

The Island Reporter

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The Premier Paper of the South Gulf Beaches

'Wear It!' Kicks Off Safe Boating Week

By Betsy Judge

Florida has the infamous distinction of leading the nation in boating accidents and associated deaths and injury according to the latest statistics available from the U.S. Coast Guard.

Drowning is reported as the cause of death in three-fourths of all fatalities, and 84 percent of the victims were not wearing life jackets. That is a fact the North American Safe Boating Council hopes to change with their "Wear It!" campaign during National Safe Boating Week, May 21-27. May 20 kicks it off with "Wear Your Life Jacket to Work Day."

In Pinellas County, Cile Moreno and her team at Sea Tow Tampa Bay are working hard to do their part. The Vina Del Mar resident and her husband Raul bought the area Sea Tow franchise last May.

"We are very excited about a grant we just received from the Sea Tow Foundation to do life-jacket stations in Pinellas County," says Moreno. The foundation is a nonprofit organization established by Sea Tow Services International, Inc. founder Capt. Joe Frohnhoeft to promote safe boating practices.

According to Moreno, they will initially get 75 adult and 100 children's jackets and four stands. "These are loner stations, so if someone has a 25 foot boat with an eight person capacity, but only four lifejackets, we can loan them the other jackets. It's free, you just come take the jackets and put them back when you return. We maintain the stands."



Florida leads the nation in boating accidents and deaths. According to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), According to the latest stats available, May was the most dangerous month on the water statewide in 2014.

Photo courtesy of FWC.

Their goal is to coordinate with government agencies to get permission to put them at the Fort De Soto and Gandy boat ramps and other facilities that get lots of traffic.

Boating safety is in Moreno's blood. "I know the water; I grew up on the water in New England," she says. Her son, Captain Erich Jaeger, has it in his blood too. He helps her run the business and operates Maverick Fishing Charters out of Pass-a-Grille.

"One of the big things for us is the kids-kids that don't have life jackets on. We understand that little kids don't want to wear them because they're bulky, and they can't move around freely, but if that's the case, get them the suspender ones.

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Moving Madeira Beach Forward

By Betsy Judge

Running a city would seem a tad more complicated than skipping a boat, but former fishing charter captain now Madeira Beach Mayor Travis Palladeno says that's not the case.

"When you are the captain of a boat and something goes wrong, everybody's looking at you to make sure they're safe, make sure they're OK. You can't panic."

And he is not in a panic about a recent delay on a vote to move two development projects for the city forward. The man who says he tries to use common sense in everything he does is applying that principle to the delay.



Mayor Travis Palladeno, left, with Congressman David Jolly at the grand opening of the Madeira Beach City Centre. The complex which includes City Hall, the Madeira Beach Fire Department, the Recreation Department and R.O.C. Park is generating revenue for the city. That and jobs for residents are priorities for the mayor.

Photo by Housh Ghovae.

"The idea of doing a re-reading is to No. 1 give people more time to absorb it, and to also show clarity and true transparency of the process." He says Shane Crawford, the city manager, will gladly spend time with anyone who has questions about the proposals or the process.

What the city has accomplished in the way of improvements thus far in his tenure, which began in 2011, is lengthy. From beautification projects like planting palms on Gulf Boulevard and upgrading parks, to redoing all the seawalls and building the new city and recreation complex, change has and is coming to this barrier island community.

He is all about generating jobs and revenue for the city and credits development with keeping millage rates down. "We're still the lowest millage rate of any full-service city in Pinellas County. It's the same as in the mid-80s. How many governments can say that?" he asks. And he likes to take advantage of other sources of revenue, like grants and low-interest loans.

The old city hall was falling apart and had mold issues. It had been talked about for nine years, but no money had been put aside for maintenance. "It was a

MAD BEACH continued on pages 11



PHOTO OF THE MONTH

Photograph by:
Yuliya Gallimore,
St. Petersburg

A screech owl on St. Pete Beach. I was lucky with this shot because it was pitch dark, I heard them screeching but couldn't see anything.

Participants are allowed to submit one photo per month by the 10th of the month for the next contest. Submit to: info@theislandreporter.com



Business News

Sirata Honors Vets

In appreciation of the service and sacrifice of military members, the Sirata Beach Resort is offering 300 room nights from May 31 - June 1 with parking for active duty and active reserve military members. In six years the Sirata has donated more than 1,700 hotel room nights valued at over \$190,000. Rooms are based on first come, first call basis. RSVP at 855-262-2715 or www.sirata.com.



Breaking Ground at Collany Key



Guests, future homeowners and dignitaries attended a ground breaking for Sunset Point at Collany Key in late March. Called "The most desirable parcel of waterfront real estate on the entire west coast of Florida," by J. Mark Stroud manager of the development, Ed Medley, owner and broker of Equity Realty reports that more than 60 percent of the project was sold as of the event. See more photos on page 23.

Coastal Fine Furniture Opens

Sam Little, who has been selling high quality American made furniture for 36 years in Fredrick Md., has opened Coastal Fine Furniture in St. Petersburg bringing that same quality to the beaches area. Each piece is built to order and all wood pieces are made of solid hardwoods. The upholstery line is all traditional, 8-way hand-tied and can be custom designed. He also specializes in dining and bedroom furniture built by the Amish. 4691 100th Way N., St. Petersburg. For info go to www.coastalfinefurniture.com.



Beverage Beat

Red, White & Bluegrass

By Ellen L. Capitosti

The month of May begins festively when the world's top three-year-old thoroughbreds run the race of their lives under the spires of Churchill Downs on the first Saturday. It ends on a dignified note with the remembrance that is Memorial Day.

No Kentucky Derby affair is complete without a proper mint julep. A traditional julep is fun, but why not be adventuresome and try a modern spin on an old tradition? In keeping with the fresh and springy feel of early May, decorate your Derby Day table with offerings of food and drink in shades of lavender. Throw down a pale purple table cloth, add a horseshoe-upturned, of course, so the good luck doesn't run out and accent with horse figurines and lavender vases filled with fresh Iris. Top it off the fresh spring theme with a matching Julep.

Lavender Mint Julep:

6 Mint leaves

2oz Lavender Simple Syrup (boil 1 part sugar, 1 part water, 1/4 part lavender flowers, strain when cooled)

3 oz. Woodford Reserve Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey

Fill a chilled glass with mint and Lavender Simple Syrup and muddle until crushed. Add crushed ice and top with Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey and a fresh lavender or mint sprig, then cheer on your favorite pony!

For Memorial Day toast our fallen

American military heroes with new wines or liquors with a military theme.

Consider a 2013 Purple Heart Napa Red. It has aromas of mulberries, plums, and blackberries with hints of black licorice. Seamless across the palate, this wine has a long, velvety mouthfeel and balanced tannins. It will drink beautifully upon release and only gain in complexity and grace as it ages over four to five years.

Heroes Vodka and Salute American Vodka pay tribute to our heroes and support veterans organizations. Heroes Vodka was started by Travis McVey, a Marine veteran, along with the Buffalo Trace Distillery. McVey is very active in the "Buy Veteran" Campaign and donates a portion of profits to veteran organizations. Salute America Vodka donates \$1 of every bottle sold to five Veteran's organizations that help feed hungry veterans or aid in transitioning to civilian careers or educational pursuits. They also support Honor Flight, and PGA sponsored programs to meet the needs of wounded veterans and their families.

Begin the month of May by delighting in the world class equine spectacle that is the Kentucky Derby. Then wrap up the month by pausing to remember and honor those brave men and women who paid the ultimate price for our wonderful country and the freedoms we hold so dear.

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

The Veterans of South Pinellas County Inc. would like to thank our sponsors, contributors, volunteers, in-kind service providers and everyone who supported our 6th Annual "Salute to the Military" charity event.

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- City of St Pete Beach
- The Island Reporter
- Paradise News
- Beach Beacon
- Beach Life
- PRP Wines International
- Jeff Munford
- John H Penny Jr, DDS PA
- Island Grille and Raw Bar
- Swigam Beach Bar

Volunteer Groups

- Admiral Farragut Academy
- AVAST Amputee Color Guard
- Christine Oertle
- OLLI / ASPEC, Eckerd College
- Pass A Grille Woman's Club
- Countless Patriots from throughout the Beach Communities

The Island Reporter Picture Page

Breaking Ground

Sunset Point at Collany Key hosted a ground breaking ceremony for the new luxury condos being built behind Downtown Tierra Verde. Guests enjoyed food and drinks, an update on the development and an opportunity to view the progress. See story on page 18.
TIR staff photos.



A Soggy Salute

Veterans, friends, family and soon-to-be recruits tried not to let rain dampen their day, but in the end mother nature ruled the day. Despite closing the event five hours early, the mass induction ceremony and presentation of flags to WWI veterans or their reps went as scheduled and the Veterans of South Pinellas County raised \$9,000 to support veteran-related charities.
TIR staff photos.



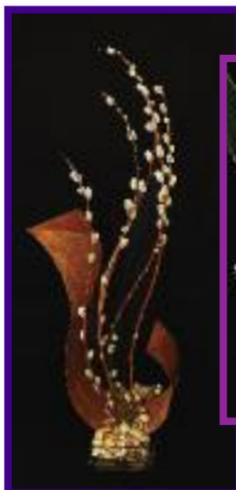
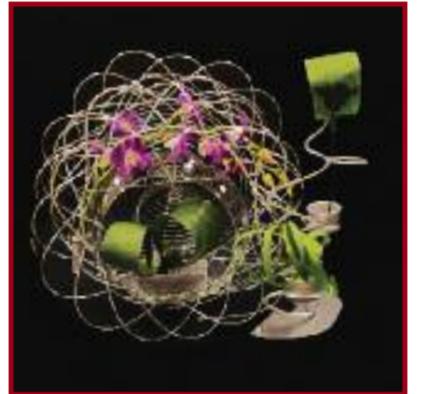
A Great Soup-er Bowl

The final score in late March from CASA's Soup-er Bowl Food Drive for a Safe Home during the months of January and February, was \$15,000 enough food to last residents of CASA's new 100-bed domestic violence center more than eight weeks. In all more than 48 businesses and 500 residents contributed. The goal for next year? To provide enough non-perishables for eight months.
Photos courtesy of CASA.



The Art of Ikebana

Ikebana Glass was the theme of this year's 54th Annual Exhibition at the Treasure Island Community Center. In addition to the two day exhibition, there were daily demonstrations and classes.
Photos by Joe Martin, Martin's Photo Art.



Picture Perfect

It was a bumper crop of great photos in the running for the May Photo of the Month, so we are sharing them here. The contest is sponsored by the Sirata Beach Resort and winners are treated to dinner for two at the Compass Grille, a \$75 value.

