

THE SARASOTA News Leader

The Progressive Voice Of Southwest Florida

November 2, 2012



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SARASOTA NEWS LEADER

The Progressive Voice of Southwest Florida

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Welcome

I grew up in Eastern North Carolina, where the flagship newspaper was *The Raleigh News & Observer*. Its reach extended “from the capital to the coast,” as it readily touted.

From the time the paper was acquired by Josephus Daniels in the late-19th century, it was dedicated to advancing the goals of the Democratic Party.

Of course, until the last 10 years or so in North Carolina, if you were not a Democrat, you found it much harder to get elected to any office — similar to the situation for Republicans in Sarasota County, as I learned when I moved here.

Yet the N&O, as it is commonly known, served a region that was pretty conservative, so much so that many exasperated readers dubbed it the “Nuisance and Disturber.”

Its circulation in the region remained incredibly strong, though, for one primary reason: No other publication in the eastern part of the state provided better coverage of local, state and national news. If you wanted to know what was going on, you combed its pages every day.

Having worked at the N&O myself as a college intern, I knew how hard the reporters worked — and I also knew how hard the management and editors labored — to keep politics out of the newsroom. In all the months I was there, I never heard any whispers or gossip about a story being killed or pushed because of the Daniels family’s political views. And believe me, I heard lots of gossip, especially on long Saturday nights.

In all my 35 years as a journalist, I have maintained a similar commitment, and that carries through with our work on *The Sarasota News Leader*. All of us work diligently to report fairly on whatever we cover, regardless of our political views.

That is why I was saddened last week by three subscribers dropping out because of our 2012 Election Voters’ Guide, which we are repeating in this week’s issue. Fortunately, we had more than 40 new subscribers who took their places.

We have called our publication “The Progressive Voice of Southwest Florida” from the outset, but *The Sarasota News Leader* never will compromise on the impartiality or comprehensiveness of its news coverage.

Rachel Brown Hackney

Editor and Publisher



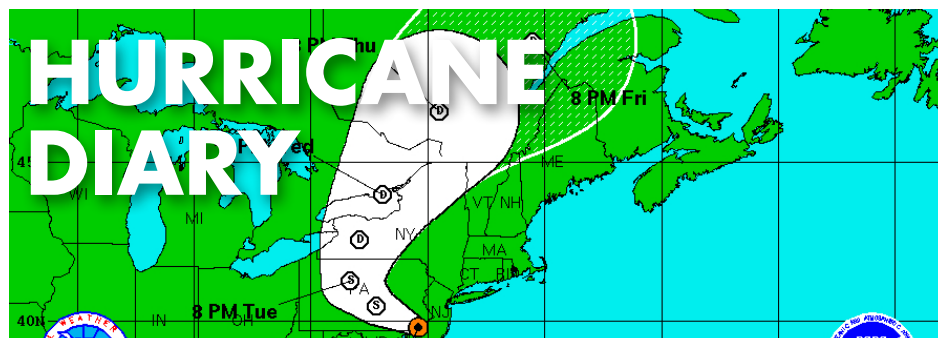
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This may take a while.

Some things are just hard to resist. Like *The Sarasota News Leader*. It's a feast of in-depth local news, delightful and entertaining features, and — thanks to its partnership with *This Week In Sarasota* — access to the best community calendar available.

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But it's better to take it slow and relish every news "morsel." There's no rush.

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TO THE POLLS!

Vice President Joe Biden urges voters to cast their ballots in the Nov. 6 general election — Cooper Levey-Baker

Vice President Joe Biden hit Sarasota Wednesday, Oct. 31, delivering a fiery 42-minute speech during which he tagged the Romney/Ryan ticket for “cynical, cynical” ad tactics.

Campaign volunteers and staffers meanwhile urged supporters to vote early, then volunteer.

Sarasota County has not voted for a Democratic president since FDR in 1944, but Biden’s presence less than a week before Election Day is dramatic evidence of how the Republican-Democratic gap has dwindled in recent cycles. Obama came within 211 votes of carrying the county in 2008 after rallying supporters at Ed Smith Stadium in the campaign’s final week.

Biden worked hard to recapture that enthusiasm this week. ([Full story here](#))



A PROGRESSIVE PROGRESSION

City’s domestic partnership registry starts Nov. 6 — Stan Zimmerman

The City of Sarasota’s Domestic Partnership Registry will be open for business on Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Subsequently the registry will be open three days a week — Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday — from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

Applicants may file their paperwork in the City Hall Annex on the first floor in the newly renamed SRQ Media Studio. Lines are expected for the first few days. You may call 954-4160 to schedule an appointment and avoid waiting.

The city is seeking volunteers to help with the program. A training session will be held Friday, Nov. 2, starting at 10 a.m. If you want to volunteer, call the same number: 954-4160. ([Full story here](#))



‘IN A SHARPER MANNER’

County Commission requests formal notification of administrative staff’s handling of issues flagged in audits — Rachel Brown Hackney

The Sarasota County commissioners have asked County Administrator Randall Reid to provide them updates on measures he and other administrative staff take to resolve problems flagged in audits by the Sarasota County Clerk of Court’s Office.

The commissioners want to avoid a repeat of situations that led to the Procurement Department scandal in 2011, they told Reid.

The discussion followed Clerk of Circuit Court Karen Rushing’s presentation of her office’s latest audit report during the commission’s Oct. 23 regular meeting in Sarasota. That audit examined the county’s permit and impact fees.

The report’s synopsis says, “The permitting and impact fee assessment and collection process is complex and there are not written guidelines or procedures documenting this process. Undercharges and overcharges were noted during the audit ...” ([Full story here](#))



TOO CHARMING

Analysis: Laurel Park fights for a place in the sun — Stan Zimmerman

Laurel Park is everything you could ask for in a neighborhood. Geographically, it lies on the southern edge of downtown; all the urban amenities are within walking distance.

It features the city’s best collection of 1920s architecture — from bungalows to apartment buildings. And it is close to all the city’s major traffic arteries.

The residents of Laurel Park have battled for years to keep their “patch of paradise” out of the hands of speculators and high-rise builders. They even had the city create a unique zoning district (RSM-9) for the area. That district does not allow for commercial activity, even though the neighborhood already had a historic designation to protect its character. ([Full story here](#))



CHARTER CHANGERS

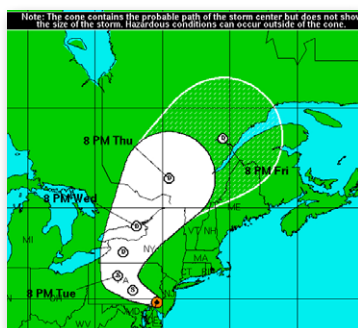
One proposed City of Sarasota charter amendment would dismember the Office of the City Auditor and Clerk — Stan Zimmerman

Six of the seven proposed amendments to the Sarasota City Charter were proposed by an appointed committee of citizens who took testimony, received legal advice and held spirited debates on the issues.

The seventh was conceived in secrecy by an organization now under investigation by the Florida Elections Commission. The amendment had a legal flaw that was rectified at the last minute. And it was put on the ballot by paid signature gatherers working piecemeal, paid per signature.

These origins normally would scuttle public support for a charter change, but a surprising number of people think it is a good idea to break up the Office of City Auditor and Clerk (CAC), separating the audit function from everything else.

The auditor and clerk's position was created during the initial drafting of the city's charter in 1945. ([Full story here](#))



HURRICANE DIARY

Sandy saga shows the power of storm surge — Stan Zimmerman

Editor's note: Stan Zimmerman has been tracking hurricanes for decades. This is his story about the system that became Sandy.

21 Oct. 10 a.m.: Hurricane Rafael came and went, thrashing Bermuda and then going subtropical on the way to Ireland.

This morning another storm is forming in the same southern vicinity, and it is expected to take the same exact path.

Another “Bahama thumper”? Right now it is called “Invest 99L,” and it has an 80 percent chance of becoming a tropical storm.

The models are not sure of the path — Cuba? Hispaniola? — but one thing seems sure: It is following Rafael out to sea, and the “Great Florida Barrier” remains in force.

22 Oct., 5 p.m.: Yup, it is now Tropical Storm Sandy, and it is sort of headed our way but is more likely to beat up the Bahamas on the exit to nowhere. Central pressure is 29.50 inches, with steady winds of 40 mph. The forecast has it strengthening to almost hurricane force in two days. ([Full story here](#))

TO THE POLLS!



Vice President Joe Biden speaks to an enthusiastic crowd at the Municipal Auditorium in Sarasota on Oct. 31. Photo by Cooper Levey-Baker

VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN URGES VOTERS TO CAST THEIR BALLOTS IN THE NOV. 6 GENERAL ELECTION

By Cooper Levey-Baker

Associate Editor

Vice President Joe Biden hit Sarasota Wednesday, Oct. 31, delivering a fiery 42-minute speech during which he tagged the Romney/Ryan ticket for “cynical, cynical” ad tactics.

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ers at Ed Smith Stadium in the campaign’s final week.

Biden worked hard to recapture that enthusiasm this week.

Around 1,350 Obama supporters packed the Sarasota Municipal Auditorium well before Biden came onstage, and they were treated to speeches by a campaign volunteer and Obama for America Field Organizer Ed James. The message was simple: Go vote; then, sign up to make phone calls and knock on doors.

Democrats are heavily emphasizing absentee and early voting this year, trying to collect as

many ballots as possible before Election Day to shorten their list of get-out-the-vote targets.

According to statistics provided by Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections Administrative Assistant Joyce Soltis, as of close of business Wednesday, 42 percent of registered voters had already cast their ballots.

Republicans had cast 36,192 absentee ballots to the Democrats' 29,336 — an 8-point difference in a county in which Republicans hold a 44 percent to 32 percent registration edge. In

2008, the Republican absentee advantage was 15 points.

But as of Wednesday, the Republicans had a wider lead in early voting, having cast 47 percent of the early ballots to the Democrats' 34 percent. In 2008, the GOP bested the Democrats by just 1 percent.

Overall, Republicans had cast 45 percent of all votes as of Oct. 31, with the Democrats at 35 percent. Before Election Day in 2008, those numbers were 44 percent and 37 percent, respectively.



Ed James, an Obama for America field organizer, energizes the audience at the rally in Sarasota. Photo by Cooper Levey-Baker

All those numbers, of course, do not account for the 22,597 absentee and early voters who are registered with neither major party. How those votes break down this year is anyone's guess.

Biden spent the majority of his Oct. 31 speech lambasting GOP candidate Mitt Romney and Romney's running mate, Paul Ryan, for their shifting stances on a number of issues in the campaign's final month. From the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan to their budget and tax plans, Biden said, the Republicans have repeatedly shifted positions because "what they are for, the people don't like."

"Look," he said. "Ryan got asked, as did Romney earlier, 'Will you commit to leave [Afghanistan] in 2014?' And they used the word that fits them more than any candidates I've ever heard. They said, 'It depends.' It depends."

"With these guys, everything depends," he roared. "It depends on the audience you're talking to. It depends on what the polls say. It depends what state you're in."

He heaped particular scorn on a Romney ad running in Ohio that suggests American car companies helped by a 2009 bailout are planning to ship American jobs to China, a claim even a Chrysler executive called "a leap that

would be difficult even for professional circus acrobats."

"Why would they do this?" Biden asked, speaking softly. "Why would they do this in the face of overwhelming facts? Well I'll tell you why. They're trying to scare the living devil out of a group of people who have been hurt so badly."

Ohio car workers "are on the balls of their feet," Biden said. "They lost their homes. They lost everything. And now they're back on their feet, just tentatively, back on their feet. They got their jobs back. But they still feel the sting of what happened four years ago."

The Romney ads now have folks worried about their jobs, Biden said. He called the move a "cynical, cynical thing to do."

With just five days to go, it is an all-out sprint to capture Florida's invaluable 29 electoral votes, and both the Obama and Romney campaigns have packed Sunshine State calendars in the coming days. *New York Times* numbers guru Nate Silver gives Romney a half-point lead and 59 percent odds in his analysis, which just reinforces a cliché I am sure you are sick of hearing: Florida could easily go either way.

Editor's note: *Cooper Levey-Baker was an Obama for America field organizer in 2008.*



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Barbara Lee

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A PROGRESSIVE PROGRESSION

A new day will dawn in the city of Sarasota on Nov. 6, as the city begins a service for domestic partners. Photo by Norm Schimmel

CITY'S DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP REGISTRY STARTS NOV. 6

By Stan Zimmerman
City Editor

The City of Sarasota's Domestic Partnership Registry will be open for business on Tuesday, Nov. 6.

Subsequently the registry will be open three days a week — Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday — from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

Applicants may file their paperwork in the City Hall Annex on the first floor in the newly renamed SRQ Media Studio. Lines are expected for the first few days. You may call 954-4160 to schedule an appointment and avoid waiting.

The city is seeking volunteers to help with the program. A training session will be held Friday, Nov. 2, starting at 10 a.m. If you want to volunteer, call the same number: 954-4160.

Applicants for the registry must appear in person, and each partner will need a photo ID. They must fill out the application and pay a \$30 registration fee in cash or with a check.

The affidavit must be signed in front of a notary. Notaries will be available.

The affidavit may be [downloaded](#).

After the early registration period ends, people may register at the Office of the City Auditor and Clerk. A reservation is suggested (same phone number as above).

Partners do not need to be city residents. However, the registration conveys certain legal benefits within the city limits only, not in Sarasota County. Among the benefits is being able to visit a partner in the hospital.

Each partnership will receive an embossed certificate.

The documents will be registered and become a public record on file at the Office of the Sarasota County Clerk of Circuit Court on Ringling Boulevard.





The Sarasota County Commission has asked for new administrative steps to follow up on audits by the Office of the Clerk of Circuit Court. File photo

COUNTY COMMISSION REQUESTS FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF'S HANDLING OF ISSUES FLAGGED IN AUDITS

By Rachel Brown Hackney

Editor

The Sarasota County commissioners have asked County Administrator Randall Reid to provide them updates on measures he and other administrative staff take to resolve problems flagged in audits by the Sarasota County Clerk of Court's Office.

The commissioners want to avoid a repeat of situations that led to the Procurement Department scandal in 2011, they told Reid.

The discussion followed Clerk of Circuit Court Karen Rushing's presentation of her office's latest audit report during the commission's Oct. 23 regular meeting in Sarasota. That au-

dit examined the county's permit and impact fees.

The report's synopsis says, "The permitting and impact fee assessment and collection process is complex and there are not written guidelines or procedures documenting this process. Undercharges and overcharges were noted during the audit ..."

The report notes, for example, "Permit clerks and other personnel rely on their knowledge and refer back to emails and memorandums that they each may store for reference."

Under the heading, "Insufficient Segregation of Duties," it also points out, "County per-

sonnel noted that all permit personnel who issue permits are also responsible for collecting payments (cash, checks, credit card payments), have access to the system, can cancel and adjust permits and the related charges, and have physical access to the cash safe."

In the course of the audit, the report says, staff reviewed fees assessed for a sample of 60 permits issued between Oct. 1, 2011 and July 31 of this year.

Commissioner Nora Patterson asked Reid whether there was any mechanism through which he and his administrators could inform the commission about steps being taken to address findings that they acknowledged were

correct or to point out that a finding was incorrect.

"It seems like these [audit findings] just sort of evaporate," Patterson said.

"I think it would be good just to provide the board an update on the response to each of these," Reid said. "But, basically, we have been sharing the results of the audits" before they come before the commission, he added.

"The desire was to make sure you were aware of all the audits," Reid said. "Most of the items that have been found to date have been issues of minor changes of policy. There hasn't been a major finding."

	NIGP	RSM	Clerk	Total	Not Started	Under Review	In Progress	Concluded
Organizational	42	20	2	64	0	0	24	40
Ethics / Conflict of Interest	12	0	2	14	0	0	0	14
Resource Planning / Strategy	12	8	n/a	20	0	0	11	9
Roles and Responsibilities	13	2	n/a	15	0	0	13	2
Staff Competencies	5	10	n/a	15	0	0	0	15
Contract Management	10	0	n/a	10	0	0	6	4
Vendor Management	6	0	n/a	6	0	0	2	4
Customer Service	2	8	n/a	10	0	0	1	9
Insurance	0	7	n/a	7	0	0	0	7
P-cards	10	14	7	31	0	2	2	27
Solicitations/Negotiations	73	0	12	85	0	0	66	17
Technology	24	24	2	50	0	0	15	35
Procure-To-Pay	17	17	0	34	0	0	8	26
Information Management	7	7	2	16	0	0	7	9
Totals	167	73	23	263	0	2	116	143
					0%	1%	45%	54%

A chart in a July 16 memo from County Administrator Randall Reid to the County Commission shows the status at that time of steps taken to improve Procurement Department practices as suggested by three entities: NIGP, the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing; RSM, the nationally known firm RSM McGladrey; and the Sarasota County Clerk of Circuit Court.

“Understand that this isn’t aimed at you, Mr. Reid,” Commission Chairwoman Christine Robinson told him.

“You can be assured I’m asking the clerk’s office to do independent audits on items I have observed that don’t make sense or feel wrong,” Reid replied. “I address anything that seems wrong or out of place.”

PAST PROBLEMS

“Historically, going back a couple of years,” Patterson said, “some of the issues that turned out to be major issues were actually identified in some of these audits.”

Patterson pointed out that a couple of years before employee misuse of “P-cards” — county-issued credit cards — became public knowledge, Rushing and her staff had indicated a problem with the cards.

“I remember speaking to the administrator about that,” Patterson added, referring to County Administrator Jim Ley, who resigned in May 2011 in the wake of the Procurement Department scandal. “He said, well, he was reducing the number [of P-cards available to employees] and addressing that.”

However, Patterson said, “That’s not the same as a formal answer [such as], ‘We’re really looking at this because it’s a potential problem,’ and that was a big ... avenue where misuses could occur.”

In a July 16 memo to the County Commission, Reid reported on a number of steps being taken in the Procurement Department to improve practices, including the implementation of a revised P-card manual and training of “Account Coordinators and cardholders.”

Staff was being trained, he added, to use new reporting tools and resources “to conduct audit reports such as a monthly spend analysis to monitor card usage and flag unusual transactions.”

At that point, Reid wrote in the memo, 98 percent of the card users had completed the training.

RECENT REPORTS

During the Oct. 23 meeting, Reid said some of the more recent problems flagged by audit involved work done “in a sloppy manner.” For example, he said, four of 54 documents that required two signatures had just one.

Robinson said she would like to see memos indicating not only progress taken on specific matters but also a final memo indicating a problem had been resolved.

Rushing explained to the commissioners that after her staff gathers all the information for an audit, the findings are “discussed with the responsible folks and we are seeking agreement on the comments being made or a recognition that we misunderstood something, which could happen from time to time.”

Most of the items that have been found to date have been issues of minor changes of policy. There hasn’t been a major finding.

Randall Reid
County Administrator

Rushing added, "If there is ever a significant disagreement in the observation [of the auditor] versus the viewpoint of the county, it'll be noted. ... [For example]: 'The audit recognizes X occurred and there's a dispute about it.'"

However, she added, "I don't think you're going to see many of those."

She and Reid work closely together, Rushing said.

"... Where there needs to be some real strengthening," she continued, is in regard to cases indicating the implementation of changes "from an enterprise-wide [countywide] perspective."

She told the commissioners, "I think your concerns are well-placed."

Patterson said, "I'm sure that in many cases these things are being addressed. It's just that I want that feedback."

"I have no objections to attempting to do that," Reid said.

The important thing to note, Reid said, was that problems indicated by the October audit were not widespread.

"Everybody has to do their job in a sharper manner," Reid said.



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TOO CHARMING

Laurel Park is known for its 1920s-era bungalows. Photo by Norman Schimmel

ANALYSIS: LAUREL PARK FIGHTS FOR A PLACE IN THE SUN

By Stan Zimmerman

City Editor

Laurel Park is everything you could ask for in a neighborhood. Geographically, it lies on the southern edge of downtown; all the urban amenities are within walking distance.

It features the city's best collection of 1920s architecture — from bungalows to apartment buildings. And it is close to all the city's major traffic arteries.

The residents of Laurel Park have battled for years to keep their “patch of paradise” out of the hands of speculators and high-rise builders. They even had the city create a unique zoning district (RSM-9) for the area. That district does not allow for commercial activity,

even though the neighborhood already had a historic designation to protect its character.

Laurel Park shares another unique quality with two other close-to-downtown neighborhoods: Any new structure built within 100 feet of an RSM-9 property can be only one story higher than what it faces.

Now Laurel Park is seeking something else unique, and as with its other battles, the progress is uphill all the way.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

The neighborhood wants “an overlay,” a zoning device that allows for special treatment.

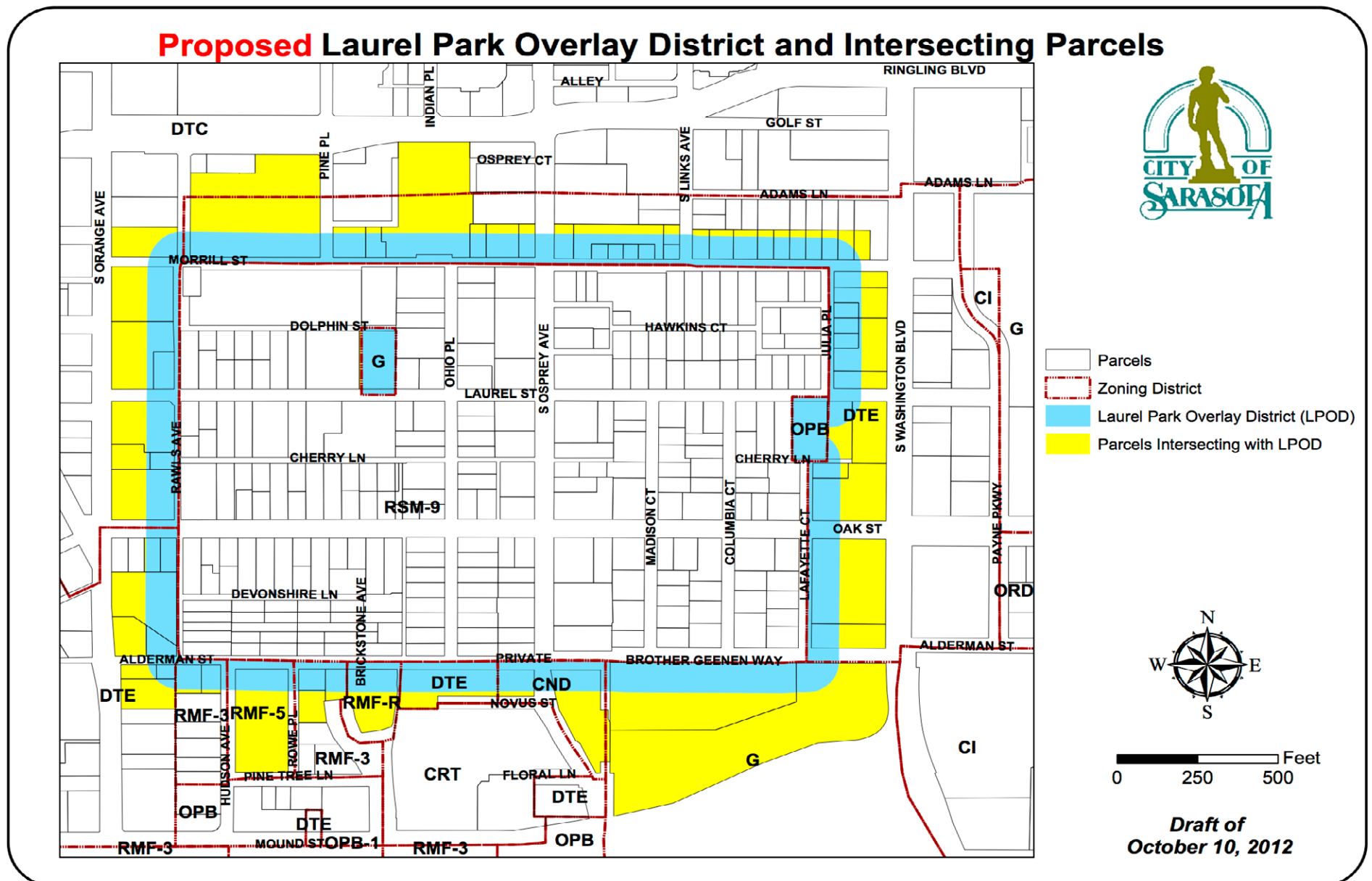
Siesta Key, for example, has had an overlay district since 1999 that establishes different residential standards than those found in the rest of Sarasota County. The overlay district also dictates a reduction in the size and height of signs, allows shell parking lots and identifies permitted and prohibited uses and structures.

Laurel Park's proposed overlay does not go that far. It asks only that neighbors be alerted when a property adjacent to the boundaries of the neighborhood becomes targeted for development or redevelopment, and it asks that residents be allowed to comment on any such proposal during a Sarasota Planning Board public hearing.

Laurel Park is surrounded by "downtown" zoning. That means developers and builders can simply drop off their applications for building permits at City Hall, and if all goes well, head to their sites in 10 days with permits in hand, ready to start.

This is a process called "administrative approval," and it requires no public hearing or even public notice. Neighbors find out when the construction equipment arrives.

Anywhere else in the city, nearby residents would be alerted and a neighborhood meeting would be required, followed by consideration of a site plan by the Planning Board. But to spur development and settle a lawsuit, the city



The blue area, which denotes a 100-foot-wide boundary, marks the edge of the Laurel Park neighborhood. The yellow areas mark all the parcels in the "downtown zones" where planned construction would mean notification for the neighborhood and discussion before redevelopment. Map courtesy of the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association

agreed that construction plans for property located downtown would need only “administrative approval” to proceed. If the plans meet city requirements for zoning and construction, approval is automatic and no potentially messy public hearing is required.

“Developers believe administrative approval solves ‘the citizen problem,’” said Kate Lowman, the current president of the Laurel Park Neighborhood Association. Developers prefer to call it “certainty.”

THE OVERLAY

The Laurel Park Neighborhood Association held a meeting at City Hall Tuesday, Oct. 30, to seek public comment on its proposed overlay district. Lowman moderated the meeting, because the change is being proposed by the neighborhood association, not the city. The Sarasota City Commission had approved the

allocation of some staff time to help the residents.

The City Commission will vote again Dec. 3 on whether it wants to proceed with the district.

The process entails a big and complex legal package, including a comprehensive plan change and zoning text amendment changes. Lowman says nobody’s zoning will change and nobody’s property rights will be amended, but the overlay will require people building large projects adjacent to the neighborhood to give residents the opportunity to evaluate their plans.

“The majority of the zoning around the neighborhood allows five stories or 10 stories,” said long-time Laurel Park resident Juliette Reynolds. “Most of the big projects will face away from the neighborhood, so we’ll be looking at their traffic patterns, security lights, garbage collection and other issues.”



Old shade trees are abundant in the Laurel Park neighborhood. Photo by Norman Schimmel

Lowman said city regulations do not provide enough protection. "It is not possible for the zoning code to define what and how each thing will be built," she said. "Where is the generator located? How much noise is allowed? Will the lights shine in my bedroom? What are the mechanics of trash pickup? These are things neighbors want to have some choice about."

The overlay would require a builder to notify the neighborhood, hold a public meeting and then seek site-plan approval from the Planning Board even if he just wanted to build something adjacent to — but not inside — the neighborhood. Lowman presented a map showing the how much property would be affected.

DEVELOPERS SPEAK

Physician Mark Kauffman is a major property owner and developer focused on downtown. "I've had two encounters with this neighborhood on two projects," he said. "And both were delightful."

He most recently worked with Laurel Park on the development of a new P.F. Chang's restaurant on Mound Street, and he made changes to the plans based on neighborhood input.

Kaufman suggested that instead of embarking on the 18-month process to change the city's comprehensive plan and zoning texts, the neighborhood simply lobby the City Commission to demand notification of any projects in the yellow zone denoted on the proposed overlay district map.

"I don't see why you can't look at the plans when we go to the city. What you're asking for is not unreasonable," he said. "But you could get everything you want if you get notification from the city."

Real estate doyenne Michael Saunders is in the middle of the fight. "It would be so easy not to take a year-and-a-half to get this overlay. Instead you could get a settlement agreement that would bind the city in some way," she said. "Make the City Commission demand meetings and then work with the developer."

Whatever policy the current City Commission makes, however, can be undone by a subsequent City Commission. And Laurel Park has had some experience with that level of betrayal since the administrative approval factor was implemented without public input; hence, the neighborhood residents' desire to enshrine the overlay in the comprehensive plan.

Both Saunders and the director of the Gulf Coast Builders Exchange, Mary Dougherty-Slapp, urged a faster resolution to the neighborhood's concerns.

"This recovery is about to happen," said Dougherty-Slapp. "It is important for builders and developers to know what the rules are."

In other words, leaders of the real estate, development and builder communities agree to notification of residents regarding construction plans on the borders of Laurel Park. But they disagree with the neighborhood on the mechanics, and they do not appear to support the idea of a mandated visit to the Planning Board.

Saunders and Kauffman want a City Commission policy to set the terms of the overlay district. Lowman and the neighbors want policy spelled out in the comprehensive plan and zoning code.



CHARTER CHANGERS



(From left) City Attorney Robert Fournier, City Auditor and Clerk Pam Nadalini and City Commissioners Paul Caragiulo and Willie Shaw listen to public comments during a regular meeting. Photo by Norman Schimmel

ONE PROPOSED CITY OF SARASOTA CHARTER AMENDMENT WOULD DISMEMBER THE OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR AND CLERK

By Stan Zimmerman
City Editor

Six of the seven proposed amendments to the Sarasota City Charter were proposed by an appointed committee of citizens who took testimony, received legal advice and held spirited debates on the issues.

The seventh was conceived in secrecy by an organization now under investigation by the Florida Elections Commission. The amendment had a legal flaw that was rectified at the last minute. And it was put on the ballot by paid signature gatherers working piecemeal, paid per signature.

These origins normally would scuttle public support for a charter change, but a surprising

number of people think it is a good idea to break up the Office of City Auditor and Clerk (CAC), separating the audit function from everything else.

The auditor and clerk's position was created during the initial drafting of the city's charter in 1945. Initially, the clerk and auditor's job included management of central records, with the person acting as clerk to the City Commission (handling agendas, minutes, etc.), doing internal auditing (of city departments, leaseholders and contracts, etc.), handling pension administration and presiding over city elections.

Over the years, the CAC took on additional responsibilities. Former Auditor and Clerk Billy Robinson started a public information office in City Hall in 2004 to handle public and press relations. Then-City Manager Mike McNees engaged in a tug-of-war with Robinson over control of the office, but McNees lost the City Commission decision over that battle.

Normally, public information falls under senior administration.

Last year the City Commission stripped the city manager of responsibility for information technology (computers and communications). That department was transferred to the CAC's office. While the shift was made following unproven allegations of email erasures by then-



One proposed city charter amendment would shake up the responsibilities of the offices of the city manager and the city auditor and clerk. Photo by Norman Schimmel

City Manager Robert Bartolotta, a subsequent inquiry revealed inadequacies in the department that the current clerk and auditor is trying to remedy.

The proposed charter amendment would split the responsibilities of the City Auditor and Clerk's Office into two separate offices. One would be the Office of City Auditor. It would be run by a charter official appointed by the City Commission, and it would perform internal audits and make recommendations based on the audits. The auditing department currently has one employee and one opening. The amendment specifically states: "The City Commission shall not assign to the City Auditor any duties not related to audit or investigatory functions."

The second office would work for the city manager. Its responsibilities would include all other functions of the current CAC, including records management, pension administration, information technology, city clerk's responsibilities and administration of oaths.

Proponents say dismembering the current City Auditor and Clerk's Office would streamline government by making one person responsible for city administration. And they believe establishment of an independent auditor with no other functions would provide the City Commission with the necessary checks on abuse of power by the city manager.

Opponents dub this the "Boss City Manager" amendment. Some suggest it is a racist putsch to force the resignation of current City Auditor and Clerk Pam Nadalini. She is the city's first African-American charter official, having served as No. 2 until the retirement of Robin-

son. When he was preparing to leave, she was offered the job as CAC.

Pension administration and public information are handled by the city manager in a significant number of Florida cities similar in size to Sarasota. The Information Technology departments virtually always report to the city manager in municipalities. Pension Management offices also report to the city manager in most Florida cities.

For the clerking responsibilities — minutes, agendas, correspondence, swearing of oaths — the record is mixed. In Clearwater, Lakeland, Fort Myers and Delray Beach, the clerks report to the city managers. In Venice, Naples, North Port and Lauderhill, the clerks report to the city commissions.

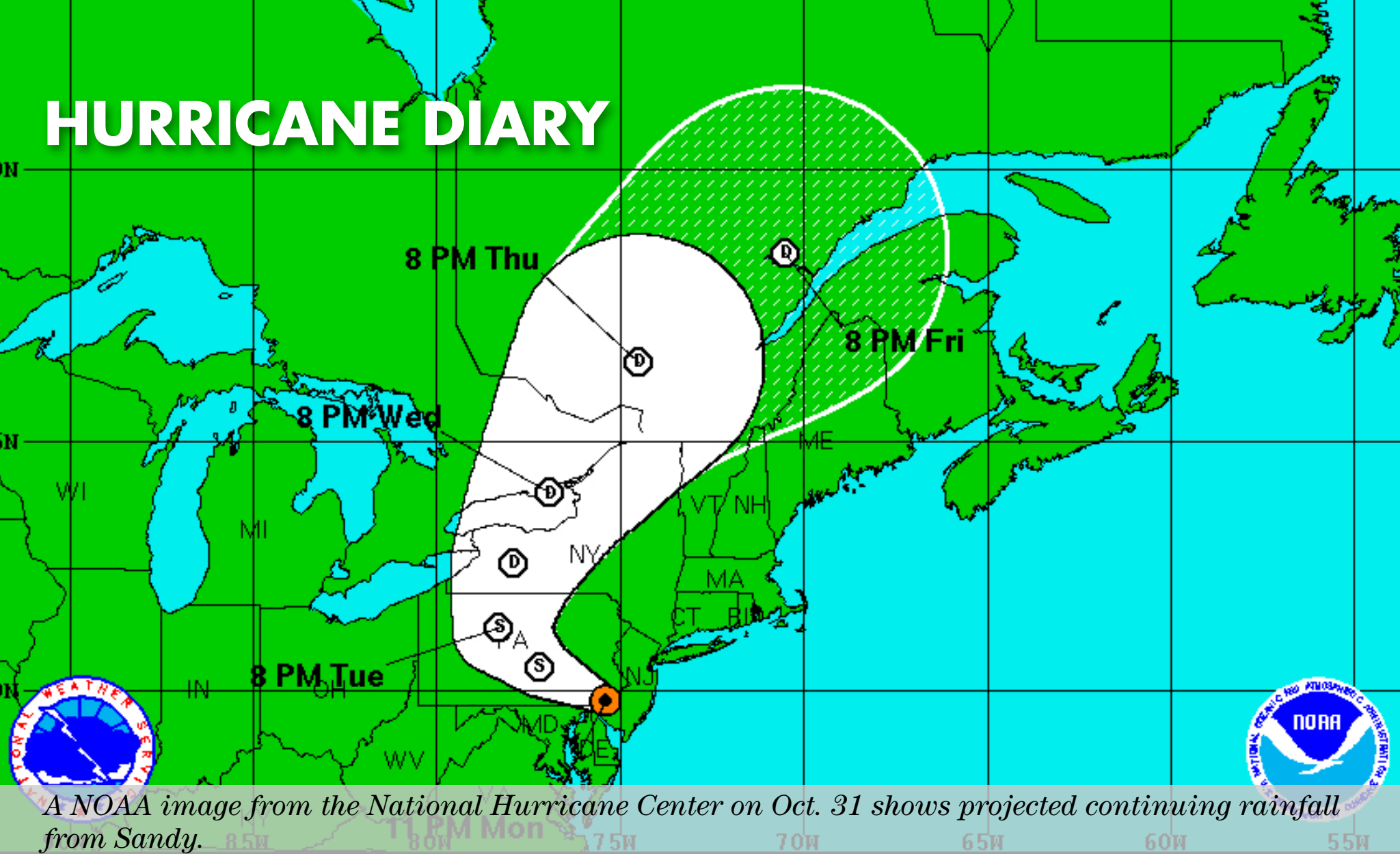
Most of the seven city charter amendments proposed for the Nov. 6 ballot seek to slow down or even prohibit City Commission actions. One would delete nearly six pages of charter language aimed at defeating a Walmart store proposed several years ago. Only one — the decapitation of the CAC office — creates a fundamental change in government accountability.

Voters who believe the city manager should be the person who really manages the city in all its aspects will vote in favor of this charter change proposal.

Voters who believe the current system of split responsibilities provides a check and balance on government power will vote against the amendment.



HURRICANE DIARY



A NOAA image from the National Hurricane Center on Oct. 31 shows projected continuing rainfall from Sandy.

SANDY SAGA SHOWS THE POWER OF STORM SURGE

By Stan Zimmerman

City Editor

Editor's note: Stan Zimmerman has been tracking hurricanes for decades. This is his story about the system that became Sandy.

21 Oct. 10 a.m.: Hurricane Rafael came and went, thrashing Bermuda and then going subtropical on the way to Ireland.

This morning another storm is forming in the same southern vicinity, and it is expected to take the same exact path.

Another “Bahama thumper”? Right now it is called “Invest 99L,” and it has an 80 percent chance of becoming a tropical storm.

The models are not sure of the path — Cuba? Hispaniola? — but one thing seems sure: It

is following Rafael out to sea, and the “Great Florida Barrier” remains in force.

22 Oct., 5 p.m.: Yup, it is now Tropical Storm Sandy, and it is sort of headed our way but is more likely to beat up the Bahamas on the exit to nowhere. Central pressure is 29.50 inches, with steady winds of 40 mph. The forecast has it strengthening to almost hurricane force in two days. The far-out forecast offers a small chance of tropical-storm-force winds on Florida's east coast on Friday, Oct. 26, and Saturday, Oct. 27.

Meanwhile, there is another tropical depression (TD 19) that could become a tropical storm tomorrow. It is headed due north in

the mid-Atlantic Ocean and expected to turn northeast in the next 36 hours — totally away from anybody until late Friday, when it could threaten the Azores. The Azores?

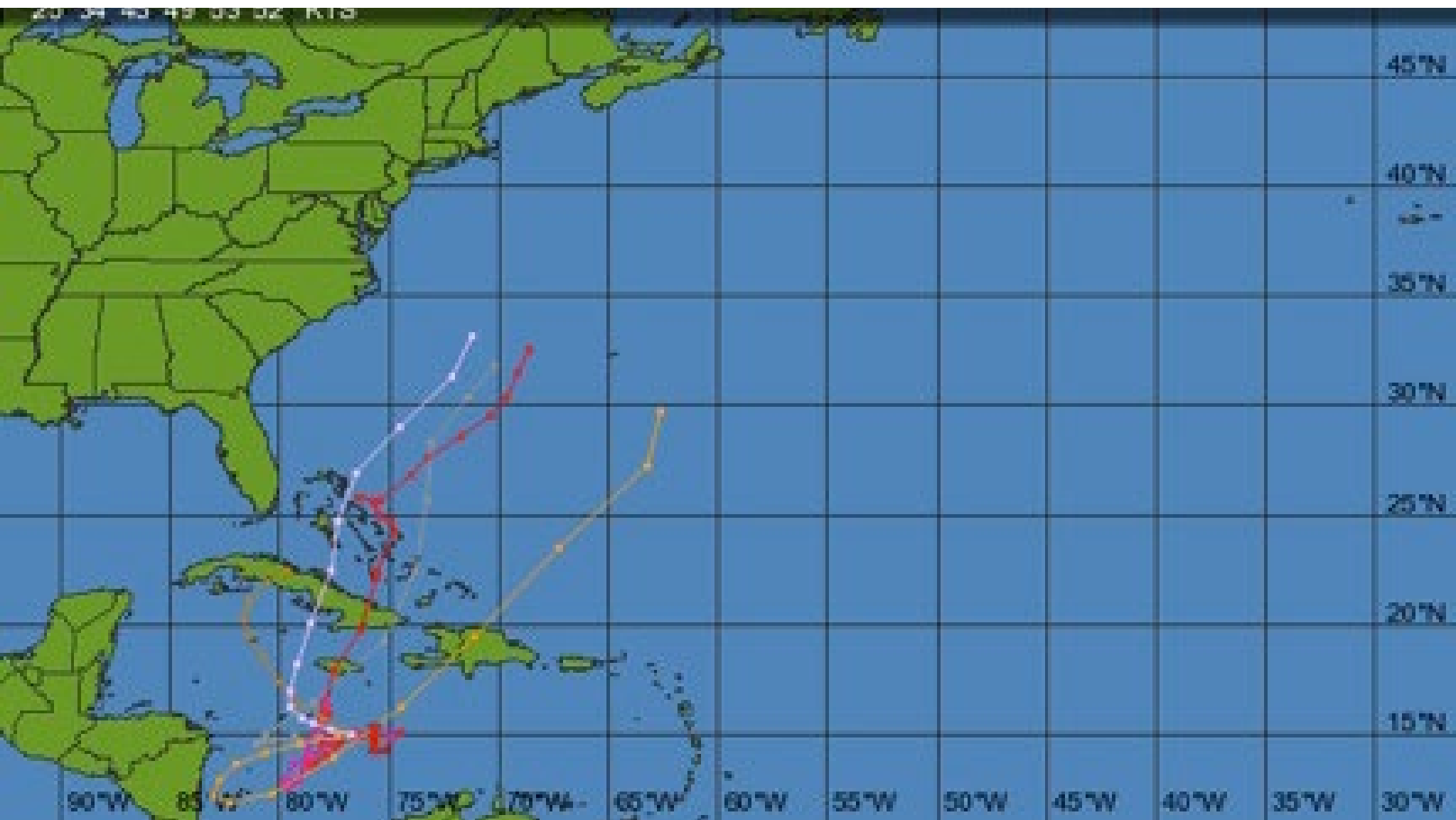
23 Oct., 9 p.m.: Soon-to-be Hurricane Sandy is projected now over Jamaica and the eastern half of Cuba, then into the Bahamas. Right now, only the Miami/West Palm area is in the zone of a 10 percent or higher chance of tropical storm winds. Sandy is not expected to stay a hurricane very long, with forecasters saying the trip over Cuba will do it in. Still, it is a little too close for comfort.

24 Oct., noon: Sandy is officially a hurricane now, with central pressure of 28.73 and sustained winds of 80 mph. The track takes it directly over Jamaica and on to Cuba and the Bahamas.

The Florida Keys and Florida's east coast are under a tropical storm watch at present, while the Bahamas are under a tropical storm warning.



A diagram showing moisture levels in the northeastern and central United States indicates the possibility of snow, thanks to Sandy's projected track.



At this point, the forming storm system is far enough away from the mainland to cause only limited concern. Image courtesy of Weather Underground

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Tony is in the mid-Atlantic with maximum winds of 50 mph; it is heading straight to the Azores. Oddly — should I even say it — the Gulf of Mexico remains quiet.

24 Oct., 10 p.m.: Sandy could be a bell-ringer, an event that changes forever the national perception of tropical weather.

The Washington Post tonight is teasing the idea that Sandy will come ashore a tad north of the Chesapeake Bay and raise huge mischief. The newspaper has models and maps galore, far in advance of those of the National Hurricane Center. “Models disagree on where the storm will recurve and make landfall: simulations vary from the mid-Atlantic to Maine. There remains a chance, though diminishing,

the storm will slide harmlessly out to sea,” the *Post* reports.

What is worse is that the storm’s landfall could coincide with the full moon, making for high tides above the normal level. And, hang on: Snow is an issue. Snow!!??

At the higher elevations, the moisture of a tropical system could produce killer snowfall levels in Pennsylvania and New York.

“Some models suggest over a foot of heavy, wet snow could fall in places like western Maryland and central and western Pennsylvania. This amount of snow on top of existing foliage could result in tremendous tree damage and power outages,” *The Washington Post* says.

A historic event? Not here, but elsewhere?



At midnight on Oct. 27, the National Hurricane Center is showing the projected wind fields for Sandy. Image courtesy of NOAA

25 Oct., 1:30 p.m.: Sandy is now a Category 2 storm with sustained winds of 105 mph and central pressure at 28.47 inches. It still looks like it will pass offshore of the Florida east coast.

The northerly winds blowing against the Gulf Stream are going to play havoc with boating conditions. Here is the marine forecast offshore of Palm Beach:

FRIDAY NIGHT

TROPICAL STORM CONDITIONS EXPECTED. N OF 29N W OF

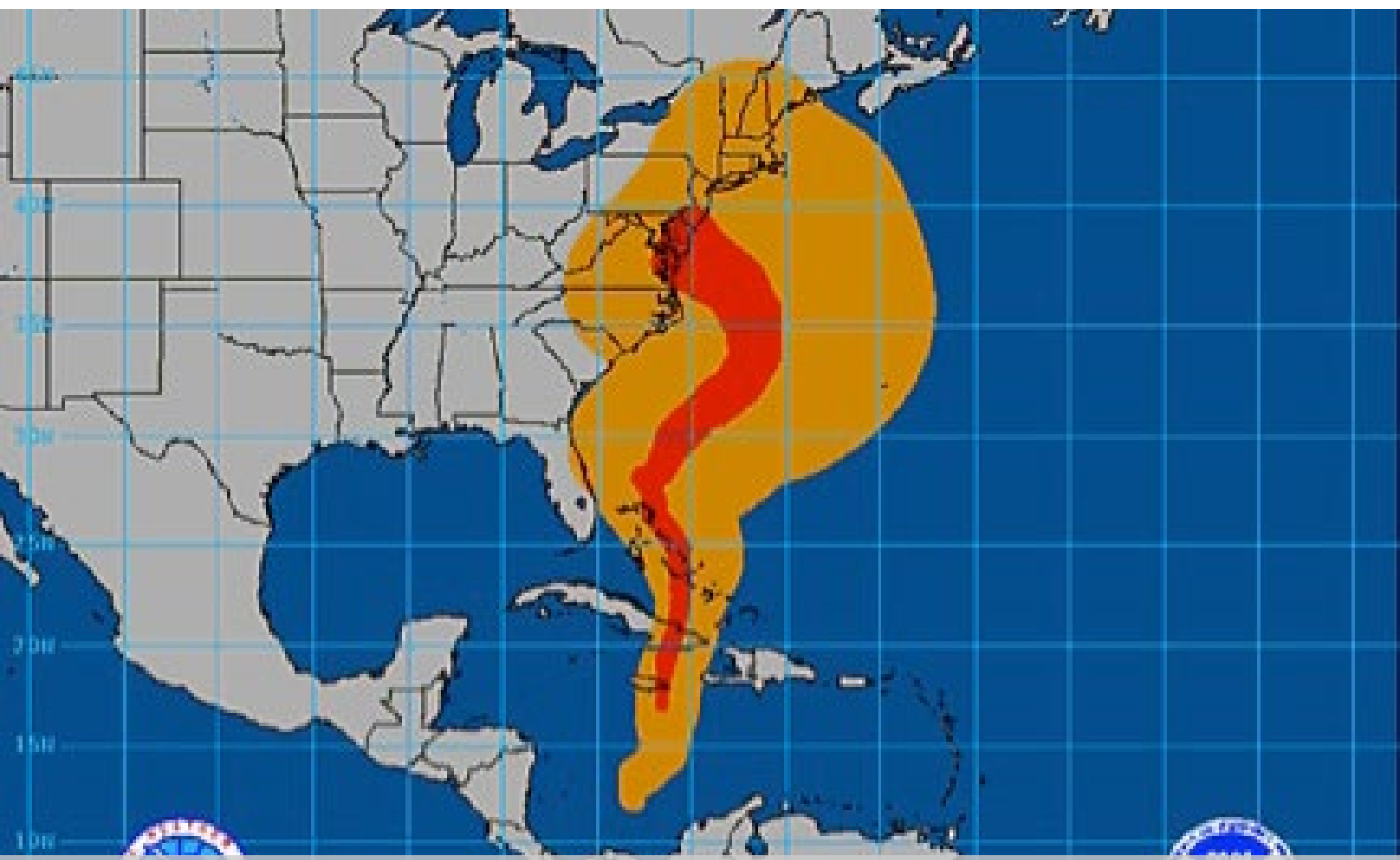
79W...N TO NE WINDS 30 TO 40 KT...BECOMING N 35 TO 45 KT LATE. ELSEWHERE...N TO NE WINDS 55 TO 75 KT...BECOMING N 50 TO 70 KT LATE. SEAS 22 TO 32 FT. NU-

MEROUS SHOWERS AND ISOLATED TSTMS. VSBY 1 NM OR LESS.

Yessiree, 32-foot seas and 70-knot wind. Sounds a bit Cape Horn-ish to me. The Bahamas are expecting a 5- to 8-foot storm surge; for Florida, on the protected side of the storm, the surge is predicted to be only 1 to 2 feet.

Locally we are told to expect gale-force winds starting tomorrow and continuing through Saturday, but little rain. My family and I were planning on launching the boat this weekend, but needless to say, that's not happening.

Sandy is the 10th hurricane of the year and the fourth to reach Category 2 or higher. It was supposed to die somewhere between Jamaica and Cuba, but instead it intensified. Even the Cuban highlands did not affect it, and it



Sandy has come ashore in southern New Jersey. Image courtesy of NOAA

emerged intact as a Category 2. Now the Bahamas are getting lashed. The damn thing is anticipated to head north to make landfall in the New Jersey/New York area and combine with a cold front to create holy hell all the way from Ohio to Maine. Forecasters are calling it “Frankenstorm.”

26 Oct., 11 p.m.: Sandy is back down to a Category 1 after ravaging the Bahamas. So far the death count — Jamaica, Haiti, Cuba and the Bahamas — is more than 40. And the storm is growing. Yesterday, the radius of hurricane-force winds was 30 miles; tonight it is 70 miles, and tropical storm-force winds extend out 415 miles! In other words, the diameter of tropical storm winds is almost 850 miles!

The National Hurricane Center still projects a DelMarVa Peninsula landfall on Monday, with hellacious rains. Storm surge along the lower Chesapeake is predicted at 2 to 4 feet, with 8 inches of rain all the way up the bay. Bad *juju* potential here.

27 Oct., 2 p.m.: Sandy’s central pressure is going down; now it is 28.38 inches. Last night, the barometer at the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport read 29.6. Sandy’s wind field is expanding, with hurricane-force winds now out 105 miles and tropical storm winds out 450 miles from the center. The storm is slowly growing. It is now 140 miles due east of Cape Canaveral.

27 Oct., midnight: Just back from the uber sexy Planned Parenthood Safe Sex Bash at Michael’s on East. Our winds are settling down, and our local barometric pressure is rising, but Sandy keeps going and growing.

Sandy’s barometric pressure is 28.35 inches, and maximum sustained winds are 75 mph. Tropical storm-force winds are now 520 miles from the center, a diameter of 1,000-plus miles! From Ocean City, MD, to Long Island, NY, the storm surge is predicted to be 4 to 8 feet, with rain, lots and lots of rain.

28 Oct., 11 a.m.: No change in path or intensity is reported, although the central pressure continues to fall; it is now at 28.08 inches. The wind field is still expanding, with hurricane-force winds out 175 miles from the unformed eye; the tropical storm-force wind field is unchanged at 520 miles.

The real threat is storm surge. New York Harbor and Long Island are on the “wrong side” of Sandy, and they are looking at 6 to 11 feet from Ocean City, MD, to the Connecticut/Rhode Island border, with 2 to 4 feet in the middle and upper Chesapeake Bay area — plus the rain, of course.

29 Oct. 11 a.m.: Sandy remains on track, with sustained winds now 85 mph and central pressure still dropping, now at 27.94. The ring of tropical storm winds has collapsed a bit, now with a radius of 485 miles. The diameter of hurricane-force winds is 175 miles, unchanged. Gale-force winds are now lashing the shoreline from North Carolina to Long Island, NY. Long Island Sound and New York Harbor are looking at 6 to 11 feet of storm surge. Heavy rain — up to 12 inches — is expected over the Mid-Atlantic States, and snowfall of 2 to 3 feet is to occur in the mountains of West Virginia, with lesser amounts in the mountains of Virginia, Maryland and Tennessee.

Oct. 29, 2 p.m.: Sandy is strengthening and accelerating towards the New Jersey shore.

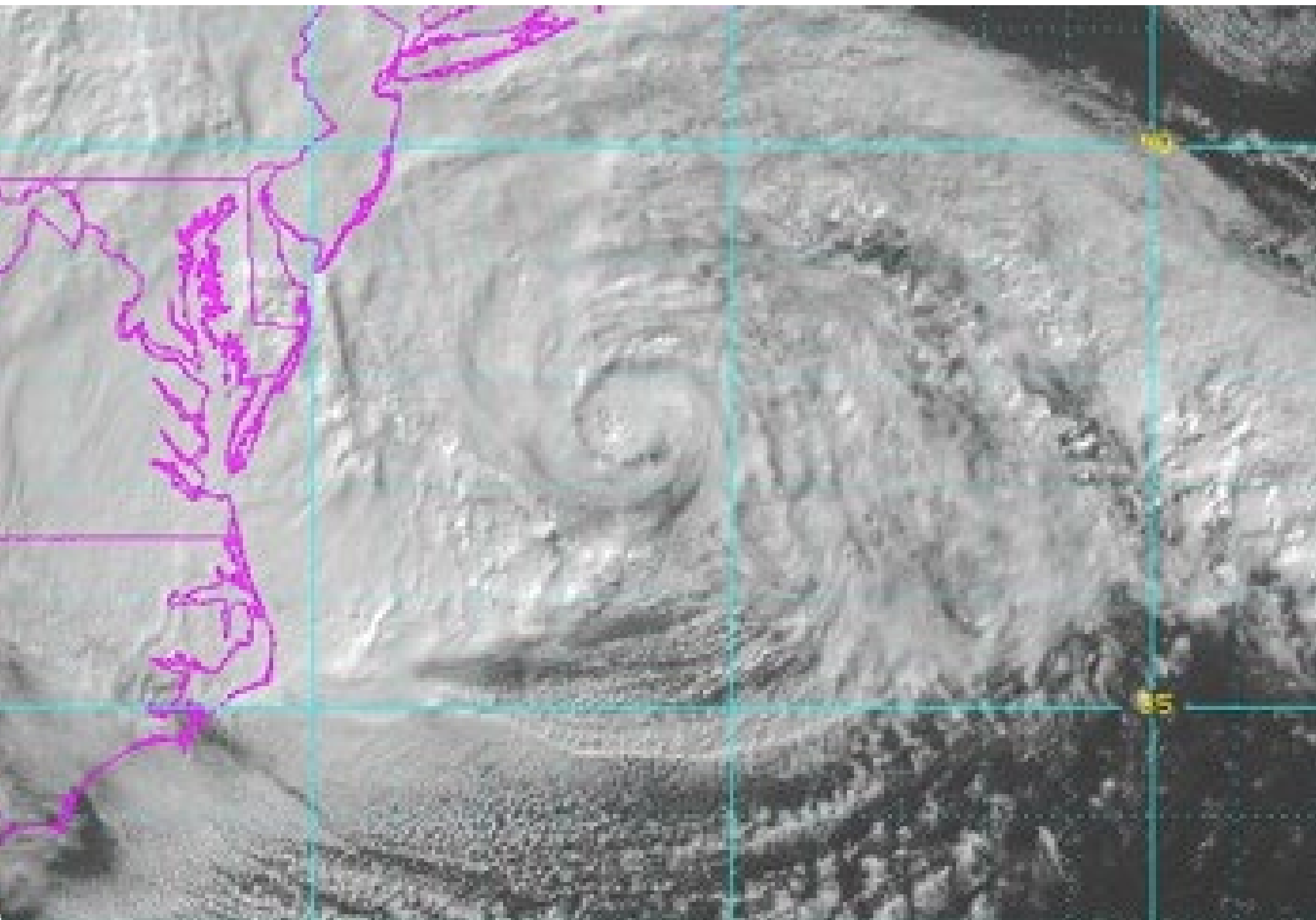
Central pressure is 27.76 inches (a quarter-inch drop in three hours!!!), and sustained winds are up to 90 mph, with gusts to 110 mph. Forward speed is 28 mph, so on the “wrong side,” winds are 118 mph. The storm is huge.

The National Hurricane Center says, “SUSTAINED WINDS TO TROPICAL STORM FORCE ARE OCCURRING FROM SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND THROUGH LONG ISLAND AND LONG ISLAND SOUND...AND SOUTHWARD ALONG THE COASTS OF NEW JERSEY...DELAWARE...AND EASTERN

VIRGINIA...AND INCLUDING ALL OF THE CHESAPEAKE AND DELAWARE BAYS.”

Sandy is going “extra-tropical” at this hour, merging with a major polar low-pressure system to mix-master a colossal dump of rain and liberated heat into the now-dominant polar air mass. Seas are running 45 feet at the center of circulation.

Meanwhile, the jet stream is plunging from Minnesota down to the Florida Panhandle, bringing us the season’s first nippy temps. It could get into the 40s inland tonight.



This is Sandy at its most menacing, with circulation restored. It is strengthening and it remains 18 hours from landfall. Image courtesy of NOAA

Oct. 29, 5 p.m.: Sandy now has formed an eye, about 20 miles across, just prior to landfall at the Delaware Bay/New Jersey border later this evening. This track will put the entire northern Chesapeake, Washington, D.C., and Annapolis areas under hurricane-force winds tonight. Pressure and top sustained wind speed remain unchanged. The storm is still moving northwest at 28 mph. And it is cold there, with temperatures in the 40s tonight under hurricane horizontal rain.

Tropical-storm-force winds are being experienced from South Carolina to Maine. This is one huge storm, and we are getting gusts to 30 mph here as part of this zany hurricane-cold front mash-up.

Oct. 29, 8 p.m.: Sandy is ashore just south of Atlantic City, NJ. Central pressure is up a tad to 27.93; sustained winds now are 80 mph. The hurricane barely made it to shore. The dry air it has been fighting for days has stripped the southern and eastern quadrants of moisture.

More than a million people are without power, the majority of them in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. Tidal gauges are setting records in and around New York City. An 1821 record of 11.2 feet at the Battery (southernmost Manhattan) was broken with a record of 11.25 feet and still rising. In northern New Jersey, a Sandy Hook record of 10.1 feet was superseded by a 12.0 reading ... and water is still rising.

Sandy is no longer a hurricane, and the National Hurricane Center is saying goodbye. But before the federal agency leaves the scene, it offers an image of the wind swath that just grew and grew and ended up sending a big punch right into the midriff of the East Coast.

Lower Manhattan is flooding tonight, millions are without power and there is more to come as the system slows and merges but retains its strongest winds.

30 Oct. 11 p.m.: Twenty-four hours have passed since landfall. Watching Hurricane Sandy was like seeing a piece of Celadon porcelain falling from a shelf to a tile floor. Concentration went into slow motion, as inch by inch we watched a shattering catastrophe unfold: six million people without power; Wall Street under water; a century-old New York subway system flooded; property losses in the billions; economic losses yet uncounted.

What can be counted is rainfall. The big winner was Easton, MD, with 12.5 inches, followed by Georgetown, DE, with 10.2 inches. Kitty Hawk, NC, on the oh-so-vulnerable Outer Banks, received 5.9 inches. New Jersey was soaked, with totals between 6.2 and 11.9 inches across the state. Virginia was in the 7- to 9-inch range, Pennsylvania had 5 to 7 inches and Ohio saw 3 to 6 inches. Washington, D.C.'s Reagan National Airport got 4.78 inches.

The damn storm is not done. Central barometric pressure is at 29.18, and the maximum sustained wind is 45 mph. It is in southwestern Pennsylvania and headed into Canada — and for all I know, the North Pole — on a due north projected track.

The storm touched millions and millions of lives. In four days, the nation goes to the polls to elect a president. In the political campaign, nobody once mentioned global warming or climate change. Records two centuries old were broken this week. Leave it to Mother Ocean to remind us.





A DIP INTO THE OIL MONEY?

Florida Gov. Rick Scott says he wants to work with a consortium of counties that will divvy up BP oil spill funds. Photo courtesy of the governor's office.

SCOTT WANTS A HAND IN RESTORE ACT STATE POT

By Cooper Levey-Baker

Associate Editor

The Sarasota County Commission voted last month to join a coalition of Gulf Coast counties affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill that will oversee how Florida's pot of BP fine money is spent.

However, according to Sarasota's delegate, Gov. Rick Scott is asking for a big say in where those dollars are directed.

The money in question will come from penalties paid by BP to the federal government, which could add up to anywhere from \$5 billion to \$20 billion. Bipartisan federal legislation known as the RESTORE Act divvies up that money among national grants, a state fund and direct assistance to counties. The

Florida Association of Counties spearheaded the creation of the Gulf Coast consortium to direct where that state pot goes.

Last Tuesday, Oct. 23, Commissioner Nora Patterson — picked as Sarasota's representative in the new consortium — gave a brief recap of the group's first meeting to her fellow board members, announcing that Scott wants the right "to appoint 25 percent of the consortium members and appoint its chairman." Saying she was "not all that surprised" at Scott's request, Patterson added that Florida Association of Counties leaders are planning to meet with Scott to discuss what his role might be.



Sarasota County Commissioners Joe Barbetta and Carolyn Mason present a trophy to members of Sarasota Crew after their victory during an April regatta at Benderson Lake. County commissioners say they would like for some of the RESTORE Act funds to be invested in the rowing facility. Photo by Norman Schimmel

Patterson tells *The Sarasota News Leader* she is OK with Scott appointing some of the consortium's leaders, but she wants to make sure those board members are "people who are knowledgeable around the state," not just political supporters.

The leadership structure of the consortium has not yet been solidified; Patterson says she expects the group will map out a clear timetable for action at its next gathering.

Asked what projects she thinks would be worth funding with the BP dollars, Patterson cites a handful of "environmental restoration projects" that would be winners, but she also made the case for funding economic development projects.

"It would be fabulous if it were possible to allocate some dollars to the rowing facility," she says, "to see if we could speed it along."

The Nathan Benderson Park rowing facility has been a major beneficiary of taxpayer dollars this year. Scott himself approved \$5 million in state money for the project, the same month Benderson Management Services donated \$25,000 to the governor's re-election bid.

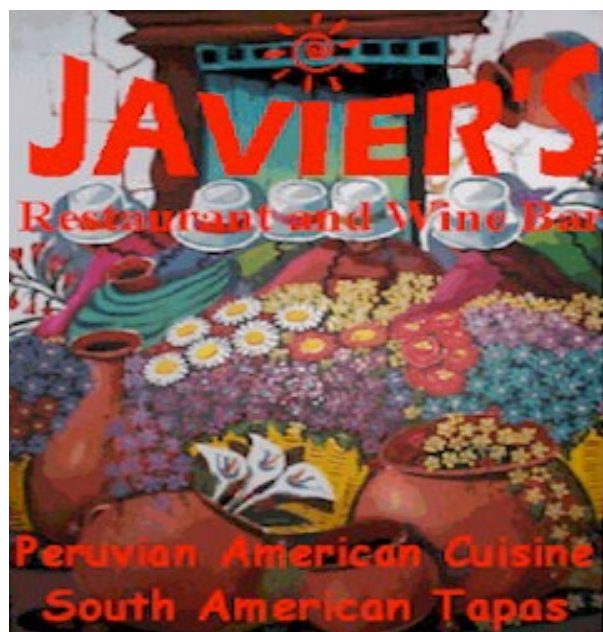
Patterson also cites Warm Mineral Springs as an economic development project deserving of funding through RESTORE.

Florida Association of Counties Communications Director Cragin Mosteller says having the governor's office involved in the consortium's efforts would be "ideal," because it would help Florida present a "unified front to the federal government."

Does the association believe Scott's proposal to staff 25 percent of the leaders and appoint a chairman is appropriate? "I think it's too soon to speculate," Mosteller says.

"If the counties are interested in the state helping with the consortium, we are happy to continue conversations with the counties on what that might look like," Scott Press Secretary Jackie Schultz writes in an email statement.

Patterson told the commission last week she does not know how the negotiations will shake out, either. "I don't really know what's going to happen on this one," she said.



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The Sarasota County Commission met with the School Board Aug. 29 in the county's Think Tank at the Administration Center in downtown Sarasota. Photo by Norman Schimmel

SARASOTA COUNTY SCHOOLS ALREADY AT WORK ON NEW PROGRAM IN RESPONSE TO WORKFORCE PREPAREDNESS STUDY RELEASED IN AUGUST

By Rachel Brown Hackney
Editor

Although a committee's report on community workforce preparedness will not be presented to the Sarasota County Commission until Nov. 7, the Sarasota County Schools district already is developing a new manufacturing program for adult students at Sarasota County Technical Institute as a result of the committee's work, district officials told *The Sarasota News Leader* this week.

According to SCTI Director Todd Bowden, the goal of the new program is to certify 100 machinists within five years of the program's introduction in August 2013.

"We're working with CareerEdge, Sarasota County and local manufacturers to develop this program to meet the needs of employers," Bowden told the *News Leader* in an email. "When they complete the one-year technical training program, students will be qualified for jobs that pay in the \$15- to \$18-an-hour range.

During a joint meeting of the School Board and the County Commission on Aug. 29, the Bradenton organization CareerEdge presented the results of a survey of area manufacturers showing that 41 percent of the jobs that had gone unfilled for three or more months were classified as "skilled production." Fifty-six of the 103 respondents in the survey said they

needed to hire skilled production workers — “a huge percentage,” according to Stephanie Kempton of Kempton Research, who had undertaken the survey for CareerEdge.

“We’re looking forward to continued collaboration with local employers, agencies and governments to close the skills gap in local manufacturing,” Sarasota County Schools Superintendent Lori White told the *News Leader*. “We offer engineering and manufacturing-related career and technical education programs at seven of our middle schools and at all five comprehensive high schools. More than 2,700 students are currently enrolled in these programs.”

She added, “Some will use these skills in post-secondary education, but we realize that not every student is bound for a four-year college experience. Our administrators and teachers constantly are finding new ways to raise awareness and spark interest in manufacturing as a career option students can explore.”

After discussing the manufacturers’ survey results during the Aug. 29 meeting, County Commission Chairwoman Christine Robinson, visibly frustrated when no other member of her board took action, passed the gavel to Vice Chairwoman Carolyn Mason to make a motion calling for County Administrator Randall Reid to meet with the appropriate representatives of the School Board, CareerEdge



Sarasota County Schools Superintendent Lori White/File photo

and county economic development staff, among others, and bring back a plan of action within 90 days.

Robinson told the *News Leader* in an Oct. 16 interview that workforce preparedness was one of the critical issues the county needed to address over the next several years. Her feeling after that Aug. 29 discussion, she said, was “Let’s get this going.”

She wanted the various groups to collaborate, she added, to work towards a common goal on the same path, “as opposed to trying to get there in our own individual ways.”

THE COMMITTEE’S UNDERTAKING

When Commissioner Joe Barbetta objected to the 90-day time frame for completing the committee report, Reid said he might be able to facilitate committee action to report back in 60 days.

As it turned out, that 60 days was compressed into about two weeks, Mireya C. Eavey, executive director of CareerEdge, told the *News Leader*. That was a result of trying to work around the schedules of those selected to serve on the committee, she added.

“I am very impressed with how everybody stepped up, and we actually had a group of people working and not talking. ... It was more actions and strategies,” she said. “It was intense.”

Because of the collaboration, she said, “I think our community as a whole is going to be very impressed.”

Along with representatives from CareerEdge, the school district and Sarasota County, the committee reflected collaboration with the Gulf Coast Community Foundation, the City of North Port’s economic development office, the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, Atlantic Mold & Manufacturing Corp., the State College of Florida Manatee-Sarasota, the Sarasota Manatee Manufacturers Association and Suncoast Workforce.

The group’s Plan of Action Summary says, “A broad-based community effort to identify future and current career pathways, assess career interests and provide incremental training is needed to employ citizens of our community. Once accomplished, this *Plan of Action* will develop appropriate levels of opportunities to receive hands-on experience in the workplace within related career fields and provide commitments for citizens to viable careers with local employers.”

The plan lists four key components: awareness and promotion; education both at the post-secondary level and in kindergarten through 12th grade; business and community partnerships; and employer engagement.

It lists the following as proposed steps in Phase Two:

- Separate the *Plan of Action* into micro-plans so each segment and line item included can be drilled down to specific actionable and achievable steps.
- Assign organizations to items within the micro-plans so work can be designated and associated with each step that will lead to the achievement of the goals included in the *Plan of Action*.
- Create a manageable and specific timeline for outlined actions and tasks to be accomplished by each party.

The County Commission is scheduled to discuss the report when it meets at the Administration Center, 1660 Ringling Blvd., on Nov. 7. The meeting will begin at 9 a.m.

“We’re looking forward to continued collaboration with local employers, agencies and governments to close the skills gap in local manufacturing.”

Lori White
Superintendent
Sarasota County Schools

■ ■ ■

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AN 'OPEN WORLD'

Booker High School students talk with International Baccalaureate program staff. Photo by Scott Proffitt

BOOKER HIGH SCHOOL HAS BECOME THE FIRST SCHOOL IN THE WORLD TO LINK WITH AN EXISTING INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE PROGRAM, THANKS TO A PARTNERSHIP WITH RIVERVIEW HIGH

By Scott Proffitt
Staff Writer

As if parent and student affirmations were not adequate to convey the success of Riverview High School's International Baccalaureate, or IB, program, the school's recent selection as one of four — out of more than 4,000 — to participate in a new IB program made that clear.

The international offices of IB, a 45-year-old nonprofit organization operating in 144 countries, recently announced the selection.

"This [new program's success] is due in large part because of the visionary leadership of Dr. [Rachel] Shelley (principal of Booker High)," said Stephen Cantees, executive director of secondary schools for the Sarasota County Schools district.

“It is an absolutely amazing opportunity for our two schools. I'm really, really pleased.”

Linda Nook
Principal
Riverview High School

“Dr. Shelley was concerned about not being able to offer the full diploma program because of the size of the school,” Riverview Principal Linda Nook

said in a Sarasota County Schools news release.

The Open World pilot program remedies that because it does not require a large group of students or new instructor training, the news release noted.

According to Paul Gallagher, Riverview High's IB coordinator, it can take two years for a school to become authorized to offer the full IB program. A school needs to be big enough to maintain such classes, he pointed out.

The IB program began at Riverview in 1999.

Nook said she is thrilled to have the collaboration with Booker High.

"It is an absolutely amazing opportunity for our two schools," she said in the district news release. "I'm really, really pleased."

"While the other [IB] schools are still developing strategic plans or else have had few students participate, Booker has seized the opportunity," Gallagher told the Booker students on Oct. 29. "You are the first cohorts [of this new program] in the world. You should be proud of yourself."

And the eagerness of not only Booker's administration and students but of those in Riverview's IB program to reach out and interact was important enough to bring IB leaders from around the world to Sarasota on Oct. 29 to meet with the Booker students and staff.

One of the major purposes of the get-together was for those IB representatives to learn

how the initiative was working for the Booker students, and what, if any, problems they had encountered.

Eleven students are active in the Booker IB program. The number is expected to expand next year, Shelley said.

With their IB classes online, the Booker students can find themselves working with other young people anywhere in the world.

Film Studies student Cindy Allen, an 11th grader, said she loves logging in to take the class, in part because of the creativity of the site and course design. She added that the diversity of the students with whom she interacts is one of the highlights of the class.

You are pioneers, true pioneers. ... This is really big, big, big for the IB program.

Denise Perrault
Head of Online Learning Development
International Baccalaureate program

Booker High junior Angelo Buenano, who is studying Mandarin Chinese, said he is honing his skills in all aspects of the language: speaking, listening, writing and reading.

"I love the Asian culture, and I already speak Spanish fluently, so I really wanted to take Chinese," he said.

He records himself speaking Mandarin, then submits them to his teacher, who is in the Philippines; they meet face-to-online-face, allowing for active involvement in the learning process.

"A lot of people are very interested in your experience because you represent the first-time the IB has opened the doors to say if you're not able to have the full IB experience, here's



Paul Gallagher is the IB coordinator at Riverview High School. Photo by Scott Proffitt

a way for you to have this opportunity,” Denise Perrault, head of online learning development for IB, told the Booker students on Oct. 29.

She had flown from The Netherlands to Sarasota for the meeting.

“You are pioneers, true pioneers,” she added. “This is really big, big, big for the IB program.”

“This program can prepare students for the next phase of education,” Gallagher pointed out. “More than 60 percent of kids who go to college don’t finish. IB provides a chance to learn about the college experience,” he added, referring to the intensity of the courses.

Gwen McCaw, who is taking an IB psychology class at Booker, said. “It’s really, really time-consuming, but I really like it. They give you many different options and I really like how you can interact with your peers. It’s more focused than regular school. But getting it all done ... is a reality check.”

“I know it can’t have been easy for you guys,” IB representative Ed Lawless told the Booker students. “But I will say this: The issue of time management is the issue that we hear time and again from students.”



International and local IB program representatives meet with Booker High students involved with a new program called 'Open World,' linking Riverview with another IB school in the Sarasota district, Booker High. Photo by Scott Proffitt

MAKING THE CONNECTION



Pedestrians long have complained of the difficulty of reaching Bayfront Park from downtown Sarasota. Photo by Norman Schimmel

DID ENDORSES PROPOSAL FOR STUDYING MERITS OF A U.S. 41 PEDESTRIAN OVERPASS FROM DOWNTOWN TO THE BAYFRONT

By Stan Zimmerman
City Editor

Sarasota's Downtown Improvement District on Tuesday, Oct. 30, supported a plan to study a pedestrian overpass across U.S. 41 at the bayfront. The idea goes back to 1959.

Gil Waters was one of the original proponents of the overpass, and at 86, he is still pushing to complete the plan to bring downtown and the bayfront together as a walkable whole. He started a new organization – Sarasota Vision – to make his case. The group has offered \$200,000 as seed money for design and engineering work.

“It increases commercial vitality, it offers a complete shopping and pleasurable experi-

ence and it provides a safe and scenic bridge to walk over U.S. 41 to the bayfront and Island Park,” said Waters of his vision. “It’s not too late, but it certainly isn’t too soon.”

Waters is a former city commissioner, news reporter and property developer.

Waters said he was asking for the district’s support prior to going before the Sarasota City Commission and then to U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key, in search of funding. The overpass is estimated to cost about \$3 million.

Waters — along with architect Brent Park — also is supporting a plan to pave Main Street

with brick during the upcoming city makeover of sidewalks and parking areas. "We think bricks are important to create a sense of ownership. It makes a nice plaza," said Park. "Cars behave differently. They slow down."

The engineering firm Kimley-Horn & Associates is working on a design for the street alterations.

"You could simply ask what it will cost to brick the streets," said Park.

The firm's representative agreed to provide a figure by the end of the week.

However, one city staffer warned it is not just a question of laying brick. "It depends on the extra engineering. If takes an extra \$1 million, the whole project goes into shutdown while we renegotiate," said City Planner Steve Stancel. Water lines run under Main Street, for example, as do other utilities.

District board member Dr. Mark Kauffman made a motion to "express our support in studying the potential production of a walk-over." The motion passed 4-0, with board member Pat Westerhouse absent.

In other downtown news, DID Operations Manager John Moran reported that 79 people have applied to become the area's next economic development coordinator. Their applications are under review by the city's Human Resources Department.

Additionally, Moran debuted a new website for the district, including the group's budgets since 2009, projects, email links and other connectivity material.

In yet other business, Stancel reported that eight firms had responded to a design-build solicitation for a State Street parking garage. He said some of the firms are nationally known.



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AN EMERGENCY FIX

Traffic cones tumbled as the pavement on a 150-foot-long section of North Beach Road collapsed on Oct. 28. Photo courtesy Sarasota County

A CONTRACTOR WAS SCHEDULED TO MAKE TEMPORARY REPAIRS TO A COLLAPSED SECTION OF NORTH BEACH ROAD THIS WEEK AS COUNTY STAFF WORKED ON A PERMANENT SOLUTION

By Rachel Brown Hackney
Editor

It probably will take four to six weeks before permanent repairs can be made to a 15- to 20-foot wide, 150-foot-long section of North Beach Road on Siesta Key, which collapsed Sunday night, Sarasota County Chief Engineer James K. Harriott Jr. told *The Sarasota News Leader* this week.

In the meantime, Frederick Derr & Co. employees were on site, Harriott said, working on an interim solution.

“The temporary fix can be done pretty quickly,” possibly as soon as the week’s end or by early next week, he said.

Derr employees were working on design and permitting for the permanent repairs — a soil step revetment system — at the same time workers were shoring up the damaged part of the road, Harriott noted. Once the permits were pulled, a crew could complete the step revetment system, he added, noting that Derr has done that type of work in the past.

The Sarasota company’s website says it is known for its expertise in heavy highway construction, site development, utility installation and coastal protection structures.



Gulf of Mexico surf undercuts the pavement on a section of North Beach Road. Photo courtesy Sarasota County

“It all should be coming together in the next several weeks,” Harriott said.

The short-term fix will cost close to \$200,000, Tom Maroney, general manager of business operations in the county’s Public Works Department, told the *News Leader* on Oct. 30.

Earlier that day, Harriott had been optimistic the cost would be about half that much. Still, Harriott conceded, “You can see utilities laying down through that [damaged] area ...”

Those broken utility lines were adding to the cost, Maroney said.

Nonetheless, Harriott told the *News Leader*, Derr is a company that works with the county on unit-price contracts. “There is a competitive nature to some of the pricing we will get.”

Even given the state of the road, he added, county officials do not take expenditures lightly.

As for the cost of the permanent solution: “It will be quite substantial,” Harriott said — probably upwards of \$1 million.

After property owners and residents complained about the state of that section of road in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Debby’s onslaught of Siesta Key in June, county staff had undertaken work about six weeks ago to stabilize the area using what Harriott called a “soil/cement base” to fill in the voids, with a cap of asphalt laid on top.

“But that’s all gone,” he said on Oct. 30. “Those waves and the surf undercut it.”

Sand was missing from an area about 3 to 4 feet deep under the asphalt, he added, making

the area unsafe for driving, though pedestrians could maneuver around it.

THE FEMA FACTOR

One factor that may complicate the timing of the permanent repairs is the need for Federal Emergency Management Agency officials to sign off on what the county wants to do, Harriott pointed out.

Although he had talked with representatives of both FEMA and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection on Oct. 29, Harriott said, that was before Hurricane Sandy came ashore in southern New Jersey, wreaking billions of dollars in property damage as it moved inland.

He acknowledged that agency officials are going to be very busy for the next several weeks dealing with the aftermath of Sandy.

Nonetheless, he said, FEMA has a special grant fund for emergency repairs such as those needed on North Beach Road. In such cases, FEMA could be expected to pay 75 percent of the total cost, with the county picking up the remaining 25 percent. “We’re optimistic that FEMA will do a reimbursement,” he added.

He emailed photos of the damage to the FEMA office in Tampa on Oct. 29, he said.

Usually the appropriate state and federal agencies work quickly to help a local government deal with a situation such as the one on North Beach Road, Harriott pointed out.

“There are homes impacted ... from an accessibility standpoint,” he noted. “None of the agencies want to keep [the road] in that condition.”

The Sarasota County Commission also will need to approve a variance, because the work will have to be undertaken beyond the Coastal Setback Line.

PAST AND PRESENT

North Beach Road probably dates to the 1940s or 1950s, Harriott said.

“There was always a seawall there [off the beach], but never much of a seawall,” he said, adding that he expected more beach was there decades ago, too.

County Commissioner Nora Patterson, who lives on Siesta Key, told the *News Leader* she recalled problems with the road going back 20 or 30 years.

At the outset, she said, it was two lanes. “It would wash out, and the county would repair it. It would wash out, and the county would repair it,” over and over again, she added.

Finally, the county designated that part of the road accessible only to the property owners and residents, she noted.



A photo emailed to the County Commission on Oct. 29 shows a different perspective of the road damage, with a crew on site assessing the situation. Photo courtesy Sarasota County

About three years ago, Patterson said, she became concerned about the appearance of the road. "It just looked terrible."

Moreover, she said, "Those aren't cheap homes there. It's valuable property."

She added, "It did not occur to me [the road] would completely wash out ... and now it's dangerous," not just to the residents and visitors who rent houses along that stretch, but to people who like to walk along that part of the island at night.

With the wind and surf building on Friday, Oct. 26, Harriott said a small hole developed in the affected part of the road, so a county crew tried to shore it up. On Sunday, the road began breaking up further, he added.

He talked with people on Sunday who had walked their dogs along that area of the road and noticed it was deteriorating, he said.

County Administrator Randall Reid told the *News Leader* Harriott had notified him early Monday morning about the road collapse, adding that Harriott had said it was the most extensive damage he had seen to that part of the road.

With the gusty winds coming primarily out of the northwest over the weekend, Harriott said, and the waves crisscrossing each other

as they rolled toward shore, the combination was more than the road could handle.

Patterson received a plea by email on Oct. 29 from Jean Furlong, a property manager for Roberti Enterprises on Siesta Key, worried about county workers having blocked off access to property the company owned along that section of the road.

Furlong has contacted Patterson in the past when problems have arisen with North Beach Road, Furlong told the *News Leader*. "Commissioner Patterson has especially been our campaign manager ... for several years" to find a permanent solution.

"The tides and winds this year really accelerated the problem," Furlong added. "I think everybody understands the liability issue."

At least Siesta residents and property owners made it through most of the hurricane season, she said, before this situation occurred. "I guess we should count our blessings."

"I wish I had a magic wand to just make it better," Patterson said.

"We struggle with the permitting process," Harriott said, because of the proximity of the road to the shoreline. "It's a fine balance of what we do and how we do it. ... We just can't bandaid it anymore."

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NEW PLANNING COMMISSIONER

Sarasota County Commissioners Joe Barbetta (left) and Jon Thaxton both served on the Planning Commission before winning election to the County Commission. File photo

FORMER NORTH PORT CITY COMMISSIONER VANESSA CARUSONE WINS APPOINTMENT TO WHAT IS VIEWED AS THE COUNTY COMMISSION'S MOST IMPORTANT ADVISORY BOARD

By Rachel Brown Hackney
Editor

A two-term North Port city commissioner not only has been appointed to fill an unexpired Sarasota Planning Commission term through December, she also will stay in the seat through December 2016.

The Sarasota County Commission voted unanimously on Oct. 23 to name Vanessa Carusone to the seat recently vacated by Christopher King.

Carusone was one of eight people who applied for the position; several of them had sought seats when the County Commission named three people to the Planning Commission on Jan. 24.

Although the County Commission had the option of appointing someone just to serve out King's term, which was to end in December, Commissioner Joe Barbetta said it made no sense to put someone on that advisory board for such a short time, only to have to follow up on the action with a four-year appointment in a couple of months.

Vice Chairwoman Carolyn Mason nominated Carusone for the seat. No other names were put forth.

Carusone's application points out that she is president of the board of Tri-County Counseling & Life Skills Center Inc. in North Port.

While on the North Port Commission, she wrote, “I gained an expansive knowledge in governmental planning & development services.”

She also noted that she presided over a number of appellate cases “dealing with land uses, zoning and impact fees.”

Among the other applicants were the following:

- Gregory A. Bacon of Sarasota, a Manatee County Emergency Management officer.
- Michael J. Baumier of Osprey, who is an executive with Gilbane Building Co. in Lakewood Ranch.
- Samuel P. Cohen of North Port, a retiree.
- Keith McMahon of Venice, owner of Accurate Precision International based in England. McMahon’s application notes he was president of the South Venice Civic Association in 2009.
- Donald A. Neu of Sarasota, a consultant. His application says he is a member of the American Institute of Certified Planners.
- Toddington S. Tracy of Englewood, a real estate broker and licensed appraiser trainee with Lasbury Tracy Realty Inc. in Englewood. His application says he is on the Englewood Community Redevelopment Authority.

- Edward J. Wolfe of Sarasota, who was senior planner with Sarasota County Government before he retired recently, following 17 years of service with the county. His application says he is a director of the local chapter of the Florida Planning and Zoning Association.

Cohen, Neu, Tracy and Wolfe all were applicants for the Planning Commission seat openings in January.

“There were a lot of great candidates on this list,” Commission Chairwoman Christine Robinson said after the Oct. 23 vote, “and we encourage everybody to keep their name in” the pool for future appointments.

“This is a very valuable board,” Robinson added of the Planning Commission.

In a December 2011 interview, Commissioner Joe Barbetta told this reporter the Planning Commission “is a sounding board with the public, to vet out projects as they come to fruition. ... We look at all nine seats as very important.”

Barbetta served on the Planning Commission for 14 years before seeking his County Commission seat.

After the Oct. 23 vote, Robinson noted that it took Commissioner Jon Thaxton 13 tries over seven years to get a Planning Commission appointment; it took her two tries.

The Commission shall review all proposed Zoning Ordinance Amendments, Zoning Atlas “map” amendments and special exception petitions. The Commission shall consider all testimony and report. All such matters shall be advisory only to the Board of County Commissioners pursuant to Zoning Ordinance Article 2.2.8.5.

Rules of Procedure
Planning Commission
Sarasota County





PRAISING PRESERVATION

A county staff photo shows the north side of the Crowley Family Home looking south. Photo courtesy Sarasota County

CROWLEY FAMILY HOME AND STORE IN OLD MYAKKA COMMUNITY WIN HISTORIC DESIGNATION FROM SARASOTA COUNTY

By Rachel Brown Hackney

Editor

Thanks to unanimous action of the Sarasota County Commission, the owner of the Crowley Family Home and Store on Old Myakka is hopeful he will be able to obtain grant funds to assist with the restoration of the buildings, which date to the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Without that funding, Mark Fineout told the board, “I don’t make enough money to make [a restoration] happen right away.”

On Oct. 23, the County Commission unanimously voted to approve an historic designation petition for the property, which is located at 2009 Myakka Road.

A memo to the commissioners from Lorrie Muldowney, manager of the Sarasota County History Center, says Fineout had presented the petition for the historic designation to the county’s Historic Preservation Board during a public hearing on Aug. 28. The board found the property was eligible for the designation, the memo adds.

In comments during an Oct. 23 public hearing before the County Commission, Fineout pointed out that the store was very significant to the Myakka agricultural community. Family descendent Jasper Crowley, Fineout said, was integrally involved in the establishment

of the Future Farmers of America chapter in the county.

Further, he said, “the family has a history, coming from way out there in the boon-docks,” of public service, including winning seats in Congress and the U.S. Senate.

Alton Crowley was the first manager of Myakka River State Park, Fineout added, and Jasper Crowley’s uncle was the first bridge tender at New Pass.

Fineout noted that he has been interviewing Crowley Family members to learn more about their ancestors’ accomplishments.

“*It’s just great to see these older buildings preserved ... You don’t see a lot of that in Sarasota.*”

Jon Thaxton
Commissioner
Sarasota County

Muldowney told the commissioners the Crowley home dates to about 1927; one section of the store might have been constructed in 1910, with the rear addition completed in 1925. However, she

said, research also had turned up the date of 1925 for the entire store.

The property is at the intersection of Myakka Road and Rawls Road.

In the late 1800s, Muldowney said, John Crowley moved to Florida with his wife and three children. He built houses and wagons and worked as a blacksmith, she added. “We know



The front of the Crowley Store faces northeast. Photo courtesy Sarasota County

he made a significant contribution to the community,” Muldowney said.

The store itself served as the community post office until the mid-1930s, she added. It had gas pumps as well, Fineout told the commission.

When Commissioner Jon Thaxton asked whether he planned to restore the structures, Fineout said he already had had several meetings with community residents about the future of the buildings. “There will be a replica of the gas station ... We want to do it right.”

Referring to the effort to achieve the historical designation for the property, Fineout added, “I’ve been trying to do this for 20 years.”

A resolution the commissioners approved says Article IV, Chapter 66 of the Sarasota County Code of Ordinances provides that for “a site, building, structure, object or district to be designated as historically significant, it must convey an overall sense of past time and place through at least three of the following attributes of integrity: location, design, set-

ting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.”

The code also notes, “In addition, the property must be associated with a significant historical event or person; possess a distinctive construction type, period or method; represent the work of a master builder, architect or designer; possess high artistic values; or yield important historical information”

Thaxton, who made the motion to grant the historical designation, told Fineout he had been keeping an eye on the old store “since I was just real little.”

“What amazing work you’re doing,” Chairwoman Christine Robinson said. “It’s really a treasure for our county.”

Asked for any further comments after he made the motion, Thaxton said, “I think it’s a pretty easy one for us. It’s just great to see these older buildings preserved ... You don’t see a lot of that in Sarasota.”



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THE STUDENTS' TURN

Students in the STAR program ask tough questions of Sarasota County Schools leaders, including School Board Chairwoman Caroline Zucker (center at the top of the circle). Photos by Scott Proffitt

LOCAL ORGANIZATION GIVES STUDENTS A CHANCE TO ASK HARD QUESTIONS OF THE SARASOTA COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD AND DISTRICT STAFF

By Scott Proffitt

Staff Writer

Just after the Sarasota County School Board meeting concluded on Oct. 16, most people hastily departed. However, a group of students who had been present for the proceedings lingered, and a select group of district leaders stayed with them: School Board Chairwoman Caroline Zucker, Superintendent Lori White, School Board member Shirley Brown and Steve Cantees, executive director of high schools.

The students went to work, pulling chairs into a circle; then, everybody sat down for a round of discussions.

The questions were cogent, important and asked in a pleasant, formal manner that was impressive to observers.

The group was part of Community Youth Development (CYD), a Sarasota organization that touches the lives of thousands of young people through an assortment of programs. The students on this particular afternoon were participants in STAR Leadership Training, which is designed to “encourage youth to take active roles within the community,” according to Kelsey Roehr, youth development specialist with CYD.

Among the topics of discussion that afternoon with the district leaders were school lunches

(with favorable comments by many about the new salad bars offered this year), campus security, class offerings, technology and teacher assessments.

When several students asked how to deal with a bad teacher, for example, White and Zucker offered detailed advice.

“You need to be very specific in your feedback and give the feedback first of all to an assistant principal, a guidance counselor or a principal,” White said. “But be specific: ‘On this date at this time, this happened.’ We welcome that information; we are here to serve you.”

She pointed out that some of the more senior teachers in the district are trying to get up to speed with new technologies that were not integral to classroom instruction even a few years ago.

“... I personally have gone through some of these issues and I have had to go through a full year [of them] in [one] class,” a CYD student said.

White replied, “Some of these issues, such as problems with the classroom technology, will involve remedial actions, and many of these, such as poor performance by the teacher, may take two years before a teacher can be removed. But some of the issues, such as substance abuse, will not take that length of time. Two years is [allowed] for teachers struggling to meet the evaluation criteria and trying to improve.”

Zucker interjected that if the student was not getting satisfaction through her school, “Just

get on the phone and call me. I have a grandson in the schools here. I’ll listen, and I’ll do something.”

Following the discussions, *The Sarasota News Leader* posed its own questions to Roehr:

News Leader: How many students are in the STAR program?

Roehr: Currently we have 19 students participating in the STAR Leadership Training from various high schools throughout Sarasota County. More than 125 youth who completed the training are still involved through service in leadership positions.

STAR is just one of the 100 activities offered by CYD that serve approximately 2,000 Sarasota County youth (students from middle-school age through high school) throughout the year.

News Leader: How do students join CYD?

Roehr: CYD offers a variety of events for middle- and high school students ... The Students Taking Active Roles, or STAR Leadership Training program, was created to encourage youth to take active roles within the community. High school youth will participate in training focused on development of leadership skills, communication and team-building skills, knowledge about civics and how to be more civically engaged as well as specific tools needed to serve on advisory boards or committees. If a student is interested in joining STAR, they need only to apply and can find the application on our website: www.cydonline.org

“Just get on the phone and call me.
... I’ll listen, and I’ll do something.”

Caroline Zucker
Chairwoman
School Board

However, CYD offers a variety of events open to all Sarasota County youth [in middle and high schools] that students can join at any time! A list of these events can be found on our website ... under the "What's Happening" tab.

News Leader: If students are interested, can they join now?

Roehr: We offer three sessions of the STAR Leadership Training per year: fall, spring and summer. Currently, we are in the middle of the fall training session, so if a student is interested, they can apply now and be considered for the following spring or summer sessions.

Youth in grades 9, 10 and 11 are invited to apply for the STAR Leadership Training. It's free! ... [They also] may be eligible for academic credit for completing [it]. Upon successfully completing the training, students will be placed on committees/boards as full voting

members. Serving on these boards counts toward community service hour requirements. Each student will be matched with an adult partner, who will provide technical assistance and support as the youth serves a one-year term on a committee. Ongoing support and training will be provided for [program] graduates throughout the year.

The board service is truly an opportunity for students to express their points of view and take an active role in their community. The training benefits not only the student but the community as a whole. CYD currently partners with more than 75 different boards throughout Sarasota County, and that number continues to grow.

News Leader: How long has the organization been doing this?

Roehr: CYD began in 1996 ... STAR began in 2000 as a model for reconnecting young peo-



Students in the fall STAR Leadership Training program gather after the Oct. 16 School Board meeting.

ple to civic life. STAR started out with 10 students and 10 boards. We now have more than 125 high school-aged youth who have completed the training ... The success of the STAR training led to a change in Florida State Statutes that makes it legal for youth ages 15 and over to serve on nonprofit boards of directors. Florida is one of just four states that allow this!

News Leader: How often do the students get together and go on outings such as attending the School Board meeting?

Roehr: Students in the fall session of STAR Leadership Training meet once a week on Saturdays for 13 weeks. We have a variety of events that are built into the curriculum of the training. After the students go to a School Board meeting, they have the opportunity to enjoy an open discussion with available School Board members, Superintendent White and Steve Cantees, executive director of high schools. The School Board members, White and Cantees are always very welcoming and generous with their time, and this gives the students an opportunity to openly ask questions relating to their school or the district. As you probably noticed, some of them are not shy with their questions!

Another popular training event takes place on what we like to call "County Day." For this, we spend an entire day touring Sarasota County Government, with students given a behind-the-scenes look at our local government functions. They sit in on a County Commission meeting, and they tour the 911 Call Center, the Emergency Operations Center, the Access Sarasota TV facility and the county jail. The commissioners join the students for lunch and open discussion as well.

It is a great opportunity for students to see how decisions are actually made at the local level.

News Leader: Do you have any standards or goals you are required to meet? What is your main funding source?

Roehr: Our mission is "To empower youth as leaders in service to their community." Our goals are to engage 2,000 youth in positive activities in the community and to serve 300 youth in leadership training programs.

We have a contract with Sarasota County Government to provide activities to youth, and we receive funding from the Community Foundation of Sarasota County for the STAR Leadership Training. We also have a large number of individuals and businesses that support CYD.

News Leader: How did you get involved with CYD?

Roehr: I am recent graduate of our very own University of South Florida-Sarasota Manatee, and, not wanting to leave the area — Sarasota is just way too nice of a place to live! — I began searching for organizations that were in line with my personal interests and passions. I came across CYD, and I truly believe that our youth have a unique and important perspective.

I was initially drawn to the way CYD treats youth: as equal partners. CYD strives to create an atmosphere of youth-adult partnership, and I personally believe that is essential for our youth. Knowing that their opinions and perspectives are important can make a huge impact in their lives, and I wanted to be a part of it.





The Sarasota Supervisor of Elections urges all voters to make sure their address information is correct before Election Day. Americanspirit!Dreamstime.com

VOTERS URGED TO UPDATE ADDRESS INFORMATION

Sarasota County Supervisor of Elections Kathy Dent is urging voters to be sure their correct addresses are on file with the elections office before heading to the polls on Election Day, Nov. 6.

Voters who have moved to Sarasota County from another Florida county may update their addresses by calling any one of Dent's offices: Sarasota (861-8619), Venice (861-3760) or North Port (423-9540).

These voters also may submit address changes online at www.SarasotaVotes.com or by emailing tsmith@SarasotaVotes.com.



“To ensure a smooth Election Day experience and avoid the need to vote a provisional ballot,” Dent said, “all voters should take the opportunity to update their address information with my office prior to going to the polls.”

CHANGE SMOKE ALARMS AND WEATHER RADIO BATTERIES

The end of Daylight Saving Time and the start of Eastern Standard Time on Nov. 4, when clocks get turned back one hour, serves as a reminder that it is time to change smoke alarms and weather batteries, Sarasota County Emergency Management officials are telling the public.

Approximately 70 percent of home fire deaths result from fires in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms, a county news release says. Smoke alarms can save lives, but only when they are working correctly, the release points out. A properly installed

and maintained smoke alarm will provide an early warning signal to a family, providing the chance to escape.

Weather radios also are as important as smoke alarms in saving lives.

For additional information regarding weather radios, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 861-4000 and ask for Sarasota County Emergency Management. If you cannot afford a smoke alarm or want more information on smoke alarms, contact the Call Center and ask for the Sarasota County Fire Prevention Office.



According to Interim Fire Marshal Don Damron, the following safety tips could save lives:

- Install smoke alarms on every level of your home. For extra safety, install smoke alarms both inside and outside any sleeping areas, especially if you sleep with your bedroom door closed.
- Make it a habit to replace the batteries in your smoke alarm when you adjust your clocks for the time change. Make sure to mark the second Sunday of March on your calendar when you set your clocks forward one hour.
- Keep smoke alarms clean. Dust can interfere with how your smoke alarm works. Regularly vacuum over your smoke alarm.
- The “chirping” noise you may hear could mean your battery is low. Replace the battery right away.
- Replace your smoke alarms about every 10 years. They do wear out, so write the purchase date with a marker on the back of your smoke alarm. That way you know when it should be replaced.

DEMOCRATS, REPUBLICANS ANNOUNCE ELECTION NIGHT PLANS

The Democratic Club of Sarasota will host an Election Night Victory Party at the Marina Jack Portside Patio on the Sarasota bayfront.

The event will begin after the polls close at 7 p.m. on Nov. 6.

Local Democratic candidates and party leaders will be present.

The party is free. Food and beverages will be available for purchase. Valet parking will be provided.

For more information, visit www.sarasota-dems.com.

The Sarasota County Republican Party is inviting all Republicans to come to its celebration at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 6 at the Hyatt Sarasota.

The event is free, but tickets are required. To register, visit www.SarasotaVictoryParty.com.

A live band and cash bar will be available.

SCAT ROUTES TO HAVE MORE DETOURS ON ORANGE AVENUE

Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) bus riders will face more detours on SCAT Routes 7 and 8 in the Orange Avenue area of the city of Sarasota during November and December, the county has announced.

The first set of detours required for the City of Sarasota's Orange Avenue stormwater improvements project began Oct. 8. The new detours as a result of that project began Monday, Oct. 29, and are expected to extend to Dec. 21.

SCAT bus stops on Orange Avenue will be closed between 10th and 12th streets. The closure will affect Route 7 (Newtown-Northeast Plaza) and Route 8 (Newtown-U.S. 301).

Route 7 will be detoured at the intersection of Orange Avenue and 10th Street. The detour

route will be east on 10th Street, north on U.S. 301 and west on 12th Street, then back to the main route at Osprey Avenue and 12th Street.

Route 8 will turn east to follow the Route 7 detour on 10th Street, then head north on U.S. 301 and west on 12th Street, before returning to the main route at Orange Avenue and 12th Street.

For both routes, service north of 12th Street and south of 10th Street will not be impacted by the detour, a county news release says.

For more information, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 861-5000, or visit www.scgov.net/scat.

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COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE TO HOST BUTTERFLY WORKSHOP

The University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences and the Sarasota County Extension Office will host a Butterfly Workshop from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 3, at Twin Lakes Park, 6700 Clark Road, Sarasota.

Attendees will learn how to attract butterflies by planting and maintaining their own butterfly gardens, a county news release says. They also will have an opportunity to propagate butterfly plants from the garden and tour the butterfly garden at Twin Lakes Park to learn

how Florida butterfly populations have varied over time.

The workshop is free; however, space is limited and registration is required.

Attendees are invited to bring gloves and pruners to take cuttings for the propagation class.

For more information on the workshop, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 861-5000, or visit <http://sarasota.ifas.ufl.edu/>.

ORIOLES TEAM UP TO FIGHT HUNGER IN SARASOTA COUNTY

The Baltimore Orioles and OriolesREACH, the ball club's charitable arm, are teaming up with Sarasota County charities to fight hunger in the local community.

The first initiative will benefit the Mayors' Feed the Hungry Program through a 12-day food drive and a sorting day hosted on Nov. 16 at Ed Smith Stadium, the Orioles' year-round training facility and home for the spring training season, the team has announced.

"Families and individuals in Sarasota County are desperately in need of assistance to address a most basic need: food," said Laura Williams, the Orioles' director of Florida operations, in a news release. "The Orioles and OriolesREACH join the Mayors' Feed the Hungry Program in urging local residents to bring donations of nonperishable food items to Ed Smith Stadium starting on Nov. 5 and then volunteer to help sort and package food on Nov. 16."

The Mayors' Feed the Hungry Program is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization that has helped more than 370,000 hungry persons in Sarasota and Manatee counties since 1987, the news release notes. The organization's Thanksgiving food drive collects approximately 34 tons of nonperishable food items annually. Food is distributed through charitable groups, religious institutions and service agencies. Mayors' Feed the Hungry also uses cash donations to distribute food gift cards, the release says.

"Mayors' Feed the Hungry does not receive government funds, and we are all volunteers," said Scott Biehler, vice chairman of the charity, in the release. "Corporate partners like the Baltimore Orioles are vital to serving the thousands of local residents who would go hungry without our help."

The program is endorsed by the mayors of Sarasota, Bradenton, Palmetto, Venice and Longboat Key, as well as the chairs of the

North Port City Council and the Sarasota and Manatee county commissions.

To drop off food at Ed Smith Stadium starting on Nov. 5, the public may park in short-term spaces along Euclid Avenue and enter the employee gate just south of Café 54. Bins will be located at Fan Assistance inside the gate. Collection hours are Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

To inquire about volunteering for the sorting day, which runs from 1 to 5 p.m. on Nov. 16

email scott@mayorsfeedthehungry.org or call 350-6075.

Ed Smith Stadium is located at 2700 12th St. in Sarasota.

Food items also will be collected at area schools and local businesses. For a list of drop-off locations and information on how to provide a cash donation, visit www.mayors-feedthehungry.org.



Teaming up with local partners for a food drive is just one way the Baltimore Orioles demonstrate their commitment to the community beyond spring training, team officials say. Photo by Norman Schimmel

COOL-WEATHER CRIME PREVENTION TIPS OFFERED

With Sarasota County experiencing cooler weather overnight, many residents sleep with their windows open. Since an open window can be an open invitation for burglars, the Sarasota County Sheriff's Office has crime prevention tips to help keep residents safe:

- Be sure the windows you choose to leave open will not allow someone to reach inside and unlock a nearby door.
- Secondary locking devices allow you to leave windows open enough for ventilation but block them from being opened any wider. These devices can be purchased at home improvement stores. "The cost is minimal but the benefits are tremendous," a Sheriff's Office news release says.
- While track locks are strongly recommended, inexpensive wooden dowels can block horizontal sliding windows from opening too far, and pins inserted through the frames of vertical sliding windows and doors also can keep them in place.
- Should your home be outfitted with an alarm system, consider the installation of "wired screens" that enable you to protect those window openings and detect intruders.
- Finally, whenever you leave the house, close and lock all possible entry points.

SECOND-SEMESTER ENROLLMENT UNDER WAY FOR VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Open enrollment for Sarasota Virtual School began Thursday, Nov. 1, for the second semester of the current 2012-13 school year. The enrollment period will close at 4 p.m., Friday, Nov. 30.

The semester will start Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2013, the Sarasota County Schools has announced.

Sarasota Virtual School (SVS) is a district public school that provides a full-time, online learning option for students in grades K-12, a district news release notes. Students in kindergarten through fifth grade may enroll in the district's full-time virtual program regardless of where they were previously enrolled in school. Students in grades six through 12 must have been enrolled full-time in a Florida public school (traditional, charter or alter-

native) in the previous year to be eligible for enrollment in SVS.

Sarasota Virtual School is an interactive learning environment created through technology. Through it, the student and teacher are separated by time, space or both. Students access lessons and assignments and receive assessments via the Internet. Using technology, teachers communicate with students and parents in many different ways.

The school meets all Florida public school standards and requirements. Students completing graduation requirements will be awarded a high school diploma, the news release says.

The Sarasota County School District contracts with two outside virtual instruction providers

(VIP) approved by the School Board. K12 Florida provides the district with online learning services for students in grades K-12; Florida Virtual School serves students in grades nine-12.

High school students have the option of using either of the two VIPs to meet their specific needs.

The school uses a state-approved curriculum with instructional materials that include text books and a variety of printed materials. Computers may be provided at no charge to eligible students who meet family income requirements, the district news release points out.

Comcast Cable also offers an affordable program, www.internetessentials.com, for Internet access. "Instructors are highly qualified and/or certified teachers, as defined by the federal No Child Left Behind law," the news release says.

For more information, visit the other providers' websites — www.k12.com/flvp (grades K-12) and www.flvsft.com (grades nine-12).

Parents of eligible students who are interested in the virtual school option must schedule an appointment with the Sarasota Virtual School administrator to discuss their student's needs. The office may be reached at 927-9000, ext. 32289, or via email at SVS@sarasota.k12.fl.us.

PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT ADDS PROFESSIONAL STAFF

The Sarasota County Procurement Department is improving the quality of its operations and services through professional staff with extensive local government procurement experience, a county news release says.

"In addition to strengthening the staff, the Procurement Department has significantly revised procurement practices, adopted new ethical policies, expanded solicitation methods and improved vendor relations," the release says.

Peter Boers, who brings 15 years of procurement experience to Sarasota County, manages bids for construction and architectural services. He is a Certified Purchasing Manager and a Certified Professional Public Buyer, the release points out.

Boers also is a member of the Institute for Supply Management, the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and the Florida Association of Public Purchasing Officers, the release adds.

Boers came to Sarasota County from Fort Myers Beach, where he managed contracts and grants, according to the release. He previously was a contract specialist for Cape Coral, where he implemented and administered a procurement card program and coordinated all procurement functions.

Boers also managed procurement operations and processes at Guilford Technical Community College in High Point, NC, and Florida Gulf Coast University in Fort Myers.

Keith Raney, who is a procurement analyst for Sarasota County, had 10 years of public

procurement experience in Venice, the news release says. He is a Certified Public Procurement Officer, a Certified Professional Public Buyer and a Florida Certified Contract Manager.

Raney is a member of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing and the Florida Association of Public Purchasing Officers, the release adds.

Following a 2011 scandal in the Procurement Department that led to dismissal of employees and the resignation of then-County Administrator Jim Ley, Interim County Administrator

Terry Lewis began taking measures in the summer of 2011 to improve practices in the department.

County Administrator Randall Reid has carried on that effort since he took his position in January. The County Commission also recently approved new proposals suggested by Procurement Official Ted Coyman and his staff to incorporate higher standards in the department's work, including new ethics guidelines.

Coyman was appointed to his position in late July.

COMMISSIONER RECOGNIZED FOR SERVICE TO COMMUNITY, CHAMBER

During the 92nd Annual Membership Meeting of the Greater Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, held on Oct. 22, Sarasota County Commissioner Joe Barbetta received the Del Borgsdorf Award.

Barbetta was honored before a capacity crowd of more than 550 business and community leaders attending the meeting at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota, according to a chamber news release.

The Del Borgsdorf Award is for "demonstrated achievement in building bridges and creating public-private partnerships by uniting business, government, and civic interests to create a stronger Greater Sarasota."



*Sarasota County Commissioner Joe Barbetta/
Photo by Norman Schimmel*

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OPINION



THE SARASOTA NEWS LEADER ENCOURAGES VOTERS TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IN CASTING THEIR BALLOTS ON TUESDAY, NOV. 6:

EDITORIAL

President of the United States - **Barack Obama**

U.S. Senate, Florida - **Bill Nelson**

U.S. House of Representatives, District 16 - **Keith Fitzgerald**

Florida State Representative, District 71 - **Adam Tebrugge**

Florida State Representative, District 72 - **Liz Alpert**

Florida State Attorney, 12th Judicial Circuit - **John Torraco**

Sarasota Charter Review Board, District 2 - **Donna Barcomb**

Hospital Board, Central, Seat 1 - **Teresa Carafelli**

RETAIN SUPREME COURT JUSTICES AND APPEALS COURT JUDGES:

Retain Justice R. Fred Lewis - **YES**

Retain Justice Barbara J. Pariente - **YES**

Retain Justice Peggy A. Quince - **YES**

Retain Judge Anthony K. Black - **YES**

Retain Judge Darryl C. Casanueva - **YES**

Retain Judge Charles A. David, Jr. - **YES**

Retain Judge Edward C. LaRose - **YES**

OPINION

STATE CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS:

Amendment 1 - **NO**

Amendment 2 - **NO**

Amendment 3 - **NO**

Amendment 4 - **NO**

Amendment 5 - **NO**

Amendment 6 - **NO**

Amendment 8 - **NO**

Amendment 9 - **NO**

Amendment 10 - **NO**

Amendment 11 - **NO**

Amendment 12 - **NO**

SARASOTA COUNTY AMENDMENTS

Sarasota County Charter Amendment - **YES**

CITY OF SARASOTA CHARTER AMENDMENTS:

Amendment 1, Supermajority vote for certain transactions - **YES**

Amendment 2, Charter Review Committee General Recommendations - **NO**

Amendment 3, Derivatives prohibition - **YES**

Amendment 4, No certificates of participation without referendum - **YES**

Amendment 5, Deletion of alternate minimum wage - **YES**

Amendment 6, Citizen's Initiative Petition, extension of time - **YES**

Amendment 7, Split office of "City Auditor and Clerk" - **NO**

Note to readers: For an explanation of these recommendations, please [click here](#).

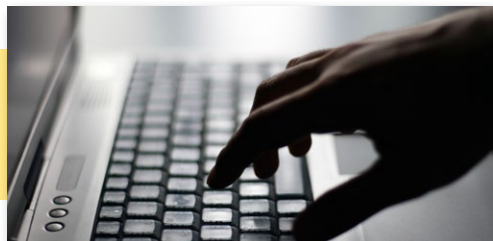
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When our "Likes" on Facebook reach 1,000, we will randomly select one of our subscribers to receive a new iPad.

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The contest concludes when The Sarasota News Leader achieves 1,000 "Likes" on Facebook. One winner will be selected at random from among subscribers. Only subscribers are eligible to win the iPad, regardless of having "Liked" our page on Facebook. Contest is open only to residents of Sarasota County. Selected winners must provide a valid Sarasota County street address to receive the iPad. Contest is void where prohibited by law.

OPINION



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BUCHANAN, PILON HAVE NOT REPRESENTED THEIR CONSTITUENTS WELL

To the editor:

The best indicator of what an incumbent political candidate will do is not what that candidate says, but how he has voted.

Two incumbents who have records are U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Longboat Key — who is running for re-election — and state Rep. Ray Pilon, R-Sarasota, who is asking for a return to his District 72 seat in the Florida Legislature, where he has a two-year record.

We know much about Buchanan's record. He has been in the news regularly, fighting charges of violations of campaign finance law as well as lawsuits filed by former business partners alleging fraud. I'm sure he has spent some of the time we pay him for defending himself against those charges. However, it is his voting record and how he campaigns that get my attention.

Buchanan has followed the Tea Party in casting nearly all his votes. His main goal was to defeat the president, not represent us. The Republicans also voted down Obama's jobs bill, which would have provided veterans returning from Iraq and Afghanistan with job and training opportunities.

Buchanan also refused to debate his opponent, Keith Fitzgerald, a highly respected New College professor, at a press-covered luncheon at Sarasota Tiger Bay Club, a known conser-

vative political organization. If you want the Tea Party in charge, vote for Buchanan.

Ray Pilon, in his two years in Tallahassee, voted for several bills to suppress the votes of minorities, seniors and students; bills placing 11 amendments to the Florida Constitution on this year's ballot — all of them rejected by the non-partisan League of Women Voters; and requiring drug testing of everyone seeking financial aid and randomly of all state employees, both without showing any cause or reason.

He also voted for a reduction in payment of unemployment benefits from 26 to 20 weeks. This vote was cast as "60 Minutes" aired a segment showing children in Sanford, FL, living in a truck while their widowed and unemployed father looked for work. He also participated in numerous attempts by Gov. Scott and the Legislature to gain more control over the court system.

Liz Alpert, a smart, determined candidate who worked her way through college and law school while raising three children, is opposing Pilon. She will represent *us*.

We need representatives who will fight for legislation in *our* best interest, not vote to tag along with the Tea Party and their sugar daddy billionaires.

*Art Ginsburg
Sarasota*

OPINION

FORMER COMMISSIONER ENDORSES CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT

To the editor:

Concerning the story, "Back to the Woodshed" (Oct. 26), about retraining city advisory board members on Sunshine Law requirements, it appears there is a missing element here. We have done this in the past, numerous times, and we are now doing the same thing again and expecting a different result (there is a definition for this process). We are missing an audit(s) that ensures policy and procedures are followed.

The City Auditor and Clerk's Office has never audited the clerk's responsibilities. This brings us to a strong argument for having an

independent auditor, reporting directly to the City Commission. This is the basis for the proposed charter amendment that would change the organization of the city so that the clerk reports to the city manager (needed for best city management practices and efficiency) and the auditor becomes an independent position.

Let's stop the Sunshine Law violation merry-go-round and fix the process. Vote for the proposed charter amendment to split the office of auditor and clerk.

Richard Clapp
Sarasota

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Editor's note: *The writer is a former member of the City Commission.*



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The *Sarasota News Leader* welcomes letters to the editor from its readers. Letters should be no more than 300 words in length, and include the name, street address and telephone number of the writer. Letters should be emailed to Letters@SarasotaNewsLeader.com, with "Letter to the Editor" in the subject line. Letters actually printed will be selected based on space available, subject matter and other factors. We reserve the right to edit any letters submitted for length, grammar, spelling, etc. All letters submitted become the property of *The Sarasota News Leader*.



I like to take my time.

Sure, it's a temptation to rush. Each issue of *The Sarasota News Leader* is brimfull of in-depth coverage of all the news and goings-on in Sarasota County. And it has delightful and informative feature stories. Thanks to its partnership with *This Week In Sarasota*, I always know what the most exciting happenings are each week. Plus, it is simply so beautiful, with photography that takes my breath away.

There is so much there, I don't know where to begin. So it is hard to resist the urge to read it all at once. But I know better. Take your time and indulge in all that it has to offer.

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Sarasota Leisure

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VAN WEZEL
PERFORMING ARTS HALL

EYES OPENED; EARS PLUGGED

ASK OTUS

Inside

EYES OPENED; EARS PLUGGED



Growlers bartender Cabe Unger and others in the audience participate enthusiastically in Wampo's performance. Photos by Tyler Whitson and Arielle Scherr

LUMPYTUNES LIVE SHOWCASES LOCAL EXPERIMENTAL MUSIC — AND NOISE — TO THE SARASOTA COMMUNITY

By Tyler Whitson
Contributing Writer

Community radio station WSLR and popular local bar and venue Growlers — both influential forces in the Sarasota music scene — joined together on Friday, Oct. 19, to bring residents and visitors alike a night of engaging performances at the third annual Lumpytunes Live concert. Those in the audience were treated to a variety of acts whose compositions and improvisations could be considered “difficult listening” as part of a live showcase of the artists and music played by host Rob Demperio on the Lumpytunes program on WSLR.

Attendees who arrived at the showcase without an understanding of what difficult listen-

ing is may have left a few hours later feeling just as, if not more, unsure than they did before. That is because the term doesn't necessarily refer to any kind of music in particular — it is a highly subjective label that can be applied to a diverse collection of sound, noise or the lack thereof, which challenges the expectations of the listener. Some listeners, in fact, may not even consider much difficult listening to be music. Essentially, it is in the eye — or, in this case, the ear — of the beholder.

That being said, there was plenty to behold in the crowded bar that evening. Kicking off the show, a three-piece free jazz band performed an improvisational set with a highly unusu-

al tonal and rhythmic structure, captivating and disorienting the audience with a revolving repertoire of instruments that included a digital saxophone, a trumpet, flutes, guitars and more. Later on, a masked performer aggressively manipulated what looked like a credit card reader from the late 1980s, producing a maelstrom of distorted noise while his partner unleashed a wall of sound from a heavily processed guitar. Toward the end of the night, a man instructed audience members to wear paper bags on their heads before he beat an amplified trash can with multicolored LED lights attached to the ends of his fingers.

The Bilderberg Jazz Arkestra, Vasectomy Party and Wampo, described above in respective order, were just a few of the highlights of the evening's showcase of talented artists, which

also included Let's Make the Water Turn Black, Dark Highways, Drut PD, Lovebrd, John Lichtenstein's Essex Project, the Black Beast of Arrrghhh!, Dream Marina and High Triste.

Some of these acts, such as Vasectomy Party, Dark Highways, Lovebrd, the Black Beast of Arrrghhh! and Wampo, extracted beauty and



Dream Marina, from Seminole, plays music that has a cosmic, psychedelic flavor.



John Lichtenstein plays bass at blistering speeds and runs the signal through homemade equipment.

nuance from what some would consider to be noise. Others, such as the Builderberg Jazz Arkestra, John Lichtenstein's Essex Project, Dream Marina and High Triste, toyed more with the subtleties of instrumental composition and improvisation to create an aural experience of depth and intricacy. Taking a different type of approach, Let's Make the Water Turn Black and Drut PD turned the notion of pop music on its head, using its structured form as a vehicle for delivering playful peculiarities and idiosyncrasies to create something unique, challenging and fun.

The diversity and distinctiveness of the sounds and styles present at the showcase demonstrated what Demperio, self-described "Head Lump" and creator of Lumpytunes, most appreciates in music. "I'm always looking for what's new," he told *The Sarasota News Leader* in an interview on Tuesday, Oct. 23.

Although most people do not look at listening this way, Demperio suggested that a slight change in perspective could clear the passage to a new world of sound. "In listening to experimental music, you really have to open your mind to what music is and what sound is."



Lovebrdr's music straddles the line between noise and ambient, using keyboards and effects pedals to generate sharp, yet soothing tones and powerful sonic reverberations.



Wampo has been participating in the experimental and noise music scene since the 1970s.

Demperio explained that presuppositions about music are what often discourage people from enjoying experimentation. “There were people at the show on Friday who came up to me and said that it’s not music, that it’s nothing you could dance to, so it’s not music,” he said. “Well, you could dance, if you wanted to, to anything. You could dance to the sound of a car accident, if you’re so inclined.”

Although none of the artists who performed at the event did anything this extreme, Demperio emphasized that the music can get somewhat loud and that it is important that listeners protect their hearing with earplugs if necessary.

Aside from keeping an open mind about the boundaries of music, Demperio suggested that listeners also consider who it is creating it. “Realize that the guy or girl who’s making the music is a librarian, is an artist, is a janitor, a newspaper writer,” he said. “The common link between all of those people is that they have an addiction to sound equipment.”

Not only do shows like Lumptytunes Live offer these passionate people — who might not otherwise meet — an opportunity to get together and share ideas, they help to develop a strong, interwoven community of individuals who share a common interest, be they musicians or listeners. This idea is big part of the reason Demperio decided to bring Lumptytunes out of the studio and into the community once every year, and it fits in perfectly with the goals of WSLR.

“It really opens the community up to the music, because people from all walks of life listen to the station,” Demperio explained. “The radio station is kind of a conduit for people to have access to experimental or noise music that normally would shut it off or not be interested or not seek it out.”

A sort of feedback loop is created, then, because the Lumptytunes program exposes community members to a type of music that they may not have been interested in before, and then Lumptytunes Live brings them all together in person. There are results to back this idea up, too: Demperio said that although many in the audience at the event were WSLR programmers, musicians and friends, he saw dozens of new faces throughout the night.

In this way, difficult listening, especially on a local level, can be seen not as about alienating listeners, as is the common misconception, but the exact opposite: engaging listeners and fostering community, creativity and collaboration.

For those who were unable to attend Lumptytunes Live, or who want to satiate their desire for more experimental music, the St. Pete Noise Fest begins on Friday, Nov. 2, at the Venture Compound in St. Petersburg. It will feature more than 57 acts — many of which are local to Sarasota — over the course of two nights.



Lumptytunes
Lumptytunes w a m p o (WSLR) 09 25 12 07

15.00

13 | 5 | 1

Like
Share

Click to listen to part of a Lumptytunes program with Wampo



ASK OTUS

WITH HUNDREDS OF COLORFUL CREATURES, CELERY FIELDS PROVES TO BE A BACKYARD TREASURE FOR SARASOTANS

Dear Readers,

[The road to the Celery Fields](#) is a short, pleasant ride for Sarasotans with cars or bicycles. For an Eastern Screech-Owl visiting from south Siesta Key, it is an arduous flight.

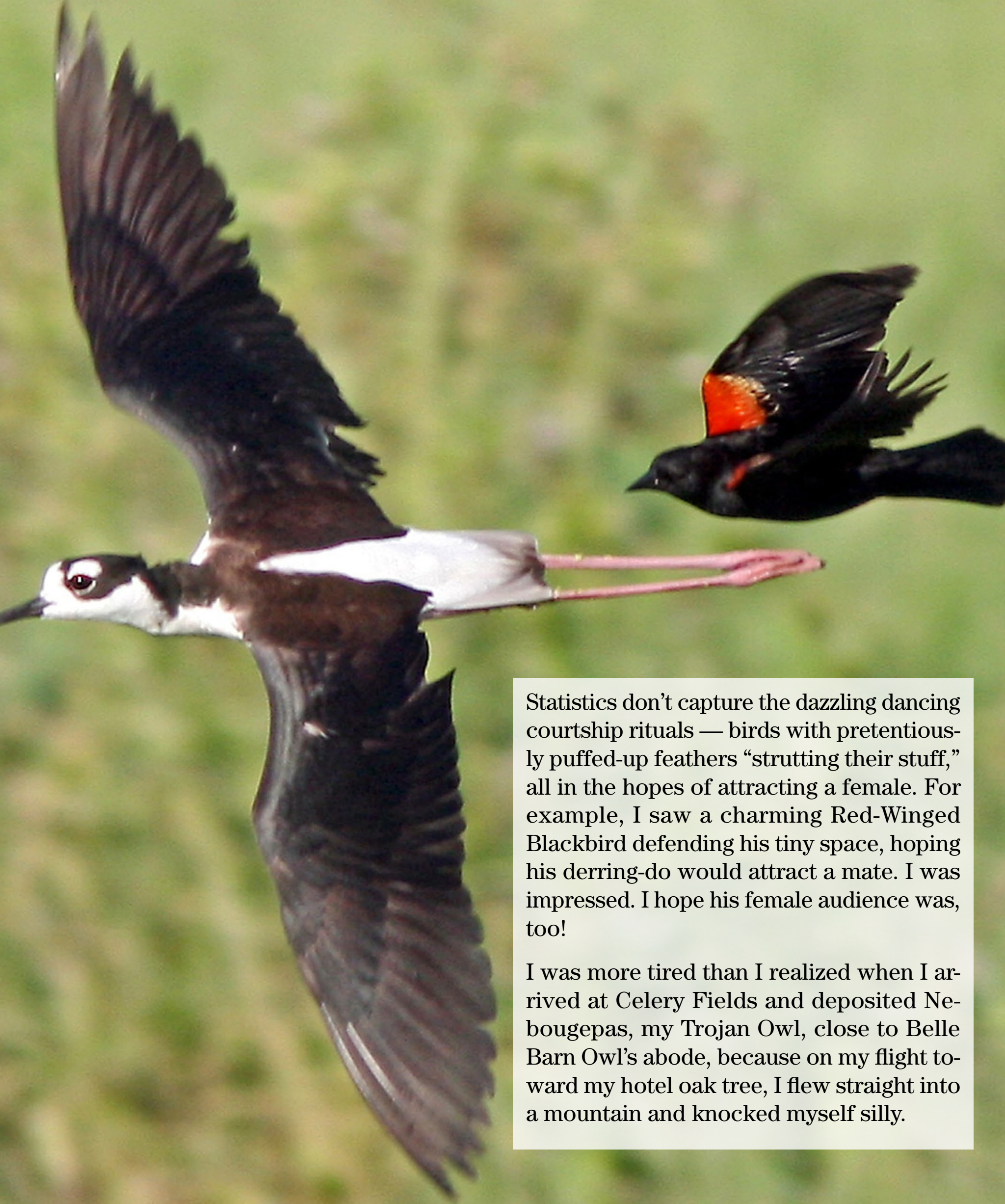
Several things kept up my spirits and resolve while trying to maintain that five-wing-beats-per-second tempo: One was mouse and moth snacks at rest stops; the second was recalling

a fabulous tale from *The Arabian Nights*. I'm sure you all know it. A man traveled the world in search of treasure. After years of fruitless searching, he returned home defeated and destitute only to discover the treasure had been in his very own backyard all that time. I love happy endings!

And that's what the Celery Fields is: a treasure in every Sarasotan's backyard. The 216 (and counting!) bird species that permanently and seasonally make Celery Fields their home draw visitors here from all around the world. The 216 species are impressive statistics. But statistics, being rather cut-and-dried, can't adequately describe those clouds of birds beating their wings, uttering strange cries of delight or warning off of strangers.



Barred Yellows butterflies have been abounding at Celery Fields, too, for mating season. File photo



Statistics don't capture the dazzling dancing courtship rituals — birds with pretentiously puffed-up feathers “strutting their stuff,” all in the hopes of attracting a female. For example, I saw a charming Red-Winged Blackbird defending his tiny space, hoping his derring-do would attract a mate. I was impressed. I hope his female audience was, too!

I was more tired than I realized when I arrived at Celery Fields and deposited Ne-bougepas, my Trojan Owl, close to Belle Barn Owl's abode, because on my flight toward my hotel oak tree, I flew straight into a mountain and knocked myself silly.

There are no mountains in Sarasota County. The land is flat as a pancake around here. Had I wandered off-course into the Great Smoky Mountains? I saw green grass and white Spanish Needle flowers. Butterflies in the hundreds, Barred Yellows (*Eurema daira*), in their summer and autumn morphs, darted about playfully, unabashedly mating — a coterie of little nymphs and satyrs!

It turns out that I was at the foot of the highest peak in all of Sarasota County. It's not a mountain but a gently sloping 75-foot-tall hill called "Observation Point." From its very tip-top, on a clear day you can see forever! Well, almost forever. You see skies, the fields, copses of trees by lakes and ponds, trails leading throughout the 400 acres — and people fishing, jogging and picnicking. Tranquil enjoyments amidst the lively background of the

birds — also fishing, picnicking and vying for their place in the sun, in the gnarled oaks, the reeds, the golden grasses and in the thermals high above Observation Point.

The jewel I seek in this treasured bird sanctuary is the Roseate Spoonbill (*Platalea ajaja*). Just a couple of years ago, we all would have had to travel to the "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge on Sanibel Island to see a flock performing lively courtship displays. Poor John James Audubon had to travel all the way to the Florida Keys to find them. And what a miserably long journey he had by canoe, cutter and skiff. As he wrote in his journal, "Reader, if you have not been in such a place you cannot easily conceive the torments we endured." He was referring to mosquitoes — something we fortunately lack in the cool, dry air of high season.

SARASOTA AUDUBON



CELERY FIELDS

Otus has learned the secret to seeing the glorious Roseate Spoonbill at Celery Fields. Photo by Rick Greenspun

I was but a cute owlet when I saw my first “Rosie” flying over Siesta Key. This being Florida, home to Miami Vice re-runs, I assumed “Flamingo!” It’s a common error among us all, probably due to watching too much [CSI: Ft. Myers](#). (Warning! Gratuitous gore!) And I ever so wanted to grow rosy-feathered-dawn plumage. Mama assured me I would if I just ate enough carotenoids, particularly those containing astaxanthin. “No roseate feathers unless you finish your crustaceans.” Hmm ...

These exquisitely colored feathers were highly prized as fashion accessories: “The feathers of the wings and tail of the Roseate Spoonbill are manufactured into fans by the Indians and Negroes of Florida; and at St. Augustine these ornaments form a regular article of trade.” (J.J. Audubon, circa 1832).

Then came the professional plume hunters with their guns, turning the fine art of hunting for decorative plumes into assembly-line carnage. The favored method of collecting feathers was to shoot the parents while they were nesting in communal colonies, leaving their chicks to die and other nearby nesting birds to abandon their trampled chick and egg nests. This method was so brutally efficient and so financially profitable that by the 1930s, tens of thousands of rosy-dawn feathered fans graced the wardrobes of fashionable ladies all over the world, but the Florida population of Roseate Spoonbills was down to some 35 breeding pairs.

Thanks to federal protection and the advocacy of the Audubon Society, the number of Roseate Spoonbill breeding pairs in Florida today has climbed to 1,000. Still, that’s not



Click to watch the
CSI: Ft. Myers video [Full screen](#)



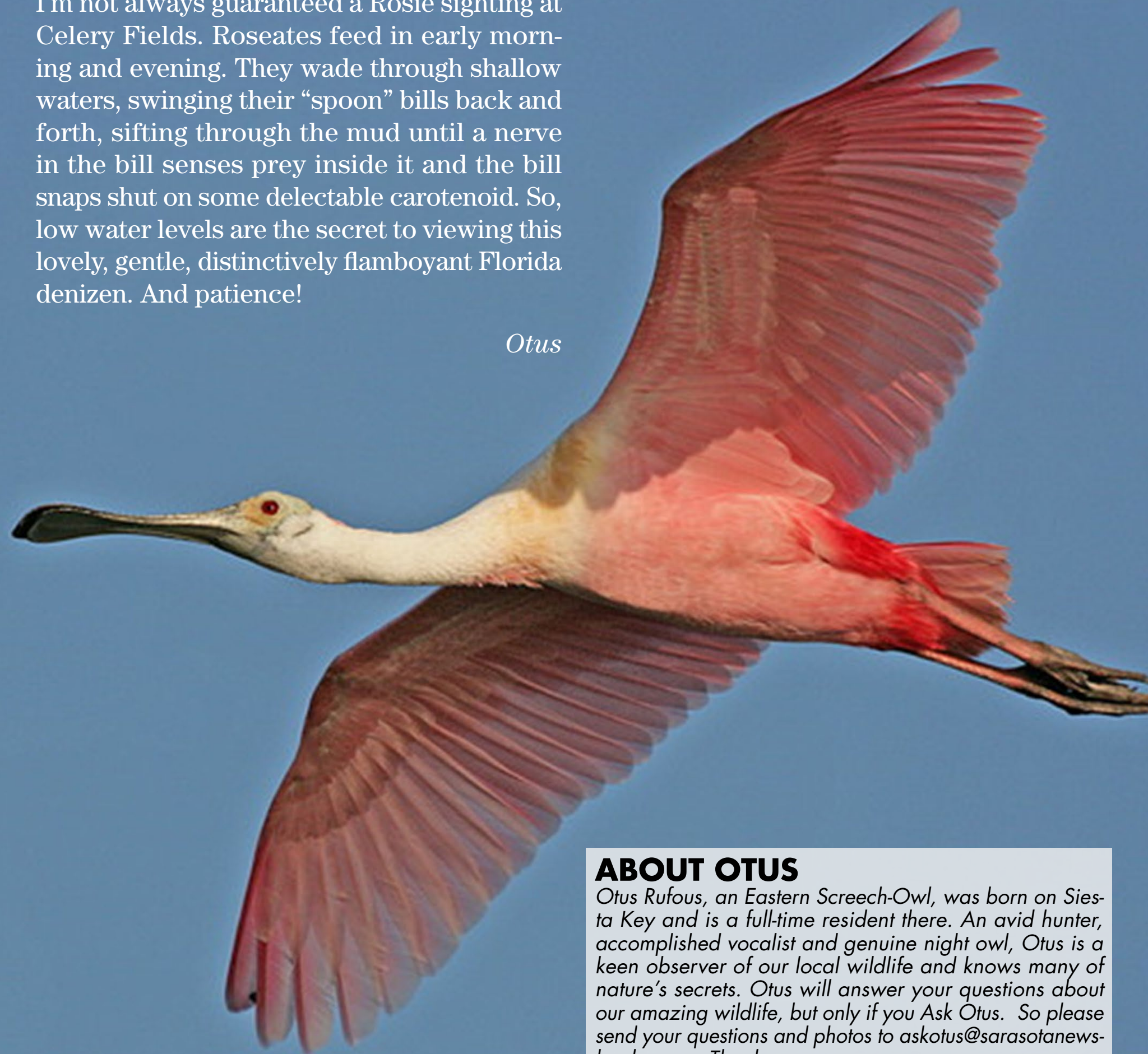
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very many when you picture them spread out through Celery Fields, the Keys, “Ding” Darling and other Florida bird preserves and sanctuaries.

I’m not always guaranteed a Rosie sighting at Celery Fields. Roseates feed in early morning and evening. They wade through shallow waters, swinging their “spoon” bills back and forth, sifting through the mud until a nerve in the bill senses prey inside it and the bill snaps shut on some delectable carotenoid. So, low water levels are the secret to viewing this lovely, gentle, distinctively flamboyant Florida denizen. And patience!

Otus



ABOUT OTUS

Otus Rufous, an Eastern Screech-Owl, was born on Siesta Key and is a full-time resident there. An avid hunter, accomplished vocalist and genuine night owl, Otus is a keen observer of our local wildlife and knows many of nature’s secrets. Otus will answer your questions about our amazing wildlife, but only if you Ask Otus. So please send your questions and photos to askotus@sarasotanewsleader.com. Thank you.

2012 Safe Sex Halloween Bash

DEADTIME STORIES



FREAKY FAIRY TALE LAND

The entrance for the Safe Sex Bash on Oct. 27 featured a giant poster of the theme artwork and, to the right, a ghoulish face. Photos by Robert Hackney

PLANNED PARENTHOOD'S SAFE SEX HALLOWEEN BASH BRINGS OUT THE CREATIVITY — AND A VARIETY OF 'CREATURES' — FOR PLENTY OF PARTYING

Staff Reports

Regular Saturday night patrons at Michael's on East cast long, curious looks as they strolled out into the courtyard on Oct. 27. All around them, people in attire of a fanciful nature — many-hued and multi-themed — danced and cavorted, prowled and purred, in the name of a good cause.

It was the annual Safe Sex Halloween Bash hosted by Planned Parenthood of Southwest and Central Florida.

More than 500 people contributed to one of the organization's biggest fundraisers of the year — and let their imaginations run wild in accord with the theme, "Deadtime Stories."



(From left) Amber and David Burgess with Krista Toomre



Sarasota's favorite vamp, Beneva Fruitville, is easy to spot in her costume.



ChrisAnn Esformes



Caroline Sampey and Jesse White



The dance floor vibrates to the sounds of a DJ and the mass of bodies in full party mode.



A volunteer spends time on the 'morgue gurney' positioned near one of the doors, inspiring close-up examinations to see if he was real.



James and Tara Cocco



Kelly and Kimi Barnett



Rochelle Currey Nigri



Santa DeOliveira and Leonard Guerra



Spike and Buffy Berry



REFLECTIONS ON HUMAN BEHAVIOR

Sean Mahoney and Michael Novak in Gossamer Gallants

FROM DEPICTING FANCIES OF ROMANCE TO REFLECTIONS ON BAROQUE COURT FORMALITY, PAUL TAYLOR DANCERS CONVEY WELL THE CHOREOGRAPHER'S VOCABULARY

By Elinor Rogosin
A&E Writer

It is a well-known fact that Paul Taylor's career as a choreographer began when he stood on a New York stage and did not move a muscle for 10 minutes. And it is that ironic twist to whatever an audience expects that has continued to be Taylor's trademark since he emerged from the cocoon of the Martha Graham Dance Company in the 1950s.

Though I haven't seen half of Taylor's 136 "ballets," I have watched enough of his work over the years to recognize his quirky humor and cynical appraisal of human behavior in the three ballets performed by The Paul Taylor

Dance Company on the opening night of The Sarasota Ballet's 2012-2013 season.

Only Paul Taylor would use the world of bees and bugs for his whimsical, delightful but sardonic exploration of love in *Gossamer Gallant*, with music by Smetana and set and costumes by Santo Loquasto. The men, resembling a strange breed of insects with wings, jump and roll on the floor, hands nestled under their chins as they ineffectively poke at the empty air. It is all fun and games until the girls shimmy into view. They are slinky, apple green visions of female vamps, and as the music sings, the men do cartwheels in their

excitement. Overcome by love, the men — or, should I say, the male insects — whirl and leap as, one by one, the girls come and go, swishing their hips and caressing their strange

antennae that emerge like tendrils from tight caps.

Whether they will mate is the proverbial question, for the women become the predators in



Michelle Fleet and Jamie Rae Walker perform in Gossamer Gallants. Photos by Tom Caravaglia, courtesy of The Paul Taylor Dance Company



Michael Trusnovec in The Uncommitted

this strange, slightly misanthropic, but always witty commentary on the way a man chases a woman until she captures him.

Though this amusing ballet sets the mood for the evening, above all, do not be fooled: Paul Taylor is a serious and thoughtful artist.

The Uncommitted continues Taylor's exploration of contemporary relationships; but in this complex ballet set to the effective and haunting score by Arvo Part, the popular Estonian composer, Taylor is in a more somber mood. Again, the costumes are by Looquasto and the patterned, flowered unitards might reflect both the changing nature of the seasons and of relationships, the focus of this work.

As the ballet opens, the 11 dancers rush onto the stage, circle in slow strides and suddenly, with the sound of a gong, rush off, leaving a solo dancer center stage. Each solo is that of a lone figure reaching, hoping and pleading for an answer. One dancer doubles into herself; a man flings himself around the stage; another punches the air: each one, alone — searching, arms stretched into the empty air and looking up as if to find an unseen force that will provide the hidden answer. This emotional, powerful pattern is repeated over and over with the group getting smaller and smaller, as if one by one, they leave this universe.

The focus shifts in the second section of the ballet to a series of duets that reflect how easily we leave one another. Groups enter, regroup and leave — two men fight; men and women easily exchange partners in a series of duets; and in the last *pas de deux*, when the woman is left alone as her indifferent partner walks away, the story of misplaced loyal-

ty that Taylor is telling is emphasized in *The Uncommitted*.

I am not sure if I wanted to protect myself from the anguish on stage, but though I was pulled into the extraordinary inventiveness and originality of the dance in the first section, it was the power of the music that kept me entranced in this second section.

A word here about the 11 dancers who make up The Paul Taylor Dance Company: Each one has absorbed Taylor's aesthetic and movement vocabulary, which is a blend of modern dance techniques and ballet, and they dance with a seamless, expressive cohesiveness.

Last but not least, my favorite piece of the evening, aptly titled *Cascade*, was pure dance: a cascading, nonstop explosion of movement to Bach's *Concertos for Piano and Orchestra*. I love the music of Bach and I love to watch highly trained, beautiful dancers skim across the stage like a group of elegant panthers stalking their prey.

Taylor's longtime partners, Jennifer Tipton (lighting) and Santo Loquasto (costumes), worked with him to suggest the quasi-Baroque period of Bach's world. The dancing, rooted in the dances of the period, retained a sense of Baroque court formality in the various duets. However, when the men danced in unison, all sense of formality was pushed aside as they followed George Smallwood, a bald, older dancer who jumped with the tensile strength of a goat.

Like Taylor, who was once a large, graceful dancer, the men in his company are strong, quick and light on their feet.

At the ballet's climax, it was as if Taylor had said, "Enough of that," and the dancers bounded into the modern world, joyfully crisscrossing the stage and riding the waves of the music in long running leaps, arms swinging in the air: a lovely, fast, blissful celebration of music and dance to end the evening on a high note.

Sarasota will see more of Paul Taylor's choreography in November when the Sarasota Ballet will perform *Company B*, set to the popular music of The Andrews Sisters and the songs of World War II.



Parisa Khobdeh and Francisco Graciano perform in The Uncommitted



The male performers in The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe strut their stuff in Nate Jacobs 50s Jukebox Revue. Contributed photos

JUKEBOX REVUE TO OPEN WBTT SEASON NOV. 16

The first show of the 2012-13 season for The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe (WBTT), *Nate Jacobs '50s Jukebox Revue*, will open on Friday, Nov. 16, and run through Sunday, Dec. 16.

Conceived and directed by founding Artistic Director Nate Jacobs, this original revue promises to be an exciting new musical that gives homage to the heyday of rock 'n' roll.

“What a fun and innocent time the '50s were,” said Jacobs in a news release. “Poodle skirts and bobby socks, fast dance tunes for jitterbugs and ballads for the romantics. Life was good, reflected in the popular music of the day. Lyrics were upbeat and the music was energetic. We began to see the emergence of African-American artists such as Fats Domino, Little Richard and Muddy Waters. I really

wanted to relive this exciting musical era and we've had a lot of fun introducing it to our younger Troupe members.”

In addition to the music presented by the Troupe, the WBTT show presents a story. *Nate Jacobs '50s Jukebox Revue* has the audience follow a group of singers, musicians and dancers performing on the “Chitlin’ Circuit.” The plot takes the group to many American cities, from Memphis to New York, experiencing life on the road.

A large cast includes some regular Troupe members as well as newer performers. Emmanuel Avraham, Ariel Blue, Dhakeria Cunningham, Will Little, Charles Manning, Michael Mendez, Tzadok Porter and Alyssa White will surely be recognized by regular WBTT attendees. Newer members of this show are Gordon

Gregory, Davronette Henson, Kristal Walker and Henry Washington.

The musical director is James Dodge, the choreographer is Dhakeira Cunningham, the costumer is Cristy Owen and the set designer is Michael Newton-Brown.

"We are really looking forward to opening our season in the '50s," continued in the news release. "After singing and swinging to songs like *Why Do Fools Fall in Love*, *Stagger Lee* and *Shake Rattle and Roll*, you'll be dancing out the door!"

The mission of WBTT is to produce plays that promote and celebrate the African-American experience and attract diverse audiences while using the productions as a vehicle for supporting African-American artists and building the self-esteem of African-American youth, the news release points out. Throughout the past decade, WBTT has produced many productions locally and around the state of Florida. All per-

formances will be held at the WBTT theater at 1646 10th Way in Sarasota. Times are 8 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Sundays. Tickets, which are \$28, may be purchased online at www.wbttstrq.org or by calling the box office at 366-1505.



The Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe women are ready to wow audiences in the first show of the 2012-13 season.



Glen Campbell/Contributed

GLEN CAMPBELL RETURNING TO THE VAN WEZEL

The Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall will welcome back country music icon Glen Campbell during a stop Sunday, Nov. 4, on his “Goodbye Tour.”

Alongside Campbell on the stage will be three of his children — Cal, Shannon and Ashley — “who are also highly talented musicians with a passion for great storytelling,” a news release says. “Not only do they add sentimental value to the ‘Goodbye Tour,’” the release adds, “but they also provide their father with support as he puts on a wonderful performance, night after night.”

Campbell rose to stardom in the late 1960s and early 1970s, winning multiple Grammys and landing 27 songs in the Top 10. Timeless classics such as *Southern Nights*, *Wichita Lineman* and *Rhinestone Cowboy* in the Campbell canon still are garnering accolades today.

Tickets are priced from \$10 to \$65. For more information, call the box office at 953-3368 or visit www.VanWezel.org.

The Van Wezel is located at 777 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota.

ECKES TO PERFORM FREE CONCERT ON NOV. 14

The Sarasota Concert Association will present Sylvia Reynolds Eckes, a professor emeritus of piano at Ohio University, in a Munchtime Musicales performance on Nov. 14 at noon in David Cohen Hall inside the Beatrice Friedman Symphony Center, 709 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota.

Eckes holds degrees from Peabody Conservatory, the Juilliard School and the University of Kansas, according to a news release. "Following decisive critical acclaim" from her debut concerts in Oslo, Norway, and Lincoln Center in New York City, the release adds, she began performing in concerts as a soloist and chamber musician, as well as with orchestras in China, Europe, Scandinavia and throughout the United States.

In 2011, Eckes was awarded the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit, Knight, First Class, for her extensive work on the music of Edvard Grieg, the news release notes.

Eckes' program on Nov. 14 will feature Franz

Joseph Haydn's *Sonata in B Minor, Hob. 47*, selected works from Grieg's *Lyric Pieces* and *Holberg Suite*, Frederic Chopin's *Ballade No. 3 in A-flat Major* and Sergei Rachmaninoff's *Prelude in E-flat Major, Op. 23, No. 6* and the *Etude-Tableau in E-flat Major, Op. 33, No. 7*.

Munchtime Musicales is a series of free concerts featuring performances by high-caliber, area-based artists. The series is designed to offer a wide variety of musical genres, including classical, folk and jazz, featuring both vocal and instrumental performers.

For more information, call 351-7467 or visit www.sarasotaconcertassociation.org.



Sylvia Eckes will perform during the Nov. 14 Munchtime Musicales in Sarasota. Contributed photo

KRAEMER & HURRICANES TO PERFORM IN DOWNTOWN VENICE

The Jazz Club of Sarasota will present Ron Kraemer & the Hurricanes in a Joy of Jazz performance on Saturday, Nov. 17, from 2 to 4 p.m. in Centennial Park in downtown Venice.

Kraemer is a noted blues, jazz and swing guitarist whose “understated stage presence belies impressive instrumental mastery as he runs up and down the neck of his jazz guitar with focus and fluidity,” according to music blog columnist Susan James.

Accompanying Kraemer for this concert will be JP Coley on upright bass, Art Siegel on drums, Eddie Tobin on keyboards and Mark Gould on sax, according to a news release.

“We’ll do a mix of blues, jazz and swing,” says Kraemer in the release. “Every song we do has at least one of those elements to it — and sometimes the song has all three elements! One way or the other, our music is sometimes jazzy, often bluesy — but always cool.”

The 2012-2013 Joy of Jazz series will include three more concerts, dates and details to be announced soon.

“It’s a perfect way to spend a weekend afternoon, enjoying the great melodies, rich harmonies and soulful rhythms of jazz,” says Bill Beckman, a Jazz Club of Sarasota board member and producer of this series, in the news release.

The concert is free, but donations will be accepted in support of the Jazz Club’s scholarship fund. Guests are encouraged to bring lawn chairs and blankets. Food and beverages will be available; coolers are not allowed.



Ron Kraemer/Contributed

For more information, call 366-1552 or visit www.jazzclubsarasota.org.

The series is sponsored in part by the Gulf Coast Community Foundation.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

THE BEST OF THE UPCOMING WEEK

02
NOV

Nunsense

Nov. 2 to 4, 7:30 to 9 p.m., Player's Theatre, 838 N. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota. Tickets: \$25. Information: 365-2494 or www.theplayers.org

02
NOV

Ariel Quartet in concert (Perlman Music Program/Suncoast)

Nov. 2, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., Tube Dude Gallery, 1001 Central Ave., Sarasota. Tickets: \$5, in advance; free if space available; 955-4942.

02
NOV

Sarasota Chalk Festival

Oct. 28 to Nov. 6, Burn's Square (South Pineapple Avenue and Laurel Street), Sarasota. Free admission. Information: www.ChalkFestival.org

04
NOV

Barbara Ras Poetry Reading

Nov. 4, 1 to 2 p.m., Bookstore1Sarasota, 1359 Main St., Sarasota. Free admission. Information: 365-7900 or bookstore1sarasota.com

09
NOV

3rd Annual Crystal Classic Master Sand Sculpting Competition

Nov. 9-12, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Siesta Public Beach; \$5 daily admission; thecrystalclassic.org
VIP "Meet the Sculptors" Reception, Nov. 8, 6 to 8 p.m., Cafe Gabbiano, 5104 Ocean Blvd., Siesta Key. Admission: \$50; for information: 364-3880 or info@siestakeyassociation.com

10
NOV

Sarasota Medieval Fair

Nov. 10-11, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sarasota Fairgrounds, 3000 Ringling Blvd, Sarasota. Admission: adults, \$16.95 daily; children, \$8.95. Information: sarasotamedievalfair.com

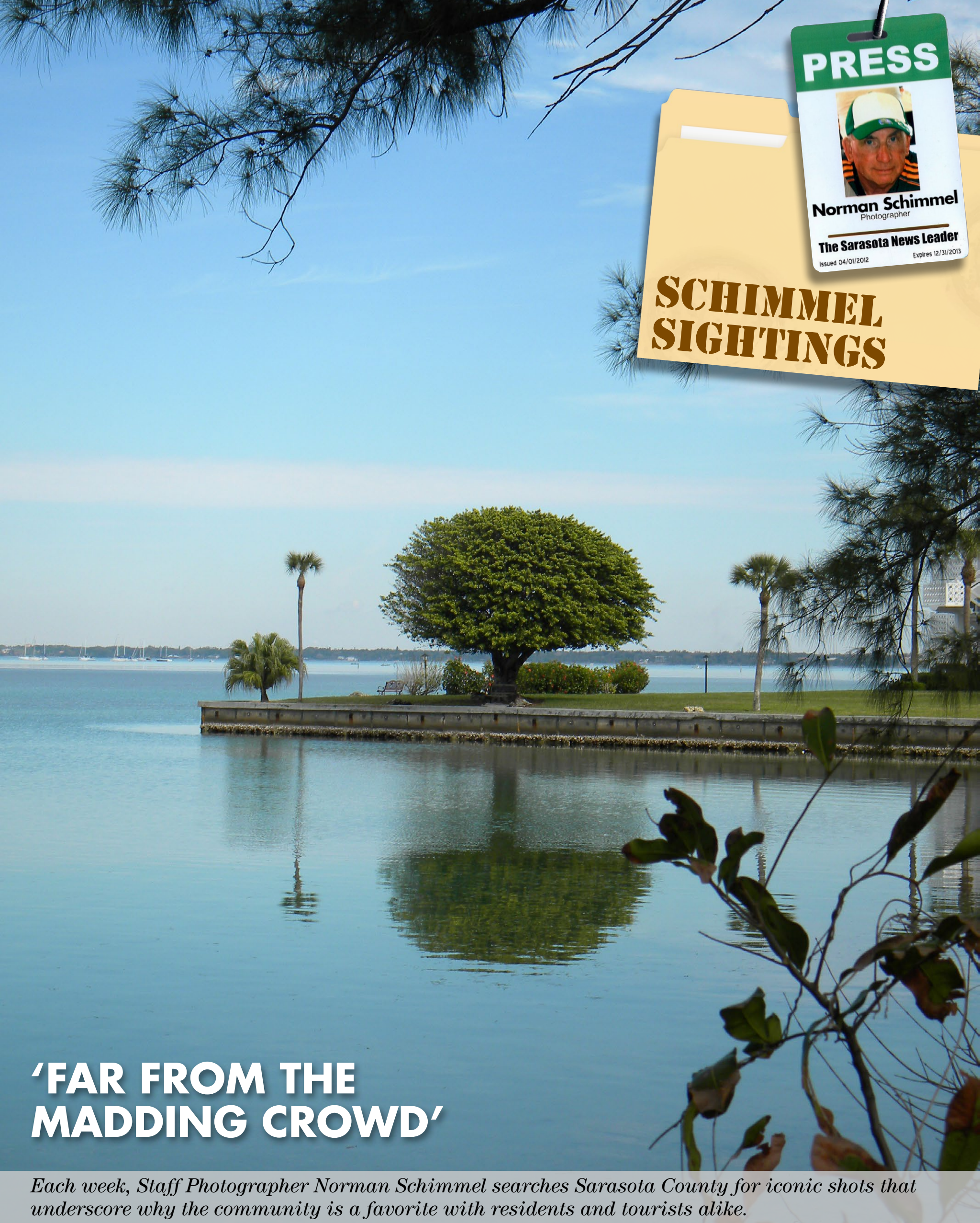
To get all the details on these and other great activities — food, nightlife, music, art, theater, children's events, learning opportunities and more — go to Sarasota's No. 1 source for local events, hot spots, fun activities and hidden gems:



thisweekin
SARASOTA.com
SARASOTA'S MASTER CALENDAR



SCHIMMEL SIGHTINGS



‘FAR FROM THE MADDING CROWD’

Each week, Staff Photographer Norman Schimmel searches Sarasota County for iconic shots that underscore why the community is a favorite with residents and tourists alike.