

# The Island Reporter

The Premier Paper of South Pinellas County

## Transportation Woes on the Road To Recovery

By Larry Lewis

*Publisher's Note: This is the first in a series of transportation-related articles based on the work of Tampa Bay Next.*

"Census: Tampa Bay shows fourth highest population growth in nation," read a Tampa Bay Times headline from March. The result? An additional 58,000 new residents plus gridlock, traffic backups on interstates and streets so routine, you can set your watch by them. Accidents and injuries aren't limited to vehicles. At least one pedestrian or bicyclist is killed each week.

As metro areas experience record growth, their transportation systems creak under the weight. Government entities scramble to keep pace with solutions, submitted or underway. Pinellas County tried pushing for more robust bus service and light rail via the Greenlight Pinellas referendum, which failed at the polls here in 2014.

In the wake of that defeat, Florida Dept of Transportation (FDOT) has been working with advocacy groups to prioritize a host of projects around greater Tampa Bay, utilizing a variety of federal, state and local funding. A key element in this effort is community outreach, as at a November transportation panel meeting hosted by the Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber in Madeira Beach.

FDOT and area agencies such as transit authorities, county commissions and metropolitan planning organizations are examining more than 55 transportation plans developed over the past 30 years. They seek to identify bay area corridors most in need of help, with an eye on fixes with the best chances for federal funding as well as being innovative projects to be included in a feasibility plan complete by October.

FDOT's outreach is part of Tampa Bay Next, a program to modernize the area's transportation infrastructure, which agency liaison Stephen Benson describes as, "a process, a conversation in the



Madeira Beach resident Ellen Lamparter talks about her traffic concerns with FDOT's Stephen Benson after the Transportation Panel.

Photo by Larry Lewis.

community, on ways we can modernize transportation infrastructure, prepare for the future and embrace innovative technology."

At nearly 1 million residents, Pinellas is the second most populated county of seven within the Tampa Bay region behind Hillsborough. This local density blurs county lines, dictating that transportation planning takes a cooperative regional approach, which isn't always easy. Benson identified key elements in need of improvements in Pinellas, including interstate modernization, transit and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. Projects in the pipeline are at various stages and several are in southern Pinellas.

The drawbridge linking Isla del Sol with Tierra Verde on the Pinellas Bayway will be replaced by a two lane, high-level fixed bridge. Design features include hammerhead piers, dolphin artwork, decorative lighting, biking/walking trails and a traffic round-about at Madonna Boulevard. Construction

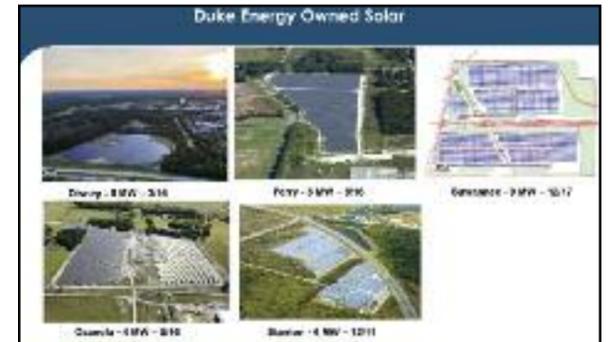
**TRANSPORTATION continued on page 8**

## Duke Shines a Light On Solar

By Betsy Judge

Duke Energy Florida says it has plans to build a smarter energy future for its customers, and solar, one of four sources of power considered a renewable energy source, is at the center.

As one of more than 50 electric utilities regulated by the Florida Public Service Commission (FPSC), Duke must justify all of its expenses for its operations. In late October they received FPSC approval to make investments in solar energy, smart meters, and grid modernization projects to enhance reliability, according to the company. They plan to make the grid more resilient and secure, provide optional billing programs to enhance customer choices, install electric vehicle charging stations, and initiate a battery storage pilot program. The company will also no longer move forward with the Levy County nuclear project and customers will not pay any further costs associated with the project.



This slide from a Duke Energy presentation shows the five solar plants in Florida. The Perry plant was built next to Perry Elementary School. It helps power the school and Duke provides energy curriculum for the students.

"For renewables in Florida there are two things that really work well, solar and biomass," said Tom Lawery, Wholesale Renewables Manager with Duke, speaking at a quarterly Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber advocacy meeting earlier this year. Duke also gets renewable energy from municipal solid waste, waste heat and hydro sources.

"Solar is the one that's really kicking into high gear now so that's mainly going to be our focus."

Duke has already invested in large-scale solar with four plants online including one at Disney shaped like Micky Mouse, and one coming online in Suwannee this month—in all a total of 150 football fields of solar panels.

"Large-scale is more economical," adds Lawery, noting that is important to the FPSC. "So we build large solar facilities in rural areas and then use the grid to get it to Pinellas County."

In densely populated areas where large swaths of land are not available rooftop and carport solar is ideal. "A lot of individuals have started seeing the economics work for them on the rooftops or even their businesses like Great Bay Distributors and Lockheed Martin. Both have individually come up with 2 megawatt hours (MW) of solar." That equates to enough power to run 660 homes for one hour, according to the Clean Energy Authority.

"One of the things I get asked a lot is, 'Well aren't you guys against that? Doesn't that take power from

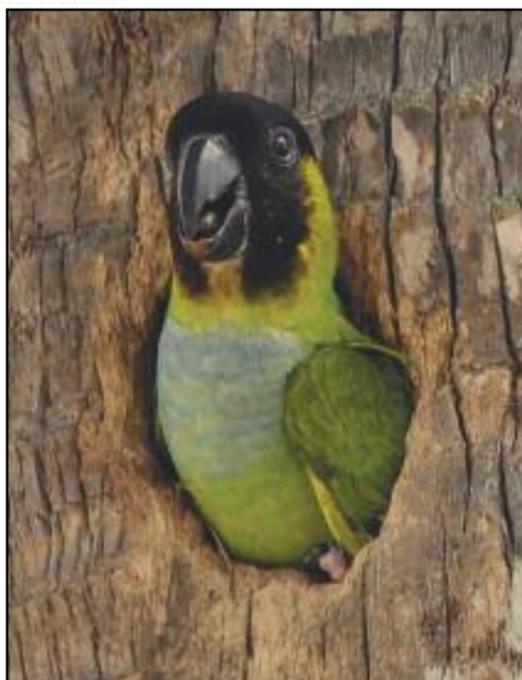
**SOLAR continued on page 9**



**PHOTO OF THE MONTH**

Photograph by:  
Bob Smith,  
Milford, DE

Bob Smith took this  
while vacationing in  
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# Gud Grammer

By The Old Professor

I was performing the country song, "If My Nose Was Runnin' Money." As I warbled "If my nose was runnin' money, I'd spend it all on you." my over-educated cortex substituted "were" for "was." I made it subjunctive. But, folks, there ain't no subjunctive in country music. The best line in

the song is "... if my nose was runnin' money, but it's not."

My school instruction in English was excellent. I know grammar pretty good. But I have learned to follow the rules the way many follow the speed limit, often but not slavishly. And I use conjunc-

tions to begin sentences. (Forgive me Ms. Nesbitt.) Incomplete sentences too. (My apologies Miss King.) I sprinkle in - dashes - and (parentheses) indiscriminately. (Mea culpa Miss Bartell.)

**PROFESSOR continued on page 5**

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# From the Publisher

By Betsy Judge

This is the first issue of the 93 I have published that does not have a Pride & Joy column by Jackie Minniti. Each month she features an individual doing something good in the community generally through volunteer work or by loaning business services and assets to a cause.

It's not that Jackie didn't want to write one; it's sometimes hard to find people because they aren't running around shouting, "Hey look at all the good things I'm doing." To the contrary, we often have to talk individuals into being featured. They say, "I don't do this for the recognition, I do it because it makes me feel good." My line is, "It gives you visibility, but it is really about giving visibility to the causes that you are supporting; you are the conduit."

We do a lot with nonprofits in terms of stories and coverage of their events, so I have a fairly good contact list, and I've been known to do a mass email to them seeking deserving individuals to feature. This time, I am putting the call out to our readers. If you know someone who gives their

time and talent to volunteer in the community, consider letting us know about it. They could be our next Pride & Joy.

Our weekly TIR E-Update is getting rave reviews. It is published via email each Tuesday with a one or two newsy items followed by Happenings This Week and Mark Your Calendars for future events. We also generally include Adoptable Pets to support local organizations trying to find animals their forever homes. Check out the latest edition at [www.theislandreporter.com](http://www.theislandreporter.com). You can also opt to subscribe there too.

We publicize events in the printed paper, on the events section of our website and in the E-Update. If you have an event coming up you would like to publicize, submit it on our website under the events tab. We will evaluate it and then use the information where it fits best. Photos and links to websites really help.

Happy December and Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah or Happy Holidays.



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Comma placement, can puzzle me. I do have a fondness for: colons, but eschew the colonoscopy. I use "ain't" and others ruralisms as if they is kirect.

Salvation is supposed to come from software auto-correcting. But it don't. Recently I tried to tell friends we were visiting at Niagara-On-The-Lake, but the computer made it Viagra-On-The-Lake. Could boost tourism. Everyone has examples of corrections that weren't. An anonymous poem says:

I have a spelling checker.  
It came with my pea sea.  
It plane lee marks four my revue  
Miss steaks aye can knot sea.

Of particular interest is the second person plural pronoun. The single person is "you," but the second person according to the grammar elite is also "you." This is very confusing. How are my hearers to know if I am referring to one or all, if the same word can mean both?

When I arrived in southern USA the college basketball cheer was "Git the ball, you all." Made sense. A team is plural. The common form of "you all" is "y'all." There are various notions about the origins of the term. Apparently Scotch-Irish immigrants had a term "ye aw" that could have morphed into "y'all." Others attribute it to Gullah or Caribbean Creole. There are competing spellings: "y'all" is most common, but "ya'll," "yall," "yo-all," and "yawl" occur. The latter must be very confusing for yachtsmen. Interestingly, "y'all" also occurs in Southern Africa Indian dialects and can be heard in St. Helena, Tristan da Cunha,

Newfoundland and Labrador. For emphasis "All ya'll" is sometime used, and it rhymes.

There are alternatives. Traditionally "ye" as in "ye of little faith" worked. But it vanished along with the King James standard. "Yinz" is used in Western Pennsylvania and Pittsburg as well other parts of the Appalachians. It is thought to come from "you ones" or "yous ones" in Ulster. Another form is "you uns." In Canada's Atlantic provinces it can be simply "yous."

In England I once heard a speaker at an academic meeting refer to the audience as "you lot." More common in the U.S. is "youse guys" as in New Joisey or "you guys." The professoress takes umbrage at "you guys" especially from female servers, who, pre-correctness, we used to call "waitresses." They ask charmingly, "What do you guys want?" My wife regards "guy" as gender specific. I would substitute "you folks," but then I'm a stuffy professor.

What are we to use as the proper second person plural? The experts are wrong. "You" as plural isn't distinguishable from "you" as singular. Confusion is inevitable. While Congress wastes its time not acting on nuclear war, tax reform, health care, climate change, and a plethora of other topics, it leaves this vitally important issue unattended to. (Forgive the prep at the end of the sentence Miss Nolan.)

Won't y'all, youse guys, you lot, and yinx, join me in a crusade to enact a new second person plural pronoun? Send contributions to the Old Professor.

*Fomented by David H. Smith, Ph.D. retired professor.*

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# 'Tis the Season for Decorations and Lights

By Sally G. Yoder

The holidays are here and so comes the trimmings that mark the season. Not to be forgotten in the rush of parties, baking, shopping, and wrapping packages is of course the decorating—inside and outside. Here are some musts to visit and enjoy this season.

Heritage Village has a wondrous display with key houses decorated in the historic period of the structure. The village opened in late 1977 on 10 acres with two houses, the Plant Sumner House and the House of Seven Gables which was barged down the inland waterway from behind the court house in Clearwater. Along with these two, there was one museum building for exhibits and offices. Today, 31 historic structures, many moved from various county locations, are nestled on 21 acres among tall Florida pines and palmettos. The House of Seven Gables, Union Academy, Walsingham House and the old McMullen House along with the H.C. Smith Store are decorated inside and out with beautiful holiday trimmings. Strolling the walkways throughout the village will put anyone in the holiday spirit. The display, at 11909 125th St. N. in Largo will be open from Dec. 9 through Dec. 31, Wed. through Sat. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sun. 1 to 4 p.m., It is closed on Mondays, Tuesdays and Christmas. Go to pinellas-county.org/heritage.

Enjoy more than 1 million LED lights at Holiday Lights in the Gardens in the Florida



The Florida Botanical Gardens come alive during Holiday Lights in the Gardens through Dec. 31.  
Photo from flbgfoundation.org.

Botanical Gardens at 2520 Ulmerton Rd., through Dec. 31 from 5 to 9:15 p.m. Good parking is available and there will be entertainment, music and other events to add to the holiday spirit. Monday nights are dog friendly, on Tuesdays visitors can participate in a photo contest and Wednesdays are ugly holiday sweater nights with prizes. See details at flbgfoundation.org.

Get the family in the car and scourer the old Northeast neighborhood of St. Petersburg, east of 4th Street North between 5th and 30th Avenues North. Many of the homes were built in the 1920s and '30s and have been restored to their original state. Owners go all out to decorate these historic residences, home to many county and city pioneers. There is a variety of architectural styles, front porches have Christmas themes, sparkling lights reach upward on tall gable roofs and holly, garland, and Christmas Trees galore make the streets fun to drive through. Old fashioned Christmas with old fashioned homes make this area special to visit.

Further south, the Oakdale Christmas House will be adorned this year with more than 500,000 lights. In it's 41st year, this free display has been rated one of the top-three Christmas lights displays in the U.S. by the "Today Show," and has been featured on HGTV. It includes a 70-foot-tall Christmas tree and more than 700 animated or moving objects. At 2719 Oakdale St. S. it is open from 6 to 10 p.m. through Jan. 3. See more at christmasdisplay.org.



The Oakdale Christmas House has been rated a top U.S. display with more than 500,000 lights and a \$5,000 electric bill to go with it.  
Photo from christmasdisplay.org.

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# Encouraging Words The Sacred Significance of Light

By Dennis Merritt Jones

*"Your life is something opaque, not transparent, as long as you look at it in an ordinary human way. But if you hold it up against the light of God's goodness, it shines and turns transparent, radiant and bright. And then you ask yourself in amazement: Is this really my own life I see before me?" ~ Albert Schweitzer*

As we enter this sacred month with the observance of both Hanukkah and Christmas, I am taking an intentional "time out" to mindfully sit in the silence and reflect upon the significance of Light. Perhaps it is by no coincidence that the Winter Solstice begins Dec. 21, marking the shortest day of the year and the longest night. Throughout history people have celebrated the solstice because it signified the coming of the light—it held the promise that, as dark as things might appear at the moment, each new day the light would reveal more of itself, making way for longer days and shorter nights and the warmth of the coming season of growth and new life.

While many may see the solstice as a secular event, the spiritual relevance and metaphor is equally important. The presence of light seems to bring a sense of hope, confidence and renewal to the human spirit. From a spiritual perspective when the letter "L," is capitalized in the word Light it becomes sacred, another name for God, Infinite Presence, the Beloved, the Christ, the Father, Jehovah, Elohim, Brahman, or whatever name you may hold as hallowed.

With this in mind, may this season be about remembering the relationship between ourselves and God and that the presence of Light signifies the unifying factor. Irrespective of the spiritual traditions we may honor, Light dispels darkness; it heals the sense of separation between ourselves and the Divine. Ralph Waldo Emerson summarized this idea beautifully when he wrote, "From within or from behind, a light shines through us upon things, and makes us aware that we are nothing, but the light is all."

Whether we are celebrating the miracle of Light at the center of the Hanukkah celebration, or the miracle birth of the man named Jesus who so fully embodied the Light that he demonstrated his oneness with the Father, Light has long been a symbol for the eternal presence of God manifesting as love, faith, wisdom, courage, forgiveness, strength and peace. A

remembrance of God's presence in our lives becomes the motivating factor that results in actions of loving-kindness, compassion, authentic power, gratitude and generosity of spirit. In this amazing season of Light we are each given ample opportunities to be the reflectors of that Light by simply remembering who we are and why we've come to the planet.

It is in the spirit of this remembrance I say:

May you take time to focus on what matters most in your chosen spiritual tradition and honor it with the sacred intention of your time and attention.

May you have ample opportunities to witness the divine birth of love in the world each time you see the light of the beloved in the eyes of others, regardless of the spiritual path they have chosen.

May you be the Light that defuses the darkness in the lives of those who are isolated in the shadows of their own personal struggles and sense of hopelessness.

May the sacredness of this season of Light illumine your way, allowing you to fully see and use the gift of your life in a manner that honors the giver of the gift.

May you always remember you are the Light of the world and the world greatly needs the Light you bring.

May you fully realize and embrace how loved you truly are by those around you as well as the Infinite One.

And may the peace that passes all understanding reside in your heart in this Season of Light and forever therein live.

While I have only had the pleasure and privilege of writing my column for the Island Reporter for the past four months I feel very connected to this wonderful community. Know that I wish you and yours the most meaningful Season of Light you've ever known.

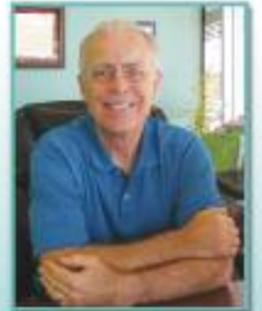
Peace and Blessings,  
Dr. Dennis Merritt Jones

*Dennis Merritt Jones lives locally and is an award winning author, spiritual mentor, and keynote speaker. Contact him at [www.DennisMerrittJones.com](http://www.DennisMerrittJones.com). You can also download a free Gratitude Journal from his website under Free Downloads. Copyright © 2017 - DMJ Presentations LLC.*



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**TRANSPORTATION continued from front page**

begins next summer with a project cost of \$52 million and completion in 2022. The Cross Bay Ferry linking the St. Petersburg and Tampa downtowns is now set to resume service in July, 2018 after winning an FDOT grant of \$438,000. Its six-month trial ended in April and mixed reviews postponed its return.

Direct PSTA bus service connecting downtown St. Pete and the Gulf beaches is planned via Central Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The limited-stops, express line will use First Avenues north and south, arc down through South Pasadena and terminate on Gulf Boulevard by the Don CeSar resort. The \$16 million project is submitted for federal funding (50 percent), with state and local allocations already approved at 25 percent each. Longer articulated buses, which have a pivot joint allowing the vehicle to turn more sharply, will operate in dedicated lanes, using branded BRT stations with wheelchair access and rapid boarding. If funding is approved, service begins in 2021.

Pedestrian and bike improvements are being done to accommodate the beach population which triples between October and April according to WTSP. Between 2013 and 2016, 72 pedestrians were hit and injured along Gulf Boulevard and 10 were killed, making Tampa Bay the second deadliest place in the nation for walkers.

In addition Gulf Boulevard is the highest traveled north-south bike route in Pinellas County, second only to the Pinellas Trail according to Benson. "The FDOT has been trying to improve bike and pedestrian safety on Gulf Boulevard for a long



Tampa Bay Next is a program to modernize the regions transportation infrastructure through a comprehensive approach to planning and development for an integrated, multimodal, regional transportation system. Image courtesy of FDOT.

time." Efforts along the 15 miles of this state-owned roadway running through eight communities reflect this concern. A 2015 study called for enhancing existing bike lanes by means of improved signage and green paint at "conflict points," plus adding new lanes with a goal of a continual bike facility. This was completed this past October at a cost of more than \$857,500 paid entirely by federal funds.

Those efforts can be seen at the intersection of Gulf Boulevard with First Street East in Treasure Island near Caddy's, the intersection with 104th Avenue in Treasure Island by Publix, and the stretch along John's Pass Village in Madeira Beach. This month, work begins on adding three pedestrian crossings along Gulf Boulevard in St. Pete Beach, at 37th and 71st Avenues and Blind Pass Road. Completion is expected by mid-2018.

Results are now being evaluated, but Madeira Beach resident Ellen Lamparter didn't wait to voice her views at the meeting. "I live here on Gulf Boulevard. I'm from London, so I'm a proponent of walking. Pedestrian behavior here is appalling. People think the turn lane in the middle of the road is a safe place to stand. A lot of people have stopped pushing the light for the flashing beacon and just walk across the crosswalk. Traffic is increasing dramatically, so we're afraid to walk across Gulf Boulevard. The number of people killed here is quite frightening."

The FDOT hopes to change that. For more information go to www.tampabaynext.com.



The population of the beaches increases by a factor of three in the winter according to WTSP and Gulf Boulevard has heavy bicycle traffic. Improvements to the road are designed to improve safety. Image courtesy of FDOT.

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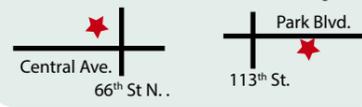


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**SOLAR continued from front page**

you? Absolutely not. We have 50 MW of individual and commercial solar now that are part of our grid, and that's not Duke-owned, that's private-owned, commercial-owned that adds to our grid every day. That's a great thing."

When it comes to determining if solar works for a business or individual, Duke is there to help. "People give us a call and say, 'Will this work for me?' And we work them through the math and let them make the decision."

According to the Solar Energy Industry Association (SEIA), 86,000 homes in Florida are powered by solar as of Oct. 6, ranking the state 12th in the nation with a projected growth of 3,615 MW over the next five years.

"We are getting 90 to 100 customers a month adding their own solar in our territory of the grid. That's impressive," adds Lawery.

Storage is a conundrum. Duke gave a \$1 million research grant to the University of South Florida, St. Petersburg in 2014 to examine solar and energy storage, batteries and charging stations.

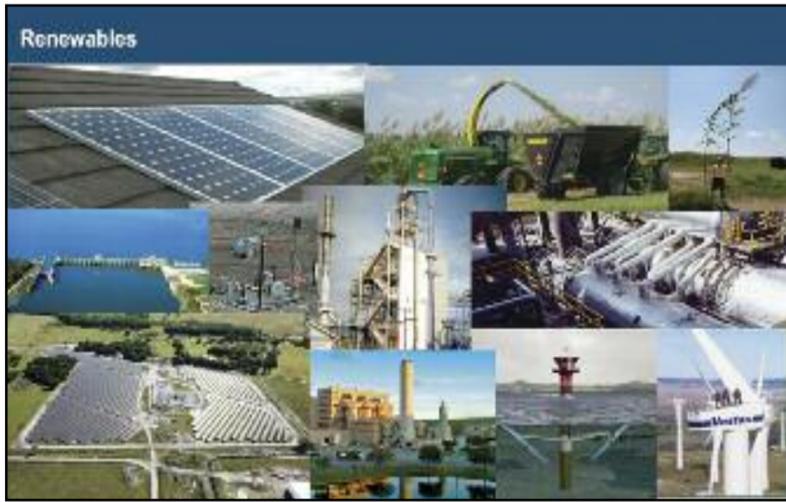
"Batteries are what can make solar much more prevalent. The problem with batteries right now, is that it increases the cost 3 to 4 times for that overall system."

Duke works with schools on energy education. "So the next couple of generations not only will understand it, but be passionate about what we need to do."

Balancing the speed of getting solar online with the cost to the customer is a challenge, and there are the social pressure to use renewables.

State Representative Kathleen Peters, who was the chair of the Energy and Utilities Commission earlier this year noted Duke is doing a "really great job."

"I'm really excited about what is going on in Florida as



Duke provided 1.1 million megawatt hours from renewable sources last year including solar, municipal solid waste, waste heat and hydro sources. *Image courtesy of Duke Energy.*

far as energy is concerned, and I love that Duke Energy is not only are investing in storage with Tesla, but when they built their solar plant next to a school (in Perry) and provide curriculum, they are generating a whole new workforce that will be interested and understands this type of technology, so we have a future workforce. I think it's brilliant that they made that connection. So Duke Energy is doing great stuff as is FPL (Florida Power & Light), TECO (Tampa Electric) and all the others.

For more information go to [www.duke-energy.com](http://www.duke-energy.com).



Duke gave USFSP a \$1million research grant to explore the integration of storing solar energy in new battery systems and install a 100 kilowatt solar system on top of university's south parking garage. They also provide solar curriculum to Perry Elementary School in Taylor County Florida, near their Perry Solar facility.

*Image courtesy of Duke Energy.*

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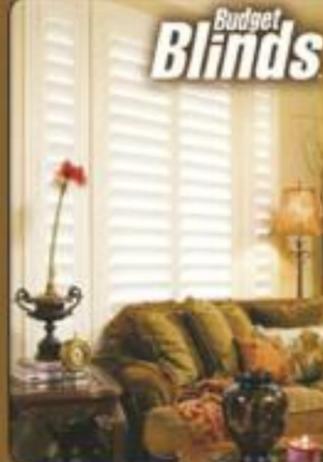
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## Wayne's World Medicare Warning...That's Not Meth...and More...

By Wayne Shattuck

Medicare Warning... Did you know Medicare premiums become much more expensive if you do not sign up on time? The program tacks on a 10 percent penalty on monthly Part B premiums for each full 12-month period of late enrollment - and you keep on paying the penalties for the rest of your life. The aim is to avoid what's called "adverse selection," which occurs when people sign up for coverage only when they think they will need it. That helps keep premiums lower for all Medicare enrollees. But a heads-up would be nice. And that is the intent of the Beneficiary Enrollment Notification and Eligibility Simplification Act, a bill introduced with bipartisan support this fall in the U.S. Senate (companion legislation was introduced in the House of Representatives earlier). It would require the government to send a notification letter in the year before your 65th birthday - the first date of Medicare eligibility. The letter would explain the enrollment rules, and - importantly - how Medicare interacts with other insurance coverage you might have. Roughly 750,000 Medicare beneficiaries paid late enrollment penalties in 2014, according to the Congressional Research Service (CRS). That is less than 2 percent of enrollees, but for those who do pay the penalties, the bite is painful. On average, total premiums for late enrollees were 29 percent higher, CRS said. Medicare enrollment is automatic if you already have claimed Social Security benefits before your 65th birthday. You will receive a welcome kit in the mail, and coverage begins the first day of the month in which you turn 65. Everyone else needs to watch the deadlines. Unless you are exempted,

Medicare requires that you sign up for Part B during a window beginning three months before your 65th birthday and ending three months after.

That's Not Meth... A man who was arrested after police mistook the glaze on his Krispy Kreme doughnut for crystal meth has received a \$37,000 settlement. Daniel Rushing, 64, sued the city of Orlando after he was arrested in December 2015 on drug charges. Law enforcement had spotted four small flakes of glaze on his floorboard and thought they were pieces of crystal methamphetamine. Rushing told the officers they were likely bits of the Krispy Kreme doughnut he'd eaten earlier, but he was arrested for possession of methamphetamine after two roadside drug tests came up positive for an illegal substance. "I couldn't believe it," Rushing said. "I've never even smoked a cigarette before, let alone meth." Weeks later, a state crime lab cleared Rushing of the drug allegations and charges against him were dropped. Rushing, a retiree from the Orlando Parks Departments, received a check for \$37,500 this fall and said he is pleased with the outcome of his case. The arresting officer was given a written reprimand for making an improper arrest, and the Orlando Police Department ended up training more than 730 officers on how to properly use field-test kits.

But That's Not All... Have you used the term "Barge in?" Back in the 1800s heavy freight was moved along the Mississippi in large barges pushed by steamboats. These were hard to control and would sometimes swing into piers or other boats. People would say they "barged in."

## OLLI to Host Excursion to Cuba

By Walt Ulbricht

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at Eckerd College is hosting a six-day excursion to Cuba, Jan. 28 - Feb. 2, led by Bibi Hidalgo, a former U.S. government official with who has traveled extensively to Cuba and has strong ties with artists, intellectuals and athletes.

The trip includes visits to Havana's historic sights like the Plaza of the Revolution and the

National Cathedral and Hemingway's favorite haunts. Participants will stay in private homes, eat in privately-owned restaurants and engage with the creative and intellectual leaders. There is a ferry ride to Regla, plus a trip to Vinales, a world heritage site.

The all-inclusive, 14 person trip, is \$3,850 per person (double-occupancy.) Contact Tom Santee at [ollitravel@eckerd.edu](mailto:ollitravel@eckerd.edu) or 727-864-7814.

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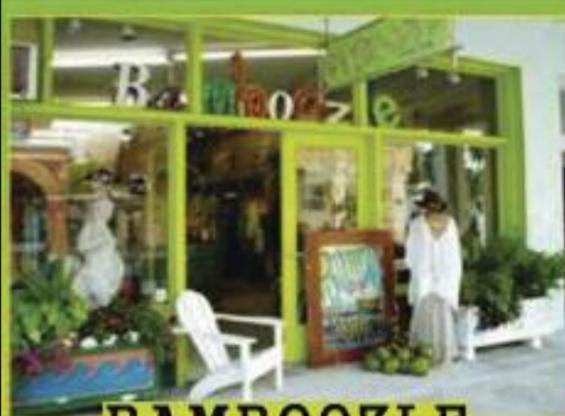
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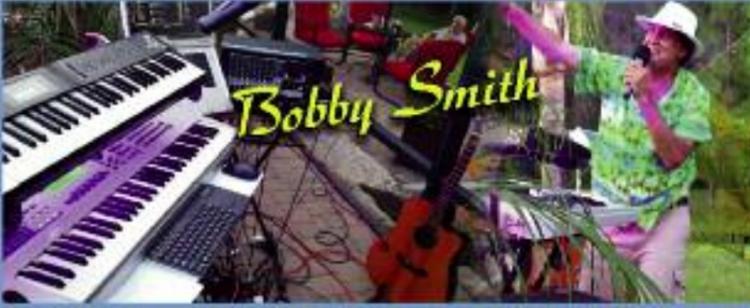
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Spectacular Pass-A-Grille views & access to Shell Key Beach.  
3bdr/3.5ba & den.  
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*Pinellas County's premier location overlooking the beach and Gulf of Mexico, plus walking distance to the shops and restaurants of Tierra Verde.*

*An 1,800 acre state preserve with miles of sandy beach attached to Shell Key.*

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Call This exclusive resort style gated community of Harbourside home. Features stunning 1st floor living level corner unit overlooking the Intracoastal waterway & pool. 2bdr/2ba plus den lots of balcony space. Move-in condition. Don't miss this one.



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**SUNSET WATCH 4TH LEVEL • \$975,000**

An amazing opportunity over looking the Gulf. This coastal living condo offers 3 bdr/3ba, bonus room, locked elevator to a private foyer, 2 car private garage, walking distance to downtown T.V.



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**BOCA SANDS \$889,000**

3bdr/3ba/2c garage. Sunset & sunrise views on Boca Ciega Bay. In the heart of St. Pete Beach.



Boat slip available separately.

**MAXIMO MOORINGS • \$275,000**

3/2 on a quiet cul-de-sac. Nicely shaded backyard with screened-in porch. Split floor plan. Put your own touches on this ranch style home w/over 1,600 sq. ft.



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Build your dream home on this one-of-a-kind lot at the end of a cul-de-sac on Boca Ciega Bay in Brightwater Beach Estates.



# Bayway Alliance Provides Update

By Bill Blazowski

The Alliance for Bayway Communities (ABC) held their initial seminar for the 2017-2018 season in early November. The seminar, attended by area condominium and home owner association (HOA) leaders, included a report on summer developments in the Pinellas Bayway area and an outlook on planned advocacy efforts for the next year.

In August, the ABC held a workshop at the Isla Del Sol Yacht & Country Club (IDSY&CC) to discuss being more effective in presenting Bayway area interests to local officials and state legislators. Lobbyists that represent the Community Association Institute and ABC property management companies presented what they expect the key issues to be at the coming Tallahassee legislative session.

First, there is substantial concern that state legislation will be proposed to make it possible for properties to be used for short-term rental services, even when such is in violation of an association's documents and rules.

"This is an issue that can have a major impact on associations and is important for the ABC to address," said Nancy LaBare, an ABC principal and resident of Casa IV. The ABC raised this matter at a Nov. 1 meeting of all Pinellas legislators and was assured by Sen. Jeff Brandes that he would oppose any attempt to circumvent community governing document restrictions on short-term rentals.

The second advocacy issue is a campaign to have all utilities on Pinellas Bayway moved underground. This year's hurricanes have heightened

concerns that overhead lines make the area vulnerable, including operations at the Southwest Water Reclamation Facility (SWWRF). ABC representatives have communicated strong support for undergrounding to city council members, county commissioners and area state legislators.

he said. "Longer-term changes to address the sewer overflow problem have not been fully defined, and the total bill may well be far over the \$326 million associated with Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Consent Order. The city needs to complete its wastewater and stormwater master plan to fully understand total costs and the ABC will be closely supporting and monitoring that effort."

ABC principals Ken Wolfe of Dolphin Cay (also representing Eckerd College), Harold Butler of Bahia Del Mar, and Del Ulrich of Playa Escondida (also representing IDSY&CC) discussed other current efforts. These include improved landscaping maintenance along the Bayway, traffic safety and security, and more prompt removal of derelict boats.

With 48 associations representing more than 10,000 residents, ABC's size also provides opportunity to negotiate improved rates for common association services. In 2014, discussions with BrightHouse (now Spectrum) resulted in substantial association savings for video services. Currently, the ABC is exploring ways to provide lower cost internet to member associations. The goal is to find a way to provide internet service to all residents in an association at lower cost than when residents purchase internet service individually.

Other seminars in the 2017-2018 season will address rules and regulations issues, city services, association mechanical issues and project management, insurance and financial matters, and environmental issues. Go to [www.baywayalliance.org](http://www.baywayalliance.org) for information on the seminars and more detail.



The Alliance for Bayway Communities (ABC) represents the residents of 48 associations and focuses on items of interest that will benefit their membership. They interact with commercial enterprises, all levels of government and other community associations to benefit their membership. Image from [www.baywayalliance.org](http://www.baywayalliance.org).

Walter Donnelly, an ABC principal and resident of Marina Bay, addressed the major work underway at SWWRF, just east of Eckerd College, noting the short-term measures prevented spills on land and in waterways during Hurricane Irma.

"While the sewer overflow crisis has been a media and political football for months, we believe the city has done a good job of implementing short-range measures that make us less vulnerable,"

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This lot is 1.3 Acres in the GATED PRESERVE near Ft. De Soto Park. Amenities include an electronic gate, a COVERED BOATSLIP with Electric and water available and with deep water access, a Long LIGHTED BOARD-WALK with access to the PRIVATE MARINA and a COVERED GAZEBO with swing built over the water. All utilities are in and the zoning allows a House, a Coach House and a large multi-car Garage. This building site contains Specimen Oak Trees, and the preserve hosts Red and White Mangroves and an incredible grove of Specimen Black Mangroves. This is a nature lovers delight with sightings of all of the area's Flora and Fauna. You will enjoy privacy and security in this location. Builder/developers Key Lot, Will Build to suit, Finance or exchange price \$1,250,000. See video at <http://tinyurl.com/zntzaub>.



## TIERRA VERDE SHORES LAKEFRONT LOT



Build your Dream Home on this large Fabulous lakefront lot on Westshore Drive in Tierra Verde Shores. Features include underground utilities, front view to the west, beautiful Lake Front View to the East. You can see all the birds of the area including Roseate Spoonbills, White Pelicans, Man-O-War birds, Skimmers, Red Headed ducks and Scaup in the winter. This location is Private and Quiet and sits among some of the most beautiful large Multi-Million dollar homes in the area. Lot size is 8/10<sup>th</sup> of an Acre and measures 159 x 230. You can walk or bike to the Tierra Verde Community Park with Tennis and Pickleball courts, The Little League Field and a Play Area for the kids. It is also a nice bike ride or jog to incredible Fort Desoto Park. This lot is level and ready to build, or you can land bank this lot for the future. \$650,000.00 with terms available.



# Business News

## Pasadena Gets Wellness Facility

Ellis Health & Wellness Center has opened an office at 214 Pasadena Ave. in the Cape Pasadena Village complex. They offer massage therapy and bodywork techniques affecting positive musculoskeletal, vascular and neurological changes in the body. 727-580-0128.



## Taco Bus Opens in Treasure Island

Members of the Tampa Bay Beaches chamber joined the Taco Bus family for a ribbon cutting welcoming them to their 9641 Gulf Blvd. location. Taco Bus has proudly delivered a healthy, fresh, authentic Mexican taste experience to their fans. Info at [www.taco-bus.com](http://www.taco-bus.com). Photo by Bob Schlesinger.



# Notable Achievements

## All That Glitters is Gold

The St. Pete Glitter Queens were proud to raise \$73,697 for the Beth Dillinger Foundation at their Annual Royal Ball held in late October. They have donated almost \$300,000 to six local charities since they started in 2012. The group was started as an extension of a ladies book club by five St. Pete women.



## A Gift from Laurie

The Pass-a-Grille Woman's Club donated \$2,500 from a Vallett family donation to the St. Petersburg College Foundation's 1st Generation Scholarship Fund. The state matches the gifted amount making it possible for St. Petersburg College to give \$5,000 to qualified students who are the first in their family to attend college. The Vallett's donated the funds to the club in memory of their daughter and sister, Laurie, who was the president from 2015 until her passing in 2016.



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 Joshua Wolfenden, Director of Christian Education  
 Angela Wolfenden, Worship Music Director  
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 Tierra Verde, FL 33715  
[www.theislandchapel.org](http://www.theislandchapel.org)

**Sunday Service Times**  
 8:00 am & 10:00 am  
 Children's Nursery Provided  
 Age 3 1/2 and under  
 Adult Sunday Bible Study - 9:00 am  
 Children's Sunday School - 10:00 am

**Wednesday Evening Services**  
 Prayer Meeting & Bible Study 7:00 pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE**  
 CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

**Christmas Eve  
 Candlelight  
 Services**

**December 24th  
 5 & 6 pm**



## Florida Author Fantasy With a Smile

By Jackie Minniti

As a lawyer with undergraduate degrees in political science and history, you wouldn't think Antonio Simon would be voted Most Likely to Become an Award-winning Fantasy Writer.

"Fantasy was anathema to what I did in college where everything was fact-based," he says. "But I had a story to tell, and I needed to tell it." So tell it he did – in a novel that combines fantasy with laugh-out-loud comedy and takes readers on an adventure they won't soon forget.

Simon, a native Floridian who grew up in Miami-Dade, read a lot as a child. "I also played a lot of video games that involved role-playing," he recalls. "They were like interactive books and influenced how I like to write." After graduating from the University of Miami, he earned his law degree from St. Thomas University School of Law and went on to marry and have two children while working as an attorney. As busy as he was, the desire to tell stories was "like a fire in my belly that I needed to get out." So in 2012, he decided to embark on his writing journey. Eighteen months later, he'd completed his first novel.

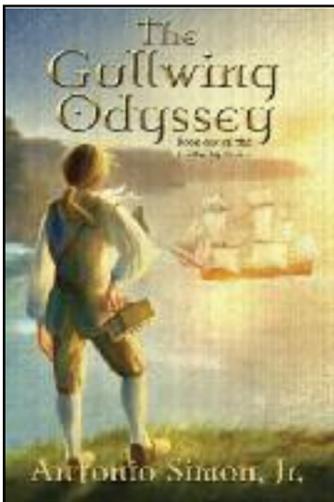
Set in a fifteenth-century fantasy world, "The Gullwing Odyssey" is the rollicking tale of Marco, a reluctant hero who accepts an assignment to deliver a letter and finds himself in the center of a series of misadventures that make him responsible for the fate of an entire civilization. "I love the Renaissance as a setting for fiction, with its explosion of new ideas and scientific enlightenment," Simon says. "It was also a time of adventure and exploration, which was a perfect backdrop for my story."

He admits that there is a lot of himself in his main character. "I wanted Marco to be a sort of Everyman who's relatable to everyone," he explains. "He has a simple job and wants to just keep at it until he can retire. I think there's a point

in everyone's life where they ask, 'Is this the best me I'll ever be? Why should I reach for something better?' When I was in my mid-twenties, I was asking the same questions." The thing Simon likes best about the book is the same thing that makes it unique – its humor. According to the Midwest



Attorney and award-winning author Antonio Simon combines fantasy and humor in "The Gullwing Odyssey," the tale of an unambitious boy's misadventures on his way to becoming a reluctant hero.



Book Review, "The Gullwing Odyssey" rests solidly on the shaking shoulders of a good laugh, and that's what sets it apart from 90 percent of fantasies on the market." The book garnered four literary awards including first places in both the Royal Palm Literary Awards and the Pacific Book Awards.

Since the publication of "The Gullwing Odyssey," Simon has published a short story collection ("Transit Dreams"); a history of 30 places in Miami-Dade that changed the world ("Miami is Missing"); a role-playing adventure game system ("R.A.G.E."); and a compendium of stories of murder and revenge ("Tarot of Hate"). He also contributed to "Forgotten Spaces," a compendium of darkly-themed poetry, and "Shadows And Teeth," a horror anthology.

Simon is currently at work on the second of what he hopes will become the Gullwing Series. Tentatively titled "The Gullwing Colony," the story picks up where "The Gullwing Odyssey" left off. "Much of the humor this time will be about what happens when people of different cultures who know nothing of each other are suddenly thrust together," he says. Simon hopes his humorous fantasies will give readers some belly laughs while delivering a more serious message. "Sometimes you're called upon to be much more than you think you are," he says. "You may not see your potential, but it's there, so reach for the heights instead of shying away from them."

For more information, go to [www.darkwatersyndicate.com](http://www.darkwatersyndicate.com).

## Today is the Day (Part 2)

By Sabrina O'Donnell

The technical name of the town is Brightsville but those of us in the bunkers won't call it Brightsville because there is nothing bright about it. Not anymore anyway. There was a time where this town was bright. We were peaceful and remained to ourselves. A war broke out a few towns over; a war over land. The losing team wasn't strong enough to keep their territory, but they were still stronger than we were. They knew they could take us over without a fight, so when they had nowhere else to go, they did just that.

They know we're still here. They know we live in the tunnels and they don't come down to our bunkers. They say they'll leave us alone as long as we don't come into town. The thing is though, the only way for us to eat is to steal food from town. If they catch us, they shoot us, but if we don't try, we starve. At least if I get shot, I die quick and die trying. It'd be a pretty bad situation to leave Old Nick in though.

I pulled on my old tee shirt and most comfortable pair of jeans. Running shoes, running shoes, where are my running shoes? Really, they're a pair of sneakers that I outgrew ages ago, tearing apart at the seams, but they're the most reliable shoes I have when it comes to making it in and out of town.

"Excuse me," I apologized to Stickers as I scooped my running shoes out from under him. "I'm going to get us some food today buddy."

Old Nick always tells me it's ridiculous that I keep Stickers around. He calls him "just another mou-"

"You talking to that cat again, kid?" Here we go. "Ridiculous. Absolutely ridiculous. He's just another mouth to feed."

With my running shoes tied up as tight as I could get them, I pulled the latter down once again, grabbed my bag, climbed the steps, and threw open the manhole cover. The intensity of the rising sun was the first thing to greet my eyes. With a deep breath, I began the trek into town.

The first place I hit is always the bread shop because if I can't get anything else, at least I'll have bread. I walked in quickly but casually, drawing as little attention to myself as possible. I grabbed two loaves of plain and two loaves of whole wheat, scooped them into my bag and moved on, walking out without even a second look from the manager.

Next up was fruit. Three oranges, three apples, three grapefruits, walk away. This process ran smoothly after doing it for so long; like clockwork.

Lastly came the protein. The thin streaks were the easiest to cook over a fire, so I grabbed the four thinnest pieces of meat I could find and then made my exit.

I breathed the same sigh of relief I breathe every time these lovely shopping trips are over. I took the long way home through the forest so I could walk slowly and calm my racing heart.

As soon as I got back to the tunnels I knew something was off. The usual buzz and hum of the people talking and walking around was gone. The only thing to greet me when I lowered myself back down into my room was dead silence. With a sinking feeling I searched for Stickers, only to turn up empty-handed.

"Nick?" I yelled. "Nick?"

Nothing.

"Janelle?" I began calling to all my neighbors. "Lucas? Jonathon? Andy?"

Absolutely nothing.

I crawled into the pipe connecting my room to Old Nick's. Everything seemed to be in order, just no Nick. I began to head back when I saw a note on his kitchen counter.

"I told you kid, today is the day."

(to be continued)

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Jackie Minniti

2016 Winner

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When ten-year-old Jacqueline Falna hears her mother's scream, she is unaware that the axis of her world is about to tilt. Her father's plane has been shot down by German fighters. In the midst of poverty, food shortages, air raids, and the grinding hardship of daily life under Nazi rule, "Jacqueline" is a tale of family, faith, unusual friendships, and the resiliency of the human spirit set against the backdrop of occupied France in 1944. With the drama of fiction and the authenticity of personal history, "Jacqueline" is both a story about family and a family's story.

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# The Island Reporter Puzzle Page

## The Crossword by Margie E. Burke

- ACROSS**
- 1 Gymnast's feat
  - 5 Crack up
  - 10 Kind of moss
  - 14 Head parasites
  - 15 70s dance music
  - 16 In need of a massage
  - 17 Newton, e.g.
  - 18 Reciprocal pronoun
  - 20 Palindromic principle
  - 22 Coffee holder
  - 23 Teaser ad, for short
  - 24 Plant firmly
  - 26 The Kingston

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|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
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| 69 |    |    |    | 70 |    |    |    |    | 71 |    |    |    |

- 28 Pool table part
- 30 Historical records
- 34 Scottish castle
- 38 Rip to shreds
- 39 Fit of fever
- 40 Change, chemically
- 42 Wise advisor
- 43 Hyundai model
- 45 Seagoer's woe
- 47 Christmas drink
- 48 Math computation
- 49 Uppity one
- 51 Fruit farm
- 56 Shade of blue
- 59 School course, for short
- 61 Like a beaver
- 62 Expressionless
- 65 Minute \_\_\_\_
- 66 Eye part
- 67 UV stopper
- 68 Wallop
- 69 Camping shelter
- 70 Extend, as a lease
- 71 Half a matched set
- DOWN**
- 1 Marching band instrument
- 2 Napkin fabric
- 3 Cake topper
- 4 One of the Brady Bunch
- 5 Botheration
- 6 Trivial details
- 7 Advertiser's target
- 8 Minimal
- 9 Waiting period, seemingly
- 10 Sponsorship
- 11 Canyon sound
- 12 Attention getter
- 13 Novice
- 19 Speak out
- 21 Edible tuber
- 25 Mishmash
- 27 Deadly snake
- 29 Alpaca kin
- 31 Type of lily
- 32 Fishing item
- 33 Cowboy boot attachment
- 34 Bottom
- 35 All worked up
- 36 Vital organ
- 37 Student loan assessment
- 41 Vitamin A source
- 44 Office supply
- 46 Carp kin
- 50 Three-alarm event
- 52 Tough to take
- 53 Light-footed
- 54 Show up again
- 55 Stuff on the bottom
- 56 Type of shine
- 57 Folk stories
- 58 Similar (to)
- 60 Computer symbol
- 63 In favor of
- 64 Morning deposit

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## Sudoku

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   |   | 2 | 1 |   |   |   |
|   | 9 |   |   | 4 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | 7 | 5 |   |   | 2 | 1 |   |
| 8 |   |   |   | 6 | 4 |   | 3 |   |
|   |   |   | 1 | 3 |   |   |   | 9 |
|   | 7 |   |   | 8 |   |   |   | 2 |
| 9 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 1 |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 6 |   | 2 |   |   |   | 9 |   | 3 |

## Trivia

- Geography Bits**  
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1. Where would you find the world's second largest barrier reef after Australia? (a) Chile (b) Bahamas (c) Belize
  2. What is the highest peak in Wales? (a) Snowdon (b) Ben Nevis (c) Tryfan
  3. What desert is in close proximity to the area known as the Skeleton Coast? (a) Sahara desert (b) Namib desert (c) Kalahari desert
  4. What place in Argentina, founded originally as a port, has a name meaning "Favorable Winds?" (a) Cordoba (b) San Juan (c) Buenos Aires
  5. What ocean was formerly known as El Mar de Sur? (a) Indian (b) Pacific (c) Atlantic
  6. What country was a former Belgian colony and is one of the world's leading diamond producers? (a) Congo (b) South Africa (c) Vietnam
  7. What group of 320 islands was discovered by Abel Tasman in 1643 and ceded to Britain in 1874? (a) Fiji (b) Falkland (c) Philippines
  8. What is the highest peak in New Zealand? (a) Mount Columbus (b) Mount Cook (c) Mount Magellan
  9. What is the smallest county in Central America? (a) Panama (b) Costa Rica (c) El Salvadore
  10. What is the most southerly town in the world? (a) Usshuaia (Argentina) (b) Port Elizabeth (South Africa) (c) Hobart (Tasmania)

**ANSWERS ON PAGE 10**

## Word Search In The Forest

- |            |              |
|------------|--------------|
| BEAR       | BIRDS        |
| BRANCHES   | CHIPMUNK     |
| CLEARING   | DEADFALL     |
| GLADE      | GROVE        |
| HAWK       | HUMUS        |
| LEAVES     | LOGS         |
| OLD GROWTH | OWL          |
| PINE CONES | PINE NEEDLES |
| PLANTS     | RANGER       |
| ROCKS      | SLASH        |
| SNAKE      | SOIL         |
| SPIDERS    | SQUIRREL     |
| THICKET    | TIMBER       |
| TREES      | WILDCAT      |
| WOLF       | WOODPECKER   |

V H Z A W X N E T S E N V U M W G  
 N O D C H C C E I H P G I G L O O  
 O L D V T O L G Y R H R O N P I D  
 I M F G K T M M N O E D B C O D T  
 S R B J S T S E U G N A H X N D E  
 N W I A Z A U S A O R E D O B A P  
 A I C A M G E C C A W S F B X V E  
 M W B K L E B A N E D C H H O W E  
 C J L A C X C C P W H I V E U A D  
 W T R E C Y H D Y A L N L M L T E  
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 A I A D N L H V V I I V M Y V Z L  
 G L W C F Y O K M N J E G E W Q A  
 N E B X A Q U O S L N N N V N W P  
 U R X P I V D R I E Z R C Q L T W  
 B N D U P L E X T T E L A H C R F

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# Local Events, Activities & Announcements

## Gulfport

**Dec. 1 & 16: Gulfport Art-Walk**, 6 - 10 p.m. Beach Blvd. S., Waterfront District.

**Dec. 9: BCYC Lighted Christmas Boat Parade**, 5 p.m. Departs from Gulfport Municipal Marina then goes by Boca Ciega Yacht Club, Gulfport Casino, Town Shores, Kipps Colony, Pasadena Yacht & Country Club, Pasadena Golf Club Estates and Dolphin Boulevard South then Isla del Sol. Info at [www.sailbcyc.org](http://www.sailbcyc.org).

**Gulfport Public Library:** Go to events at [www.mygulfport.us/gpl](http://www.mygulfport.us/gpl) for library events or visit at 5501 28th Ave. S.

### Each Week

**Gulfport Fresh Market:** Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. 3007 Beach Blvd. Info at 727-278-4285. Sept. 12 is Clothing Swap to Benefit CASA.

**Gulfport Toastmasters:** Wednesdays, 6:15 - 7:30 p.m. Community Room, Gulfport Public Library. 5501 28th Ave. S. Info at 727-537-9098, [info@gulfporttoastmasters.com](mailto:info@gulfporttoastmasters.com) or [www.gulfporttoastmasters.com](http://www.gulfporttoastmasters.com).

### Throughout the Month

**Gulfport Casino:** Dance Lessons. \$5 for members, \$8 for non-members. Gulfport Casino: 5500 Shore Blvd. S. Info at [www.mygulfport.us](http://www.mygulfport.us).

**Senior Center Events:** Calendar available at [www.gulfportseniorfoundation.org](http://www.gulfportseniorfoundation.org) or 727-893-1231.

## Madeira Beach

**Dec. 10: Festival of Lights Illuminated Boat Parade**, 6:30 p.m. Starts in John's Pass with a holiday extravaganza. Parade travels through most fingers of Mad Beach then past ROC Park with holiday music, food and spirits. Info at [www.madbeachevents.com](http://www.madbeachevents.com).

## St. Pete Beach

**Dec. 1 - 15: Holiday Basket Auction**, Annual fundraiser with 13 unique baskets hosted by Friends of St Pete Beach Library. Place a bid on your favorite or buy a now basket. Info at [www.spblibrary.com/event](http://www.spblibrary.com/event) or call 727-363-9238. 365 73rd Ave.

**Dec. 2: Pass-a-Grille & Vina Del Mar Lighted Boat Parade**, 5 p.m. Festivities start at the Merry Pier with Santa, hamburgers and hotdogs by SPB Fire Department, carolers and luminaries. The boat parade from Merry Pier, around and behind Vina Del Mar then across the channel to Tierra Verde.

**Dec. 8: Boat Parade and Winter Festival**, 6 p.m. Boat parade viewing party to include live music, art projects for children, and a special visit from Santa! Horan Park, 7701 Boca Ciega Dr.

**Dec 9: Christmas Market and Parade**, 9 a.m. Parade starts at city hall and winds around Corey area and back to city hall. Santa ends up at the library (365 73rd Ave.) for Grinch-themed crafts, face painting, light refreshments and "The Grinch that Stole Christmas" at 11 a.m.

**Dec. 16: Winter Solstice Extravaganza**, Noon - 11 p.m. Sip, socialize, and shop from the areas artists and boutiques to support Angels Against Abuse. Fashion Show from 7 - 9 p.m. Info at [mastrysbrewingco](https://www.facebook.com/mastrysbrewingco) on Facebook.

**Dec. 18: Senior Excursions**, 8 a.m - 4 p.m. Discover Christmas at Gaylord Palms with Christmas Around the World in ice. Hosted by SPB Community Center. \$15 plus \$25 for Ice admission. Info at 727-363-9245.

### Each Week

**Corey Avenue Sunday Market**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Up to 75 vendors with locally produced and home-made items, ready to eat foods and hand crafts. Live music. Info at [www.TampaBayMarkets.com](http://www.TampaBayMarkets.com).

**PAG Thrift Shop**, 9 a.m. - noon, Tuesday - Thursday and Saturday. Shop quality new and used items. Supports local charities. 17th Ave. and Pass-A-Grille Way. Info at 727-360-5508.

### All month:

**St. Pete Beach Public Library.** Check [www.spblibrary.com](http://www.spblibrary.com) for the latest events.

**Honor Walk Brick Campaign.** The 2017-2018 Brick Campaign is on through March 19. Installation of the bricks will occur early summer. Call 727-363-9232 to order.

## St. Petersburg

**Dec 2 & 3: Outdoor Nativity**, 6 - 8:30 p.m. Follow a path of luminaries through the story of the nativity with costumed characters and scriptures. Refreshments. St. Petersburg Community Church, 4501 30th Ave. N. Info at [www.spcc.church](http://www.spcc.church).

**Dec. 9: Second Saturday Art Walk**, 5 - 9 p.m. Take in the St. Pete arts scene after hours. Info at [www.stpeteartsalliance.org](http://www.stpeteartsalliance.org).

**Dec. 31: First Night St. Petersburg**, 4 p.m. A celebration of the arts with music throughout the night, kids activities, gliee skating and bubble stomp culminating with Ryan Montbleau Band and fireworks at midnight. Info at [www.firstnightstpete.com](http://www.firstnightstpete.com).

### Each Week

**Mondays: Toastmasters**, 6:15 p.m. PARC, 3190 Tyrone Blvd. N. Info at: 727-422-8856.

### All Month:

**Oakdale Christmas Light Display**, 6 - 10 p.m. 500,000 lights covering over a half acre. Waterfalls and fountains, HO scale railroad and Christmas trees. Hands-on games and bubble machines for the kids. Open through Jan. 3. 2719 Oakdale St. S. Free.

## Tierra Verde

**Dec. 2: Annual Tree Lighting**, 4 a.m. - 7 p.m. TV personality Wayne Shattuck emcees this event with snow sledding, Santa, elves, pet parade, face painting, balloon making and live music. Bring a new unwrapped toy for toy drive. Tree lighting around 6 p.m. Downtown Tierra Verde. Info at [www.tierraverdebusinesspartnership.com](http://www.tierraverdebusinesspartnership.com).

## Treasure Island

**Dec 2: Treasure Islettes Hollyfest**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Luncheon, crafts, bazaar, 50/50, baskets, jewelry and holiday shopping. Proceeds benefit city beautification projects. Tickets 727-367-1301 or 727-360-9181. No tickets needed for shopping. TI Community Center, 1 Park Place.

**Dec. 13: Happy Holidays Concert**, 7:30 p.m. Free concert with classic holiday music and other beautiful arrangements performed by the South Pasadena Community Band. Community Center, 1 Park Place & 106th Ave. Info at [www.southpasadenaband.com](http://www.southpasadenaband.com).

**Dec. 15: TI Lighted Boat Parade**, 4:30 p.m. A special cast-off party at The Club at Treasure Island with entertainment, food, drinks and Santa. Entry is a donation or new, unwrapped toy. Parade departs at 6:20 p.m. and ends at John's Pass. Info at [www.theclubti.com](http://www.theclubti.com).

**Dec. 16: An Afternoon at the North Pole**, 1 - 3 p.m. Santa and holiday shows with cookie decorating, arts & crafts, train rides and face painting. Free. Community Center, Gulf Boulevard at 106th Ave.

### Each Week

**Thursday Bingo**, 6:45 p.m. Early bird, 7:45 p.m. Regular. Cash prizes. Snack bar & free coffee. Hosted by the Treasure Islettes. Community Center 1 Park Place and 106th Avenue.

**Friday Morning Market**, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Open air market featuring local art & crafts, produce, plants/flowers, independent distributors, fair trade, and interesting flea items. Free. Community Center Park, 154 106th Ave

### Seminars, Classes and Announcements

**U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 78 Safe Boating Classes**, 7 p.m., each Tuesday. A 13 week continuous cycle of classes; start anytime; includes 400 pages of materials. Initial registration is 6:30 p.m. \$40 for 13 weeks (\$55 for couples sharing a manual). Call Jim at 727-360-4846, Warren at 727-321-7801, or Phil at 865-2226. 1500 Pass-a-Grille Way, St. Pete Beach.

Dec. 5: Which Boat is for You? Dec. 12: Equipment for Your Boat, Dec. 19: Waterway Watch/Trailing Your Boat, Dec. 26: No class

**Dec. 8 - 10: The Heritage of Jews in India**, Times vary. Learn about Jewish India through the eyes of Rahel Musleah, award-winning journalist, singer, speaker and educator. Info at [www.cbist-pete.org](http://www.cbist-pete.org) or 727-381-4900. Congregation B'nai Israel, 300 58th St. N. St. Petersburg.

**Jan. 3 - 5: Mark Your Calendars: Estuary EDventures Winter Camp:** 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tampa Bay Watch hosts three camps with marine science labs, animal encounters, estuary exploration, and sea-themed crafts and games. Aftercare available. Info at [www.tampabaywatch.org](http://www.tampabaywatch.org).

**St. Pete Beach Recreation Center Classes**, Classes in art, dance, self defense for women and a variety of other topics throughout the month. Classes for kids too. Go to [www.spbrec.com](http://www.spbrec.com) for a complete listing or call 727-363-9245.

**Treasure Island Art Guild Workshops**, Info at [treasureislandartguild.org](http://treasureislandartguild.org).

### Each Month

**Suncoast Hospice Caregiver Education and Support**, Gain new skills, self-confidence and emotional support with Suncoast Hospice's caregiver programs. Info at [www.suncoasthospice.org/caregivers](http://www.suncoasthospice.org/caregivers).

### Announcements

**Bay Sailors**, a sailing club for singles celebrating 25 years of fun and sailing is looking for a few good skippers with sailboats. Info at [www.baysailors.org](http://www.baysailors.org).

**Gulfport New Year's Eve Gala**, Tickets are on sale for the 2018 New Year's Eve Gala at the Historic Gulfport Casino Ballroom, Dec. 31. \$35 per person at Gulfport Welcome Center, 3101 Beach Blvd. S. Info at [www.facebook.com/GulfportNYEGala](http://www.facebook.com/GulfportNYEGala).

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# Beverage Beat Kosher Wine Basics

By Ellen L. Capitosti

Kosher wine may conjure an image of an inexpensive, sweet wine made from American Concord grapes, but kosher wine production has come a long way, and making kosher wine is a complex procedure and some of the highlights are fascinating.

To be considered a kosher wine requires a specific process from beginning to end, similar to guidelines used to ensure other foods are kosher. In this process, the following criteria come under scrutiny: the grapes and the vineyard, the ingredients added during the winemaking process and the winemaking process itself.

Grapes intended to be used for kosher wines are planted, but fruit from these vines must remain unharvested for at least four years. Upon the fifth year, the fruit can then be harvested and used in the wine-making process in accordance with the Law of Orlah. Interestingly, most non-kosher wineries also follow this practice, as young vines generally do not

produce fruit that would make a quality wine.

In accordance with the Law of Shmita, every seventh year, nothing can be sown or grown in Israel. This could hamper wine production in one of the largest Kosher wine producing countries in the world. In the 19th century the rule was interpreted as applying only to land owned by Jews and heter mechira, a Hebrew term which translates to permissible selling, came into play allowing Jews to sell their land for the Shmita year to a non-Jew, work the land, then buy it back.

There are also additives which stabilize, reduce bacteria, or preserve wine to consider including: yeast, sugar, water, sodium, sulfites, tannin and acid blends. Some are available as kosher. This is mainly an issue for wines that are kosher for Passover. Wines can be kosher, but unless they are kosher for Passover, they can't be consumed during Passover. In order to make wines that are readily consumable year-round,

kosher additives must be used.

The wine making process itself is an integral part of the stringent requirements for kosher wine. From the time the grapes enter the winery, only Orthodox, observant Jews can touch the wine, vats, barrels and bottles, among other items. This can lead to some very difficult situations, especially if the winemaker isn't an Orthodox, observant Jew but needs to taste the wine prior to bottling. In this case an Orthodox, observant Jew supervisor at the winery must withdraw the wine from the vat, or barrel for the winemaker.

These are just a few of the basics of kosher wines, but don't be daunted. When dining with friends and family during this holiday season, get a bottle of your favorite kosher wine, pair it with food as any non-kosher wine, and celebrate the beauty of the season with the ones you love!

*Ellen Capitosti is the owner of Tostis Spirits & Fine Wines.*

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# The Island Reporter Picture Page

## A Tahitian Success

It was an Evening for the Bay and for the 400-plus supporters and friends of Tampa Bay Watch who attended this year's annual fundraiser dubbed Tahitian Nights. The evening included dinner, cocktails, auctions, and Polynesian entertainment, and raised more than \$90,000. Photos by Limelight Photography.



## St. Pete Honors Vets

The city of St. Petersburg hosted a Veterans Day celebration and named Charles Claybaker as a 2017 Honored Veteran. Charles is the Founder/CEO of the Claybaker D.U.S.T.O.F.F. Foundation which is dedicated to providing combat veterans assistance during times of transition and hardship. Carrie W. Nero, Brigadier General, ANC, USAR (Ret) who served during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm was also honored.



## Chowder Anyone?

Local celebrity chefs and chowder lovers braved the rain to eat and vote for what they considered the best chowder prepared by area restaurant chefs. The event was hosted by Pass-a-Grille Woman's Club to support their charities. The winners were: Judges Choice - Rumfish; Golden Ladle - Mad Beach Fish House; and Peoples Choice: 1st, Brass Monkey, 2nd, Shells, and 3rd, Chill. Photos by Barbara Bennett.



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By Bruce W. Norris





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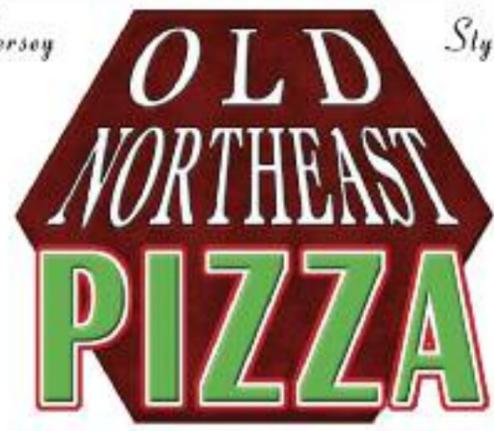


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