SOLD! 801 S. OLIVE, #1617, WPB
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DELRAY BEACH
SOLD! 5247 SW 37TH WAY, HOLLYWOOD
Tall and lanky with a firm handshake, 81-year-old Vince Canning of coastal Delray Beach seems like a no-nonsense fellow. And he certainly is, when it comes to serving his community. But he’s got a whimsical side, too, evidenced by his Mickey Mouse wristwatch.

“I’ve always worn a fun watch,” Canning says. “When I had the shoe stores, I wore a Buster Brown one, of course.” He retrieves it from a back room and shows off the watch’s face with its classic winking-boy-and-dog logo.

Selling Buster Browns and dozens of other popular shoe brands was Canning’s lifelong career, and the shoe store that bears his name is still going strong in downtown Delray Beach. Canning is retired now, and devotes almost all of his time to volunteer work.

He keeps a busy schedule. One day a week he picks up day-old bread from Publix and Costco and drives it to Caring Kitchen, which provides meals to the homeless.

He dedicates another day each week to Kiwanis Club activities (he’s been active there for 50 years), and another day to church activities.

A member of St. Vincent Ferrer Catholic Church, Canning is a founding member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul conference attached to the parish.

Canning has been a gung-ho volunteer since arriving in Delray in the late 1950s. He has served on the boards of directors of both the Boca Raton and Delray Beach Chambers of Commerce and the Delray Beach Playhouse.

Each year he helps build, staff and tear down the 100-foot Christmas tree at Old School Square, and he has headed up the Halloween Parade for 40 years.

For his ceaseless contributions to the community, Canning has been awarded the Delray Beach Chamber of Commerce 2011-2012 Lifetime Achievement Award. He will be honored at the Chamber’s annual Luminary Gala fundraiser Sept. 17 at the Delray Beach Marriott.

“I’m very pleased to be recognized for the work you do?” he asks, “and I enjoy doing.”

Vince Canning sits in his namesake shoe store on Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach. His nephew took over the store in 1995, allowing Canning to pursue volunteer work. Photo by Jerry Lower

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

A. I grew up in Kansas City, Mo., and lived there until graduation from the University of Missouri in 1951. Then I entered into the U.S. Marine Corps. It was a starteling experience but a wonderful experience. I think the Marine Corps made a better person out of me, more conscious of other people and more aware of my surroundings.

I was stationed in San Diego and assigned to special service as the equipment manager for the Marine Corps basketball team. I got to see a lot of the West when the team traveled to games against various colleges and universities. This was during the Korean War, and I was lucky enough never to be shipped out.

Q. What inspired you to get into the shoe business? How long did you have the shop?

A. After the Marine Corps, I needed to start a career. My father had worked for Brown Shoe Co. and had made a good living, and I saw there was a future in it. So I worked for Brown Shoe Co. in St. Louis for a couple of years.

By this time my folks had moved to Florida and my dad had a business on Atlantic Avenue in Delray Beach called Warren’s Better Shoes. In 1957, I came to Florida to put down my roots. When my dad retired, I bought his business and renamed it Vince Canning Shoes.

Over the years I accumulated three other shoe stores, one on Atlantic Boulevard in Pompano Beach, one in Boynton Beach at Sunshine Square and one at the Royal Palm Place shopping center in Boca Raton.

When I began thinking about retirement, I sold off the other stores and kept Delray Beach as the headquarters. My nephew Mark Denkler — he and his wife moved here from Houston — they took over the business when I retired in 1995.

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

A. These are very difficult times we’re living in. You can be selective, but be prepared to move on to another occupation if need be. Also, be happy with what you’re doing. Don’t continue to be in an occupation that you’re not happy with. Life is too important.

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

A. When my wife, Pat, and I were married, it was time to settle down and have a little bit of equiity, and it was only natural to buy a home in Delray Beach. It was located close to my headquarters store, the ocean was only a block and a half away, and it was an ideal location for house guests.

I was 39 and Pat was 40 when we got married. She was a schoolteacher in St. Louis, and we’d been the very best of friends for 13 years. She’d look me up when she came down here, and I’d visit her in Missouri. I got tired of being alone and realized this lady was the best thing for me, so it was time to do something about it. We’ve been happily married now for over 40 years, and our friendship is much the same as it was back then.

Q. What is your favorite part about living and working in this area?

A. It’s very desirable. I’m surrounded by good people and what I enjoy doing: using the beach, walking, biking and participating in the community.

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

A. Here in Delray we have had excellent community leaders. I’ll mention two of them, Ken Ellingsworth and Marshall DeWitt.

Both of these people were inspiring to me. They were interested in and about so much in themselves, but in the community, to make this a better place to live.

Q. What book are you reading now?

A. Crazy Horse and Custer, by Stephen Ambrose. He is a wonderful author.

Q. Who or what makes you laugh?

A. My wife — which has a lot to do with why we’re still together after 40 years. Also, I never tire of the TV shows popular in the ‘80s such as Mary Tyler Moore, and M*A*S*H.

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

A. Robert Redford. He’s good looking, he’s a good all-around person, and if people were to attend the movie, they’d say “perfect cast.”
Manalapan

Beach house size goes to zoning commission

By Tim O’Meilia

How big should a Manalapan beach house be? Until now, the answer has been: not big enough to live in, sleep in, cook in or rent out. Certain not big enough to be seen from State Road A1A, so lush landscaping is a must. By town law, a big enough to have a pair of changing rooms and a small common area: 750 square feet. But Manalapan town commissioners voted Aug. 23 to ask the zoning commission to consider whether to allow larger cabanas, perhaps setting a formula based on the size of the oceanfront property.

While the question of whether beach house size matters applies to only 30 properties along the ocean south of Chillingworth Curve, the town has wrestled with the issue several times over the years. “I’m asked most frequently if you make a decision based on the size of the lot,” south end resident George Vlassis said to the commission. Vlassis wants to expand his 500-square-foot beach house to more than the allowed 750 square feet. Although concerned about landscaping and intruding on the view of neighbors, Commissioner Donald Brennan said, a small cabana “is not a usable structure given the lifestyle of the town.” The size limits were designed to prevent the beach houses from being used as residences and from obstructing the beach view of neighbors. A few are larger than allowed because they were built before the regulations were adopted.

“I don’t have an interest in putting in a bedroom but I’d like to have a pizza and be able to sit down and watch a ball game,” said Brennan. “You can build a nice place that’s not intrusive.” By allowing larger beach structures, said Commissioner Robert Evans, “we have the possibility of essentially building new residences.” He feared heirs may want to split the property into two lots later. Ken Kaleel, representing builder Stewart Satter, said multimillion-dollar waterfront properties should not be unfairly limited. Satter owns four properties along the barrier island.

“So what if the grandkids want to live in the house during the winter? That’s why you own the property,” he said. Commissioner Louis DeStefano, who also lives south of the curve, opposed sending the issue to the zoning board. He also suggested that only commissioners who live on the ocean vote on the question.

“I don’t think people on the point understand the issue,” he said, referring to Point Manalapan residents. Commissioners rejected his idea.

“We want our landowners to be able to do what they want with their land, but we also want to protect the neighbors,” Evans said.

While the zoning commission deals with the issue, commissioners loosened the requirement that cabanas be 30 feet by 25 feet, allowing a 37.5-foot north-south length but keeping the total area at 750 square feet.

In other business in August, commissioners:

- Approved an ordinance change to allow dock lighting five feet above the docks instead of four, reducing the maximum intensity of the light from 850 lumens to 480 lumens.
- Asked Town Manager Linda Stumpf for a proposal to reduce the town’s reserves from 59 percent of the annual budget to 40 or 50 percent and use that money to reduce the tax rate. The town has about $2 million in reserves. Although commissioners have set a maximum tax rate of $2.80 per $1,000 of taxable property value, the manager has suggested reducing the rate to $2.789.
- Public hearings on the budget are set for 5:01 p.m. Sept. 15 and 26.
- Asked Stumpf for a proposal on how to distribute the proposed 2 percent employee salary increases based on merit rather than longevity.

Police hope tweets will discourage youthful drinkers

By Tim O’Meilia

Hooligans in England used Facebook, Twitter and other social media as an almost instantaneous call to riot in London, Birmingham and other British cities.

Manalapan Police Chief Clay Walker hopes electronic communication will have the opposite effect in policing the Boynton Inlet.

Police made half a dozen arrests for underage drinking on the north side of the inlet in the past month and Walker figures word may spread as fast as a tweet can be read. “Social media is very, very important,” Walker said. “As soon as an arrest is made, they’re on their smartphones and tweeting.”

Walker’s message is that the cove off Bird Island on the north side of the inlet is not the place to break the law.

Complaints by Manalapan residents north of the inlet about noisy parties, trespassing and vandalism have prompted Walker to consult with other law enforcement agencies — the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office, Ocean Ridge and Lantana police and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission — in mapping a strategy to police Ocean Beach Park, which is bounded by Manalapan on the north and Ocean Ridge on the south.

The park has become attractive to partners since $8 million in improvements to the jetties, Bird Island and the sand transfer stations were completed earlier this year.

“We’ve met with a lot of agencies in this area to see what their enforcement needs are and how we can cooperate,” Walker said.

Manalapan has a written agreement with the Sheriff’s Office allowing Manalapan to patrol the north side of the inlet. In addition, it has mutual aid agreements with Ocean Ridge and Lantana. Lantana has a patrol boat, which other smaller coastal towns lack.

“It’s difficult to justify a boat for one small community,” Walker said. He’s offered personnel instead, an officer to help Lantana’s marine patrol. Manalapan is teaming with wildlife officers to enforce fishing license and catch limits. Town police and sheriff’s deputies are also enforcing open container laws and the prohibition of dogs on the public beach.

“We’ve made ourselves available for mutual aid although we haven’t had any incidents in our jurisdiction,” said Ocean Ridge Police Chief Chris Yannuzzi. The town’s boundaries extend into the south end of the park but not as far north as the inlet. The town owns an all-terrain vehicle that is useful on the beach, if needed.

Of the underage drinking arrests, Walker said, “Maybe we’re solving a problem not only on the beaches but also in the community.”

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HURRICANE SEASON

A is for the African coast. We have it to thank for the birth of our Caribbean storms. Also Alka-Seltzer. Plop, plop, fizz, fizz, oh what a relief. This is when hurricane warnings get downgraded to tropical storm, or when a hurricane misses you all together like Irene did.

B is for barometric pressure. Watch the pressure drop as the storm approaches, hoping that your roof will hold up so you won’t need any blue tarps. Also for batteries, of which no post-storm home can have too many.

C is for cone of destruction or cone of terror. Some forecasters may call it the “cone of probability,” but we know better. C is also for cone. You’ll want to have some on hand when the power goes out and ATMs are rendered useless.

D is for debris — like that very large oak tree branch that falls on your house. Also for the disaster supply kit (water, food, flashlights, batteries, first aid kit, etc.) that you should have by now!

E is for evacuate. What barrier island residents should do when a hurricane warning is issued.

F is for feeder bands like those that marched through Boca from Irene. Those bursts of wind and rain are notorious for knocking out power; and for flashlights, which you’re gonna need when the power goes out during the next big storm.

G is for generator. How we hate those smelly, noisy and expensive machines, but put up with it all just to keep the refrigerator running. Also for gas lines at the filling station.

H is for happy dance, which you’ll be doing when the power finally comes back on. Also for Home Depot, where you’ll be standing in line for plywood or shutters, if they still have them in stock. And then there’s hurricane hunters, those brave folks who fly right into storms to check them out.

I is for the Irene, that frightening Cat 3 that skirted us in late August in favor of a trip to New York. We’re glad she remained stand-offs! Also for ice. Stock up!

J is for Jim Cantore (right), the guy you hope isn’t sent by the Weather Channel to cover your storm. It’s always devastating when he’s around.

K is for kitchen, where your fridge and freezer are just waiting to go out. (Clean ‘em out now!)

L is for the love you’ll try desperately to remember you have for your family after being stuck in a shattered-up home for 12 hours while the storm passes over.

M is for misery index. It’s bound to soar if, and after, a storm strikes.

N is for that wonderful neighbor who runs a loooonnggg extension cord from his kitchen to your bedroom — and suddenly you have TV, a fan and a reading lamp. Also for next-of-kin, which the police ask for when you tell them you plan to weather the onrushing storm in your barrier-island home.

O is for overwhelmed. Hard to escape feeling this way, although a plan will help. Look under R for a remedy.

P is for power outages and prayer. If you have the first one, you’ll be using the second one to get your power back.

Q is for questioning what family heirlooms to pack in the car before evacuating the barrier island. Also, for the eerie quiet when the hurricane’s eye passes over your neighborhood.

R is for reservations. Make them as soon as you can and preferably at a fine hotel where you can ride out the storm in style.

S is for surfing safety. Rip currents abound as hurricanes loom and surfers need to exercise extra caution while hanging 10. Also for shingle, the kind that flies off the roof and is capable of decapitating delicate daisies and your boomeranging back for more. Also for shelters, where you’ll need to go if you can’t prevail on family, friends or a nice hotel.

T is for Tapcons, those pesky little concrete screw anchors often needed to secure hurricane shutters. That is, if Home Depot doesn’t run out of them.

U is for the uncertainty of waiting and watching and watching TV as the storm approaches. Will it veer north or south? Will it fizzle out before it arrives? Or will we get hammered head-on? Who knows? Also: For “uh-oh,” which you’ll be saying every time you listen to the weather forecasters predicting, “This will be the Big One!”

V is for vodka, large swallows of which can help you endure the pelting rain and howling winds.

W is for watch and warning. Do you know the difference? A hurricane watch indicates the possibility that you could experience hurricane conditions within 48 hours. A hurricane warning indicates that sustained winds of at least 74 mph are expected within 36 hours.

X is for X-ing out the days on the calendar until hurricane season is over. The season runs from June 1 to Nov. 30.

Y is for the yelling we will all try not to do because it’s so darn hot after the storm passes and we have no electricity.

Z is for the ZZZZZZs you’ll be missing staying up to watch the Weather Channel.

What’s in a name? New definitions of tropical storm and hurricane watches and warnings, as of 2010:

**Hurricane Watch:** An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of at least 74 mph or higher) are possible within the specified coastal area. Because hurricane preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, the hurricane watch is issued 48 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds.

**Hurricane Warning:** An announcement that hurricane conditions (sustained winds of 74 mph or higher) are expected within the specified coastal area. Because preparedness activities become difficult once winds reach tropical storm force, a hurricane warning is issued 36 hours in advance of the anticipated onset of tropical-storm-force winds. A tropical storm has maximum sustained winds of 39 to 73 mph.
Hurricane Irene

Along the Coast

Equinox can exaggerate tidal flooding this fall

By Tim O’Meilia

The autumnal equinox arrives Sept. 23 and that means higher than usual spring tides could threaten to slosh down coastal streets this fall.

“Huh? Spring tides in the fall?”

“It all has to do with the Earth, the sun and the moon lining up during the full moon and the new moon. And it has to do with the equinox,” said National Weather Service meteorologist Dave Ross in mysteriously vague terms.

And twice-monthly spring tides have nothing to do with the seasons. The strongest tides — usually 20 percent higher than normal — occur during the new moon when the gravitational pull of the sun and moon are aligned on one side of the Earth.

Add a pinch of help from the equinox, when the sun crosses the Earth’s equator, and the spring tides that follow are usually the strongest of the year.

The Boynton Inlet will have tides 3.8 feet higher than mean low water Sept. 27-28 and 3.9 feet higher Oct. 27, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) forecasts.

Compare those with other high tides that typically reach 2.8 to 3.1 feet above the mean low water levels.

Along the Intracoastal Waterway near Highland Beach, tides will rise 3.7 feet higher Sept. 27-28 and 3.9 feet Oct. 27. At Lake Boca, near the Boca Inlet, the September highest tides are 3.5 feet Sept. 27-28 and 3.6 feet Oct. 27.

But the biggest difference will be along the Intracoastal Waterway in Ocean Ridge. The Sept. 27-28 tide will reach 4 feet higher and 4.1 feet Oct. 27.

The high tides of autumn sometimes have caused street flooding, but many coastal towns have updated their drainage systems in recent years. Ocean Ridge, for example, installed $4 million in improvements near Woolbright Road several years ago and another project is under way at the end of Coconut Lane to ease flooding problems.

Occasionally silt buildup on the ocean side of the Ocean Avenue bridge will flood the street, as it did several months ago.

“Our main concern is not storm surge because of the coastal ridge. Our concern is flow into the inlet that will hit us from behind,” said Ocean Ridge Police Chief Chris Yannuzzi.

The same is true for Highland Beach, where flooding from the Intracoastal is more worrisome than ocean tides.

Two years ago, Manalapan cured its frequent flooding problem along State Road A1A near the Ritz-Carlton and the Plaza del Mar with a state-financed drainage program that installed new drainage and raised the road 18 inches.

“It happens every year,” said meteorologist Ross. “We have the spring tides and the equinox to enhance them even more.”

High waves splash along the pumping plant at the Boynton Inlet as Hurricane Irene passed over the Bahamas. A few hours after the top photo was taken, a wave injured eight stormwatchers and officials closed the jetty. Later in the day, spectators took to the beach north of the inlet and risked the storm-driven waves.

Photos by Jerry Lower
Guard camps on island for post-disaster training

By Ron Hayes

On Aug. 22, while Hurricane Irene was still making up its mind about Florida, 28 National Guardsmen in a vacant lot just across A1A from the Ocean Ridge Police Department were making sure they could help if disaster struck.

"Basically, we're on a proof-of-concept mission," said Lt. Eddie Jesse, 30, an Iraq vet and the unit's public affairs officer. "We're testing our monitoring systems after a natural disaster."

Proof-of-concept mission? That's how the National Guard describes a training exercise designed to make sure a good idea works.

The idea is to create, very quickly, a sort of super-communications system that would link all the law enforcement agencies within a 50-mile radius in the aftermath of a storm or other natural disaster. The sheriff's office and local police departments could talk to each other. Radar and satellite systems could provide air traffic control to direct emergency helicopters. Live TV feeds would give ground workers an aerial view, the better to direct relief efforts, and Internet access would be available 24 hours a day.

Why Ocean Ridge?

"After a storm, emergency helicopter tend to navigate along the coast if air traffic control towers are knocked out," Jesse explained, "so we needed a site near the ocean."

And that's how those air-conditioned tents, satellite and radar trucks and 50-foot aerial antennas came to spend two weeks just south of Oceanfront Park.

"We convoyed down from Camp Blanding," Jesse said. "It took us 12 hours."

And two flat tires.

A second radio center was also established at Hugh Taylor Birch State Park in Fort Lauderdale, while the 28 men and women are staying, as they say, at an undisclosed location — a nearby hotel.

"But it's a 24-hour operation," Jesse explained. "This site is manned 24 hours a day."

So how's the proof-of-concept mission proving so far? "Theoretically, it should take us two days to get operational," Jesse said. "We were semi-operational in two, but it took five days to get everything we wanted, with everyone able to talk to everyone else."

Meanwhile Police Chief Chris Yannuzzi was thrilled to have the National Guard just across the street.

"We're very accommo-
OCEAN RIDGE: Continued from page 10

benefits for an investigator. The budget proposal notes that the Police Department drastically reduced overtime payments by moving to 12-hour shifts this year. Commissioners questioned Police Chief Chris Yannuzzi about whether a consultant could help complete the policy and procedure manual required for accreditation, noting they don’t want to pay anything out of reserves other than one-time expenses. Mayor Ken Kaleel also asked Schenck to get a quote from the Palm Beach County Sheriff’s Office for providing police protection for the city. “We don’t want it, but we have a duty to look at it,” the mayor said.

Ocean Ridge and other coastal communities have been exploring consolidating services, including those offered by police departments. Commissioners noted their commitment to that project. But Yannuzzi pointed out, “We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others. We want other towns to come here. We want to be the others.

Tentative budget adoption is set for a meeting at 5:01 p.m. Sept. 6. The second and final public hearing is set for 6:45 p.m. Sept. 20, before the monthly council meeting. The council has set a preliminary tax rate for 2012 at $4.32 for each $1,000 of taxable property value, the same rate is this year. — Tim O’Meilia

South Palm Beach

Town sets budget workshop

The South Palm Beach Town Council has scheduled a budget workshop at 7:15 p.m. Sept. 12 to discuss suggestions made by residents during the first public hearing on the budget, at 6:45 p.m. Sept. 6.

The council has set a preliminary tax rate for 2012 at $4.32 for each $1,000 of taxable property value, the same rate is this year.
Along the Coast

TOP: Paul Shersty (center) announces the weight of a wahoo caught by team ‘Killer Buzz’ of Boca Raton during The Mark Gerretson Memorial 17th Annual Fishing Tournament in Delray Beach. The 42-pound wahoo was one pound heavier than the closest competitor and was good enough to give the team the $4,050 prize for overall largest fish. (From left), Chris Green, Chris James, Blake Johnson and Ben Zafir.
RIGHT: Nicholas Sarmousakis, 9, holds a $100 check and trophy for top junior angler he was awarded for catching a 3.8-pound triple tail.

Photos by Tim Stepien

Lantana

Flooding and ballfields get council action

By Margie Plunkett

The Lantana Town Council hopes a newly approved $711,765 contract will pull the plug on a drainage problem at North Atlantic Drive and Beach Curve Road on Hypoluxo Island that has spanned decades.

The winning bid, quoted by Intercounty Engineering Inc. of Pompano Beach, was the low offer of four bids submitted in late July in response to a town solicitation.

The drainage improvement project to correct the problem is expected to take at least six months, and will be followed by a long-awaited road paving project, according to Town Manager Mike Bornstein.

The area has chronically flooded for 30 or 40 years, according to Bornstein, who like Mayor David Stewart recalled the waters claiming at least two vehicles — including a police car — and on occasion providing a venue for boater-towed water skiers.

Frustrated neighbors recently came out to a budget meeting ahead of the drainage contract bidding deadline, learning that the money had been earmarked in the current budget.

Separately, council members approved an agreement with the Lantana Athletic Association that allows the association to use and maintain the Lantana Sports Complex for the 2011-12 year.

The new contract is an extension of one last year — a move that allowed youth sports to continue at the complex while reducing the financial burden on the town.

The town previously had spent approximately $400,000 a year to operate the complex, but the agreement has reduced the town’s obligation to less than half of that sum, Bornstein said, noting its costs include debt payments.

The LAA would use fields at the complex, including the Quadrangle and Field Two, to provide baseball and softball for the public. In exchange for use of the fields, the LAA maintains the fields and pays for use of electricity, including lighting.

Rob Murphy, LAA president, said nearly 270 students used the fields through his organization last year.

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$300,000

Illustrated Properties

139 South County Road, Palm Beach, Florida 33462
Boynton Beach

Downtown progressing in fits and starts

By Angie Francalancia

Boynton Beach celebrated the completion of its amphitheater at the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum and marina-entry feature with tours and music last month — a milestone in a slow progression to convert Ocean Avenue into a dining, shopping and entertainment destination.

But at the same time, other parts of the plan experienced hiccups. The Boynton Beach Community Redevelopment Agency agreed to start over in its quest to find a restaurateur to lease the Ruth Jones Cottage, which was moved in June to the corner of East Ocean and Southeast Fourth Street.

And over at the Boynton Marina, the easternmost anchor of the plan, the CRA gave Splashdown Divers until Aug. 25 to vacate its dive shop. That’s the latest salvo in an 18-month feud with business owner Lynn Simmons, who says she was promised a long-term lease.

There can be no long-term lease, CRA Executive Director Vivian Brooks says, because that building is slated to be torn down. “They bought this property to give me false hope?” Kirk said. “What I’m really happy to see is that we are finally moving forward with these plans and that things are really starting to change for the better,” Orlove said. “There are several free events planned for next year in the amphitheater. We’re also going to have an open-air market there.”

By Sept. 28, the CRA will be examining a new set of potential tenants for the Ruth Jones Cottage, looking for one that can hit it out of the park, said Brooks.

She’s looking for someone who can give Boynton Beach a novel café and assure the CRA that the business can make it. “What am I chopped liver? Why would they assurance Brooks couldn’t get from Sandra Gagne, with whom the CRA initially contracted.

Gagne, who planned a café-style restaurant of comfort food, “could not produce the financial data to show they had the working capital to make it through the first year,” Brooks said. “We kind of worked with this particular business for a while because they’re local people. These are tough times, and we get it. But you at least have to have money to pay the gas, electric, water and supplies. To me, we’ve gotta try to hit a home run. We don’t want to have a failure out of the box.”

Meantime, Kaufman Lynn Construction, contracted to move the cottage from its original location three blocks away and renovate it, will shore up the structure and install the rough plumbing on the 1920s-era home before setting it on a foundation. The City Council, sitting as the CRA Board in August, approved several changes to the contract to add extra structural support as well as vault the ceiling, giving the tiny structure a more open feel.

“As with any historic restoration project, there were some unknowns,” said Bruce Cavossa, vice president of operations for Kaufman Lynn. Work was slated to begin Aug. 29, “and we’ll be cutting that ribbon in about 45 days.”

Boynton Beach has completed its amphitheater at the Schoolhouse Children’s Museum. Photo by Mary Kate Leming

The city hopes to find a tenant for the recently moved Ruth Jones Cottage. Photo by Jerry Lower

Workers put finishing touches on the entrance to the marina. Photo by Jerry Lower

Boydton Beach

Don’t let the year get away without ownership at 4001 North Ocean, the first new oceanfront condominium to rise on the coast of Gulf Stream in over three decades.

This is an extraordinarily rare opportunity. Only 20 out of 34 units remain, with historically low introductory pricing well under $2 million.

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Kolter
Delray Beach

More than 60 years after it was built, Wright-by-the-Sea still is owned by the same family, and welcomes back many of the same guests each year. Photo by Jerry Lower

Seaside get-away is all Wright with the regulars

By Mary Jane Fine

Here’s what it is: an oceanfront motel on A1A in Delray Beach, one of the last of the family-owned variety, cloud white with blue trim, two acres of landscaping around a kidney-shaped pool and a shuffleboard court and a croquet area and a Seminole-woven octagonal chickie hut for picnics and parties, a destination whose loyal clientele return year after year after year after year.

Here’s what else it is, depending on whose view you take. Patti Carlson, the self-described “front desk girl,” calls it “a laid-back tropical paradise,” and greets visitors with a big smile and the slogan “Welcome to Wright-by-the-Sea, the best place to be!”

Events coordinator Tammy Tatum sees the place as “the way [life] used to be,” which is, she adds, “probably why the employees stick around.”

Robin Hickman, the housekeeper who is one of them — 30-plus years and counting — remembers it as the locale where “I’m gonna work there . . . and now I am.”

But to Katherine Wright Willoughby, the motel’s meaning goes even deeper. To her, each January, February and March, it was home.

Her father, osteopathic physician Dr. Russell M. Wright, built the motel in 1950, partly, for its first few years, as a seaside retreat for family and friends. Later, he expanded it, with a second two-story row of rooms, and Wright-by-the-Sea welcomed more of the public.

“The story is that Dr. Wright was swimming in the ocean and he saw this land,” says Tatum, who wears a marine-blue shirt and a white skirt, the motel’s signature colors. (Even her eyes are blue.)

The motel’s general manager, Jack Anastas, adds, in a phone call from his upstate vacation site, “It was the closest point to the Gulf Stream — three miles — which keeps us warm in the winter and cool in the summer. When he found the property, there wasn’t even a bridge across Linton [Boulevard].”

Willoughby, who runs the Shakespeare & Co. bookstore in Highlands, N.C., remembers her childhood winters in Delray Beach with fondness. “I used to find a lot more interesting things beachcombing than I do now,” she says, laughing, in a phone interview. “One time, I found a wonderful bowl that came from Africa, and, once, a wooden trunk.”

The Wright family lived in Detroit then, driving south to the Gulf Stream — three miles — which kept the snow and ice away. Dr. Wright, his daughter says, had a good reason to open the motel: “He felt very strongly that it was a very healthy thing for people to get out in the sun and get some exercise.”

In those days, Wright-by-the-Sea followed the common practice: open for guests five months of the year and closed for summers, a rhythm that held until the 1970s.

Since then, the motel’s guests have been coming year-round, from Germany and Sweden and Argentina as well as from across the U.S. So many German tourists visit — word-of-mouth being the best advertisement — that Wright-by-the-Sea’s small in-house library stocks German-language books.

After pointing that out on a recent morning, Tammy Tatum leads visitors on a brief tour: a two-bedroom, two-
meters-long bath suite with pull-out love seat, its kitchen stocked with “everything you need in there but the food”; her favorite suite, a one-bedroom whose king-size bed boasts an ocean view; and then the honeymoon suite, where two walls are picture windows. It once was Dr. Wright’s own apartment.

Housekeeper Hickman is tiding the place up now, in the wake of just-departed guests. She remembers the good doctor fondly, remembers taking care of him in the months before he died, in 2002, at age 98.

“I said to him, ‘I bet when you hired me, you didn’t know what you were getting,’ she says, grinning. “He said, ‘Yes, I did. That’s why I hired you.’”

Willoughby remembers Hickman’s caring for her dad, too — “She was wonderful.”

Willoughby says, “It was very comfortable for him.”

And she remembers how maintenance man Miguel Lemus, a 22-year employee, helped Wright wrestle the veritable forest of sea grape trees, once tall as palms, that nestles below the suite, now a sea of sea grape stretching toward the ocean. And, she says, “He taught my son to speak Spanish, really well.”

The Wright family — three children, five grandchildren — still own Wright-by-the-Sea. That sense of family, of caring, still lingers. It’s there on the small blackboard, hung outside the office, where guests can learn the surf temperature (83 degrees, this day), high-and-low tide times (10:55 a.m. and 5:05 p.m.), and the day’s cautions, if any (HOT sand — wear shoes; jellyfish possible). And it’s there in the loyalty of guests whose parents once brought them here and who choose to return with children of their own.

“They’ll come back,” Tatum says, “and they’ll ask, ‘Is my room ready?’ And it’s ‘my room,’ the one they always stay in.”
Summer Arts

Musical series parked at Arts Garage

To walk in on the office of the director of programming at Delray Beach these days is to see the familiar signs of creative chaos that bespeak an unstoppable hunger in progress: heaps of papers, clusters of wires, takeout coffee cups.

In its short lifespan, the arts organization outgrowth of the Creative City Collaborative has made vigorous use of its space in the city parking garage building at 180 N. First St., most notably with a twice-monthly jazz concert series that has drawn some of the best-known South Florida jazz performers to the Garage, and to what Executive Director Alyona Ushe calls a “phenomenal” response.

That series is pretty well sketched out through the end of the year — rising Boca Raton vocalist Chloe Dolandis will star in the Garage’s New Year’s Eve celebration — but last late month the group added Classical Explosion, a series of chamber music concerts done in tandem with the South Florida Symphony, formerly the Key West Symphony.

It’s all part of the growth of the Garage, Ushe (pronounced Aish) says. “The idea for the Arts Garage has always been interdisciplinary. The classical component has always been a part of our programming,” said the Russian-born Ushe, who came to the Garage from the New Orleans Opera. “We started the jazz to experiment, and then we didn’t want to take too much on when we first opened our doors. We wanted to focus on getting the jazz off the ground. But while we were doing that, we were thinking about what else we could bring to the table.”

In addition to the South Florida Symphony, which is scheduled to perform three concerts at Old School Square’s Crest Theatre (Dec. 4, Jan. 29 and March 11), the Garage will be working with Jon Robertson, who leads the Lynn University Conservatory of Music, and the Palm Beach Opera, whose members will perform a season-preview concert in December.

Arts Garage, in downtown Delray Beach, Florida, could be a model for the arts in progress: heaps of papers, clusters of wires, takeout coffee cups. (Image: Above)

The actress Karen Stephens, who last month played Lorraine Hansberry in a Women’s Theatre Project mounting of Ann Davidon’s Chitterling Heights, returns to her Carbonell-nominated performance in Sarah Jones’ Bridge and Tunnel at the Boca Raton Theater Guild this month.

Bridge and Tunnel, which was first produced by Meryl Streep and won a special Tony in 2006, is a tour de force of acting and accent chops in which Stephens plays 14 characters from New York City’s outer boroughs who have gathered in a Queens theater basement for a poetry jam. The characters include a Chinese woman whose lesbian daughter is having a relationship crisis, an aging Jewish grandmother, a Fordian woman obsessed with The Beatles, and a wheelchair-bound Mexican man.

Jones’ play is about the immigrant experience, and about the least-heard voices in the national conversation. Stephens won warm reviews for her performance of the piece in December 2009 at the Florida Studio Theatre in Sarasota, and in October 2010 at the Women’s Theatre Project, which performs in Fort Lauderdale.

The Theatre Guild shows are set for Sept. 9-11 at the Willow Theatre in Boca Raton’s Sugar Sand Park. Performances are at 8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 9; 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10; and 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 11. Tickets are $15; call 347-3948. Visit www.brtg.org.

Art notes: The Norton Museum of Art in West Palm Beach will be closed from Sept. 12 to Sept. 30 while workers reinstall galleries. Museum officials said the rehanging will give visitors “a more engaging experience with its collections. The first new exhibit, debuting Nov. 5, will be American artist Dave Cole’s installation Flags of the World. … Three new exhibits open at the Boca Raton Museum of Art this month, including portraits from the museum’s collection (Sept. 6-May 13), and work by the Colombian conceptual artist Federico Uribe (Sept. 21-Dec. 4). Also opening Sept. 21 is Outsider Visions: Self Taught Southern Artists of the 20th Century, a collection of 75 works by creators such as Mose Tolliver (aka Mose T) and the remarkable Howard Finster. The show closes, fittingly enough, on Jan. 8, the birthday of another self-taught Southerner, Elvis Presley.

Greg Stepanich is the editor/founder of the Palm Beach Artspaper, available online at www.palmbeachartspaper.com.
September 3 - Sand Sifters Beach Cleanup at Oceanside Park, 4675 N. Ocean Blvd, Boynton Beach, 9-11 am. Free.

September 4 - Quick Start Tennis Clinics at the Tennis Center, 3751 S. Congress Ave., Boynton Beach. Three week session runs Saturday through 9/17 and held again 9/18-10/2. Ages 4-9 or 9-12. $45/resident, $59/non-resident 7:30-10:30 am, Free. 246-4490.

September 4-5 - Labor Day

September 4-10 - 8100 or www.thecolonypalmbeach.com.

September 5 - Youth Quick Start Tennis Clinics at Boynton Beach City Center, 7091 W. Atlantic Ave. Ages 4-6 $20/residents, $25/non-residents; Ages 7-10 $35/residents, $40/non-residents. 274-7263.

September 5 - The Carolyn Sims Center, 225 E. Ocean Blvd., Boynton Beach. Meet new people and earn some cash for their services. 6:30-8 pm. 742-6384.

September 7 - Back to Life at Bethesda Heart Hospital, 4th Floor Conference Room, 742-6410. 10am-noon guests and family members. 243-7350.

September 8 - Kinderdance at the Sandoway House Nature Center, 142 S. Ocean Blvd., Delray Beach. 4:30 pm. Free. 742-6735.

September 9 - Quick Start Tennis Clinics at the Tennis Center, 3751 S. Congress Ave., Boynton Beach. Three week session runs Saturday through 9/17 and held again 9/18-10/2. Ages 4-9 or 9-12. $45/resident, $59/non-resident 7:30-10:30 am, Free. 246-4490.
9/10 - Chinese Moon Festival Family Day as part of the Meet a Master, Create a masterpiece series at the Boca Raton Museum of Art, 501 Plaza Real. Students have an opportunity to create a masterpiece in the Zimmerman Shade & Color Galerie. 9-11 am. $35. Registration: 297-2980.

9/10 - Great Grown-Up Spelling Bee is presented at the Delray Beach Civic Center on S. Federal Highway along both Lake and Atlantic Ave. 6 pm. Free. 266-9490.

9/10 - Ride & Remember Trolley Tour is sponsored by the Delray Beach Historical Society Museum. 2-hour tour focuses on historic downtown Delray Beach. Departs from Delray Beach Parking Garage, NE 1st Ave. Held the second Saturday of each month. 10 am-noon. $15. Reservations: 791-4000.

9/10 - Chinese Moon Festival Family Day is held in the Mezquita Arquitectura and Gardens, 4000 Neirmark Park Road, Delray Beach. Experience the gardens, maybe take a drumming, a cold drink and a bountiful snack. Free to all with your garden program registration, $5 for adults, $3 for children over 11, free for children under 11. Free food and soft drinks. 2-7 pm. Free. 276-7166.

9/10 - Meet a Master, Create a masterpiece is offered on the second Saturday of each month. 10 am-noon. $15. Reservations: 832-3765.

9/10 - Tae Kwon Do is offered for beginners and advanced students. At the Carden Center 225 W. Miron Ave., Boynton Beach. Ages 5-18 may train the physical and mental skills of self-defense. For ages 14-20, fee is $7 per week. Program runs through 10/7. 2-3:30 pm/6-8:30 pm for $35 and $90/600, respectively. 832-3765.

9/10 - Taekwondo is offered for beginners and advanced students. At the Carden Center 225 W. Miron Ave., Boynton Beach. Ages 5-18 may train the physical and mental skills of self-defense. For ages 14-20, fee is $7 per week. Program runs through 10/7. 2-3:30 pm/6-8:30 pm for $35 and $90/600, respectively. 832-3765.

9/10 - Fundraiser: 12th Annual Taming of the Shrew is presented as part of the Evening Book Group at the Boynton Beach Library, 500 NW 2nd Ave., Boynton Beach. Ages 16-18 (1952) must be made before class date. Registration: 233-1757.

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9/11 - Florida Freedom Walk & Run is offered at 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton. 7-10:30 am. $25-$30/family. Registration: 395-0433.

9/11 - Patriot Day is held at Bethesda Memorial Hospital, 2815 S. Seacrest Blvd., Boca Raton. 7:00-10:30 am. $7/plate for a hot dinner. (freewill offerings accepted). 395-0433.

9/11 - Florida Freedom Walk & Run is offered at 777 Glades Road, Boca Raton. 7-10:30 am. $25-$30/family. Registration: 395-0433.

9/11 - Schubert & Boccherini by South Florida Symphony at the Mizner Park Ampitheatre, 1281 N. Federal Hwy., Boynton Beach. 8 pm. $35-$55. 777 Glades Rd., Boynton Beach. 4-5:30 pm. $35-$55.

9/11 - Schubert & Boccherini by South Florida Symphony at the Mizner Park Ampitheatre, 1281 N. Federal Hwy., Boynton Beach. 8 pm. $35-$55. 777 Glades Rd., Boynton Beach. 4-5:30 pm. $35-$55.

9/11 - 4th Annual Blue Mass for Police & Fire Fundraiser is held at Old Vines, Wine Bar & Kitchen, 225 SW 1st Ave., Boca Raton. 5:30-7:30 pm. Free. 714-8299.

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SEPTEMBER 18-20 - Lake Worth Tropical Prizes 2011 - Presented by the Lake Worth Chamber of Commerce at Lake Worth Beach. 10 A.M. Participants will have a 1½-mile run along the historic Lake Worth Beach, 11-mile bike course along ocean and downtown. 243-7129.

208 S. Seacrest Blvd. All materials provided. $30/advance, $35/door. 7 pm. 243-7129.

- EVP (Extreme Volleyball Professional) Pro Men's/Women Tour is held at the Intracoastal Waterway at the Delray Beach Breakwater, 1101 S.ᾳnd St. 8 am-9 pm. Spectator admission: $29-180, 1-800-788-9292.

- 1st Annual Get Your Game On! High School & College Women's Softball Tournament is held at the Delray Beach Breakwater, 1101 S. Andrews Ave. 8 am-9 pm. Spectator admission: $29-180, 1-800-788-9292.

- Youth Sports Day is held at the Delray Beach Breakwater, 1101 S. Andrews Ave. 8 am-9 pm. Spectator admission: $29-180, 1-800-788-9292.

- Tah-Lake Pirate Day is held at the Baywatch City Library, 100 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach featuring Boynton Beach Kids Club and the Boynton Beach Police Department. 2-3 pm. Free. 742-6390.

- Children's Book Discussion group at the Boynton Beach City Library, 208 S. Seacrest Blvd. Grades 3-5. 6:30-7:30 pm. Free. 742-6210.

- Narrated Bus Tour of Historic Downtown Delray Beach is conducted by the Museum of Lifestyle & Fashion History in a 3-hour and 45-minute cruise from the Intracoastal Waterway to downtown Delray Beach. 9:45 am. 297-2980.

- 2011 U.S. Open Women's Championship is held at the Delray Beach Breakwater, 1101 S. Andrews Ave. 8 am-9 pm. Spectator admission: $29-180, 1-800-788-9292.

- Infertility Awareness Fundraising Event is held at the Delray Beach Public Library, 100 W. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach. 9-11 am. Free. 742-6886 or 742-6886.
Tuesday - 9/27 - Sailing the Lagoon at the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd, Boca Ratson. Explore the groves and Rats of the Intracoastal Waterway. West clothes that can get wet. Ages 10 to adult. 3:30-5 pm. $5/members, $8/non-members. Reservations: 391-8139.

Wednesday - 9/28 - Seining the Lagoon at the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd., Boca Raton. BYOW. $20/advance, $25/at the door. 8-10:30 am. $30. 272-1281, Ext. 4.

Thursday - 9/29 - Rash Haskell
9/29 - Signs of Fall - Enjoy a fall hike at the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, 1801 N. Ocean Blvd, Boca Ratson. For ages 7-11. 10:30 am-noon. $5/members, $8/non-members. Reservations: 391-8139.


Friday - 9/30 - 10/2 - 17th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Craft Festival is held along NW & SW 4th Avenues. (330 E. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach. Handmade crafts and unique products. Free. Swag bag for the first 100 people. D.I.Y. Noon-2 pm. 742-6645 or www.boynton-beach.org. 10/1-22. Level 1, II & III: 11 am-noon. Cost per one-hour classes per session. Session 2: $30/resident, $38/non-residents. 10/1 - Stitch Rock, an Indie Craft Fair & Bazaar at Old School Vintage Furniture, 417 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. $20. 742-6600. Free. Open to all ages. 3:30-5 pm. $5/members, $8/non-members. Reservations: 945-4735.

Saturday - 10/1 - Mayor’s Challenge Golf Classic held at the Delray Beach Golf Club, 1200 Highland Ave. as a fundraiser for Sister Cities of Delray Beach. 1:30 am/registration, 2 am/shotgun scramble. You pick/awards luncheon with prizes. 752-240-7011.

10/1 - 10th Annual Dollars for Scholars Golf Tournament sponsored by the Lake Worth High School Alumni Foundation is held at the Atlantic Country Club, 196 Atlantic Blvd. 7:10 am/Registration and breakfast, 8:15 am/1st green/Dinner, 8:30 am/Shooting Start, 12:15 pm/Awards luncheon. $125/caller, $140/hole. Registration deadline 9/15. 642-6888.

10/1 - Sand Sifters Beach Cleanup at Oceanfront Park, 6415 N. Ocean Blvd., Ocean Ridge. 8-10:30 am. Free. 743-9328.

10/1 - Designing, Creating & Maintaining Your Home Landscape is a three session workshop held at Mounts Botanical Garden, 531 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Learn how to improve a home landscape.

10/1 - Evaluation of site conditions; 10/8: Tour your home landscape for free. 531 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Attendees are encouraged to bring an orchid (up to 6 inches) to be repotted and minimize maintenance. Registration deadline 10/2: 9 am, 1 pm. 500/members, 560/non-members. 233-1757.

10/1 - Blessing of the Animals at the Joggy Lakes Animal Rescue League, 3110 SW 280th Rd. N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Father Frank and Rabbi Frank will be conducting a celebration in honor and remembrance of the animals.

10/1 - Orchid Care 101 at Mounts Botanical Gardens Auditorium, 531 N. Military Trail, West Palm Beach. Learn how to take care of your orchids. For kids ages 3 and older. Young children must be potty trained. Classes are held Saturdays in four-week sessions, Four one-hour classes per session. Session 2: 10/7-10/14: Level 1, II & III: 11 am–noon. Cost per session is $35/resident, $48/non-residents. 752-6455 or www.baywetlands.org.

10/1 - Stitch Rock, an Indie Craft Fair & Bazaar at Old School Square Vintage Furniture, 417 N. Swinton Ave., Delray Beach. Handmade crafts and unique products. Free. Open to all ages. 10:00–6:00 pm. 742-6645 or www.boynton-beach.org. 10/1 - 12th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Craft Festival is held along NW & SW 4th Avenues. (330 E. Atlantic Ave., Delray Beach. Over 100 craft booths. 10-5 pm. Free. 954-472-3555.
Paws Up for Pets

**Pooch Prom ups the ante on doggie dating**

Raise your hands if you've ever experienced a dog of a date. Yes, we all wish to forget them. But it's 2011 and now the hot trend is to stage a date night with your dog. Often, these events feature a "paws for a good cause" theme to raise money and awareness.

Earlier this summer, I boldly created a national pet holiday — see nationaldogpartyday.com — and hosted simultaneous parties in New York City and San Diego. I instructed attendees in advance that this was "not your mother's typical yappy hour," but rather, a part with a purpose. And during the three hours, your party with a purpose. And the attendees in advance that this was "not your mother's typical yappy hour," but rather, a party with a purpose.

I'm happy to report that people revealed in the rare opportunity to live in the moment and well-mannered dogs got to partake in games and healthy treats.

We raised money for two worthy pet charities and plan to expand to four locations in 2012, including one in South Florida.

Cheryl Crowley, a lifelong pet lover, is taking this dog date concept a creative step further. On Sept. 24, she will host the inaugural Pooch Prom at Downtown at the Gardens in Palm Beach Gardens. A pack of clothing-clad canines will strut the runway in their finest attires with two being crowned Prom King and Prom Queen, based on a vote by a panel of celebrity judges.

"Imagine a beagle in a tuxedo or a Yorkie in a frilly gown," says Crowley, president of ImMEDIacy Public Relations, based in North Palm Beach. "Well, that's what you may actually see on Sept. 24."

Don't let distance stop any of you living in south Palm Beach County. It's an easy ride up I-95 and you will have your cool dog as your co-pilot.

In fact, the soiree is limited to 50 well-mannered, well-groomed, party-seeking dogs, and Crowley says the word is spreading fast that this is one of the social events of the season.

Cost is $45 for one dog and human "chaperone," or $85 for one dog and two human "chaperones," with the ticket price including food and libations, a band, live auction and door prizes. And the opportunity to witness the historic crowning of Pooch Prom queen and king — would be a memory maker that is simply, well, priceless.

Learn more by visiting www.poochprom.org or by contacting Crowley at 561-776-7659.

The benefactor of this tail-waggers in tuxedos event is the programs of the Drug Abuse Treatment Association, a nonprofit group that delivers effective programs for children, teens and their families coping with substance abuse and/or juvenile delinquency in five counties: Palm Beach, St. Lucie, Martin, Indian River and Okeechobee.

Learn more by visiting www.drugabusetreatment.org or by calling 561-743-1034.

The always-clever Crowley also found a way to come up with a canine acronym for DATA that aptly fits this inaugural event: "Dogs are totally awesome."

A key member on the event committee is Christine DiRocco of Lake Worth, who works at the pet-welcoming Ritz-Carlton in Manalapan. Happy to report that the pre-planning activity inspired her to adopt a sweet-eyed Cavalier King Charles spaniel pup named Mia.

"Yep, I confess. I'm one of those crazy pet owners now," says DiRocco with a laugh. "Mia is only 3½ months old and she is sosoo cute. She is very friendly, easy going and loves to cuddle. She is a bit young and still getting her puppy [vaccinations], so she won't be at this year's prom, but I predict she will be a runaway winner next year."

OK, the canine challenge has been made. But barking out optimistic predictions is one of the many, many benefits of being paired with a pet. Medical studies conclude that dogs, cats and other pets do a body good.

"Since I got Mia, I am happier and I look forward to going home and scooping her up in my arms and loving her," says DiRocco. "Mia has changed me for the better."

Christine DiRocco predicts her Cavalier King Charles spaniel pup will be a winner at next year's prom. Photo provided

Crowley agrees. "My mom bought a dog three months before I was born and I have never been without a dog or a cat both during my entire life. To me, pets make you a happier, more passionate person."

You won't get any arguments from me. What are your thoughts on dressing up dogs? Or planning a "date night" once in a while with your canine chum? Email me at Arden@fourleggedlife.com.
Pastor reaches out at St. Joseph, finds responsive community

The story of St. Joseph Episcopal Church’s pastor of nearly 11 years, the Rev. Martin Zlatic, and the Boynton Beach church’s innovative, youth-driven expansion is one that warms the cockles of the heart.

It all started coming together when “Pastor Marty,” as he affectionately is known, was literally out in the corporate world, traveling the planet for Motorola Inc. His experiences undoubtedly could fill a book. For our purposes, let it suffice that he says, “Where Renaissance Commons is now, there used to be 5,000 Motorola employees in Boynton. Now there’s zero.”

The former Catholic priest and his wife, Dee — now Children’s Minister at St. Joseph’s — found an Episcopal home in Jacksonville where they married. Answering his hankering to return to the priesthood, he was a worker-priest — one who, in addition to his priestly duties, works a secular job — between Motorola and St. Andrews Church in Lake Worth, before being tapped as St. Joseph’s in 2001.

He was blessed with a congregation whose charisms, or special virtues, include reaching out to youths and to young adults who want worship experience but for whom the traditional form of worship might not be the thing. “And we were able to hire Charles Miley, who was just coming out of Berkeley School of Music, and who had a background doing contemporary music in a traditional Episcopal setting, which is a very unique combination,” Zlatic said. “And Charles came and we started what we call the ‘unplugged’ service.” After settling on the Sunday 11:45 a.m. time niche for the less formal, Episcopal twist on “Rock Church,” there’s been continuous growth. “Unplugged” is the second largest of the four Sunday services.

But having established the service, its time frame and its musician “who has since forged relationships with local musicians and put together this incredible group who come together to help to lead the music, we didn’t have a place to put him,” said Zlatic. For five years what literally was a storage closet has served as the rehearsal room. Underscoring the urgency of prioritizing a planned expansion was that the church’s traditional choir also is outgrowing its practice room.

Moreover, weekend attendance of around 150 makes St. Joseph’s a medium-to-large congregation, difficult for one person to manage alone. Recognizing “unplugged” as where the need is, that’s where the church is concentrating. The Diocese of Southeast Florida’s enlightened investment of a $150,000 total matching grant over three years has helped St. Joseph’s hire an additional priest for this focus.

Of 50 people who formally applied, the best fit was Wendy (Warnke) Tobias. “Her family has been in Boynton forever,” Zlatic said, “and she also happens to be someone who grew up in this church.” After working at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., the past three years, she’s due on board in October, “hopefully coinciding almost with the launch of the new building, so it’s all going to come together sort of at the same time. So that’s exciting,” he said.

Soon after, the South Palm Beach Deanery of the diocese, of which Zlatic is the dean, will host for the first time in St. Joseph’s history the annual convention of the 83-congregation, Key West-to-Jensen Beach, Glades-to-the-coast diocese. “It will be here Nov. 11, 2011, a very easy date to remember,” Zlatic said. In honor of the nation’s veterans, “We are having the Episcopal bishop for the armed forces to be our guest preacher.”

St. Joseph’s is honoring the past and present, yet developing an innovative ministry for the future. It’s a success story of a family- and youth-oriented church, and of the adaptability required to truly serve that makes one want to pray for even more.

This 4,399-square-foot beachside residence is full of architectural detail, inside and out. Set amid garden-like grounds with mature plantings, the exterior is designed with a leafy color stucco background. Attached are arches, columns, interesting fenestration, decorative bell towers and a barrel-tiled roof. You enter the space via a herringbone-design brick drive leading you to a bougainvillea-covered trellis to the patio, or to a brick pathway to the front entrance. Around back there is a resort-style saltwater pool and spa, a covered loggia with carved limestone fireplace and cook area — perfect for entertaining in South Florida style.

You enter the front door into a two-story foyer, which offers display niches, light-filtering windows and a tray ceiling. A curving wood staircase with custom wrought iron railing leads to the second story. The foyer also opens to the 18- by 15-foot living room with gleaming dark wood floors. It also overlooks, through French doors, the open patio and tropical pool area. Also on this floor are a large (15 by 13 feet) dining room and an eat-in kitchen with state-of-the-art appliances and gourmet touches.

The home has four oversize bedrooms, including a lower level master suite with an Old World look bath with dressing area and an adjoining walk-in closet (room). This custom home is loaded with amenities and details. It is near Atlantic Avenue as well as within walking distance of the ocean.

Offered at $2,495,000.
Jon D. Rashotsky, P.A.; Mizner Grande Realty Inc.
Call (561) 236-0111 or email: sold@jonthecloser.com

This Mediterranean-style Delray Beach house has distinctive architectural details.

The spacious kitchen offers state-of-the-art appliances and custom cabinetry, as well as eat-in space.

The study has built-in cabinetry and a fireplace. French doors open on to the patio.

Many rooms of the house open on to the tropical patio and pool area, making it perfect for entertaining. There also is an outdoor fireplace and cooking area.
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Val Coz, 561-386-8011
Sold at $980,000

DELRAY BEACH
Custom luxury home in the highly desirable Seagate neighborhood. Double lot, 10,000+ sq ft with huge pool, guest house, stunning loggia with outdoor fireplace, a perfect home for entertaining. This bank owned property needs some TLC to bring up to its full potential.
Val Coz, 561-386-8011
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Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Offered at $6,000,000

OCEAN RIDGE INTRACOASTAL
Amazing Intracoastal and sanctuary views from this super private waterfront 3/2/1 pool home with $250,000 in recent upgrades.
Val Coz, 561-386-8011
Offered at $955,000

OCEAN RIDGE INTRACOASTAL
Beautiful courtyard pool and spa. Three car garage and Chicago brick drive and pavers.
Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Sold for $895,000

MANALAPAN
Stately Manalapan Estate located on 238 ft of water with sensational views. A short distance from ocean access, the home features marble floors, high ceilings, spacious rooms, Viking appliances & impact windows. Huge lot with beautiful pool.
Free membership to the Ritz Carlton LaCoquille Beach club with purchase.
Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Reduced to $2,900,000

NEW LISTING
MANALAPAN
Enjoy this view every evening! Least priced waterfront home on the point with 135 ft on the water. This 3 Bedroom, 3 bath jewel features a new kitchen, renovated baths, impact doors and a huge covered patio with pool for outdoor entertaining. Free membership to the Beach Club located at the Ritz Carlton. Major price reduction!
Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Offered at $2,900,000

NEW LISTING
MANALAPAN
Key West style 3 bedroom / 2 bath home with great Intracoastal views. Dock with ocean access.
Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Offered at $1,975,000

NEW LISTING
MANALAPAN
Exquisite waterfront home located on a huge lot with lush landscaping. Pool, dock with ocean access. Renovation of this 4 Bedroom, 4.2 Bath home incl. tumbled limestone floors, imported glass tile baths, granite and onyx counters, impact resistant french doors, plus 2 fireplaces. Separate guest suite. Free membership to the Beach Club at the Ritz Carlton. Major price reduction!
Bill Quigley, 561-346-3434
Offered at $2,900,000

NEW LISTING
MANALAPAN
Stately Manalapan Estate located on 238 ft of water with sensational views. A short distance from ocean access, the home features marble floors, high ceilings, spacious rooms, Viking appliances & impact windows. Huge lot with beautiful pool.
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