

## Stuart police taking the lead in East Stuart

Even as Stuart police, city officials and residents convened this month at the 10th Street Recreation Center to discuss neighborhood unlawfulness in East Stuart, one Stuart police officer, Kathleen Lannon, continued to make connections with its youth. Read about her dedication to ending violence, one child at a time. Pg 14



**FREE**

# Martin County CURRENTS

Volume 9 Issue 3  
July/August 2019

## Someone else's water

To get a clean river, we need more than just to stop Lake O discharges. pg 12

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Heard wants \$450,000 to pay legal fees pg 9

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**Court upholds jury's ruling, but Maggy continues fight.**  
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**Indiantown expands staff, takes over parks, and eyes police and fire.** pgs 19-23

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## Aug. 2-6 Sales Tax Holiday

Back-to-school shoppers can plan their lists accordingly when the statewide Sales Tax Holiday begins at 12:01 a.m., Aug. 2 and lasts through 11:59 p.m., Aug. 6. During the period, shoppers can avoid paying sales taxes on clothes and shoes costing \$60 or less; school supplies costing \$15 or less; and personal computers and accessories costing \$1,000 or less. For more information, go to <http://floridarevenue.com/backtoschool>.

## Thursday, Aug. 15 Bingo Italian Night

An evening of food and fun is promised at the monthly Bingo Italian Night, set for Thursday, Aug. 15 at St. Luke's Episcopal Church, 5150 S.E. Railway Avenue, Cove Road at Old Dixie Highway, Port Salerno. Doors open at 5 p.m.; dinner is at 5:30 p.m.; Bingo begins at 6:30 p.m. Cost of \$10 includes a Bingo card and a pasta dinner with salad and dessert. Beer and wine will be available for a donation along with the purchase of additional cards and specials. For more information, call 772-286-5455 or go to [www.stlukesfl.org](http://www.stlukesfl.org).

## Saturday, Aug. 17 Apollo School open house

Stop by the historic Apollo School, 9141 S.E. Apollo St., Hobe Sound on Saturday, Aug. 17, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., to see how restoration efforts have preserved the school, off Bridge Road and east of U.S. 1. The school, under several names since it opened in 1925, served Hobe Sound children until 1963. It then was used as a thrift shop and, later, fell into disrepair. In 1999, members of the community joined together to procure the resources necessary to acquire and rehabilitate the building. The Apollo School Foundation was born. The building's rehabilitation was complete in late 2013 and the former two-room schoolhouse formally reopened in 2014 to be used as a local historical museum as well as an educational, cultural and historical facility. FREE. For more information, go to [www.apolloschool.org](http://www.apolloschool.org).

## Friday, Aug. 16 & Saturday, Aug. 17 Treasure Coast Bonito Blast

Have a blast trying to land a bonito while helping the Wounded Warriors of South Florida. The 7th annual Treasure Coast Bonito Blast happens Friday, Aug. 16 and Saturday, Aug. 17. The event includes \$2,500.00 in prize money, dinners, live music, auction items and a

raffle for a state-of-the art Flying Fish Paddleboard, complete with a Carbon Fiber Paddle. The charitable donation to support the Wounded Veterans Relief Fund for this paddleboard is \$5 per ticket or 5 tickets for \$20. The Captain's meeting on Friday, Aug. 16 at Pirates Cove Resort and Marina will include dinner, tent events and entertainment by Jupiter Trailer Trash. Weigh-in will be on the dock from noon to 3 p.m. Prizes are \$1,500 first; \$750, second; and \$250, third. Awards also will be given for the largest dolphin, snapper, grouper and amberjack. The awards party on Saturday, Aug. 17 will include dinner, a silent auction and music by the Mikey B band. Registration before Aug. 16 is \$125 for four anglers; \$150 on and after Aug. 16; \$25.00 for each additional angler. Junior anglers (under 12) fish for free and will be recognized for their catch. Donation of \$25 for dinner and festivities is asked of non-anglers. To buy raffle tickets and to register, go to [www.TreasureCoast-BonitoBlast.com](http://www.TreasureCoast-BonitoBlast.com).

## Saturdays, Aug. 17 & Sept. 21 Tea with the Besseys

Step back in time with Bruce and Barbara Osborn as they portray Hubert and Susan Bessey, Keepers of the House of Refuge from 1890-1901, on Saturdays, Aug. 17 & Sept. 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the Elliott Museum, 825 N.E. Ocean Blvd, Stuart. "Mrs. Bessey" will serve iced tea and lemonade on the porch and share family photos album, as "Mr. Bessey" tells tall tails of living at the House of Refuge when Hutchinson Island was a wilderness, packed with bears and wild animals. FREE. Call 772-225-1961.

## Aug. 17-25 Free Movie Summer 2019

There's two musicals, a comedy and one remake of a political intrigue flick being offered in the remaining Free Movie Summer 2019 - total of six - at The Lyric Theatre, 59 S.W. Flagler Ave., Stuart. Admission to each movie is FREE. Tickets are limited to four per person and are subject to availability. Tickets are available only by visiting The Lyric Theatre Box office Mondays through Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., and two hours prior to show times. Seating is on a first-come, first-serve basis. Call 772-286-7827. Schedule of movies (sponsored by Humana and Health Promoters) is:

- "Mamma Mia! Here We Go Again" - Saturday, Aug. 17 at 3 p.m.; Sunday, Aug. 18 at 5 p.m.
- "Ocean's 8" - Saturday, Aug. 17 at 7 p.m.; Sunday, Aug. 18 at 2 p.m.
- "Bohemian Rhapsody" - Saturday, Aug. 24 at 3 p.m.; Sunday, Aug. 25 at 5 p.m.
- "Manchurian Candidate" (2004) - Saturday, Aug. 24 at 7 p.m.; Sunday, Aug. 25 at 2 p.m.

## Wednesday, Aug. 21 Brain Games Tournament

Dust off your thinking cap to test your memory and brain fitness in the Brain Games Tournament, set for Wednesday, Aug. 21, 10:30 a.m. to noon, at the Kane Center, 900 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart. Compete in mental agility exercises, brain fitness events and more. Prizes will be awarded. Registration is required. Call Crystal Collier at 772-223-7843.



## Saturday, Aug. 24 Shipwrecked ADULT Party

It won't matter if you're a landlubber or expert in the seas, don your favorite seagoing costume (pirate, mermaid, castaway, etc.), for the Shipwrecked ADULT Party set for Saturday, Aug. 24, 6 to 9 p.m., at The Children's Museum of the Treasure Coast, 1707 N.E. Indian River Drive, Jensen Beach. For those 21 or older ONLY. Tickets: \$35 and include two drink tickets, music, dancing, and passed appetizers. Tickets increase to \$45 at the door. <https://childrensmuseumtc.networkforgood.com/events/13687-shipwrecked-adult-party>.

## Wednesday, Aug. 28 "The Upside"

Cool off from the summer humidity by joining others in watching "The Upside" (PG-13) at the Kane Center, 900 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart on Wednesday, Aug. 28 at 1 p.m. FREE. Offered by VIP America Home Health Care. Inspired by a true story, "The Upside" is a comedy about a recently paroled ex-convict (Kevin Hart) who strikes up an unusual and unlikely friendship with a paralyzed billionaire (Bryan Cranston). Directed by Neil Burger and written by Jon Hartmere, "The Upside" is based on the hit 2011 French film "The Intouchables." Complimentary popcorn and drink will be available. Call 772-223-7800.

## Wednesday, Aug. 28 Pure Prairie League

One of this American country rock group's best-known singles is "Amie," but there's a lot more to the repertoire. And Pure Prairie League promises to

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**Calendar**

continued from PAGE 3

perform quite a bit from its roster of songs when the group comes to The Lyric Theatre, 59 S.W. Flagler Blvd., Stuart on Wednesday, Aug. 28 at 7 p.m. Pure Prairie League hit it big with its second album, 1972's multi-platinum, *Bustin' Out*. Pure Prairie League stayed at the top through the 1970s and early 1980s. The group's third album, *Two Lane Highway*, featured Chet Atkins, Emmylou Harris and Johnny Gimble. They went on to record 10 albums, many reaching the charts. Tickets: \$47, reserved seats. Call 772-286-7827 or go to lyrictheatre.com.

## Friday, Aug. 30 & Saturday, Aug. 31. Young Farmers and Ranchers' Buck Wild Fish Roundup

Port Salerno waters expect to be highly populated on Friday, Aug. 30 and Saturday, Aug. 31 during the second Martin County Young Farmers and Ranchers' Buck Wild Fish Roundup. Proceeds from this event will fund future educational events and conferences for its committee. The four target fish are king fish, wahoo, dolphin, and snapper. The boat with the largest total weight made of these four species combined (aggregate) wins. The Buck Wild Fish Roundup costs \$300 per boat of up to 4 anglers, and an additional \$50 per angler after that for a maximum total of 6 anglers per boat. Payouts are \$2,000 for first place; \$1,500 for second place, and \$1,000 for third place based on largest aggregate weight. Also planned are Top Woman Angler (18 and older as of Aug. 31) prize and Top Junior Angler (14 and older as of Aug. 31) prize. Trophies will be awarded for angler with the largest single fish by weight; angler with the largest number of fish caught; and top boat by total weight of fish caught. For registration details, email buckwildfishroundup@gmail.com.

## Wednesday, Sept. 4 Beach Dynamics

Put on those hiking shoes and join naturalist Kim Mohlenhoff in a hike at the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge beach on the north end of Jupiter Island for Beach Dynamics Wednesday, Sept. 4, at 3:30 p.m. This could be a beachcombing adventure to find treasures brought to our shores by ocean currents and waves. Watch for wildlife, pick up some trash and litter along the way. Reservations are required. All ages. FREE. Call 772-546-2067 or go to www.hobesoundnaturecenter.com.

## Friday, Sept. 6 Spyro Gyra

The sounds of jazz fusion will fill The Lyric Theatre, 59 S.W. Flagler Blvd., Stu-

art when Spyro Gyra brings its specialty sound for one-night only. The concert will be Friday, Sept. 6 at 7 p.m. In its 40-plus year career, Spyro Gyra has performed more than 5,000 shows, released 31 albums, and sold more than 10 million of them. It has one platinum and two gold albums. Tickets: \$50, reserved seats. Call 772-286-7827 or go to lyrictheatre.com.



## Saturday, Sept. 14 Autumn Adventure

Put the summer doldrums behind you and get ready for the cooler weather by bringing the family to the Autumn Adventure at The Children's Museum of the Treasure Coast, 1707 NE Indian River Drive, Jensen Beach on Saturday, Sept. 14, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Featured will be museum play time, crafts, food trucks, petting zoo and more. Tickets: \$5 per person; members and infants are admitted free. Call 772-225-7575.

## Saturday, Sept. 15 Broadway Duets, George and Gracie together again



Entertainers Peter Salzer and Betsy Wickard will perform some of Broadway's best loved

duets at Broadway Duets, on Saturday, Sept. 15, at 2 p.m. at the Kane Center, 900 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart. Salzer parlayed a part as George Burns in a musical into a "George Burns Tribute" act, which he has performed around the country. In 2001, Salzer wrote the play "Together Again" which became the basis of this show when he teamed up with Wickard to play Gracie Allen. Tickets: \$15 for Kane members/\$20 for Kane Club & non-members. Call 772-223-7800 or go to www.kanecenter.org.

## Sept. 19-Oct. 6 "Beauty & The Beast The Musical"

The Barn Theatre, 2400 S.E. Ocean Blvd., Stuart is kicking off its 49th year with "Beauty & The Beast The Musical," featuring music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman & Tim Rice and book by Linda Woolverton and opening Sept. 19. The local production is directed by Bryan Childe. Individual tickets for this and fu-

ture shows in the 2019-2020 season go on sale Aug. 26. Shows are Sept. 19, 20, 21, 26, 27, 28, 3, 4 at 8 p.m.; Sept. 28, 29, Oct. 5 and 6 at 2 p.m. Individual tickets: \$35. Season tickets: \$90-\$120. Tickets: www.barn-theatre.com or call 772-287-4884.

## Friday, Sept. 20 & Saturday, Sept. 21 Saltwater Sisters Lady Angler Tournament

Ladies, get ready to party and fish when you participate in the Stuart Sailfish Club's Annual Saltwater Sisters Lady Angler Tournament. The 2019 tournament, will be at Pirates Cove Resort, 4307 S.E. Bayview St., Stuart on Friday, Sept. 20 and continues on Saturday, Sept. 21. The tournament allows participants to fish for sailfish, dolphin, kingfish, wahoo, grouper and snapper. Marine artist Carey Chen has been the honorary chair of the event the past two years. Also planned are silent and live auctions with dozens of fishing and non-fishing related items up for bid. The kickoff party on Friday, Sept. 20 will start at 4:30 p.m., with registration, followed by the captains meeting at 7 p.m., ending with a costume party and kick off festivities. The tournament is on Saturday, Sept. 21 with a shotgun start at Red Inlet Sea Buoy, with lines out at 3 p.m. and ends with an awards ceremony at 6 p.m. The past four years, part of the proceeds have benefited local charities, including Friends in Pink, a local organization that provides financial assistance for those on the Treasure Coast battling breast cancer; and Windsor Community Angels, an organization that pays for free mammograms for Treasure Coast residents. For registration details, go to stUARTSAILFISHCLUB.COM.

## Saturday, Sept. 21 International Coastal Cleanup

Join in the fun and know that you're doing good for the community when you sign up for the International Coastal Cleanup on Saturday, Sept. 21, 8 to 11 a.m., along area beaches and parks in Martin County. You can register now, either as an individual or as a team, through <http://keepmartinbeautiful.org/great-american-cleanup.html> (click on "International Coastal Cleanup" at the right of the page). Sponsors are also needed. Call 772-781-1222 or tiffany@keepmartinbeautiful.org for more information.

## Saturday, Sept. 28 Bike Helmet Giveaway /Fitting Event

Youngsters, ages 5-12, can get a free bicycle helmet and can make sure it's the right fit at the Bike Helmet Giveaway and Fitting Event sponsored by Epilepsy Florida and Friends of the Martin

County Library System, Inc., on Saturday, Sept. 28, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., at the Robert Morgade Library, Anderson Community Room, 5851 S.E. Community Drive, Stuart. FREE but pre-registration for an appointment is required. Available times are 10:30, 10:45, 11 or 11:15 a.m. Time preference given to first registered and appointment time is not confirmed until contacted by staff. Christine Pelaez-Pena of Epilepsy Florida will work with youngsters to ensure a proper fit. Call 772-463-3245.



## Saturday, Sept. 28 Dancing with the Martin Stars

Here's a chance to see local celebrities show off their dancing skills, while supporting Martin County Healthy Start Coalition. Dancing with the Martin Stars will be Saturday, Sept. 28 at The Lyric Theatre, 59 S.W. Flagler Blvd., Stuart. Competing for the mirror ball trophy are Laura Crawford, co-owner and director of Coastal Detox in Stuart; Maggie Slobasky, a wife and mother to four boys; Kimberly Brisky, Learning & Organizational Development Educator at Cleveland Clinic Martin Health; Amy Snow, account manager at Red Hawk Fire and Security, Dean Lopes, president of Audio Visual Guy, Fabi Gonzalez, trainer at Sailfish Point Country Club, Eddie Arguelles, real estate broker at Engel & Volkers Jupiter and David Bradford, husband and father to three children. Each dancer will square off with their professional partner after five-months of training. They'll take on dance styles ranging from the cha cha to the waltz. For ticket information, go to [mchealthystart.org](http://mchealthystart.org) or call 772-463-2888.

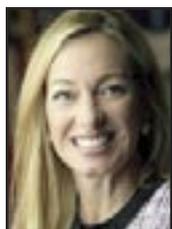
## Sundays Stuart Green Market

Take time out on your weekend and pay a visit to the Stuart Green Market on Sundays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at City Hall parking lot, 121 S.W. Flagler Ave., Stuart. FREE admission. Offered for sale are fresh produce, cut flowers (seasonal), honey, freshly-baked breads and pastries, hot sauces, handcrafted soaps and lotions, grass fed/local beef, poultry, and eggs, goat milk and cheeses, organic spice blends, artisan crafts and handmade jewelry, as well as a variety of freshly prepared gourmet foods for breakfast and lunch. For more details, go to [www.stuartgreenmarket.org/](http://www.stuartgreenmarket.org/).

## Stuart's election not a secret



Stuart Mayor  
Becky Bruner



Stuart Commissioner  
Kelli Glass-  
Leighton

**City Commissioner Kelli Glass-Leighton's re-election seemed to prove the adage that voters have short memories. The outcry over her initiative to increase commissioner pay by 40 percent, which took effect in three days' time, was a major factor in ousting two other commissioners in the city's previous election.**

That result, which seated Commissioners Mike Meier and Merritt Matheson, apparently satisfied Stuart voters and quelled further outcry over the increase in commissioner pay.

Some residents have called the June 21 results as Stuart's "secret election," which also returned incumbent Mayor Becky Bruner to her seat with no fanfare or publicity.

"Quiet" might be a more apt descriptor, since neither candidate had opponents in the election for their commission seats. The lack of obvious

campaign materials also led to the appearance that, somehow, an election had taken place in secret.

That was not the case.

Candidates had five days to file, from June 17 through June 21 for the August 27 election. Since no other candidates filed, Bruner and Glass-Leighton won their seats by acclamation. ■

### MAYFIELD JOINS SEWALL'S POINT COMMISSION

In contrast to Stuart's election, the Sewall's Point special election June 18 to fill a seat left vacant by Commissioner Paul Luger was hotly contested and noisy between Johnny "Cowboy" Colson and Kaija Mayfield.

Mayfield won, and takes her seat during a time of several hot-button issues, including helipads and septic-to-sewer conversions, as well as deciding who will be the town's next city manager.

Mayfield, a Certified Public Accountant, has lived nearly all of her 42 years in Martin County, graduating from Martin County High before attending the University of Florida. A community activist, she and her husband, Geoff, are the parents of three children.

Sewall's Point commissioners serve



Sewall's Point  
Commissioner  
Kaija Mayfield

four-year terms as unpaid volunteers and town activists. ■

## AgTEC squeezed between county, state rules

**When a local Comprehensive Growth Management Plan butts against state law, the state always wins. That likely will be the case this summer with a proposed Comp Plan amendment for Sunrise Groves, which created a new land use designation in 2010 called AgTEC, an innovative concept that mixed industrial and commercial uses with its current agricultural use on around 1,700 acres.**

AgTEC lies west of Interstate 95 and north of Martin Highway, adjacent to the C-23 canal and the Martin-St. Lucie County line. The project was approved in 2010 and became effective in July 2011.

The land use designation for the AgTEC project applies only to that project, thus the new Comp Plan amendment would affect only the AgTEC project.

The Comp Plan amendment, if approved by the county commission in August, would delete one line that sets a 10-year time limit to approve AgTEC's final site plan for its first

phase of development.

The developer received approval of its Planned Unit Development application in 2015, as required, but has not yet submitted its final site plan, which is required within 10 years. If AgTEC fails to meet the deadline, the county could remove the land use category altogether from the Comp Plan.

So how does this involve the State of Florida?

Anytime that the state's governor issues an emergency declaration – anywhere in the state – all developments throughout the state are eligible to apply for an emergency extension of the project's timetable. Over the past three years, about 23 emergency declarations have been issued by the governor, from hurricanes, to blue-green algae, to the Zika virus.

Local governments are required by law to honor those emergency extensions of time. More than three dozen projects in Martin County were approved for extensions, according to Growth Management records, including AgTEC; however, the time extensions move the AgTEC project beyond the Comp Plan's 10-year time limit.

Without a Comp Plan amendment to remove the time limit for AgTEC's final site plan approval, Martin County's Comp Plan will conflict with state law, leaving the county vulnerable to litigation. The county's staff recommends approval. ■

# Land For Sale in Okeechobee, Florida



## 1,090± ACRES

**DINNER HAMMOCK RANCH** located in Northern Okeechobee County. County-paved road frontage on the North, west and southern boundaries. Electricity to site. Well and septic required. Palmetto flat woods, large oak canopies and cabbage palm heads provide excellent cover for quail, deer and turkey. No conservation easements and all oil, gas and mineral rights are conveyed at closing. Very hard to find topography, a must see property for the discriminating quail/turkey and deer hunter. Property has 197 +/- acres of native water features with the balance in excellent farming soils that are well drained. Zoning is Agriculture, one housing unit per 10 acres or 109 total housing units allowed if subdivided. Clustering is allowed with lots as small as 1/2 acre in size with well and septic. World famous Pine Creek Sporting Club 5 miles to the east and Quail Creek Plantation 8 miles to the east. **Asking \$5,495 Per Gross Acre. Contact: Brandon D. Tucker (772) 201-8722**

## 850± ACRES

**LUSH CATTLE PASTURE** with very fertile soils. Grass types are Star and florita divided into five pastures. Property has current Consumptive Water Use Permits with the SPWMD. Two solar wells located on-site with cattle ponds providing additional watering for your herd. Property also features beautiful oak and sable palm hammocks with abundant deer and turkey. Great trophy ranch for an active recreational lifestyle and excellent cow/calf production. Property holds approximately 350 head of cattle, on an annual basis, and currently is holding nearly 500 head. **Asking \$5,495 Per Gross Acre.**

**Contact: Brandon D. Tucker (772) 201-8722**

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A trail system that includes an already established conservation area owned by Martin County is a hallmark of the Winemiller Farms project near Tropical Farms.

## Another creative approach to developing land now proposed

**Perhaps the most enduring legacy of the Pineland Prairie development – a recently approved mixed-use village concept preserving around 70 percent of its acreage in open space – is inspiring other developers to think creatively.**

Winemiller Farms followed in Pineland Prairie's footsteps with an innovative proposal for an agricultural neighborhood community with around 75 percent in open space, including preserved pinelands, and

nine miles of hiking trails.

Instead of building around 350 homes on five-acre ranchettes along the northwest side of the C-44 canal in the Tropical Farms area – each with its own septic tank – as now zoned and with no amenities, the Winemiller design team has proposed to build an agricultural, mixed-use community instead.

The existing property is primarily an agricultural area, growing row crops, such as green peppers. In agriculture for about 70

years, the property also includes 108 acres of wetlands and Hogg Creek, a non-tidal creek, used for irrigation and drainage that flows into the C44 near the St. Lucie Locks.

The Winemiller team proposes to use those natural assets to improve the quality of stormwater discharges with flow-through marshes and to preserve around 500 acres of native pine flatwoods.

They want to keep the western part of the property with the most fertile land in agriculture, according to county records, and thus create a new agri-community land use, including community gardens, parks, and hiking trails open to the public and connecting to conservation lands owned by Martin County.

The new land use would require amendments to the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and the Land Development Regulations.

Around 700 housing units would be built, which would be clustered in the central and eastern parts of the project in defined, walkable “neighborhoods.” A variety of housing types would attract residents of diverse ages, incomes, family sizes and lifestyles, according to the project plans, balanced with work places, jobs, retail and civic uses.

To avoid individual septic tanks, the proposal would request that the project connect to water and wastewater services provided by Martin County utilities, approximately 2,000 feet to the east. Such a request to expand the urban services district, however, would also require an amendment to the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.

Numerous meetings and public hearings over the next six months will give residents an opportunity to have input and stay informed. For more information, go to [www.winemiller-farms.com](http://www.winemiller-farms.com), or contact the Martin County Growth Management Department. ■

## Search for Sewall's Point manager nears end

**A familiar name popped up in the Town of Sewall's Point search for a new city manager: Dan Kleman, a senior advisor with the Florida City/County Managers Association, who leads executive searches for cities and counties on an all-volunteer basis.**

Kleman also conducted the search that ultimately produced the name of Indiantown's new city manager, Howard Brown, who began his term in January.

Sewall's Point commissioners reviewed the resumes of all the candidates a few days prior to hearing Kleman's top-nine candidates. The Sewall's Point commission developed an additional “recruitment assessment profile” with questions for the recommended candidates to answer to create a self-assessment by July 3.

From those nine completed assessments, the commission narrowed its list to four semi-finalists, who will undergo a background screening, then be interviewed individually by commissioners prior to July 30, when the commission as a whole will interview the candidates in a public forum, followed by the town's business meeting. The commission will discuss and decide then on the town's next manager, who will replace retired City Manager Pam Walker.

The top four candidates are Ben Hogarth (community affairs liaison for the City of Stu-

art, the only local candidate), Martin Murphy, David Harvell, and Richard Scherle.

## PICKING RIGHT MANAGER NOT EASY

The City of Stuart knows first hand the pain that comes from picking the wrong city manager. They employed a search firm more than two years ago, made the hire, and then six months later, asked him to leave. They moved Chief of Police David Dyess into the position as interim city manager, and eventually hired Dyess in a unanimous decision as the full-time executive for the city.

The Village of Tequesta, with a population of around 6,000 and an annual budget of more than \$19 million, worked hard to avoid the same pitfall.

They hired a national search firm initially in June last year. After interviews with their top-four candidates, they decided to open the search again in August. After interviewing the top-three candidates, they decided they still had not found the right fit for the village, according to Village Clerk Lori McWilliams.

The village council brought its retired fire chief back to the village to serve as acting village manager, turning also to its own Human Resources Department to conduct the search, deciding to postpone the decision until after the March 2019 election.

“Council felt it was extremely important to find and hire the right person for the Manager's position,” McWilliams said in an email. “They took their time and asked a lot of questions. Their ideal candidate had to match the ideals and character of our quaint, family friendly community.”

In April, the village council interviewed five applicants, and Jeremy Allen, the former deputy city administrator for Stephenson, Texas, was the unanimous choice. He holds a master's degree in business administration from the University of Phoenix; a bachelor of science degree from California State University, Fresno, and he is a Certified Public Manager, Texas State University.

He also holds a Balanced Scorecard Strategic Planning and Management certificate from George Washington University and is certified in government finance from Texas Tech University.

He was sworn in July 1. ■



## Window clings signal county's first responders

**First responders in Martin County are currently undergoing training to better serve residents with dementia. A window cling placed in homes where dementia patients live lets first responders know they may be dealing with someone who may require extra patience.**

The window cling conveys information to first responders within seconds, at a time that seconds count the most.

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non-profit initiative to create an environment where dementia patients and their caregivers are treated with respect and dignity. Call 772.340.6087, email martincountyhugs@gmail.com or go to www.MartinCountyHugs.org. ■

## Ciampi, Overdorf push authorities in Hep-A puzzle



Ed Ciampi  
Martin County  
Commissioner



Toby Overdorf  
State Rep., R,  
District 83

**Apparently, it pays to be the "squeaky wheel." County Commissioner Ed Ciampi, who represents Palm City, and state Representative Toby Overdorf, representing District 83, have been demanding attention by the Florida Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control to the deadly consequences of the Hepatitis-A outbreak here.**

Although Hep-A infections are not usually considered serious threats to long-term health, their impact in Martin County have left four people dead in

2019, possibly five. The number of cases, now numbering more than 30, did not raise the alarm, but the rare deaths triggered attention by county legislative leaders, as well as federal and state officials.

Local investigations have not found any common link among the infections thus far, which have been primarily in Palm City. Martin County Sheriff Will Snyder offered his services, including a detective, to aid in the investigation.

State Lt. Gov. Jeanette Nunez and Surgeon General Scott Rivkees, M.D., recently appointed by Gov. Ron DeSantis as secretary of the Florida Department of Health, came to Martin County earlier this month to speak with officials.

"This affects the entire state," Rivkees said to reporters outside the Health Department of Martin County, "but some people have been hit particularly hard in Martin County, and so we want to learn about what is going on here, and how we can make a difference going forward."

The hep-A outbreak is a national epidemic, currently being investigated by the CDC and the Health Department, which report that the number of infections in Florida in the first five months of 2019 is greater than the previous five years combined. Hardest hit is the Tampa-St. Petersburg area.

The challenge in finding local sources of the contamination by the highly contagious disease, spread by ingestion of a small amount of the fecal matter of someone infected by Hep-A, is the lengthy incubation period, ranging from two to six weeks before symptoms arise.

Although the symptoms are similar to flu, a distinct difference is the color of a person's stools, which turn a whitish-clay color.

The most effective treatment is prevention through vaccination, which became part of a child's regular immunization schedule in 1995. Adults who have never been vaccinated, or vaccinated more than 10 years ago, should consider vaccination to prevent the illness that can last for several weeks, even months.

Another key to prevention is conscientious hand washing, particularly by restaurant workers.

For more information, go to [www.cdc.gov/hepatitis](http://www.cdc.gov/hepatitis) or to [www.floridahealth.gov](http://www.floridahealth.gov). ■

## Army Corps launches experiment in Lake O

**The battle against blue-green algae took a step forward mid-month on Lake Okeechobee. The Army Corps of Engineers launched a 10-day experiment that uses a floating skimmer, similar to what's used to clean up oil spills, to suck up water, scrub it free of algae and the nutrients it feeds on, then pump it back into the lake.**

The Army is concentrating on the bloom in the northwestern area of the lake from Taylor Creek to Clewiston. Any spongy chunks of algae would be separated and turned into biofuel, by breaking down the cell structure to extract oil, which is stored as natural energy in the algae, according to the Corps' announcement.

"The potential for this technology is very exciting," said Erica Skolte, a public affairs specialist with the Corps. "This project is about what we can do in large scale systems like Lake Okeechobee and Lake Erie."

Their public health concern rests more on breathing toxins, rather than eating the fish. Tests on fish caught in cyanobacteria-laden waters do not show any significant levels of toxins in the flesh, just in the fish organs, which should always be discarded before eating, according to the Department of Health.

The Corps' heightened concern about inhaling toxins that can be released into the air by splashing or boating where algae is present, resulted in several warning signs being posted where algae had been detected.

The winter drought and the Corps' efforts to lower lake levels with discharges in early spring has dropped the lake to 11'6" above sea level as of July 4, about a foot lower than normal this time of year. A controversial step, the lowered lake has led to some severe economic impacts to small businesses and marinas around the lake.

It has also damaged countless boats that have run aground and required expensive repairs, according to local marina owners. Actual lake depths are from six to seven feet lower than the sea level measurement.

Lower lake levels are intended to keep algae out of the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee rivers. Not all scientists agree with the measure, however, since such low water levels threaten the ecol-

ogy of Lake Okeechobee itself, the largest natural filter for local waterways and the Everglades. ■



Brightline, formerly All Aboard Florida, is now being rebranded as Virgin Trains USA.

## A Brightline station in Boca, too?

**Brightline, now Virgin Trains USA, apparently wants to add a Boca Raton stop to its passenger rail service, according to a South Florida News Journal article July 19. In a recent letter to Boca officials, the business journal reports, Virgin's interest is in city-owned property, about half of the municipal library's parking lot.**

Built in 2013, the library sits on a 6.9-acre lot just west of the train tracks.

In the proposal letter by Virgin Trains President Patrick Goddard, Virgin Trains would pay to build the train station, if the city would contribute the land, and build a parking garage and an elevated pedestrian bridge over Dixie Highway.

Boca Raton Mayor Scott Singer had pitched the idea of a stop, according to news reports, due to residents' interest for more convenient access to the train. Boca Raton is home to Florida Atlantic University, as well extensive shopping and entertainment opportunities for an affluent population.

Boca Raton had not previously been considered for an additional stop in its Miami to Orlando route. Virgin Train's first proposal for another station went to Ft. Pierce in May, which was turned down; however, another site is under consideration there, perhaps in addition to a stop in Stuart.

The Martin County Commission agreed to pay half the expense of building a train station in Stuart as part of a settlement with the county and Citizens Against Rail Expansion (CARE-FL) after nearly five years of legal fights. In addition to a stop in Stuart, the train company gave a host of other concessions to the county, including the addition of safety measures, a set schedule for bridge closings, renovations to the St. Lucie River/FEC railroad bridge, and not charging additional monies to maintain a majority of the county's rail crossings for the next decade.

The Phase 2 work that will extend the service from West Palm Beach, where it now ends, to Orlando has begun, according to train officials, simultaneously in Orlando and in northern Palm Beach County. Martin County residents likely will begin to see railroad workers laying a second track along the FEC corridor sometime this fall, according to train officials. ■

## Farm Bureau seeks a seat for agriculture at SFWMD

**One seat on the Governing Board of the South Florida Water Management District remains vacant after Gov. DeSantis asked all the members of the SFWMD to resign shortly after he took office. No one from agricultural communities, the second largest contributor to the state's economy, is represented.**

All eight members live in and represent coastal areas, decried previously by Glades and Hendry County Commissioners, several ranchers, and now the Florida Farm Bureau as a lopsided representation of south Florida.

"Agriculture is a primary consumptive user of water and is a vital component to regulating flows by holding excess water whenever possible," wrote John Hoblick, president of the Florida Farm Bureau in a June letter to the governor. "Having representation on the board will help to deliver the goals that we are all striving to achieve."

The open position is for representation of Glades, Highlands, Okeechobee, Orange, Osceola and Polk counties, which has been vacant since March.

The Martin County representative on the SFWMD board is environmental activist Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch of Stuart, formerly a Sewall's Point commissioner. Residences of the other seven members include Sanibel, Miami Beach, Pinecrest, Islamorada, Marco Island, West Palm Beach, and Ft. Lauderdale.

Hoblick also lauded the positive impacts in water quality documented by changes in farming practices. "We know that there is a long way to go," he added, "and we play a large part in creating and implementing solutions."

## Legislative delegation to meet with residents Sept. 12

**Residents get a chance to speak their minds without traveling to Tallahassee when the legislative delegation representing Martin County hosts a public meeting Sept. 12 at IRSC's Wolf Technology Center at 10 a.m.**

The primary purpose is to listen to constituents in advance of the legislative committees that begin their work in the fall. To comment, however, residents must submit a completed registration form prior to Sept. 2, according to state Rep. Toby Overdorf, who will be joined by MaryLynn Magar and Senator Gayle Harrell.

Each legislator also will give a brief outlook for the upcoming session that begins in January 2020, prior to public comments.

To obtain a registration form, or for more information, contact Overdorf's office at 772-221-4961 or email Joey Planz at [joey.planz@MyFloridaHouse.gov](mailto:joey.planz@MyFloridaHouse.gov). The Wolf Technology Center at IRSC is at 2400 SE Salerno Road. ■

# Hurchalla asks for yet another day in court

**Three appellate judges are not enough, says environmental icon Maggy Hurchalla. She wants an opinion from all 12 of Florida's District 4 Court of Appeal judges ... or from the Florida Supreme Court.**

**H**urchalla's petition, filed July 14 in the Fourth District Court of Appeal, asks for an en banc hearing before the full panel of appellate judges, following the unanimous opinion by a three-judge panel last month that the \$4.4 million jury award for damages against Hurchalla in Martin County Circuit Court should stand.

The June 15 opinion by the appellate court, which upheld that ruling, found that Hurchalla had acted with malice against the Lake Point Restoration mining company, which negated her free speech and petition rights under both federal and state law.

If at least seven of the 12 Fourth District Court judges agree to a new hearing, then the previous opinion will be thrown out. The new hearing will focus on the lower court's ruling and jury instructions, not on the judges' opinion.

Should the appellate court fail to reach a majority vote, thus rejecting a new hearing, then the petition will go directly to the Florida Supreme Court asking for a hearing before the state's highest court.

Either path delays the final judgment by several weeks at the least, or by several months at the most.

## THE CORE ISSUE

The question that Hurchalla's attorneys say "to be of great public importance," qualifying the case to be heard again, is over the definitions of express malice and actual malice, and their applications to Hurchalla's case.

Hurchalla attorney Richard Ovelman, of Carlton Fields PA in Miami, wrote that the appellate judges' opinion that Hurchalla had lost her First Amendment rights by "an intentional or reckless dis-

regard of the truth" (actual malice) is flawed, as is their opinion that Hurchalla had lost her Florida common-law privileges by acting with malevolence toward Lake Point (express malice).

Ovelman wrote, "Just because facts are untrue, does not constitute actual malice," as required to negate Hurchalla's First Amendment rights to free speech.

Ovelman also disagreed with the appellate judges' determination that "the use of improper means" does not show express malice, which is the "ill will, hostility, evil intention to defame and injure," as required to nullify Florida's common law protection of a citizen's right to petition or instruct government officials.

## GROUND TO CRITICIZE, OR TO FILE A LAWSUIT?

In their petition, Hurchalla's attorneys also admonished the appellate judges for not including the notices of violation that had been issued independently by county staff against Lake Point, apparently in an attempt to demonstrate that the environmentalist had legitimate cause to criticize.

However, Ovelman neglected to acknowledge that the county staff had been ordered by then-Commission Chair Sarah Heard to inspect the project as a housing development, not as a mining or water restoration project. The county staff had not conducted inspections of their own volition.

Since Heard also had ordered county staff not to process Lake Point's application to terminate the housing development order after Lake Point obtained its state and federal mining permits, as the county's contract had stipulated, violations of the housing development order would be expected.

Indeed, one of those violations cited Lake Point for mining rock beyond the limits of a lake specified in the housing development plan. The mining did fall within the boundaries specified by Lake Point's mining permits.

Lake Point filed suit against the county in February 2013 for allegedly failing to meet its contractual obligations within a month after the commission ordered the staff inspections, and a separate lawsuit against Hurchalla for allegedly interfering with its contracts. Eventually, the two lawsuits were combined.

In their lawsuit, Lake Point listed nearly a dozen instances of deliberate misrepresentations of fact by Hurchalla. The mining company, located on 2,000



acres in western Martin County, offered to drop the lawsuit if Hurchalla recanted and apologized.

She refused, although in later court proceedings outside of the jury's presence, courtroom arguments revealed that Hurchalla had demanded payment of \$1.7 million from Lake Point to write an apology letter. Lake Point refused to pay Hurchalla to settle the case, according to court testimony in February 2018.

## IT'S NOT ABOUT FREE SPEECH

Justice Burton C. Conner, who was the primary author of the appellate court's decision, noted that her attorneys had argued she did not act with the purpose of harming Lake Point, but "to promote the public interest in the environment."

He conceded that some of her environmental arguments presented to the appellate court could weigh in Hurchalla's favor; however, since Hurchalla used "wrongful means to interfere in Lake Point's contract" with the county by misrepresenting facts, she had demonstrated malice.

The judge pointed out that when the county entered into the interlocal agreement in 2009, Hurchalla knew of the project and expressed a few concerns, but took no action in protest.

Burton also noted that the county monitored the project and had never identified any problems from 2008 until 2013; however, a change occurred after the 2012 county commission election that put Hurchalla's friend, Anne Scott of Jupiter Island, on the commission, and Commissioner Sarah Heard was elected chair.

Hurchalla reacted vehemently to a newspaper report in September 2012 that markets were being sought for ex-

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cess water from the C-44 canal, which would be cleansed in the Lake Point rock pits, sold and stored for later use during droughts, as experienced by West Palm Beach in 2011.

The water in the C-44 currently goes out to sea, other than what is diverted to the Caulkins Water Farm during Lake Okeechobee discharges.

Hurchalla had stated in private emails to three county commissioners that Martin County was the rightful beneficiary of such a deal – beyond just the contractual environmental and hauling fees – and that a new contract to benefit Martin County should be written. She told commissioners the steps to take to void the county's contract without due process to Lake Point.

Publicly, however, Hurchalla cited only environmental concerns with the project, including that all wetlands had been destroyed, no studies had been conducted, and the project had been fast-tracked – all of which Lake Point denied and was the focus of trial testimony.

### PROOF OF MALICE, OR NOT?

The appellate court judges did not analyze each of Hurchalla's statements that Lake Point claimed were false. The lower court's jury had already concluded they were. The judges' concern was whether the false statements had been made with malice toward Lake Point.

They focused narrowly on two sentences: One that Hurchalla wrote in a public email to county commissioners Jan. 4, 2013, stating that no study documenting the benefits of Lake Point's stormwater treatment areas had been conducted.

The other sentence came from Hurchalla during her trial, in which she testified: "As far as the treatment benefits, there is a study (documenting treatment benefits), and I did review that study . . . it's a preliminary study and other studies would need to be done."

"Therefore, even if Hurchalla thought there should have been more studies," Conner wrote, "she admitted that she had reviewed the study showing treatment benefits."

Those statements "are examples of competent substantial evidence that clearly and convincingly proved that Hurchalla demonstrated actual malice" in interfering with Lake Point's contracts, Conner wrote, "by making statements she either knew were false or with reckless disregard as to whether they were false."

### HURCHALLA'S ATTORNEYS CRY FOUL

Ovelman countered with: "No Florida appellate court has ever upheld a judgment directed at petitioning activity, let alone such an enormous judgment, on such a thin record."

Two sentences taken out of context, or that could be misinterpreted, is insufficient to prove malice, he argued. The worst Hurchalla could be accused of, according to Ovelman, is using "ambiguous" language.

"These facts do not show," he added, "that ill will was Hurchalla's sole motive." ■

—Barbara Cloudus

## Heard wants \$450,000 to pay her legal fees



County Commissioner Sarah Heard

Martin County Commissioner Sarah Heard told fellow commissioners July 9 that she expected to be reimbursed for her legal defense bills, which she said should be treated as any other commissioner expense.

Turn in the invoice, she said, and the county should just cut the check.

That's not the county's procedure, responded County Administrator Taryn Kryzda about the \$450,363 invoice from the Kibbey-Wagner law firm for Heard's defense. Kryzda suggested that first the invoice should be audited by the county's comptroller, Martin County Clerk of the Court Carolyn Timmann, to ensure that the charges are "fair and reasonable."

After a four-day criminal trial and 30 minutes of deliberation in April, a six-person jury found they could not find Heard guilty on the two misdemeanor charges of violating public records laws as presented to them by the state attorney's office.

The husband-and-wife legal team of Barbara Kibbey and Jordan Wagner represented Heard in the state's criminal case that stemmed from the 2017 testimony during Lake Point Restoration's separate civil lawsuit against the county for public records violations that resulted in \$502,000 in sanctions against the county.

The sanctions were levied against the county after the actions by Heard and two former county commissioners, Ed Fielding and Anne Scott, were ruled as violating Florida's public records laws. Lake Point had alleged that the commissioners failed to fulfill the company's request to see all correspondence with Maggy Hurchalla regarding the Lake Point project, including private emails on Heard's Yahoo account, which were pertinent to a separate lawsuit.

Heard responded that all her emails had been deleted in a hacking in January 2013; therefore, she was unable to comply, although state law requires that all public records be preserved and protected.

After a subpoena was issued in 2017 by Martin County Circuit Court for Yahoo to search Heard's private email account, around 600 deleted emails were recovered and turned over to the court, according to testimony. Of those, around 40 pertained to Lake Point; however, the state attorney's office was barred from presenting that evidence in Heard's criminal trial.

In a 4-0 vote at the July commission meeting, with Heard abstaining, the commissioners agreed to hire an outside expert to work with Timmann to review the Kibbey-Wagner invoice.

Then-Acting County Attorney Krista Storey advised commissioners that although there was no statute requiring that Heard's legal expenses be paid, there were court cases that set a precedent for doing so. Commission Chair Ed

Ciampi said that he, "and I'm sure this goes for my fellow commissioners, as well, have no problem paying her fees;" however, he said that they first must be reviewed by a legal expert to ensure fairness.

In addressing commissioners, Wagner defended the legal billing, explaining Heard's case required months of preparation and reading "hundreds of thou-

sands of documents."

Timmann selected criminal justice lawyer Robert Morris, of the Morris Law Group in Hernando County, Florida. Morris also is a former state prosecutor, who has practiced law in Hernando County since 1991. Timmann says she expects that the audited invoice will go before the commission sometime in August. ■

## Trial dates set for Fielding, Scott

Two more county commissioners will face misdemeanor charges for alleged public records violations in Martin County criminal court, former commissioners Ed Fielding of Stuart and Anne Scott of Jupiter Island.

Fielding, who was indicted by a grand jury Nov. 28, 2017, on two counts of not permitting inspection of the public records in his care and custody, will go to trial August 12 in the Martin County courthouse.

Scott, who was indicted on four counts of violating public records laws, will go to trial Sept. 16 in Martin County.

She was charged Nov. 28, 2017, on two counts of failing to produce public records for inspection, and was indicted again Jan. 4, 2018, for failing to turn over her public records to her successor within 10 days of her leaving office in November 2016.

She also was charged with one count of failing to respond to a demand by her successor, Commissioner Harold Jenkins, for the public records under her custody and control.

Both cases have been assigned to retired Justice James Langford of Highlands County by Martin County's Chief Judge Lawrence Mirman, and both trials will be heard before separate juries. ■



Ed Fielding



Anne Scott

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# Editorial: No wonder readers are losing faith

Currents made a mistake in our reporting of Commissioner Sarah Heard's legal bill of \$450,000 in the last issue, calculating that the Kibby-Wagner firm was charging \$25,000 per week to represent Heard on two criminal misdemeanor charges that she expects the county to pay.

We misspoke. It should have been reported as \$25,000 per month, not per week. We apologize for the error.

The public usually forgives mistakes, when they're acknowledged and not repeated, but it's quite another to misreport in the first place. That's when the public loses faith in what they read.

We believe that the "mistakes" that are not truly mistakes, but are intended to shape a point of view, have led to a disdain for reporters at nearly the same level as that for attorneys, which these days is worse even than that of used-car salesmen.

Locally, the news reports have never been more distorted than in the six-year coverage of the Lake Point case. In part, that's because newspapers can no longer afford the luxury of assigning one reporter to one particular case, to attend the county government meetings and the court hearings and every day of

the trials, to read thousands of pages of documents, and to follow all the threads and all the testimony, just to get the facts.

We can empathize with that; however, when a newspaper relies solely on sensationalism and on one source to tell you the story – when they will not, or cannot, do their own research – their "facts" are tainted by the opinions of their source.

Never was that more evident than when a major newspaper to the south printed a story about environmentalist Maggy Hurchalla losing her appeal of a \$4.4 million judgment in the Lake Point case. Most of the story did not focus on the three-judge appellate panel's decision that found:

"Hurchalla's comments were represented as statements of fact, as opposed to statements of pure opinion. Even if we viewed the statements as 'mixed opinions,' the statements would not be privileged under the First Amendment." They chose not to reduce the judgment by even one dollar.

It's the same thing that Martin County Circuit Court Judge Thomas McCann told attorney Virginia Sherlock representing Hurchalla way back in

2013. "Lies are not protected speech," he said, as he refused to dismiss the case.

Instead of focusing on the opinion and reasons behind it, the giant daily reported that Martin County and the South Florida Water Management District had been "cowed" into a settlement with Lake Point.

Where are the facts that would justify using a word like "cowed"? That word belongs in an opinion column only, and obviously was the opinion of their source.

If anyone could "cow" the county commission it would be the public, who was sick and tired of the millions being spent on this one lawsuit, faced with an outside attorney demanding an additional \$1 million to cover his time just through the trial, which he guaranteed would lead to several more years in court.

How many more years? He could not say, and even then, he could not guarantee the county could win.

Our own daily newspaper, which should know better, continues to slant news coverage to favor Hurchalla – making "mistakes" that are not mistakes.

In their story about Hurchalla's lost appeal, they end by saying that the Department of Environmental Protection

"agreed with Hurchalla" that Lake Point's project would destroy 60 acres of agricultural wetlands, without explaining that agricultural wetlands are farm lands that grow crops. They are not protected wetlands as we know them.

Hurchalla, who got slammed for claiming that all the wetlands on the Lake Point property had been destroyed when, in fact, they'd been restored, seized on the DEP permit that allowed 60 acres of agricultural wetlands to be filled or excavated.

Can't you just see her saying, See? I told you so! See?

The paper made a "mistake." Their observation is not factual. The issues in the Hurchalla case revolve around the abuse of power and behind-the-scenes manipulation of government officials. Just imagine what the coverage would have been had Hurchalla been a developer wanting to skirt the rules, instead of an environmentalist wanting to skirt the rules.

Our daily newspaper continues to do a disservice to our residents by pretending that Hurchalla's fight is over ideals. It is not, and we suspect they know that.

The problem is that their reporting erodes more than just their own credibility. It affects all news media. ■

## Letters to the Editor:

### Census to be largely conducted via internet

In the kerfuffle over whether the 2020 census should include a "citizenship question," two key facts have been largely overlooked. Progressives will be heartened by the first while xenophobes will rejoice at the second.

Both the Constitution and the enabling statutes require that all persons be counted. That means citizens, non-citizens, immigrants, undocumented aliens, black, white and Hispanic folks, and every sentient being from nonagenarians to newborn babies.

The 2020 Census will be the first ever to be conducted primarily via internet. Efforts will be made to collect data from people who cannot be reached that way, but it will doubtlessly have an impact.

Now that the fuss is (hopefully) over, responsible civic and community leaders can concentrate on educating people about the importance of the census, and encourage them to participate.

*Donna Dupuy  
Stuart*

### Mast working to preserve Florida's sportfishing

With the most recreational fishermen of any state in the country, Florida has rightfully earned the title of "Fishing Capital of the World." Thankfully, our congressional

delegation works hard to uphold that title, especially Rep. Brian Mast, who continues to lead on issues affecting Florida's anglers and environment.

In addition to his well-known focus on water quality and the Everglades, Mast has acted on multiple bipartisan bills that will help grow fishing for future generations. His actions will ensure Florida's iconic fishing heritage and significant \$11.5 billion sportfishing industry.

As a co-sponsor of the bipartisan Driftnet Modernization and Bycatch Reduction Act, Mast is working to align federal policy with how Florida has managed its fisheries for decades. This legislation would phase out the use of mile-long drift gill nets, still being used in California's swordfish fishery during a four-year transition period, but allowed nowhere else in U.S. waters.

Drift gill nets create significant, unnecessary bycatch, often catching fish that anglers prefer and damaging marine life.

Mast also knows that if recreational fishing is to endure for the next generation, key sources of food for sport fish must be properly managed. Mast introduced the bipartisan Forage Fish Conservation Act to make sure that smaller fish – like mullet, pinfish and ballyhoo – are properly managed, because they are a key food source for larger fish targeted by anglers.

For many Floridians, spending a day fishing means creating lasting memories with family and friends. It's a tradition we hold and want to pass on to our kids and grandkids. Congressman Mast understands the importance of our state's heritage and has taken strong action to support it through his

water quality and fisheries-related bills in Congress.

I am grateful for his work to support our environment and the sportfishing industry.

*Michael Dixon  
Jupiter*

### More than pets upset over fireworks

First, let me say that I respect the opinion of pet owners in regard to their concern about illegal fireworks set off in residential areas in Martin County. I am sure the fireworks cause much distress to both to both pets and their owners. Especially when they continue over a three-day period.

However, if you really think about it, there are others who suffer just as much or even more.

How about the parents who may have a new baby in the house? Or how scared young children may be with the deafening noise late into the night? You may also have senior citizens in your neighborhood with dementia or Alzheimer's. And let's not forget our military personnel who may have served in Vietnam or in the Middle East. How many of them came home with PTSD? The constant barrage or fireworks could cause them extreme anxiety and/or flashbacks.

So, before you go and buy hundreds or thousands of dollars worth of imported fireworks, maybe you could stop and think about your neighbors. Not everyone enjoys the "booms" late into the night or

picking up spent bottle rockets off their screens over the pool or in the backyard.

*Patricia Phoenix  
Jensen Beach*

### Officials should speak out about human rights violations

I urge Rep. Brian Mast, Sen. Marco Rubio and Sen. Rick Scott to speak out loudly and often about the human rights violations that are happening on our country's southern border and in immigrant detention centers in the United States. We cannot stand for the actions being taken by the Trump administration. I expect my elected officials to provide immigrant children and families in U.S. detention centers with safe, clean and humane conditions and to make sure they are not held indefinitely. I also expect them to cut funding for ICE and CBP, and get rid of the slush fund that will allow ICE to continue terrorizing immigrant communities.

They must respect our existence or expect our resistance.

*Rona Brandell  
Indiantown*

*Editorials in Martin County Currents are written by its editor. If written by a guest editor, they are identified as such. To respond to this editorial in a letter to the editor, email up to 300 words to editor@martincountycurrents.com.*

# My granddaughter navigates an ugly world



**Barbara Clowdus**  
*Unfiltered*

This is a photo of my granddaughter, Reagan, a soccer and futsal player in Miami who is determined to be a member of the National Women's Soccer Team one day. Coaches tell her mother she's already a definite contender.

Although these words sound like bragging, which they are, this is not just a grandparent's out-of-proportion pride. This is a story about a country's affliction with stereotypical prejudices, which suddenly became personal with the World Cup triumph.

And the dreams of one child.

No one was more ecstatic than Reagan when yet another World Cup went to an American team, HER future team. On the court and on the field, Reagan's talent already reveals itself in her footwork, speed, and focus, but the intangibles reveal even more – confidence, fierceness, and power beyond her size.

Parents of opposing teams think she's

a boy, likely because of how she commands and controls play, consistently setting up other players to succeed. Boys' teams recruit her, which she joins often as a guest player.

Her intelligence and quick feet elevate their play, making them look really good.

Off the field, she's nurturing, loving, and the gentlest of souls. Her heart is tender. She admits she still cries for her father, who died in January, "but then I tell myself to let it go." Soccer makes that possible. She refused even to skip a game the next day after her father's death, when even coaches and referees crumpled.

Her untamed mane makes her easy to spot among dozens of kids scampering across open fields. It's also a stamp that says, "I'm different," which adds to the target she carries for competing with boys.

For not dressing like a girly girl. For



An intent Reagan Hood playing futsal, which is soccer played with a smaller, heavier ball, with fewer players on a team, usually on an indoor court.

being strong. For being of mixed race.

Home-schooled, she's spared the bullies she'd likely encounter in hallways and classrooms, yet on the sidelines, strangers whisper often unkind words that pierce my heart. They ignore the human inside her, the depth of character it takes to work for hours every day to hone a skill, and to get back up when knocked down, over and over again.

And she's only nine.

After the World Cup, my inbox filled with memes, caricatures, and nasty comments about the

purple-haired woman soccer player and others on that team. It disturbed me to the core. The comments came largely from people I respect – the ones who vigorously defend our freedoms, who are Christians or Jewish, living in the belief of a higher power and loving God, and who have forged their own personal success.

They are openly disgusted by many of these women soccer players, failing to recognize the same virtues – the hard work, determination and perseverance – that brought them their own successes. Instead, these detractors chide them on their suits and bowties, quip about their gait, physiques and haircuts, and often call for tests to determine their "true" gender.

Or they vilify them for expressing their opinions, forgetting that Americans died defending that right.

Rather than the chuckles that were intended, the memes wrenched my heart, because my mind immediately went to Reagan. Is that what awaits her, just disdainful words spit from the dark underbelly of our prejudices?

I pray not.

My hope for Reagan is that she will live a life authentic to herself. That she will thrive being the woman she is destined to be, and that she will always be treated respectfully, even by those who do not look or sound like her.

I fear that will not be.

Seeing all the ugly, visceral reactions to these strong, exceptional women reminded me of President George H.W. Bush's call for a "kindler, gentler nation." At the time, it seemed like a strange thing for a President to say, almost funny to me then, but not now. Not anymore. ■

## Skipping state's to go straight to federal courts



**Jeff McCoy**  
*Guest Column*

To understand how quickly a Supreme Court decision can have widespread effects in the legal system, take a closer look at the Court's decision in *Knick v. Township of Scott*. That decision, Pacific Legal Foundation's 12th Supreme Court victory, is already reshaping property rights cases nationwide.

Last month, the U.S. Supreme Court sided with PLF client Rose Mary Knick in a suit against her town. Rose challenged a local law that required her to allow public access to her property, because local officials claimed her land contained an old cemetery.

The lower courts dismissed Rose's lawsuit because of an old Supreme Court case called *Williamson County Regional Planning Commission v. Hamilton Bank of Johnson City*. That decision said that property owners must bring takings cases in state courts, before going to federal court. For decades, because

of Williamson County, property owners had difficulty getting relief when the government violated their Fifth Amendment rights.

Fortunately, in *Knick*, the Supreme Court overturned *Williamson County*. In the words of Chief Justice John Roberts, Rose's case restored "takings claims to the full-fledged constitutional status the Framers envisioned when they included the Clause among the other protections in the Bill of Rights." Rose will now be able to seek relief against her town for the unconstitutional taking of her property.

But the effects of the court's decision stretch far beyond Rose's particular case. In less than a month, *Knick* is already influencing litigation across the country. Property owners are no longer saddled with the requirement of filing takings cases in state courts, where cases can linger for years.

Less than a week after the court decided *Knick*, a federal court in North Carolina followed suit. In *Zito v. North Carolina Coastal Resource Commission*, PLF represents a couple whose beachfront home burned down several years ago. The Zitons wanted to rebuild their home on the same footprint where it had stood since 1982, surrounded by dozens of other homes just as close to the ocean.

Town officials refused to approve a building permit to allow the couple to rebuild a home similar to the one that burned down. On top of that, the town refused to give them a permit to build anything on their property.

The Zitons sued the commission and the town, alleging that the refusal to issue a permit violated the Fifth Amendment. The town and commission argued that *Williamson County* prevented the federal court in North Carolina from hearing the case. Thanks to *Knick*, the court rejected that argument.

On the other coast, PLF represents another couple fighting onerous municipal regulations. In *Pakdel v. City and County of San Francisco*, the Pakdels challenged a local ordinance that required the two homeowners to give a lease to their current tenant for the rest of the tenant's life.

The district court dismissed the case under *Williamson County*. The Pakdels appealed the case to the Ninth Circuit and the case was briefed. Once *Knick* was decided, PLF sent the court a letter informing it of the Supreme Court's decision to overturn *Williamson County*, arguing that the appellate court must reverse the district court. PLF renewed that argument in a supplemental

brief it filed this week.

Oral argument in the Pakdels' case is scheduled for September.

*Knick* is also having an effect elsewhere. In New York, a group of landlords are suing New York City over new rent control laws. Among other changes, the new law changes previous rules that allowed landlords to increase rents up to 20% when a regulated apartment was turned over. As with other cases, the chance for success in state court is slim. *Knick* will allow these landlords to go to federal court to vindicate their rights.

These are just three examples of cases that are already benefiting from the Supreme Court's decision. The *Knick* decision is less than a month old, but the ripples are already starting to spread, which is great news for wronged property owners nationwide. May there be many more to come. ■

*Pacific Legal Foundation attorney Jeff McCoy was a staff attorney at Mountain States Legal Foundation in Lakewood, Colorado, where he litigated cases protecting individual liberty, the right to own and use property, limited and ethical government, and the free enterprise system.*

# Why the North Fork of the St. Lucie matters, too

Someone else's water is being dumped on us!



Nyla  
Pipes

*One Florida  
Foundation*

**Y**ou'll hear this often in Martin County, and to be fair, it's true. This describes our flood control system, and, in some cases, the way water flows naturally. For instance, Lake Okeechobee receives "someone else's water" from as far away as Orlando. Water always flowed south through the Kissimmee, but it now happens much faster than it used to, because we straightened the river.

When you hear this statement in Martin County, however, it's generally in reference to the discharges from Lake

**You'll hear this often in Martin County, and to be fair, it's true. This describes our flood control system, and, in some cases, the way water flows naturally. For instance, Lake Okeechobee receives "someone else's water" from as far away as Orlando. Water always flowed south through the Kissimmee, but it now happens much faster than it used to, because we straightened the river.**

Okeechobee that are released to the South Fork of the St. Lucie River via the C-44 Canal. What many people don't realize is that a lot of "someone else's water" also comes from the northwest corner of St. Lucie County via the canals and the North Fork of the St. Lucie River, which dumps into the South Fork, just prior to the Roosevelt Bridge.

#### **ST. LUCIE COUNTY'S WATER FLOWS INTO MARTIN, TOO**

To put this in perspective, St. Lucie County is 688 square miles in size with an estimated population of 313,400 peo-

ple. Port St. Lucie's 2019 estimated population is 186,000 people. Many of those residents live along the North Fork of the St. Lucie River or on the C-23 or C-24 canals, which deposit their water into the North Fork.

The C-25 canal also connects to the C-24 canal, and that water can drain from western industrial and agricultural lands into the mix, as well. The eastern portion of the C-25, also known as Taylor Creek, also drains into the Indian River Lagoon in Fort Pierce. No matter how you slice it, a lot of water, full of nutrient pollution from various land uses, heads south via the North Fork and ends up in Martin county.

Many Martin County residents protest any use of the term "local basin" when talking about what we can do to remove nutrient pollution that feeds algae blooms, not realizing that the term encompasses St. Lucie County. Many truly believe that Lake Okeechobee is our only or biggest problem.

Others believe that we must focus on only one problem at a time, and that problem is Lake Okeechobee.

#### **ST. LUCIE WATER PROJECTS AFFECT MARTIN**

These beliefs have made it very difficult to get funding for projects in St. Lucie County that could ultimately help both St. Lucie and Martin County have cleaner water. So, what is St. Lucie County doing and how can you help?

First, most homes along the North Fork of the St. Lucie River are still on septic systems. This is the oldest development in Port St. Lucie, and when the City of Port St. Lucie installed sewers, homes on septic could stay on septic until they failed. With zero inspection requirement, failure can go on for years!

Furthermore, many homes along waterbodies are under St. Lucie County jurisdiction, so they have a different set of requirements. Efforts to

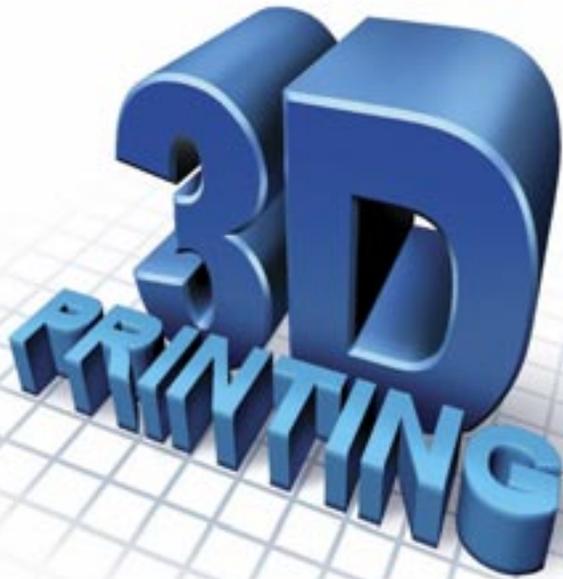


An idyllic scene on the North Fork of the St. Lucie River is spoiled by the brown water, which often tests high in enteric bacteria, closing boat ramps and notifying residents not to touch the water.

move from septic-to-sewer are ongoing, with the City of Port St. Lucie taking the lead. Supporting these efforts by speaking in favor of septic-to-sewer conversions, sending emails to city and county leaders in support, and acknowledging that this is one source of nutrient pollution in the North Fork of the St. Lucie River that can be addressed locally would be helpful.

Second, Port St. Lucie is working to hold more water back on the land to reduce the amount of water flowing to the canals and the North Fork. One such project is the McCarty Ranch Water Quality and Storage Project, which will remove and treat nearly 9 billion gallons of water a year, a reduction of approximately 21% of excess water reaching the St. Lucie River from the C23 Canal.

This project is being funded in phases and is a partnership dependent upon matching state grants and other funding. Following along with this proj-



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A map showing the location of the proposed C23 and C24 Reservoirs in relation to the canals. It's easy to see how water and nutrients from St. Lucie County flow into the South Fork of the St. Lucie River in Martin County.

ect and telling state legislators how important the project is would be helpful because it would show broad public support, which is important to legislators. More information can be found at: HYPERLINK "<http://www.cityofpsl.com/government/departments/utility-systems/mccarty-ranch-water-project>"[www.cityofpsl.com/government/departments/utility-systems/mccarty-ranch-water-project](http://www.cityofpsl.com/government/departments/utility-systems/mccarty-ranch-water-project)

Third, and most pressing, St. Lucie County has reservoirs in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan that have been moved down the Integrated Delivery Schedule several times since Everglades Restoration began! The Integrated Delivery Schedule is the timeline for what order projects are completed. This is a flexible document and gets changed often based on things like funding availability, or political pressure. More information on the Integrated Delivery Schedule can be found here: HYPERLINK "<https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Ecosystem-Restoration/Integrated-Delivery-Schedule/>"[www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Ecosystem-Restoration/Integrated-Delivery-Schedule/](https://www.saj.usace.army.mil/Missions/Environmental/Ecosystem-Restoration/Integrated-Delivery-Schedule/)

#### UNIFYING ST. LUCIE AND MARTIN COUNTY VOICES

Unfortunately, although St. Lucie County has \$1 million set aside for the

C-23/24 North and South Reservoirs and most of the land has been purchased, which takes a substantial amount of land off the tax rolls, it looks as if these reservoirs are about to be moved down the list again!

St. Lucie County is doing its part but could use the public's help in putting the pressure on the people in charge of Everglades Restoration to get these reservoirs built! In fact, an email to every single member of the Everglades Restoration Working Group asking them to prioritize the C-23/24 reservoirs would be helpful. (Emails are listed separately.)

Considering several studies have shown that more water, and more nutrient pollution is coming from our own "local basin" than comes from Lake Okeechobee, and considering St. Lucie County drainage makes up a substantial percentage of the St. Lucie River basin, it is our plea that more Martin County residents join with St. Lucie County residents to fight for these projects that will make a difference for the entire St. Lucie River.

After all, that's a lot of "someone else's water" dumping into the South Fork of the St. Lucie River! ■

*Nyla Pipes is a founder of One Florida Foundation, which addresses water issues throughout the state.*

## Everglades Restoration Working Group

**These are the various officials in charge of Everglades Restoration. Sending an email to every single member of this group asking them to prioritize the C-23/24 reservoirs will be helpful, according to Nyla Pipes of One Florida Foundation.**

- **James Erskine**, Chair 561-882-5704 [James.erskine@MyFWC.com](mailto:James.erskine@MyFWC.com)  
Everglades Coordinator Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- **Nicholas G. Aumen**, Vice Chair 954-377-5917 [naumen@usgs.gov](mailto:naumen@usgs.gov)  
Regional Science Advisor U.S. Geological Survey Center for Collaborative Research
- **Stephania Bolden** 240-533-0914 [Stephania.bolden@noaa.gov](mailto:Stephania.bolden@noaa.gov)  
Fishery Biologist, Southeast Regional Office National Marine Fisheries Service, NOAA
- **Amy Castaneda** [AmyC@miccosukeetribe.com](mailto:AmyC@miccosukeetribe.com)  
Water Quality Manager, Water Resources Department Miccosukee Tribe
- **Deb Drum** [ddrum@pbcbgov.org](mailto:ddrum@pbcbgov.org)  
Director, Environmental Resources Management Palm Beach County
- **Rebecca Elliott** 561-682-6040 [relliott@sfwmd.gov](mailto:relliott@sfwmd.gov)  
Water Policy Liaison, Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Dept.
- **Cecelia Harper** 470-249-3125 [harper.cecilia@epa.gov](mailto:harper.cecilia@epa.gov)  
EPA Liaison to the Army Corps of Engineers, Jacksonville Office
- **Veronica Harrell-James** 305-961-9327 [Veronica.Harrell-James@usdoj.gov](mailto:Veronica.Harrell-James@usdoj.gov)  
Assistant US States Attorney, Civil Division U.S. DOJ
- **Lee N. Hefty** 305-372-6754 [Heftyl@miamidade.gov](mailto:Heftyl@miamidade.gov)  
Asst. Dir. Miami-Dade County Dept. of Regulatory and Economic Resources
- **Andrew Kelly** 904-232-2241 [Andrew.d.kelly@usace.army.mil](mailto:Andrew.d.kelly@usace.army.mil)  
Commander, Jacksonville District U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- **Marjorie Kirby** 850-414-5209 [Marjorie.Kirby@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:Marjorie.Kirby@dot.state.fl.us)  
State Environmental Programs Administrator, Florida DOT Office of Environmental Management
- **John Maehl** [jmaehl@martin.fl.us](mailto:jmaehl@martin.fl.us)  
Manager, Ecosystem Restoration and Management Division, Martin County
- **Vacant Director**, Environmental Resource Management Seminole Tribe of Florida
- **Russell Morgan** 352-338-9501 [Russell.Morgan@fl.usda.gov](mailto:Russell.Morgan@fl.usda.gov)  
State Conservationist, Florida U.S. Dept. of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service

- **Matthew Morrison** 561-682-6844 [mjmorris@sfwmd.gov](mailto:mjmorris@sfwmd.gov)  
Office Chief – Federal Policy and Coordination, SFWMD
- **Roland Ottolini** 239-533-8109 [ROttolini@leegov.com](mailto:ROttolini@leegov.com)  
PE Director, Div. of Natural Resources, Lee County
- **Pedro Ramos** 305-242-7710 [pedro\\_ramos@nps.gov](mailto:pedro_ramos@nps.gov)  
Superintendent, Everglades & Dry Tortugas National Parks
- **Leonard Rawlings** 615-564-6832 [Leonard.rawlings@bia.gov](mailto:Leonard.rawlings@bia.gov)  
Eastern Regional Hydrologist, Bureau of Indian Affairs
- **Edward Smith** 850-245-3186 [Edward.C.Smith@dep.state.fl.us](mailto:Edward.C.Smith@dep.state.fl.us)  
Director, Office of Ecosystem Projects Florida
- **Sunny Snider** 305-297-0721 [Sunny.snider@noaa.gov](mailto:Sunny.snider@noaa.gov)  
Chief of Staff, Southeast Fisheries Science Center NOAA
- **Joseph P. Sullivan** 850-553-2248 [Joseph.Sullivan@dot.gov](mailto:Joseph.Sullivan@dot.gov)  
Environmental Protection Specialist, U.S. DOT, Federal Highway Administration
- **Vacant**, Superintendent Biscayne National Park
- **Larry Williams** 772-469-4285 [Larry\\_williams@fws.gov](mailto:Larry_williams@fws.gov)  
Field Supervisor U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ■



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# Police tackle violence one child at a time

Community policing in Stuart goes beyond sidewalks, stepping directly into the hearts of minds of kids with officers like Kathleen Lannon, a youth intervention counselor and gang coordinator for the Stuart Police Department.



Kathleen Lannon

Her role in the community takes on added significance with recent acts of violence that sent two East Stuart residents to the hospital.

Her professional reward is "the satisfaction of seeing kids smile and knowing that I'm making a positive influence in their lives," she said. "I've always had a passion for working with kids."

Since May of 2000, Lannon has held the position funded by the Children's Services Council. She works with their youth-targeted agencies, as well, such as Tykes & Teens, at times referring youngsters to their Youth Enrichment Services counseling program.

Based at the 10th Street Recreation Center in Stuart, which recently hosted a community meeting to address steps in improving community relations, Lannon deals daily with more than 100 children ages 6 to 18 in the center's after-school and summertime programs. They come

from nearby J.D. Parker Elementary School, as well as Stuart Middle School, Martin County High School, Spectrum Junior-Senior High School, Willoughby Learning Center and Felix A. Williams Elementary School, all in Stuart, and Jensen Beach High School.

Lannon's youthful attitude and high energy belie her 56 years of age, as she also teaches the Phoenix Curriculum to fourth graders at J.D. Parker Elementary School and Felix A. Williams Elementary School. An evidence-based six-week-long program, the Phoenix Curriculum emphasizes anti-gang and anti-bullying concepts to children. Students are pre-tested and post-tested with a 99 per-



Kathleen Lannon, Stuart Police Department's Youth Intervention Counselor and Gang Coordinator, with five-year-old gangwalk buddies Calvin Grinds, left, and Jenesis Jackson at East Stuart's 10th Street Recreation Center.



Ria Welch, 7, holds a handmade sign reading "No Gangs/Guns" at the start of a "gang walk" in East Stuart last fall.

cent increase in mastery of the curriculum.

"She loves the kids," said Julie McHenry, community services director with the Stuart Recreation Department. "She's always concerned with their safety and with the opportunities for them to make better choices in their lives."

Over the past 19 years, Lannon has seen several youngsters who started in the program return either as recreation leaders or as volunteers. One of those was Kaitlyn Champion, a dual-enrolled student at Jensen Beach High School and Indian River State College. The teenager first started with the after-school program at age 9, Lannon said.

It was Lannon's overall enthusiasm that inspired CeCe Van to pursue a career as a recreation leader, a position that started locally for her last summer.

"She is amazing," Van said of Lannon. "She brings such a burst of energy to anything she does. Her respect for the kids has always been there."

Van was nine when she attended programs at the center on a daily basis, she said. "When I was coming here, (Lannon) was always telling us to be better, to give back to the community," she added. "She always pushed us."

Van is passing along Lannon's values. "The kids know how much fun I can have with them," Van said, "and they make me laugh every day."

Before this job, Lannon, who holds a master's degree in social work, worked in a recreation program at a children's psychiatric hospital for 12 years, mostly with at-risk juveniles, she said, making her a perfect fit for youngsters with diverse, sometimes-troubled backgrounds. She's been recognized for her work

often, being named as Florida's Juvenile Gang Investigator Coordinator of the Year and Employee of the Month for Stuart. She sits on the executive board of the Florida Gang Investigators Association.

"Kathleen's 19-year tenure has been nothing but positive, hard work from her," said Stuart Police Chief Joseph Tumminelli. "Kathleen runs the First Offender Diversion Program where juveniles who commit specific crimes in a created criterion, as a first offense, are diverted to the program."

Juveniles, primarily between the ages of 15 and 18, are given sanctions and closely monitored through counseling and mentorship. The youngest ever referred to her was only eight years old.

"Kathleen's program is very successful," Tumminelli told the Stuart commission last August. "To date, the program has a 98 percent success rate. The best on the Treasure Coast."

One of Lannon's projects promotes International Gang Awareness Day in the community with a community Anti-Gang Parade. Youth were instructed to make anti-gang posters to promote anti-violence and anti-gang involvement.

Other police officers joined the walk, riding Segways and in cars, Lannon said, starting at the recreation center, east on Southeast Tarpon Avenue, then turned north on Southeast Lake Street, then west on Southeast Bayou Avenue and then south on Southeast 10th Street back to the recreation center.

It was a short parade taking major steps to reach neighborhood kids. ■

--Jeff Alexander

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## *Linda Braswell* JENSEN BEACH



Community activist Linda Beard Braswell, 71, succumbed to pneumonia June 22, 2019, after battling illness. She owned Braswell Bail Bonds in Stuart since 1975, licensed as a bail agent in 1974 as Florida's youngest licensed female bail agent, and was president of Braswell Surety Services, Inc., since 1981. After serving roles in state and national professional organizations, she was inducted into the Professional Bail Agents of the United States Hall of Fame in 1995 and was named the 2003 PBUS Bail Agent of the Year. She was most widely known locally as an active board member and volunteer for Helping People Succeed and for the Florida and Martin County GOP. A memorial service was June 28 at The Grace Place in Stuart.

## *Eugene Flanagan* 🇺🇸 PALM CITY

Eugene J. T. Flanagan, 96, died June 22, 2019, at his Palm City home. Born in New York City, he graduated from Pelham High School in 1940 and entered Yale with the Class of 1944; however, he enlisted in the Army in 1942, learned Japanese at Denver University, Stanford University and was stationed with the Signal Corps at Arlington, Va. After discharge, he returned to Yale, graduating in 1946 and from Harvard Law School in 1948. He began his law practice in 1949 in New York City. Chairman and CEO of the American Society of Corporate Secretaries, he was a member of the New York Stock Exchange's Legal Advisory Committee, a trustee of New York University from 1984 to 1990, and president of the graduate business school alumni association.

Survivors include his children, Dr. Claire Flanagan (Dr. David Duhaime) of Mansfield, Mass.; Janet Flanagan (Emory L. Morsberger) of Lilburn, Ga.; Anne Kawas (Paul T. Kawas) of Rye, N.Y.; Thomas Flanagan (Adrienne Byrnes Flanagan) of Rye Brook, N.Y.; and Gail Flanagan of Rye, N.Y.; 17 grandchildren; and four great grandchildren. He was predeceased by Lucette, his wife of 67 years, who died May 22, 2018. A burial mass was July 3 at Holy Redeemer Catholic Church in Palm City. Memorial contributions may be made to Treasure Coast Hospice Foundation in Stuart.

## *Herbert Scott, Jr.* 🇺🇸 JENSEN BEACH

Herbert E. Scott, Jr., 87, died Saturday, June 22, 2019, at Brookdale Jensen Beach. Born in Long Branch, N.J., he had a long career with the Bell Telephone Company beginning in Red Bank, N.J., transferring to Florida in 1971, and

retiring in Jensen Beach in 1983. An Air Force veteran, he volunteered with Eaton-town First Aid Squad and Fire Department, and was a member of the First United Methodist Church of Hobe Sound.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Lenore (Horner) Scott; three sons, Herbert Scott (Jill) of Rockwall, Texas, Charles Scott (Rachel) of Stuart and Stephen Scott of Port St. Lucie; daughter, Deborah Scott Pitchford, of Stuart; and five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his brother, Charles G. Scott. Contributions may be made to Treasure Coast Hospice, 1201 S.E. Indian Street, Stuart, FL 34997, 772-403-4500 or www.Treasure-Health.org. A memorial service was June 29 at Treasure Coast Seawinds Funeral Home, Stuart.

## *Pauline Walstrom* HOBE SOUND

Pauline "Peg" Julie Teeters Walstrom, 92, died June 22, 2019, at her Hobe Sound home. Born to Elton and Louise Teeters in NYC on January 31, 1927, she married Sivert M. Walstrom in 1947. Survivors include her five children, Catherine (Stephen) Noonan, Sivert M. Walstrom, Jr., Charles Walstrom, Claire Walstrom (Anna) and Mary Ann (Nick) Matsoukis; 12 grandchildren; 13 great-grandchildren and four great-great-grandchildren; and sisters, Louise Dawson and Claire Drake. A celebration of life was at Treasure Coast Seawinds Funeral Home, Stuart.

## *Robert Whitty* 🇺🇸 STUART



Robert Bezzelle Whitty, 84, of Stuart, died June 22, 2019 at home. A graduate of Lee High School and University of Florida, he was an honorably discharged Army captain. An assistant cooperative extension director with the Florida State School for Boys in Marianna and Suwannee County, he moved to Martin County in 1971 where he worked for 23 years as cooperative extension administrator. He then worked for Martin County Property Appraiser's Office for nine years. He volunteered with Suwannee County 4 H, Live Oak Jaycees, Kiwanis Club of Stuart, Martin County 4H Organization, The Orchid Society, and Men's Garden Club. He was a member of First United Methodist Church since 1971 and taught Sunday School since 1978. He was inducted into the Martin County Fair Association Hall of Fame in 1992.

Survivors include his wife of 57 years, Mary Ruth Oswald Whitty; son Robert Bruce Whitty and wife Aileen; son



Richard (Rick) Edward Whitty and wife Sherry; daughter Mary Elizabeth (Beth) Whitty Ernst and husband Robert Ernst; son Roger Eric Whitty and wife Paula; siblings Lucile Cherry, Frances Mercer, Gertrude Gamble, and Benjamin Whitty; seven grandchildren; numerous nieces and nephews.

He was predeceased by his sister Muriel Turlington. Memorial contributions may be made to Kiwanis Club of Stuart (KCOS) Foundation (in the memo, put Robert Whitty), P.O. Box 532, Stuart, FL 34995 or the Martin County Orchid Society, P.O. Box 3211, Stuart, FL 34995. A celebration of his life was June 29 at the First United Methodist Church of Stuart.

## *Emilio Del Conte* 🇺🇸 HOBE SOUND

Emilio (Emil) Del Conte, 92, died June 21, 2019 at Treasure Coast Hospice. Born in Garwood, N.J., he served in the Navy during World War II and was a lifelong road-building contractor for Del Conte Brothers, Del Conte Contracting, and CRISDEL Construction, all of Garwood, N.J. After moving to Stuart in 1979, he co-founded Del Conte Contracting of Stuart with his brother, Ray. Survivors include his wife, Carol, of 68 years; daughters Carol Ann Del Conte-Dominguez (Luis "Lou"); Bonnie; and son Anthony; sister Grace Del Conte-Tomaio. five grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his father, Emidio; mother, Rita; brothers, George, Anthony and Raymond; and sisters, Bruna and Doris.

## *Eileen Gorham* JENSEN BEACH

Eileen C. Gorham, 89, of Jensen Beach died June 19, 2019. Born in the Bronx, N.Y., she moved to Lake Worth in the early 1950s, where she met and married Vincent R. Gorham Jr. They moved to Fort Pierce in 1958 where they raised eight children. After moving to Jensen Beach in 2000, she volunteered at Martin Memorial Hospital for more than 20 years, St. Martins De Porres Catholic Church, Elliot Museum, and many other causes, including Knitting Angels, where she knitted hats and blankets for cancer patients and hospitalized children.

Survivors include her children, Joanne Fullman (Thomas) of Jensen Beach; Patty Pizzuto (Nicholas) of Tallahassee; Vincent R. Gorham III of Stuart; John P. Gorham of Orlando; Barbara Esselstrom (Bill) of Port Orchard, Idaho; Carol Gorham (Kurt Kotschi) of Orlando; Kevin Gorham (Shawna) of Charlotte, N.C.; and Brian Gorham of Lake Mary; 16 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Mark the Evangelist Catholic Church, Fort Pierce, on June 22. Burial was at White City Cemetery.

## *Colin Holmes Jr.* PALM CITY

Colin M. Holmes, 75, of Palm City died June 18, 2019 at Treasure Coast Hospice. He was diagnosed with Hepatitis A in March and never recovered. He grew up in Vero Beach working at his parents' fruit stand selling Indian River oranges and juice to tourists traveling along U.S. 1. Following graduation from Vero Beach High School, he attended Palm Beach Junior College and Indian River Junior College and worked as a draftsman and design associate for Babcock & Wilcox and RCA. When they closed, he returned to college to earn his B.A. from Florida Atlantic University. Returning to sales, he opened Remex North Business Systems in Fort Pierce, where he sold and repaired typewriters, calculators and copiers for several years. When he sold the business, he became a district sales manager for Canon USA for the Southeastern United States. After traveling for 10 years, he worked for Discount Auto Parts as both a store manager and corporate trainer.

Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Beverly; sister, Virginia VanBlois; and a niece. Memorial contributions may be made to Treasure Coast Hospice, 1201 S.E. Indian St., Stuart, FL 34997. A memorial service was June 22 at First United Methodist Church, Stuart.

## *Sam Zemsky* STUART

Sam Zemsky, 93, of Stuart, died June 18, 2019. Survivors include three children, Michael, Randi (Bob Lane) and Howard (Leslie) Zemsky; and four grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his wife, Shirley Kushner Zemsky. His funeral was June 28 at Temple Beth Zion of Buffalo, N.Y. Memorials may be made to Linus Pauling Institute, Tourette Association of America or Temple Beth Zion.

## *Jeanne Leonard* PALM CITY

Jeanne Marie Leonard, 76, of Palm City, died June 17, 2019. Born in Medford, Mass., she graduated from Medford High School in 1960. In 1963, she and her husband, Charles, moved to Pepperell, Mass. In 1979, she graduated Summa Cum Laude with a B.S. in education from Fitchburg State College. She taught English at Spring Street Junior High School in Nashua, N.H., traveling yearly on school breaks to Cape Cod, Hampton Beach, Kennebunkport, and Winnepesaukee. She chaperoned summer youth trips to Boston for the symphony, Boston Pops, and Red Sox games at Fenway Park. In 1980, she went to see Pope John Paul II. In 1984, she and her family moved to Martin County, where she taught English at Martin County High School until she retired in 2004.

continued from PAGE 15

Survivors include her husband of 59 years, Charles Leonard; two daughters, Suzanne Clonan and husband Sean, and Sandra-Jean Leonard; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

### *Hester Armstrong* STUART

Hester Armstrong of Stuart died June 13, 2019 at Martin Nursing and Rehabilitation, Stuart. Born in Barberton, Ohio, she graduated from New Philadelphia High School, with previous homes in Worthington, Ohio, and West Barnstable, Mass. She held an associate degree from Ohio Institute for Medical Assistants, working as a lab technician and later as a bank trust manager. She was active in the choir at Stuart Congregational Church and was a member of Treasure Coast Community Singers.

Survivors include sons, Mark Johnson, and partner, Janice Monks, of Dublin, Ohio; Michael Johnson and his wife, Suzi of Las Vegas; and two grandsons. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Wendy Johnson; brothers, Jim and Tom Armstrong, and sister, Mary Lois Strode.

### *Mary Lou Opolka* HOBE SOUND

Mary Lou Opolka, 82, of Hobe Sound, died June 13, 2019 at Salerno Bay Health & Rehab, Stuart. Born in Osgood, Ind., she moved to Miami with her family when she was 10. After moving to Martin County in 1985, she worked at Martin Correctional Facility as a bookkeeper. She settled in Hobe Sound in 1989, retiring in 1995. Survivors include her daughter, Linda (Alfred) Johnson of Hobe Sound; three sisters, Lavone, Rita and Melba. She was predeceased by her son, John Robinson in 2000, and her husband, Albert W. Opolka, in 2011.

### *Richard Allen* PALM CITY



Richard E. Allen, 98, died Sunday, June 9, 2019 in Palm City. Born in Bellefontaine, Ohio, he enlisted in the Army Air Force and served in the 491st Bomb Squadron before moving to Yangkai, China, to become part of Gen. Claire Chennault's "Flying Tigers" 14th Air Force from January 1944 until the war ended. He earned the rank of first lieutenant and was awarded the Army Air Force Air Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and a Purple Heart. After discharge, he attended Ohio University & Ohio State University on the G.I. Bill before marrying Joan Simpson and moving to Kenton, Ohio, in 1947 to start the wholesale candy business. He later ventured into the vending

business that led to the purchase of a cup machine in 1968, which later became Imperial Cup Corporation, manufacturer of vending cups. The cup company was sold to Federal Paperboard in 1989. He was also a 32nd degree Master Mason and was a Shriner.

Survivors include his wife of 21 years, Beverly (Owens) Allen; daughter, Dr. Karen Allen of Stuart; two sons, Richard (Jane) Allen of Rancho Santa Fe, Calif. and Rex (Cheryl) Allen of Chattanooga, Tenn.; three grandchildren; five great-grandsons. He was also preceded in death by his first wife, Joan (Simpson) Allen; brother, Kenneth "K.C." Allen and daughter-in-law, Debra H. Allen. Private graveside services were in Bellefontaine Cemetery. Contributions may be made to RE & Joan S. Allen Foundation, P.O. Box 1379, Stuart, FL 34995.

### *Anthony Tarallo* STUART

Anthony "Tony" A. Tarallo, 60, of Stuart, died June 8, 2019, at Treasure Coast Hospice in Stuart. He was a Florida resident for 30 years after moving from New York. In his younger years, he was an Olympic swimmer in the Pan American Games. He was a boat captain for Blue Water Sport Fishing in Costa Rica and owner of the Sakura Japanese Restaurant in Stuart.

Survivors include his wife, Ako Tarallo, of Stuart; son, Christian Tarallo of Homestead; daughter, Emily Tarallo of Stuart; three grandchildren; father, Albert Tarallo (Jennifer) of Holbrook, Long Island, N.Y. and mother, Amy Zigo of Port Orange; brother Christopher Tarallo (Keri) of Lake Grove, Long Island, N.Y.; sisters June Tarallo (Reuben) of Daytona Beach; and Vikki Desiderio (Edward) of Flora Park. A Celebration of Anthony's Life was June 14 at Twin Lakes South Condo Association Clubhouse, Stuart.

### *Carole Dietz* JENSEN BEACH

Carole A. Dietz, 86, of Jensen Beach, died June 5, 2019. Survivors include her husband of 67 years, George W. Dietz; children, Dianne Salveter, Daniel G. Dietz (Penny), Karen Vincent (William), Elaine Munson (Gerald), and Stephen Dietz (Maryann); 14 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her daughter, Lynn Martinez. Funeral mass was June 10 at St. Andrew Catholic Church, Stuart. Interment was at Fernhill Memorial Gardens, Stuart.

### *Robert "Gus" Roguski* STUART

Robert "Gus" Roguski, 84, of Stuart, died May 22, 2019. "An old veteran leaves this place with a salute to our flag." As a young man, he was drafted into the Army, then served a tour of

Korea. He earned an Associate B.A. at Dean College in Franklin, Mass, and worked 10 years with Northeast Airlines, which merged with Delta, for which he worked another 20 years. "Travel was paramount with (my) wife of 40 years. He fathered two ethical solid children and a new beautiful grandchild. Always hunting and fishing high on my list, two hunting camps near the Canadian border for more than 40 years. Enjoyed them until yesterday – Adios my Friends."

### *David "Rainbow Dave" Guizerix* PALM CITY



David "Rainbow Dave" Guizerix, 58, of Palm City, died May 18, 2019, at AdventHealth Hospital in Orlando. Born in New Orleans, he grew up in Picayune, Miss., and graduated from

University of Southern Mississippi. He later moved to south Florida, where he met and married Lorraine. Together, they relocated to Louisiana, where their four children were born, while Guizerix worked with his father in the family business. In 2001, he moved his family to Palm City, and soon after he was a steward of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Stuart. He was an usher and Sunday school teacher with his daughters, and volunteered with numerous organizations. He was vice president of the Palm City Chamber of Commerce, owner, president and general manager of Rainbow International of the Palm Beaches and Treasure Coast South, which performs restoration services for mold removal and fire, water and smoke damage. Since moving to Palm City in 2001, he served on the boards of the Rotary Club of Stuart, Habitat for Humanity, Mary's Shelter, Boy Scouts of America, and as board member and executive project director for Elev8Hope.

Survivors include his wife of 29 years, Lorraine; children, Jaquelyn, Nichole, Stefanie, and William; his parents, A.P. Guizerix, Jr., and Patricia; brother Skipper Guizerix (Christy), and sisters Kathy Faucett (Mark), and Tricia Gipson (Walter); uncle Robert Guizerix; nieces, nephews, and cousins.

A memorial mass was May 24 at St. Joseph Catholic Church, followed by a Celebration of Life at its family center. Memorial contributions may be made to Elev8 Hope, Hope Central Station, 3700 S.E. Salerno Road, Stuart, FL 34997. Friends are also being asked to consider becoming an organ donor.

### *Pamela Nordwall* STUART

Pamela Ellen Nordwall, 64, of Stuart, died May 18, 2019. Born in Schenectady, N.Y., she spent her early years in Cheshire, Conn., the United Kingdom

and Syracuse, N.Y. She attended Kent State University and was employed as a Software Configuration Analyst for Northrup Grumman. Survivors include her mother, Sylvia Nordwall; brother, Alan Nordwall Jr.; sister, Bonnie (Mitch) Mordas; and many cousins, nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her father, Alan Nordwall Sr.

She was inurned in Schenectady, N.Y. Donations may be made to Treasure Coast Hospice, 1201 S.E. Indian St., Stuart, FL 34997.

### *Mary Ann Piscopo* STUART

Mary Ann Piscopo, 82, of Stuart, died May 13, 2019, at Hospice of the Treasure Coast. Born in Miami, she graduated from Martin County High School, Class of 1955, and worked in secretarial and administrative positions after almost a decade as a homemaker. She lived in Carbondale, Ill., New York City, and Vestal, N.Y., before returning to Stuart in 1977.

Survivors include two daughters Julie (Kelvin) Smith of Jensen Beach and Nicole (Dan) Neal of Gainesville; sisters, Heidi Kirkhart of Barefoot Bay, Gwen Henry of Jensen Beach and Lynn Bobinski of Okeechobee; one grandson; and many nieces and nephews. She was predeceased by her brother, Ben Richardson, of Jensen Beach. Memorial contributions may be made to Treasure Coast Hospice, 1201 S.E. Indian St., Stuart, FL 34997, (772) 403-4500.

### *Branson Laurel Read* STUART

Branson Laurel Read, 32, of Stuart, died April 25 following a boating accident on his sailboat in the British Virgin Islands. Born in the British Virgin Islands, he attended Rainbow Country School, Tortola, BVI; The Algarve International School, Portugal; Crystal Lake Elementary School, Stuart; Treliske Preparatory School, Truro, England; Guana Cay School, Bahamas; Hidden Oaks Middle School and South Fork High School, Stuart. He received a two-year scholarship from The Chapman School of Seamanship in his last years of high school. His employment included Patouche Daysail, Conch Charters, Voyage Yacht Charters and the William Thornton (The Willy T) floating restaurant.

Survivors include his mother, Nancy Laurel Read, two sisters, Mya and Melissa Read; half-brother, Nathan Read, in England; and one niece. He was predeceased by his father, Gordan Read.

A Celebration of Life was at the Grace Place, Stuart on May 31. Memorial contributions may be made to The Chapman School of Seamanship, 4343 S.E. St. Lucie Blvd., Stuart, FL 34997.



# Reading those changing sands for clues



**Rich Vidulich**  
*Pompano Reporter*

**M**y curiosity for pompano fishing has never diminished. A year-round effort to hone my skills and learn from others is a daily process. Today's journey visits beach conditions, past and present, and how they affect fishing decisions.

Every time I go to the coast, I remind myself that I put footprints on Florida beaches, which I've done since 1959. Catching pompano became—and still is—my identity.

Perhaps the most important factor in being successful at catching poms is water color, which is often dictated by the type of substrate existing on the beach. So how was water color affected by the sand in the early years, before replenishment was common?

Untouched, natural beaches comprise quartz crystals, shell fragments, limestone, ground coral and sea shells. Back when all beaches were “natural,” water color was driven by moderate northeasterly and southeasterly winds. The waves would stir up the broken forms of aragonite from the bottom and create alluring pompano water.

We could see it happen from on-shore. When royal blue transitioned to a whitish aqua, we went fishing!

Today's surf fishermen and women are at the mercy of the state's numerous renourishment projects. The costly process (\$1.3 billion in past years) involves pumping substrate from an inlet or offshore, and then blowing it through rusty pipes onto the beach. Bulldozers grade the sand to create a slightly inclined path to the waves.

Obviously, every tidal change and any significant wind shift moves this lightweight material easily.

On our beaches, all the marine life that exists within the harsh intertidal shoreline occurs within a foot below the surface; however, the “renourishment” process smothers all species of crustacea, mollusks and annelids (sea worms), and other live inhabitants, thus ruining all opportunity for pompano!

Renourishment projects widen beaches to please beachgoers, tourists and politicians here, sacrificing the natural world (and surf fishing) in the process. Florida does not employ a geologist to match the components of its natural sand, as does North Carolina, which recognizes the natural needs of shoreline life and follows strict guidelines.

As a surf charter guide, I recognize this local contamination of our seashore



Sandfleas mixed with small shells at Hobe Sound Public Beach. There's plenty of plankton for food and shells for cover!



The beach at Blowing Rocks is flat. You see no shells on the sand. No shells, no fleas!

sand. Once you renourish a beach, you can never go back to its natural state. Due to the small composite of renourished sand, its “shelf life” is short.

Tropical storms erode the lightweight sand and suspend the silt. Within a short span of time, the combination creates high turbidity levels. The only shoreline fish that can breathe are those with strong gills, basically bluefish and jacks.

This suspension is magnified by warm waters. Add a rainy autumn day, or a threatening hurricane, or discharges that relieve the burden of inland flooding, and we lose significant parcels of beach for fishing. The southern pompano migrations have been detoured offshore many Octobers of recent.

During the winter, when the ocean is colder and the winds subside between fronts, the suspended silt is given a chance to fall to the bottom. Once the semblance of green/white or blue/white water is achieved, then I go nugget hunting.

Notice the words green/white color. This is not the historical blue/white. It's a polluted – but acceptable – range that fish have accepted in these modern times. By the time the water turns to a crystal blue color, however, the bite is generally done.

As visibility increases, any shark presence becomes way too obvious to our prized travelers. At this point, my fishing strategies shift, and I focus on low-light conditions in proximity to the red reefs of Hobe Sound and Vero Beach.

Trough reefs at Gulfstream Beach in Ft. Pierce, Middle Cove in Pt. St. Lucie, and Seminole Beach on Singer Island



Numerous turtle tracks can be found on many beaches, but notice the escarpment. Those are unacceptable sand conditions for sandfleas and barely acceptable for turtles!

will be the most rewarding under those conditions, as poms come in to feed on the hard structure early and late in the day. Ledge protection is key, plus the reef crustacean source is great to feed on!

Sand fleas have always been their primary food. The most difficult part is to find them. Fortunately, the females go offshore to survive, thus avoiding the compaction that comes with renourished beaches..

Look for long runoffs with deep swales, especially lined with small shells. Feeding on plankton in a swale tends to school them up. The mole crabs have amazingly adapted to even some flat beaches, so what determines their location is important.

South of all south-Florida Inlets are nutrient-rich waters. Offshore currents mingling with the tidal estuary move plankton to these areas, but, generally, you will note the fleas are in small shelly areas.

In an effort to preserve the sand flea population, I offer one simple request. The big fleas are the females, yet far too many anglers who rake fleas don't allow the females to grow to 3/4 of an inch – the ideal size to ensure procreation. They use rakes with a 3/8-inch mesh, snagging young females and ignoring males that don't grow past a quarter inch.

Then they put three on a hook to fish! Females spawn 10 out of 12 months a year, and each spawn equals 10,000 fleas. Give them a chance to sustain their population, already under assault by man-made changes to their habitat.

In an effort to conserve, I have dropped my bait license! It would be

foolish to support conservation, yet not set an example. I challenge you to join me, and look forward to any feedback you have to offer. ■

*Rich Vidulich, a commercial pompano surf fisherman who traverses the beaches of Martin County and points north for his "golden nuggets," lives in Jupiter. Send comments or questions to Pompano@MartinCountyCurrents.com.*

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# New life seen in CRA projects countywide

On the brink of extinction just six years ago, the Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) now have solid footing due to the efforts of the current Martin County Commission. A separate chapter in the Comprehensive Growth Management Plan that pertains only to CRAs, including a form-based illustrative code, and a separate article with specific regulations in the county's Land Development Regulations received final approval in July.

"The CRAs never met their potential, in part, because no property owner knew exactly what they could or could not do with their property," said County Commissioner Harold Jenkins. "I know of a parcel in the Hobe Sound CRA with more than one zoning on one piece of property. That kind of situation limits redevelopment and private investment in our CRAs, which I'm happy to say, now has been fixed."

Jenkins, along with Commissioner Ed Ciampi and long-time CRA supporter

Commissioner Doug Smith, made campaign promises to ensure the viability and long-term future of the CRA program, which fosters economic development and private investment in the county's oldest, most urban areas.

The state's CRA program was created in the '90s to fight sprawl in Florida by encouraging reinvestment in the state's older developments – the county's "walkable" communities – which it supported with special financial incentives and grant priority. Each county then had the option to establish their own CRA, launched in Martin County in 1998-99.

In addition to retaining the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council to help rewrite the code for CRAs, the county commission over the past three years also re-established the independent, all-volunteer Community Redevelopment Agency comprising members of each of the six Neighborhood Advisory Committees, extended its 30-year term in Feb-



The Hobe Sound Neighborhood Advisory Committee heard residents' complaints about the chicanes on Pettway Street in the Hobe Sound CRA. They soon will be replaced by a straightened road with two crosswalks and two speed tables to slow traffic in the heart of the Gomez community.

ruary by 10 years, set now to expire in 2039, and staffed the Office of Community Development, now managed by urban planner Susan Kores.

Significant developments are now underway in all six CRA neighborhoods, according to Kores:

- **Hobe Sound** developed its core downtown revitalization plan more than 20 years ago, had sufficient funds to begin construction eight years ago, then a change in county commission priorities halted all progress. Now back on track – although at higher cost – construction on Bridge Road to harden the electrical grid by burying its power lines, adding sidewalks and bike lanes, and improving parking is expected to begin in October.

- The installation of water and sewer

lines in the Gomez area of the Hobe Sound CRA began this month in support of Habitat for Humanity's construction of 17 new homes. The chicanes on Pettway Street also will be replaced with two raised crosswalks and two speed tables to calm traffic in that residential neighborhood.

- The **Jensen Beach** Community Redevelopment Area will complete its sewer access to properties on Church Street, Cherry Street and Mango Street by the end of this summer, completing its goal of providing water and sewer access throughout the Jensen Beach CRA. Adequate parking remains a priority, and negotiations to underground utilities will begin after the sewer project is completed.

- **Golden Gate** continues work on its water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure, a priority for the past 20 years, as well as building a pedestrian and bike trail with enhanced lighting on county-owned property throughout the CRA to increase safety. The state Department of Transportation will begin work on Dixie Highway in 2020 to add center medians, landscaping and crosswalks from Jefferson to Indian streets.

- Supported by a Safe Routes to School grant, the **Port Salerno** CRA anticipates construction to begin in 2020 to eliminate the missing sidewalk links in the neighborhood. Increased parking in the Manatee Pocket area continues to be a priority, which has led to a

parking, sidewalk and an enhanced-lighting project to increase safety along Park Drive for pedestrians and vehicles. County staff is working with Bowman Consulting to begin the engineering work for Park Drive.

- The Phase 1 design of the Port Salerno water utility project should be done in August, followed by the award of

a construction bid in September. Residents will see construction begin some time in the first quarter of 2020.

- Developer Charlie Modica purchased the Rio Town Center marina project on County Road 707 in the **Rio CRA** this past winter, and the community is eager to see his plans for this long-awaited project. Another long-anticipated project is the Habitat for Humanity housing project, which purchased the former mobile home park, but must wait on completion of the project's infrastructure before home construction can begin. The water main extension in the Rio CRA area north of CR 707 to Railroad, between the mobile home park on the east and Martin Ave on the West by Martin County Utilities is nearing completion.

- The engineering plans for the Mapp Road Town Center project for the **Old Palm City CRA** is nearly complete. The intent is to give Mapp Road a more "Main Street" feel with on-street parking, sidewalks, landscaping and lighting to create a well-connected multi-modal corridor. The Mapp Road Town Center Plaza is a small space west of Mapp Road next to the new Stormwater Treatment area that will include walking trails around the STA, seating, pavilions, public art, informational signs/kiosks, as yet unfunded; however, the Rotary Club of Stuart Sunrise expressed interest in funding an element of the plaza. County staff submitted an additional grant request to the state Department of Environmental Protection to complete the "Ripple" EcoArt Stormwater Ripple project, funded initially by the National Endowment for the Arts.

- The Old Palm City NAC also focused attention most recently on Charlie Leighton Park, retaining Giangrande Engineering to complete two concepts for redesign projects. The NAC approved one design and directed staff to seek grants or additional funding sources. ■



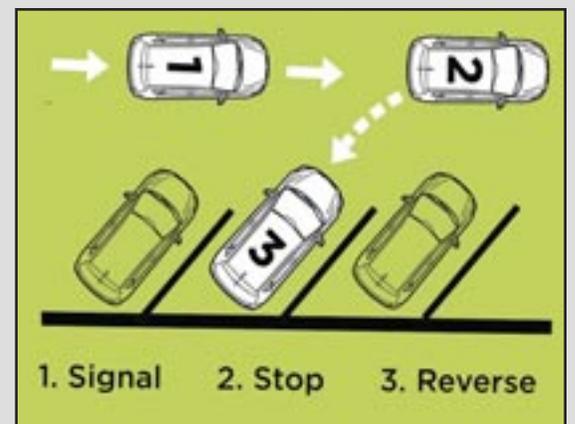
## County staff to give updates on Bridge Road construction, head-out parking

With the award of a \$2.6 million contract this summer to Rosso Site Development of Lake Worth, construction on the Hobe Sound Downtown Revitalization project on Bridge Road is expected to begin this fall.

It will include building sidewalks, creating head-out parking spaces, and burying electric lines.

Merchants and business owners will be updated monthly by county staff on construction plans, including traffic issues, the first Thursday of each month at 5:30pm in the John H. Filer Memorial Conference Room of the Hobe Sound Chamber of Commerce, 8958 SE Bridge Road, Hobe Sound. No reservations are required.

The September meeting will be Thursday, Sept. 5. ■



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A rendering of the Casa Bella apartments project by the Atway & Sehayik Development Group in Indiantown.

## Casa Bella offers new options for housing

Om ar Atway and his partner, Daniel Sehayik, have become fixtures in the Indiantown community. Popping into the businesses that have leased spaces in their shopping center, Village Square II on Warfield Blvd., or sharing breakfast at the Seminole Inn for an Indiantown Chamber of Commerce meeting, or standing at the rear of Indiantown Village Council meetings, they seem to be everywhere.

They're certainly two of Indiantown's most ardent cheerleaders and a public relations bureau of two. But what brought them to Indiantown?

Atway says it was the late Art Matson, himself an Indiantown devotee and signer of the official Indiantown incorporation declaration. Long before Indiantown became a municipality, Matson was recruiting investors and developers wherever he went.

"I don't even remember exactly where we met in the first place, but he just kept after me and after me to come check out Indiantown, until I finally did," Atway says. "Art used to tell me that Indiantown was the 'land of opportunity,' and he was right."

The entrepreneur, who has a passion for launching other Indiantown entrepreneurs, says now that he feels so indebted to Matson that he should have named his first Indiantown project after him, Matson Square.

Or Erfurt Square, he says, after former Martin County Community Development Planner Edward Erfurt, who gave Atway and Sehayik an enormous amount of time and attention to get the Village Square II project designed to fit Indiantown's character and walking them through the county's arduous and confusing approval process.

"Edward is such a gentleman," adds Sehayik. "We made a friend for life." Indiantown residents who were involved with the Indiantown Neighborhood Advisory Committee of its CRA, which was dissolved following incorporation, know exactly what Atway and Sehayik are talking about. Erfurt left a positive imprint

on the Village of Indiantown with the design of Village Square II and the Dollar General Store.

"We also had a great experience this time with the Village's new planning department," Sehayik is quick to add, boasting that the Casa Bella apartments project is the first development since incorporation to seek approval.

The 800 sq-ft, two-bedroom, two-bath apartments are expected to be affordable reasonably priced for the average Indiantown resident, Sehayik says. They will include washers and dryers, have front porches, and will be directly behind the Village Square II shopping center, in the heart of Indiantown, so that residents can grab a meal, pay their phone and utility bills, or take a pottery class just by walking across the street.

Sehayik says he expects the apartments to be ready for occupancy by the end of next year. Three of the apartments are approved as live-work units, so that a small business owner or artist can run a business from his or her home — right in line with the entrepreneurial spirit of the Atway & Sehayik Development Group.

They're already busy designing a 37-acre "town center" on Warfield Boulevard, directly across from the Indianwood Golf and Country Club that will meet all the requirements of Indiantown's new Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and maintain Indiantown's small-town, friendly feel, at the same time they are expanding opportunities for its residents.

"I definitely owe a debt to Art Matson, and I'm glad I listened to him," says Atway, with a broad smile. "I wish he was still around to see what we're doing. I think he'd approve."

For more information about Casa Bella, other Atway & Sehayik Development Group projects or opportunities, contact Atway at 561-401-3000 or Sehayik at 561-685-0022 or [daniel.sehayik@sehayikcommercialrealty.com](mailto:daniel.sehayik@sehayikcommercialrealty.com). ■

--Barbara Cloudus,

with contributions by Sarah Powers

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HOME

# New BDB director tackles economic issues

Less than a month into her new position as executive director of the Business Development Board of Martin County, Joan Goodrich came to Indiantown to address the



Joan Goodrich

members of the Indiantown-Western Martin County Chamber of Commerce.

Her visit was arranged by Indiantown native and businessman David Powers, president of the Business Development Board and chamber member. Since Goodrich's initial goal was to gather information and contacts, more than to make deals or pronouncements, she says, then the much-anticipated economic boom in Indiantown was a logical place to start.

Goodrich, 57, brings 30 years of economic development experience in south Florida to her post, most recently working in economic development for both the city of Delray Beach and the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency. Her previous work in a similar capacity, however, for the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, a public-private partnership to promote economic development, is more closely akin to her role in Martin County.

For the moment, though, Goodrich adds, "I'm just listening, learning. And ultimately then, we'll figure out the best strategic vision to put forward to our community," which will include making sure that people who want to work have great jobs, and businesses who need great people can find them.

Among her challenges is helping Indiantown's development within the framework of Martin County, since much of the area remains unincorporated, and after conflicts arose over previous development projects that were at least part of the impetus for village incorporation.

"I have not a lot of understanding yet of the history of all the reasons why the decisions have been made," Goodrich says. "I can only speak to some of the partnerships I'm looking to cultivate with some of the leaders of the village," from the public and private sectors, and the industries headquartered there.

She met with Donna Carman, executive director of the Indiantown Chamber, to talk about several ways they can collaborate.

"We're going to create a new business workshop series so we can deliver some of those services to the business owners in Indiantown," Goodrich says, who is also working on an economic profile of Indiantown to help market the business community. She says also that the BDB intends to support the Indiantown



BDB Director Joan Goodrich speaks to Indiantown Chamber members in June.

Chamber's upcoming business expo.

Goodrich noted that 77 percent of Indiantown businesses are small (less than 20 employees), and 11 percent are home-based, yet Indiantown businesses employ almost 5,000 people and generate a total of almost \$1.3 billion in revenue.

"So, there's some great opportunity there to grow them from their homes into commercial-industrial space," she says.

"Market research data and business intelligence are just some of the things we can provide to Indiantown, and other parts of the county," Goodrich says. "So, as Indiantown comes up with some of their initiatives and strategies to grow a stronger, healthier economy, we can help them with that."

As a countywide organization, the Business Development Board intends to work with all locales and BDB partners to help implement their goals for economic development and community development, says Goodrich, who stresses the point that community development is an important facet of economic development.

"As the history has been told to me, this organization (the Business Development Board) was formed by the chambers of commerce throughout the county, some private leaders, and the county commissioners

at the time, because they recognized that not everything is going to be the same in all parts of the county," she says.

Also part of Goodrich's task is helping Martin County residents understand that commercial and industrial development helps ease the property tax burden for homeowners.

"Generally speaking, a government is going to make more money from a com-

mercial or industrial user than they will from us, as residents," Goodrich says. "For every square footage of commercial, industrial and business use that we can cultivate, that ultimately brings a stronger return on investment, because the services don't necessarily have to be delivered the same way that we deliver our public safety services, our recreation services, et cetera, from a residents' point of view.

"So, when government supports the work of economic development," she adds, "many times it's also a financial strategy."

The BDB will continue to build the industries that have been important to Martin County, as well as pursue new opportunities that are appropriate, not only targeted industries, but "where the best opportunity is from a business competitiveness point of view."

Goodrich also notes residents' passion and leadership around issues involving water and the environment, which aligns with an industry cluster called the Blue-Green Economy that creates business opportunities for engineering firms, and such, that can bring solutions to the water issues the county faces.

"The work I know, because I've been doing it for 30 years," she says, "so the biggest challenge is getting to know my new community, getting to know the people and the players and the passions and the opportunities, so that's just going to take time." ■

— Mike Mason

Special to Martin County Currents

## Indiantown Pet & Supply to open soon

Not often do announcements at government meetings draw applause, but that's exactly what happened at the July 11 meeting of the Indiantown Village Council. Indiantown farmers, Farm Bureau members, 4-H leaders and parents of four children, David and Alicia Hafner, announced they took the last remaining retail space at Village Square II on Warfield Boulevard to open a pet supply store.

Then two weeks later, when the husband-and-wife team announced the addition of veterinary hours at their soon-to-be-opened store, the council meeting crowd cheered.

"We are so happy that David is doing this," said Donna Carman, executive director of the Indiantown-Western Martin County Chamber, at the meeting. "This definitely is something that Indiantown needs."



The front door of Indiantown Pet & Supply nearly ready to greet shoppers in Village Square II.

The veterinarian, who will offer care to dogs, cats, and other small animals, is Johanna Wade, DVM, a fourth-generation native Floridian who lives in Martin County. She will have some regular office hours inside Indiantown Pet & Supply, as well as offering appointments by

phone. (You might jot down this number, 772-218-0665, for future reference.)

She graduated from the University of Florida with a bachelor's degree in wildlife ecology and conservation and a doctorate in veterinary medicine, followed by the launch of Wade Veterinary Services to treat a variety of animals in their homes.

"Dr. Wade loves teaching," according to Hafner's Facebook post, "and wants clients to feel they are able to have their questions fully answered to better understand the treatments and preventative measures provided to their pets."

The Hafners also are natural teachers, so it's a combination that should soon meld into an unbeatable team. Watch for the Facebook announcement of the Indiantown Pet & Supply's grand opening. ■

# Budget grows bureaucracy, independence

Village Manager Howard Brown described the direction he intends to take during the 2019-2020 budget year, according to a plan laid out for the Village Council during its budget workshop prior to the July 25 Village Council meeting.

It's not the "government-lite" path, as proposed during Indiantown's incorporation initiative, intended to minimize the number of direct government employees.

A government-lite administration provides village services through contracts with outside vendors and county government to reduce the long-term fiscal impact from the cost of retirement and other benefits to the village. It also eliminates the need for union negotiations and provides hiring flexibility during times of economic downturns, yet also can result in accountability and response issues.

Instead of "purely" government-lite, Brown called Indiantown's administrative structure "a mix" of contract employees and village employees; however, few contracts will remain intact at the end of 2020, including those with Martin County, if Brown's plan is followed.

The village, which took over responsibility for its roadways last year and will take over responsibility for its parks on Oct. 1, is also eyeing the creation of its own police and fire departments and its own disposal of solid waste, possibly ending its interlocal agreements with Martin County for those services.

Mayor Theresa Gibbs-Thomas called Brown's budget proposal the "pieces of the puzzle" that remain in getting Indiantown's "true independence from Martin County."

## FIRST COME THE STUDIES

The council authorized several studies in next year's budget. First on the list is the expenditure of up to \$50,000 to deter-



Village Councilwoman Janet Hernandez, right, speaks with Director of Planning Bonnie Landry, following the July 25 meeting of the Indiantown Village Council.

mine the feasibility of creating the village's own police and fire departments. The same amount was allocated for a study of stormwater and solid waste assessments, which would determine if the village should continue its interlocal agreement with the county for Waste Management pickups, or seek its own contracts.

The council also authorized another \$50,000 to be included in the budget to study the impact fee structure, since developers pay impact fees to Martin County for countywide services, such as public buildings, libraries and conservation/open space lands.

Brown explained that impact fees to the county will continue, even when the village charges developers its own impact fees; therefore, to keep from thwarting the development that Indiantown seeks, having a fair and proper impact fee schedule for potential developers is critical to meeting Indiantown's goals, he said.

Improving the economic climate for Indiantown is the reason Brown also asked for an additional \$25,000 for a retail market analysis study, the results of which would assist in the recruitment of retail businesses to the village, an area he feels is particularly lacking.

The budget also includes an alloca-

tion of up to \$50,000 to create a parks master plan, and \$36,000 for a grant writer, who also would monitor the execution of any grants awarded.

"Getting just one grant can pay for that position, potentially at least, depending on the grant," Brown added.

The village manager also proposed \$25,000 to hire a lobbyist in Tallahassee to represent Indiantown's interests, and another \$7,000 to establish a Certified Emergency Response Team program.

## INCREASING EMPLOYEES TO MEET GOALS

Brown said in order to meet the goals of the strategic plan established by the members of the Village Council last year, it was imperative to have a structured village administration. He proposes the establishment of seven departments: Public Safety (police and fire), Community & Economic Development, Legal Services, Administrative Services, Financial Services, Parks & Recreation, and Public Works & Engineering.

Currently, the village has in place contracts for the Village Attorney, Magistrate, Planning, Financial, and Engineering services. This year he plans to hire seven full-time staff employees and one part-time employee. He recently hired two part-time employees and an office coordinator.

Brown re-opened his search for a management analyst, whose job description sounds like that of a deputy village manager, after an unsuccessful recruit-

ment period last month, saying he intends to increase the salary levels to attract better candidates.

In next year's budget, he hopes to have one full-time employee in Public Safety, hire a Director of Community & Economic Development, a full-time Financial Director, a full-time Parks Superintendent with a part-time assistant.

He said the village likely will continue the contract with Bowman Engineering Group as Public Works Director, but will add a full-time code enforcement employee.

The Administrative Services Department is managed by Village Clerk Susan Owens, already a full-time employee; however, Brown wants to add an assistant clerk position in that office, "since she has so many responsibilities."

The number of village employees would reach a total of 11 during the 2020 budget year, excluding the village's five elected council members, which Brown included in his employee list.

"My research of cities the same size as Indiantown – and that's from 5,000 to 15,000 (residents), which is the size of Indiantown," Brown said, "shows the average number of employees is 93."

With the expansion of the village bureaucracy comes also the need for an administration building. Brown told the council that he is continuing to look for suitable locations for a Village Hall, perhaps even building one on the lot across from the Seminole Inn. ■

- By Barbara Cloudus

## Village's millage rate stays the same

Although Indiantown residents got a small increase in taxes the first year of incorporation to meet state requirements, their rates for village taxes will hold steady in the 2019-2020 budget year, according to Village Manager Howard Brown.

"This is despite a loss of revenue from lower personal property taxes we got from the closing of two of FPL's plants, including the Eco-Generation plant," he said, "but we were anticipating that reduction."

There also was a decrease in the taxable values of some properties, according to the county tax appraiser.

The proposed millage rate is 1.6304, which is a tax of \$1.634 on each \$1,000 of property value; thus if a home's taxable value is \$80,000, the village will levy a property tax on that house of \$130.72, as currently proposed.

Village residents will see increases, however, from the school board and from Martin County.

Their tax bill also will look somewhat different since the fire and police MSTB

(Municipal Services Tax Benefit) will be levied directly by the county, instead of the village.

Previously, the village levied those fees, which served simply as a pass-through to Martin County, for police and fire services. The parks MSTU will remain in Indiantown in the upcoming budget year.

The proposed budget of \$4,987,567 for the 2019-2020 year is balanced, as required by the village charter, showing proposed expenditures of the same amount. The budget presentation is available on the county website, and the budget details can be obtained from the village clerk.

The first public hearing on the proposed budget is Thursday, Sept. 12, at 6pm during the regular Village Council meeting at the Indiantown Civic Center. The millage rate could be decreased at that time, according to Village Attorney Wade Vose, but it cannot be increased due to state law.

The final public hearing will be Sept. 26 at the council's regular meeting, and will go into effect Oct. 1, 2019. ■

## Indiantown paid its debt

A loan from CenterState Bank funded Indiantown's administrative functions until it received its first state revenues of about \$1 million in December 2018. That loan debt was paid May 10, 2019.

Interest on the loan was labeled debt service on the village's financial statements, indicating the loan remained outstanding through May.

The loan amount reached approximately \$227,000 from a \$1 million line of credit extended to Indiantown by CenterState in 2017.

Currents reported in its June issue that the loan was unpaid, based on the financial report presented at the June 8 council meeting by G&L Accounting Services; however, the report was through only April 30, prior to the loan being satisfied.

A \$1 million line of credit remains available to the village from CenterState, which Village Manager Howard Brown says would be used "only in emergency situations," such as in the aftermath of a hurricane.



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# Work on 2nd draft of Comp Plan underway

Indiantown residents agree that a critical task of the new government of Indiantown is the creation of its own Comprehensive Growth Management Plan and corresponding Land Development Regulations.

"The Comp Plan really forms the soul of Indiantown for the next five years," said Village Manager Howard Brown, during a Comp Plan workshop July 25, prior to the council's regular meeting.

The Village Council also selected a firm to write the corresponding engineering and code requirements of the village's Land Development Regulations. The contract will be approved at the council's August 8 meeting.

The Comp Plan's initial first draft was released to the public two weeks prior, which elicited more than 200 emailed comments, according to Planning Director Bonnie Landry, of Landry & Associates, who was commissioned to write the plan in March 2017.

(The full draft is posted on the village's website, [indiantownfl.gov](http://indiantownfl.gov), under Village Hall, then Planning Department. Scroll to the bottom of the first column on the left to Village of Indiantown Comprehensive Plan, Proposed First Draft, to open.)

Landry, who says she intends that Indiantown's Comp Plan will be sufficient for planning purposes over the next 30 years, spent the first year conducting community charrettes and gathering input from residents of all ethnic groups, as well as from council members, business owners and potential developers, which the village hopes to attract in order to build its economic base.

Overwhelmingly, Indiantown residents told Landry they wanted more opportunities for jobs, especially by expanding their manufacturing and industrial businesses, to increase their choices in affordable housing, and improve both transit and "walkability," without losing the village's friendly, small-town feel.



The former members of the appointed, all-volunteer Comprehensive Plan Review Committee in a joint meeting in 2018 with the Village Council and administrative staff to discuss the committee's role. The council disbanded the review committee, when it was determined that the first draft would be completed at one time, rather than by sections.

"We want to see growth," said Clyde Dawson, who owns the Indiantown Airport, in a video produced by Landry, "but not too much growth." It is a sentiment often repeated, both within and outside of council meetings.

Landry described the objective of the Comp Plan, which determines the policy for all growth and development within village boundaries, as similar to that first identified by Indiantown residents during the previous 20 years by its Indiantown Neighborhood Advisory Committee of the village's Community Redevelopment Area (CRA). They, too, conducted charrettes to determine residents' needs and vision for the future of Indiantown.

She described Indiantown's Comp Plan as meeting residents' expectations of having a village of mixed uses, including retail businesses and residential buildings at its core, with more suburban and industrial uses outside of the core, transitioning to rural properties, which are largely outside of the village boundaries.

The draft also supports wetland and upland protection policies, as well as a

number of other "green" initiatives.

The eight-chapter document, excluding maps, describes the goals, objectives and policies of each element and includes supporting data and analysis for each category: Chapter 1, Land Use Element; Chapter 2, Infrastructure and Water Resources; Chapter 3, Housing Element; Chapter 4, Recreation and Open Space Element; Chapter 5, Intergovernmental Coordination Element; Chapter 6, Transportation Element; Chapter 7,

Conservation Element; and Chapter 8, Capital Improvements Element.

Landry said that she will be meeting with Brown, who also is an accredited land planner, and Village Attorney Wade Vose, who will review the comments in preparing a second draft for the August 8 public hearing, during which time Landry hopes the Comp Plan will gain council approval for transmitting to the state Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) for their review.

"We are so fortunate that the DEO was willing to review this draft in advance," Landry said, "which certainly helped me and should, hopefully, speed up their approval process."

The changes to the first draft will be noted by strike-throughs of deletions and underlined text of any additions, Landry said. She also assured residents that there will be no "down zoning", so if landowners question the new zoning on their property, to contact her immediately.

Comments may be emailed to [blandry@indiantownfl.gov](mailto:blandry@indiantownfl.gov), or 772-266-9427. The public hearing will begin at 5 p.m., Thursday, August 8, prior to the regular Village Council meeting, in the Indiantown Civic Center on Osceola Avenue. Council members will decide if the draft is ready to be transmitted to the state at that time. ■

--Barbara Cloudus

## County says Indiantown to get pet-friendly shelter

Martin County's first pet-friendly emergency shelter will be in Indiantown, if the state approves the move.

The Martin County Commission voted unanimously July 30 to approve a five-year agreement with the Martin County School district to create a pet-friendly shelter at the Indiantown Adult Learning Center on Farm Road.

Part of its appeal is that the building does not conduct K-12 classes, which makes the building more conducive to housing pets and their owners, in part because it will not interfere with the daily operations of a school.

The costs for creating an appropriate shelter space within the district-owned building and cleaning it after the emergency passes will be borne by the county; however, the county might possibly be reimbursed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, depending on the disaster, according to officials.

Both Commission Chair Ed Ciampi and County Administrator Taryn Kryzda have pressed School Superintendent Laurie Gaylord unsuccessfully for a location



closer to the coast, specifically Hidden Oaks Middle School in Palm City, which already serves as an emergency shelter.

If an agreement between the county and the school district is signed and approved by the state, county residents will be allowed to bring their dogs and cats, since separate canine and feline "suites" will be created.

Residents also likely will need to register a few days in advance with the county's Emergency Services Department to ensure availability, as both St. Lucie and Indian River counties require for their pet-friendly shelters; however, the shelter may not be ready for occupancy during this hurricane season. ■

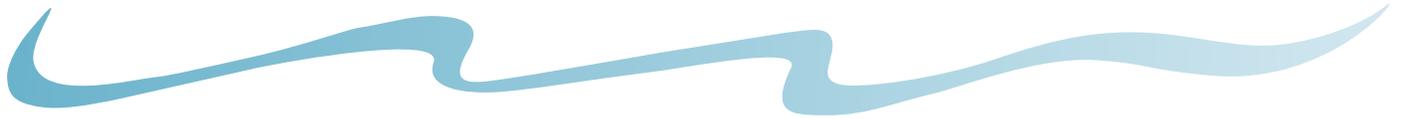
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## A slow July? No way!

July always is a challenge, because it's the number-one month for family vacations. Even regular organizational meetings get skipped, local restaurants fall into a slump, and kids complain of boredom. Not this July, which saw a spectacular Fourth of July celebration with planes overhead in a pre-show performance, with at least one spectator observing, "If I was in that plane, I'd be throwing up!" We also saw the Babe Ruth Softball World Series championships that filled fields from Halpatiokee to Jensen Beach, and the International Coastal Clean-up, with on-shore as well as offshore volunteers picking up trash along our coastline. It was a busy month, indeed!

