

MICAwave

A Periodic Publication of the Marco Island Civic Association
Read by Over 20,000 Members

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October 2018



Join Residents' Beach
Cleanup – October 13

Scenes from MICA's
2018 July 4th Sand Jam

2018 Marco City Council Election - Candidate Q & A
Rookery Bay Research Reserve Celebrates 40 Years!

News and Reviews of What's Really Happening on Marco Island

President's Message

by Kathy Sullivan, MICA President

As I was thinking about what to write about in this issue of the MICAwave, I considered several topics. I thought about all the frustration we're still dealing with one year after Irma. This is a very personal topic for me. At the Sullivan home there is still no roof, no lanai screens, etc. I might have felt better after venting, but it certainly wouldn't achieve any good for the community. I could write about all the upheaval and chaos in our city government. That's been reported widely, and my covering here would just be more negativity. Then it hit me. There is something I can write about that is both important and something I can do to make things better. In fact, we all can do something. And that is inform yourself and vote wisely.

Also, I am a firm believer in not reinventing the wheel. As I looked over the issue of the MICAwave from just before the city council election two years ago, I found the letter from the then President, Dianna Dohm. She agreed to let me plagiarize her words, but in a spirit of honesty and transparency, I'll quote them verbatim.

"One of our most influential powers as citizens is exercising our right to vote. However, with this power comes a civic responsibility to consider our options and make informed decisions when electing representatives to office, whether it be local, state or national level. This is not always an easy task, especially with the constant

efforts by campaigns to persuade voters to elect certain politicians. In today's fast-paced society, it may seem difficult to remain informed without spending hours sifting through each candidate's materials to find the most accurate information. That is why MICA issued this special edition of the MICAwave."

For this issue, each candidate has been asked the same questions. Hear from them in their own words. We selected the questions specifically to address some of the most pressing issues facing our community now or in the future. To ensure everyone has an opportunity to ask their own questions, along with the Marco Island Chamber of Commerce and the Marco Island Area Association of Realtors, MICA is sponsoring two candidate forums. Both will be held at the **Marco Island Historical Society from 5:30 to 7:30 PM. The dates are October 10th and 18th.**

Please mark your calendars, bring your questions and be an informed voter.



*Kathy Sullivan, President,
MICA Board of Directors*

Marco Island Civic Association

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Cover Photo: taken at Residents' Beach by JoAnn Gaudino Brandau, winner of the best "beach sunset" photo competition run by Marco Island Civic Association, in partnership with the Marco Island Center for the Arts.



Rookery Bay Research Reserve Celebrates 40 Years with Documentary Film

~ Segments of documentary film previewed at National Estuaries Day event ~

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve is celebrating its 40th anniversary with the production of a full-length documentary film. Clips from the film, which is slated to air on PBS stations across the state on Earth Day 2019 (April 22, 2019), was previewed at the Reserve's National Estuaries Day celebration on September 29.

"Rookery Bay is a special habitat, and I'm proud of our staff's dedication to preservation and education regarding its natural resources," said Florida Department of Environmental Protection Secretary Noah Valenstein.

"We are really excited about this film," said Reserve Director Keith Laakkonen. "The documentary not only describes, but also shows the diversity of connections that people have made to this special place for over four decades."

Now underway, the documentary film highlights the reserve's story of how a vision to protect the fragile ecosystem between Marco Island and Naples grew to include partnerships with local families and conservation agencies. Because of their efforts, the reserve offers a myriad of opportunities for exploration and education.

The film, produced by award-winning director Elam Stoltzfus and writer Nic Stoltzfus of Live Oak Production Group, also highlights Rookery Bay's past and present programs, including appearances by people who were instrumental in creating the reserve, and many partners, who continue to help the reserve meet its mission. The documentary is funded by DEP with support from the Collier County Tourism and Development Council.

Continued on page 13



News from Across the Bridge

by Donna Fiala, Collier County Commissioner

My best friend, Shirlee Barcic, is on the Board of Trustees with Physician's Regional Hospital, and attended their annual retreat in September. Shirlee was excited to learn about all the advancements that have been made in this past year, and that the business has tripled! They showed the Trustees the newest advancements in Robotics that had been added to both of their hospitals and demonstrated how they work. Shirlee invited me to attend the Annual Social afterward as her guest, so I got to talk with the doctors and board members, plus Scott Lowe, the CEO and Susan Takacs, the COO, and Jim Kauffman, Chairman of the Board. We are thankful on Marco that this hospital is doing so well. They even opened a Walk in Clinic in East Naples, close to the pickleball courts on Thomasson Dr. If any of you play pickleball in East Naples, especially during tournaments, you would be glad to read that.

The Marco Island Historical Society is readying itself for its big – no HUGE – event coming up toward the end of the year. The famous “Marco Cat” from the Cushing Expedition will be coming “home” for a



*Donna Fiala,
Collier County Commissioner,
Marco Island Representative*

visit. The cat lived in the muck of Marco after being carved by the Calusa Indians, and then discovered by Cushing. I think most of us love to wear the replica ‘Cat’ around our necks to show where we live (or wished we lived), and who we support. The Marco Cat was discovered in 1896 during the Cushing Expedition on Marco Island as they were searching for information about the ancient Calusa Indians, who were a war-like tribe and are now extinct. (It was the Plague that did them in, not human beings.) Cushing discovered many artifacts, but many of them disintegrated as they were being removed from the muck and hit the outside air. By the time they discovered the Cat, they realized that items found must immediately be covered with muck and held air tight to preserve them. The Cat was one of the lucky artifacts that still survives, along with masks and shards, etc. The Marco Island Historical Museum will be hosting a few of these

Continued on page 48

Presenting Magical Marco



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What Can Mini Reefs Do to Help Water Pollution Problems in South Florida?

by David Wolff, President/Executive Director, Ocean Habitats, Inc.

It's been a wet summer in central Florida and the rainfall caused the level of Lake Okeechobee to reach dangerously high levels. In June, the US Army Corp started to release an extra two billion gallons of water every day to lower the lake level. This water was full of toxic blue green algae and runoff from farming and ranching activities in Central Florida. As the water reached the Gulf of Mexico, an ecological disaster unfolded in SW Florida. Hundreds of sea turtles, manatees, sharks and hundreds of thousands of fish have perished.

This summer's water problems and marine death toll have led people to wonder what can be done to help disasters like this? One great way to help is to install Ocean Habitats' Mini Reefs under as many docks as possible. There are many animals that live on the Mini Reef that view blue green algae, red tide, bacteria and viruses as nothing more than lunch and dinner. Even the toxins from these animals are digested. Mote Marine Labs is even using this design to help in its red tide studies. Mote is deploying Mini Reefs to collect filter feeders so it can measure how much red tide it can eat in a day.

In addition to cleaning the polluted water, large numbers of Mini Reefs would produce millions

of fish and crabs every year. Marco Island alone already has enough Mini Reefs installed to clean 15.6 million gallons per day but more can be done. There are enough docks on the island that if each had four Mini Reefs the island would clean 1 billion gallons everyday. It would also produce 8.4 million fish and 5.6 million crabs every year! Marco Island is capable of growing enough marine life to replace what was lost this summer every year.

If you've been thinking of installing Mini Reefs, there's no better time than now. If you already have some you can always add more. New discounts are now available for orders of multiple units. The more Mini Reefs you donate, the more you save, and remember Ocean Habitats is a 501c3 non profit, so a portion of your donation is tax deductible. There are docks on the island with as many as 27 Mini Reefs working 24 hours a day under them. The more units that hit the water, the faster we get to a day when events like this summer's in SW Florida can have their impact reduced and recovery can be a much faster path.

You can find more information at oceanhabitatsinc.com or contact Ocean Habitats at 218-841-5932.

*Remember...
No Glass
at the Beach*



Greetings from the Family Church Food Pantry of Marco Island!

by Liz Pecora, Director of Community Affairs, Family Church Food Pantry

God has continued to bless the Pantry with incredible growth, a dedicated staff, and outpouring of volunteers and community support. The Pantry started in three small rooms of Family Church's annex building in January, 2016. Today we use the whole building, an expansion of over 300%.

The presence of the Food Pantry has spread deep into our community and beyond, becoming a trusted resource and partner in the fight against hunger. In the first nine months of 2018, the number of Pantry guests has grown by over 400%, receiving 108,000 pounds of food, or the equivalent of over 90,000 meals. In this year alone, we estimate we will serve 25,000 guests.

These numbers amaze us too! The work of the Pantry is made possible through the support of: 11 area churches, dozens of our community's organizations and businesses, and 13 regional, and national partners such as Publix, Walmart, and Winn Dixie and food banks such as Harry Chapin, Midwest Food Bank and Collier Harvest Foundation.

Some people may question the need for a food pantry in a community like Marco Island, not realizing that on average, 40% of the children in our schools are eligible to participate in free and/or reduced rate meal programs.

Recently the Pantry and its volunteers have gone beyond its four walls. On Friday afternoons, Mobile Outreach Programs bring food to Manatee Middle School, Marco Island Charter Middle School and Greater Marco YMCA, helping to ensure children do not go hungry on weekends. Volunteers even take any leftover food to Immokalee Churches and neighborhoods along the Route 41 Corridor.

All this would not be possible without a small army of helpers! Acts 20:35 states "It is more blessed to give than to receive" and the Pantry's dedicated volunteers attest to this. We need your help too! Pantry days are the 2nd and 4th Saturday of every month, there are two shifts, about two hours each, to choose from and each shift requires 22-24 persons.

And that's not the only opportunity to be blessed by serving others! Many volunteers are needed in the weeks prior to Pantry days. Volunteers gather, unload, check expiration dates, mark and shelf food products. It has been wonderful to watch friendships grow, teams and organizations being inspired to help and parents working along side their children. If you'd like to partner with us in financial support we would very



much appreciate that! We are currently spending in excess of \$4,000 per month to meet the basic needs of our growing number of Pantry guests each month.

To find out more, give us a call, stop by on a Pantry Day or send your name to PantryVolunteers@fbcmarco.com or call 239-394-1646 x 225. Please make any checks to Family Church Marco with 'Food Pantry' noted in the memo line. We also offer online donations.

Thank you, Marco Island for your support!

In August of 2017, our team launched "Lunch with Friends" in collaboration with the Marco YMCA. This special Outreach is for those in our community age 60+ and provides an opportunity for people to gather for food, fun, and fellowship. See old friends, make new friends, have a delicious lunch. And it is all free! Thanks to generous donations by our local restaurants and service by volunteers from the Pantry and the YMCA.



"Lunch with Friends" is the third Thursday of each month upstairs at the Family Church Fellowship Hall, 1450 Winterberry Drive, Marco Island, FL 34145. Please call Nancy Kot to RSVP 706-566-8532.



Residents' Beach Clean-Up

8-10 am, Saturday
October 13th

Help us keep our beach beautiful!

Sponsored by MICA

Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce provides buckets and grabbers.

MICA provides the Gator for trash removal and dumpster facilities.

Bring your own reusable bottle for water to fill up from our Igloo water dispenser.



A Small Grassroots Organization Can Have a Major Impact on the Marco Community

by Mimi Wolok, Executive Director, Audubon of the Western Everglades

Since 1961, Audubon of the Western Everglades (AWE) has protected Southwest Florida's natural resources and wildlife through advocacy and education.

On Marco Island, AWE focuses on education and community science projects that have a real impact on residents and guests on Marco Island and the imperiled species sharing space with them.

We know from experience that visitors to Marco Island want to know about the nature that surrounds them.

That is why the Summer Shorebird Stewardship Initiative on Sand Dollar Island attracts so many curious beachgoers. They gravitate to the Marco volunteers - called Stewards - wearing t-shirts announcing, "Ask Me About the Birds". They look through the spotting scope at one of the last remaining Florida nesting hotspots for several listed shorebird species. By the time they walk away, they know they just bore witness to a sight unlike anything they may ever see again.



Black skimmer with its baby on Marco Island

Getting this initiative off the ground each year is no small feat, requiring the cooperation of an impressive array of partners: Audubon Florida,

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Our most important partners, however, are Marco's volunteer Stewards.

Each year, AWE must find private donations to ensure the initiative's success. Donate to AWE and become a Shorebird Steward.



Least tern pair feeding their young

AWE's Owl Watch is Community Science at its best. This 2018 nesting season, Owl Watch harnessed the power of over 40 community volunteers to monitor 194 Florida Burrowing Owl pairs. AWE pays a University of Florida graduate student to band and study nesting owls. The goals are to determine how and why owls nest, so that we can predict and better manage for the future of Marco's most beloved neighborhood wildlife.

Thanks to our generous donors and the University of Florida's Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, all of whom have allowed this important research to flourish.

The Burrowing Owl Class of 2018 - with 423 chicks successfully leaving the nest - was the largest





*Burrowing owl caught in wire,
rescued with the help of AWE*

on record, despite housing construction. Only 800 vacant lots are left, so we are in a race against time to determine the best way to manage this population - the second largest known population in Florida after Cape Coral.

AWE's graduate student is experimenting with digging 3-foot "starter burrows" to determine whether owl adults will take over the hole and turn it into a full-fledged nest burrow. The preliminary results are telling us about 10% of owls accept starter burrows.

*Visit our new website
www.audubonwe.org for more
information about all of the above.*



*Burrowing owl "starter burrows"
are a great family activity*



*Burrowing owl being released after
rehabilitation*

What you can do to help:

- Adopt An Owl;
- Donate online to AWE's Owl Watch;
- Join AWE as a member;
- Become an Owl Watch volunteer;
- Inform yourself about state and local guidelines, designed to ensure owls and people can live together.





Residents' Beach Uncle Sam's Sand Jam - July 4th 2018





See more pictures on pages 50 & 51



Marco Island Historical Society Prepares for Arrival of the Key Marco Cat

Extensive permanent exhibit enhancements are underway and include interactive stations



The Key Marco Cat, one of the finest pieces of Pre-Columbian Native American art ever discovered in North America, will be showcased at the Marco Island Historical Museum from January 2019-April 2021.

Courtesy of Department of Anthropology, Smithsonian Institution (A240915)

The Marco Island Historical Society (MIHS) is preparing for the highly anticipated arrival of the world-famous Key Marco Cat and other rare Pre-Columbian Native American artifacts discovered on Marco Island, Florida in 1896. The artifacts are being brought together on Marco Island for the first time since their discovery by anthropologist Frank Hamilton Cushing more than 100 years ago.

The exhibit will be at the museum from January 2019 to April 2021. The MIHS is mounting the exhibit in collaboration with Collier County Museums, the Smithsonian Institution and the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology.

A free, public grand opening event for the exhibit will be held on Saturday, January 26, 2019, during museum hours. It will include a morning ribbon cutting to celebrate the official opening of the exhibit, live music, afternoon program/performance on the music of the Calusa by composer/musician Kat Epple and Anthropology Band, as well as family friendly activities.

The Key Marco Cat has been described as one of the finest pieces of Pre-Columbian Native American art ever discovered in North America. At only six inches tall and carved from native hardwood, the Key Marco Cat is a charismatic anthropomorphic feline statuette that has captured the public's imagination for more than a century. Other important pieces in the exhibition include a ceremonial mask, alligator figurehead, painted human figure and sea turtle figurehead. Since their discovery by Cushing, the returning Key Marco artifacts have been in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History and University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Others are at the National Museum of the American Indian, the Florida Museum of Natural History, and the British Museum.

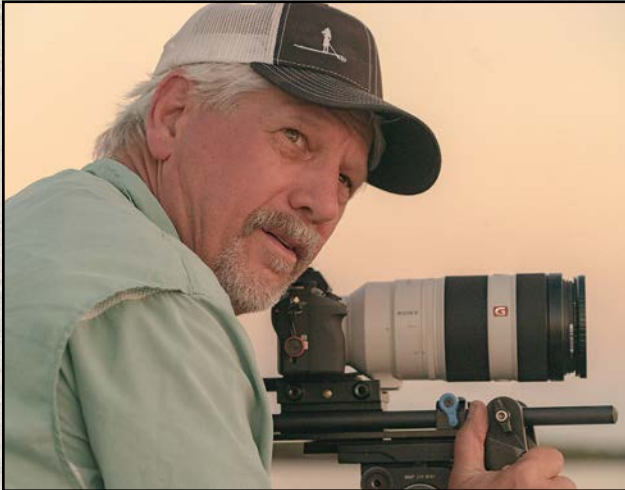
The artifacts will be showcased within the museum's award-winning permanent exhibit - Paradise Found: 6,000 Years of People on Marco Island. Major enhancements to the permanent exhibit are underway to prepare for the installation of the artifacts upon their arrival.

Creative Arts Unlimited, Inc. is serving as the design and fabrication team for the exhibit enhancements that will include interactive activity stations, state-of-the-art projections, dramatic animations, stunning new original artwork, and exciting additions to the museum's immersive life-size Calusa Village.

Marco Cat, continued on page 45



Rookery Bay, continued from page 3



Emmy award-winning filmmaker Elam Stoltzfus presented clips from his upcoming documentary about Rookery Bay's 40th anniversary

Rookery Bay was designated as a National Estuarine Sanctuary by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and Florida Governor Bob Graham in 1978, following a grassroots effort spearheaded in the 1960s by the National Audubon Society and Collier County Conservancy. Located at the northern end of the Ten Thousand Islands on the Gulf Coast of Florida, Rookery Bay was protected when the local community became concerned about plans for a road extension and causeway that would connect Naples with the islands adjacent to the bay. What started out as a 3,000-acre sanctuary has grown to 110,000 acres of coastal lands and waters through the state of Florida's Conservation and Recreational Lands Program, Preservation 2000 and the Florida Forever Act.

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, designated in 1978, encompasses 110,000 acres of coastal lands and waters and is managed by the Department of Environmental Protection's Florida Coastal Office in partnership with NOAA. The Reserve's mission is to provide a basis for informed stewardship of estuaries in Southwest Florida through research and education. For more information, visit <https://floridadep.gov/fco>, www.nerrs.noaa.gov or www.rookerybay.org.

Marco Island

2018

Annual Publication of the Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce

Stop by the Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce at 1102 N. Collier Boulevard to pick up your FREE copy of the

2018 Official Publication of the Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce

136 pages of great area information and chamber member listings both alphabetically & categorically!
www.marcoislandchamber.org

40

Paradise Grill at Residents' Beach

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Making Roads Safer for Gopher Tortoises

by Maria Lamb

In Florida, the gopher tortoise and its burrow are protected under state law. There is a large population of gopher tortoises in Marco Island, most of them are located in the Estates area of Dogwood, South Barfield, Inlet, Indian Hill, Caxambas Drive, Ludlow and Copeland and a smaller population in the Spinnaker Drive area of Tigertail Beach.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) recently reported that there were instances last month of people “helping” gopher tortoise hatchlings to the ocean. Gopher tortoises cannot swim and can easily drown. Officials say gopher tortoises often nest in dunes near the beach close to sea turtle nesting areas. This may have led to the confusion.

Gopher tortoises can be distinguished from sea turtles by their limbs. Their feet provide a clue. Sea Turtles need water to swim, so they have webbing

between their toes. Gopher tortoises have stout, elephant-like toes used for digging burrows and walking on land. Due to their preference for land and for digging, gopher tortoises keep their nails neat and trim. Sea Turtles’ nails are long and sharp and they have flippers with one or two claws on each fore flipper.

Another difference is their shell. Gopher Tortoises have high domes and are heavy - while a sea turtle’s shell is sleek and lightweight - perfect for swimming in the ocean.

Gopher tortoises are protected by state law and all five species of sea turtles found in Florida are also protected by federal and state law.

The cold-blooded gopher tortoise often spends time near roads, where it can easily soak up the sun’s warmth and forage for food. This makes it vulnerable to fatal vehicular strikes.



Photos by Maria Lamb






You can reduce gopher tortoise mortality by:

- Understanding that Gopher tortoises' activity is highest in mid-morning and mid-afternoon
- Scanning the road and shoulder for the slow moving tortoises
- Allowing time for it to cross the road; or
- Helping the gopher tortoise cross the road (only if it is safe for you) by picking it up and setting it down on a grassy spot in the direction it was headed
- Not throwing a gopher tortoise in the water - it cannot swim.

What to do if you see an injured or dead gopher tortoise?


Please call the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's Wildlife Alert hotline at 888-404-FWCC (3922), dial #FWC or *FWC on your cell phone. If you cannot remain at the site, please note the location and take a photo. OR call the von Arx Wildlife Hospital at 239-262-2273.

SAVING FLORIDA'S GOPHER TORTOISES



WATCH YOUR STEP

We dig burrows on land 8-12' deep and up to 40' long! Using our powerful front forelegs, we dig our burrows so deep to escape this Florida heat! Our eggs are usually laid in a sandy area outside the burrow entrance.









I DON'T SWIM! DON'T PUT ME IN THE WATER

WHY IS MY BURROW IMPORTANT?

The gopher tortoise is a keystone species because the burrow is home to 365 + species like:

- Indigo snakes
- Florida mice
- Gopher frogs
- Burrowing owls

I'M PROTECTED DON'T TOUCH ME OR MY BURROW

It is a violation to intentionally take, harass, wound or kill any species designated as endangered, threatened, or "of special concern."

S. 379.411, Florida Statutes - Violators may be guilty of a third-degree felony.

ABOUT US



Gopher tortoises are one of the oldest living animals on earth, with many of us living to be 80 years or older!

Adult tortoises have no natural native enemies, except humans.

On average, we're 10 inches long and weigh up to 10-12 lbs.

We reproductively mature at 10 years or older and lay 3-5 eggs in a clutch.

We have an internal GPS unit that allows us to always find our way back home to our burrow

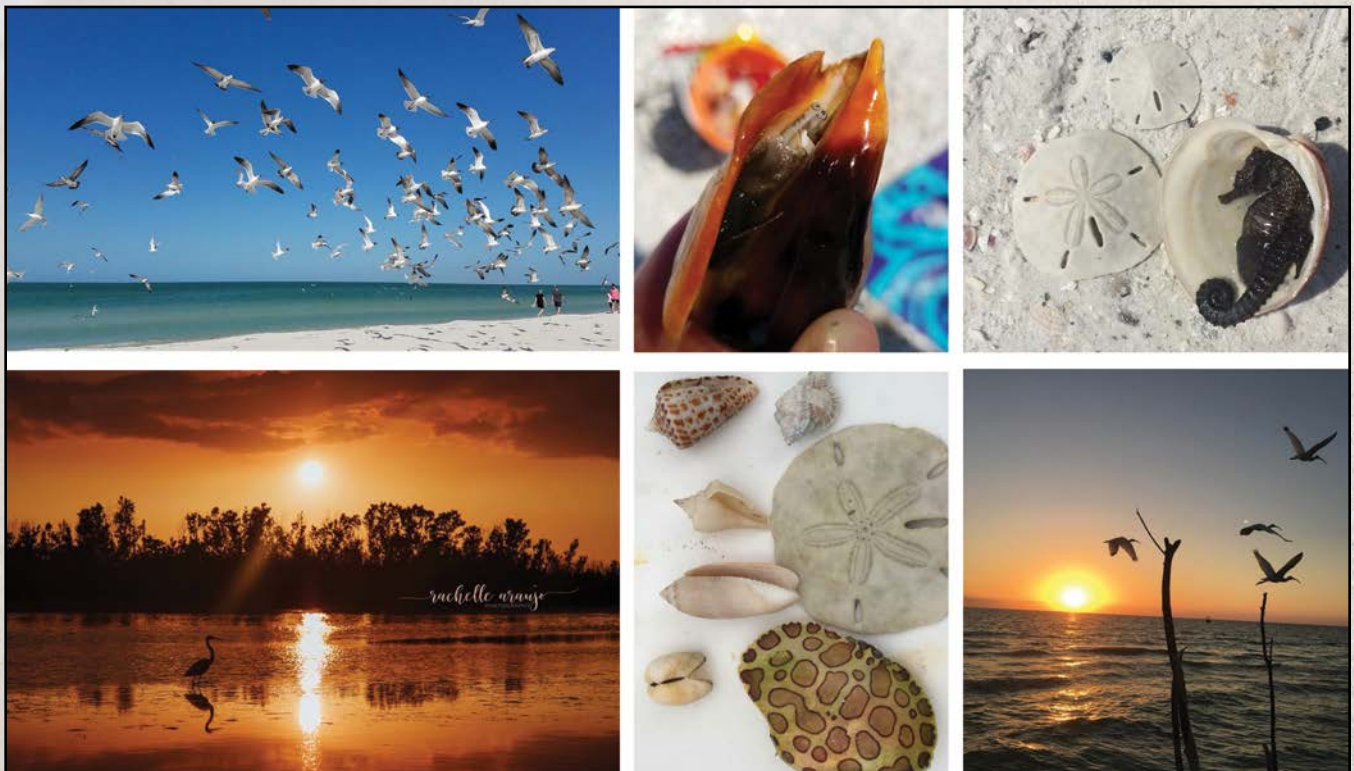


Spectacular Shots

We put out the call and you answered with artful photographs! The Marco Island Civic Association, in partnership with the Marco Island Center for the Arts, launched three photo contests this summer on Facebook. More than four dozen snap shots depicting the best our beach has to offer in nature, sunsets and sand art populated our news feed. The Art Center had the difficult job of judging the entries. All three winners took home a deluxe prize pack from MICA and the Paradise Grill. Thank you for sharing your photographs as we celebrate the everyday beauty of our island paradise.



Kyle Cholka won the best “beach nature” contest with this photo taken during the fire season.



Honorable Mentions (clockwise from top left): Don Desautels, Aimee Desautels Mali, Jennifer McGilvray West, Laura Beltramini Araujo, Lynette Cahill, and Rachelle Araujo

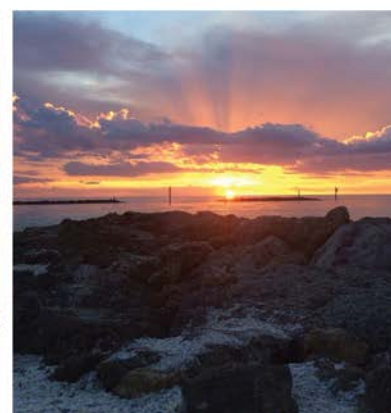




Our cover photo this edition was taken by JoAnn Gaudino Brandau. Her image won the best “beach sunset” for this photo taken July 4, 2017.



10-year-old Mae Naas of Yarmouthport, MA won best “beach sand art” with this photo she took back in December.



Honorable Mentions (clockwise from top left): JoAnn Gaudino Brandau, Laura Beltramini Araujo, Joe & Casey Gilliland, Theresa Darmiento Brown, Jack Lange, Marilyn Staub-Garazin



Art on Marco - News of the Double Eagle Sculpture at Sarazen Park

by Karen Swanker



The Double Eagle sculpture was created by artist Pete Pineiro of Naples and, at over seven feet tall, requires regular expert maintenance.

In keeping with its mission to promote literary, visual and performing arts to the Marco Island community, the Marco Island Foundation for the Arts (MIFA) along with the Marco Island Civic Association (MICA) and private donors, in 2012 obtained a “Double Eagle” sculpture to place at Sarazen Park across from the South Beach entrance. The Boards of Directors of MICA and MIFA enthusiastically agreed to place this sculpture at this location and provide funding of \$30,000 for acquisition and installation.

The theme of double eagles is appropriate for this park which honors golf legend Gene Sarazen who was the first to shoot a “double eagle” during the 1935 masters’ tournament.

This magnificent bronze sculpture – a pair of eagles, wings unfurled, golden beaks engaged in conversation - stands over seven feet tall and is almost six feet wide, weighing in at over 600 pounds. The sculpture was created by artist Pete Pineiro of Naples. The quality and craftsmanship of this piece are unparalleled, with beautiful, subtle patinas worthy of these symbols of our nation.

The double eagles, as a patriotic symbol for our country, are also appropriate for our island as a tribute to the many veterans who call Marco home and speak to Marco Island resident eagles as well.

Since its installation at the Sarazen Park, proper care has been taken to maintain the sculpture. Art restoration expert Viviana Dominguez from Art



Conservators Lab LLC in Miami has been called in several times to painstakingly work on the sculpture to clean and restore the patina. This summer she returned with expert metal restorer, Dimitra Pantoulia, to do a final cleaning and any repair before MIFA turns over the care of the sculpture completely to MICA.

Many thanks to all those who worked and contributed to bringing this beautiful art sculpture to Marco Island. A bronze plaque is soon to be installed in front of the sculpture with names of donors who contributed \$500 or more toward the purchase of the sculpture.

The plaque will read:

The Double Eagle

bronze sculpture commemorates

Gene Sarazens' legendary

"double eagle shot, heard round the world"

at the 1935 Masters Tournament.

The theme of double eagle is also appropriate to Marco Island which is home to its pair of resident eagles who inhabit the Eagle Sanctuary on Marco Island

Contributors:

Barbara J. Adams - In Memory of Bob Adams

Robert and Barbara Biesiadecki

Elizabeth P. Bungert

The Cikacz Family

Dr. C. Dwight and Linda A. Decker

The Grzybowski Family

Alexandra Ellis

John and Ginger Finlayson

Mary T. Kaczynski

Dr. Wallace M. and Lindy Kowalczyk

Italian American Society of Marco Island

The Tom McCullough Family

Thomas C. and Carol L. Patterson

R.J. and B.A. Phillips

The Gene & Mary Sarazen Foundation

Paulo L. and Priscilla M. Teixeira

William R. and Patricia L. Thomas Jr.

Sandy Wallen



Restoration is slow and precise.



Kiwanis®

2019 Car Show

February 17, 2019 9a.m.-3p.m

NEW LOCATION - Veterans' Park

All proceeds are used to fund and support various programs and needs of Marco children.

A photograph of a classic car show. In the foreground, a man in a grey shirt and khaki shorts stands next to a woman, looking at a vintage light blue car. Other cars and people are visible in the background under a clear sky.

Marco Island City Council

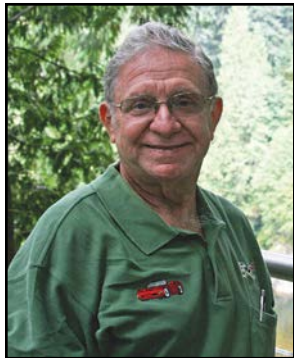
2018 Candidates



Erik Brechnitz has been a resident of Marco Island since 1995 and has prior experience in municipal government leadership positions dating back to 1981, having served on the Decatur, Illinois city council for 10 years and as the city's mayor. Erik is presently Chairman of the Marco Island Planning Board, serving an unprecedented second term as the board's chairman. Erik is not a career politician! He's a successful executive in the financial services industry. Erik loves Marco Island and is grateful for its natural beauty and small town feel, and he is passionate about maintaining that quality of life.



Jim Richards originally from Philadelphia, has been a full time resident of Marco Island for 17 years. Jim is the co-founder and chairman of Capio Partners, LLC a patient finance company headquartered in Atlanta, GA. Jim has worked in or started companies in the healthcare financial space his entire career. Jim is currently semi-retired while dedicating his free time to his community on Marco Island. He currently is involved with the following organizations: Center for the Arts (President), Noon-time Rotary, Rotary Foundation, Marco Island Police Foundation, Marco Island Fire Foundation, Society of 25, Marco Island Charter Middle School Foundation, Christmas Island Style, Meals of Hope, Marco YMCA Daily Bread Runs, Our Daily Bread Food Pantry and Mobile Food Pantries.



Victor Rios, along with his wife, Joan, has been a full time resident of Marco Island for 14 years. Victor has degrees in Engineering and a Master in Business and has a very strong management and financial background. He has continued to pursue his dedication to the community by serving on city council for the past four years and Marco Island Beach Advisory Committee for 3+ years prior and served as Chairman for one year. Overlapping that, he served on the County Coastal Advisory Committee. Victor is currently the Island Representative at the County Tourist Development Council. He has fulfilled his commitments to the citizens as promised.



Jerry Swiacki, a retired surgeon of 47 years, is married to Linda Turner for 41 years, has 5 children, and 10 grandchildren. For almost 50 years, he continues to serve for many organizations as a dedicated community volunteer, including the Board for the Marco Island Civic Association and the Marco Island Fire Rescue Foundation. He served on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, two years as chair, and as Vice President for the Caxambas Republican Club. He is 2017 graduate of Leadership Marco and a member of the San Marco Catholic Church.





Sam Young is currently retired and has been a full-time resident of Marco, with his wife Sheree, since 2005. He has been fishing Marco since 1970. Sam is a member of Marco Island's Waterways Advisory Committee. He is a graduate of University of Illinois and spent 35 years in the healthcare industry serving in sales management, marketing management and consulting roles to create efficient, streamlined processes that delivered hard dollar savings and soft cost savings through greater efficiencies, without adding additional staff. Sam served on the Board of Directors for the Children's Care Foundation, a Chicago based non-profit organization that funded various grant requests for underprivileged and disabled children's programs in the Chicago area.

MARCO ISLAND CITY COUNCIL



CANDIDATE FORUMS - 2018

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 10TH
AND

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 18TH

5:00 PM - MEET & GREET

5:30 - 7:30PM - FORUM

at Rose History Auditorium

Marco Island Historical Society - 180 S. Heathwood Drive

FIVE CANDIDATES COMPETING FOR 3 SEATS

Session will be available **FACEBOOK LIVE** on the
Marco Island Chamber of Commerce Facebook Page

**INFORMED
VOTING**

**ALL ISLAND RESIDENTS WELCOME
ELECTION DAY IS TUES, NOV 6TH**

PRESENTED BY:

Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce, Marco Island Area
Association of Realtors and Marco Island Civic Association



Marco Island Civic Association's 2018 City Council Candidates' MICAwave Questions & Answers

1. **Would Marco Island government be improved if there were five city councilors instead of seven? Would you support a restructuring of the city council to a four member council, with a mayor and city manager position, with the city manager reporting directly to the mayor?**

Brechnitz:

Marco Island needs a constitutionally elected mayor. That is a key component of my platform. I was mayor of Decatur, IL for five years which had a mayor/council/city manager system. It is an efficient and effective form of government. If elected I will propose a change in the Marco Island Charter to adopt that system. The mayor still has only one vote on the council but the manager reports to the mayor for day to day interaction. I would support a four or six member council plus a mayor.

Richards:

- a. I would support a city council of 5 members instead of 7. A 5-member board would increase cooperation and efficiency in the decision making of our city.
- b. I would support a 4-member council, with a mayor being the fifth member to break any tie. I would also support a city manager reporting directly to the Mayor. I feel this would increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the council. Fewer council members input on issues that should be handled by the mayor/city manager.

Rios:

The present structure has several major issues that restrict efficient and fair government:

- Needing 5 votes to hire a city manager has stifled an ability to hire a city manager. Need to change to simple majority
- The fact that the city manager can meet with each individual councilor to lobby and support the city manager's proposal and have his/her staff work on his recommendation while an individual councilman cannot lobby another councilman and cannot have staff work on his proposal without council approval makes this an unfair process where the city manager has most of the power. The mayor concept where the city manager reports to the mayor (like Naples) works better
- Like Naples, we should consider developing an assistant city manager position to assure some form of organizational back-up and stability and succession planning in case the city manager leaves, is fired or must leave due to health problems.
- Must be a referendum item to change the Charter!

Swiacki:

There seems to be strong support throughout the city for changing our form of government and electing a mayor. The mayor could be a "strong" or "weak" mayor. Depending on the type of mayor selected, the number of city councilors could be adjusted. A city manager who runs city government would still be required and he would report to the mayor. These changes require a change to our City Charter.

Young:

I support the will of Marco Citizens. Marco Island can be successful with a mayor, just like the City of Naples. I do not support a four member council. I would support a six member council plus a mayor. The city manager should be appointed by a super majority vote on council, and report to the mayor for day to day interaction. The City Charter must be changed to also reflect that a super majority is also required to fire a city manager. Today, it is a simple majority. I support the will of our citizens through a referendum that is clearly stated, easily understood, with full disclosure including associated costs of such change.



2. Would you support a stricter ethics code for Marco Island elected officials?

Brechnitz:

Florida already has one of the strictest ethics codes in the U.S., so I don't believe further regulation will improve behavior. The current system is clearly effective in punishing offenders; case in point the recent conviction and fine of a former Marco Island department head. It has been my experience that people who have a tendency to bend the rules do so regardless of the regulations in place.

Richards:

Prior to rewriting the current ethic codes, we should concentrate on enforcement of the existing codes. Then, if necessary, yes, absolutely I would support a stricter code of ethics for Marco Island's elected officials as well as the required monitoring and enforcing.

Rios:

All councilors must attend an ethics code session (several hours every year) in accordance with State law. I do not see any needed changes.

Swiacki:

According to the City Charter the city councilors and city employees must conform to the ethics code contained in the Florida Statutes. The most relevant codes are located in Chapter 112 Sections 311 and 313. These are quite comprehensive. They require public officials to be impartial and independent without using their position for personal gain. Regardless of personal considerations they must promote public interest and maintain the respect of the people. Any violations of the principals contained in the Code need to be reported to the state authorities for investigation.

Young:

No. Florida already has one of the strictest codes in the U.S.

3. What are your plans for ensuring our natural environment and water quality (Gulf of Mexico and canals) become a focus for the City of Marco Island?

Brechnitz:

The city council needs to make water quality in the canals and the gulf a priority. There are some good first steps to initiate now, such as monthly testing in a variety of locations, improvement of the swales to allow storm water runoff to remain for longer periods and a better written fertilizer ordinance. Implementing those changes and frequent testing to determine their effectiveness is a good beginning.

Richards:

First and foremost, we all know that our water quality and natural environment is larger than just Marco Island. We must continue to enforce our current codes and ordinances while working with the county, state of Florida and Federal Government (i.e.) Okeechobee water releases. I do support strong enforcement of the current ordinances and an educational outreach program for the protection of our waterways, beaches, and coastal resources with island citizens and contractors. I also strongly support the ongoing programs for the students to participate in science studies educating them on how to protect our waterways and wildlife.

Rios:

I have been proposing during my first term plans to address these issues, such as: Assure that fertilizer ordinances are strictly followed and increase penalties for violations; Assure that the city prohibits and enforces the use of live aboards (people living on boats), especially in areas like Smokehouse Bay where

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City Council Candidates' Questions... Continued from page 23

some 77 large boats are docked at the Esplanade Marina; Assure that the city regulates the possible pollution from boats that are moored in the bays and canals to assure they are not dumping pollutants into our waters; Develop a plan and cost estimate for the development of a storm water retention and treatment system. This could include the possibility of treating such water and recycling it as irrigation water to reduce the cost of irrigation of homes (present a financial challenge to pay for the infrastructure). Put to referendum. Address the swales problems; We already have a storm water program in place and a funding source to implement. Council must establish policies to enforce codes, swale restructuring program and establish an ideal height of drain inlets to render swales useful. Presently inlets are placed at bottom of swales rendering swales useless!

Swiacki:

Our lifestyle and economy depend on healthy estuaries and excellent water quality. Our local waters have degraded and become impaired. The State of Florida has declared a "state of emergency" concerning water quality and water flow. The City of Marco Island should also declare a "state of emergency". We need to partner with environmental groups such as "Captains for Clean Water" and seek solutions on those issues that impact our local environment. Our local waters need to be tested monthly at various locations to determine from where the pollution is coming. Our fertilizer ordinance and landscaping issues need to be re-evaluated based on the findings of the testing. Our ordinances need to be enforced. Our storm water control needs to be improved with attention paid to swales, pollution from fertilizer, construction sites and impervious ground cover. It is important to prevent rapid transit of storm water from land directly into the canals and waterways. We must be proactive.

Young:

Water quality is an issue I am very passionate about and one of the reasons I decided to run for city council; Member Waterways Advisory Committee, 15 years as a Charter Captain, Director of Fisheries for the Marco Sportfishing Club, appointed member of Aquaculture Committee for Gulf of Mexico by NOAA Fisheries, diver/spearfishman, fishing Marco since 1970. A, B, C approach.

- a. Analyze; I would move from quarterly testing of water quality to monthly testing, so that we have accurate trending data for the entire year and each of its seasons. Once that is in place, we can create a measure for gauging the health of our island flora and fauna, specifically sea grasses, and then have the conversations we need to have about how to maintain this beautiful paradise. Add a test site to Landmark Bay and include Turbidity as an additional analytic.
- b. Block untreated storm water runoff into the 1,800 canal outlets directly into our waterways by putting a cement collar around the storm drains like Naples, Bonita Springs and all along I-75. Use a screen on top of the storm drains that can prevent grass clippings from entering the drains and are easily lifted up and cleaned vs. expensive to buy, expensive to install and expensive to maintain that have shown measurable value other than to be a waste of tax dollars.
- c. Control through a public workshop to review, revise and amend our current Fertilizer Ordinance and include source point pollution through random testing.

4. **What can the city government do to improve island-wide parking? Will you support the parking plan developed by the ad hoc Parking Solutions Committee? What specific low cost and budgeted solutions will you support, if any?**

Brechnitz:

The city government should continue to look at marginal increases in parking availability, such as in alleys



which was one Parking Solutions Committee recommendation. I am reluctant to tax residents for expensive solutions for what is a business problem.

Richards:

The Island's parking problems exist approximately 4 months of the year during "season". During this time period, we should identify underutilized current commercial parking facilities as a low-cost alternative. I also support incorporating the ad hoc Parking Solutions Committee low cost plans.

Rios:

City council put in place an ad hoc Parking Committee. They have made serious proposals, and some have been implemented. We have discussed all the options and have extended the ad hoc committee to further evaluate and refine the various options and the implications to our taxpayers. We cannot burden our taxpayers with paying for added parking, we need participation from the business community and I believe some have stepped up to the plate, but we need more of it.

Swiacki:

The ad hoc Parking Solutions Committee has presented city council with recommendations to improve island-wide parking. These include No Cost, Low Cost and Budgeted Solutions. The No Cost Solutions should be adopted immediately. These include: no cost permitting to park in residential swales 24 hours a day twice a year, adopt alleyway parking and parking in swales in commercial districts on a limited basis. Low cost solutions need further evaluation before I would support them. They include: Private free transportation in which partial cost would be borne by the city, a seasonal trolley paid for by the city, parking agreements with private developers and stickers for citizens in preferred parking spots. The High Cost Solutions require more investigation.

Young:

The city can continue to look at marginal increase in parking availability, such as alleyways, but be mindful of any adjacent residences that could be affected in advance of any parking allowance. I would support extended parking hours at Veterans Park to perhaps midnight as another solution to expand our seasonal parking issue. No, I do not support parking plans that involve using tax dollars.

5. How do you plan to restore the community's trust in our city government?

Brechnitz:

That's a big reason why I am running. Hiring a professional qualified city manager with a proven record of accomplishment will go a long way toward solving that problem. I have hired two successful city managers in Illinois when I was a councilor and mayor and I know I can help the process in Marco Island. I am the current Chairman of the Marco Island Planning Board and anyone who watches our meetings can see that we treat each other with civility and respect. We disagree but are not disagreeable.

Richards:

The key to a successful business venture is to be transparent and have superior communication across the board. This way everyone is on the same page and there is no guessing. We need a trustworthy qualified well-vetted city manager to be the voice of our city.

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City Council Candidates' Questions... Continued from page 25

Rios:

The present levels of satisfaction of city government by residents is well under 20% and at the lowest level in our history (MICA annual survey). Accordingly, the only proven method for improving trust and approval ratings would include: Develop a small list of measurable goals and objectives, get resident input to those goals and objectives, publish them and periodically publish the measurable progress towards those goals and any changes being made along with the justification for such changes; Assure that all of staff also has input to these goals and has their annual performance and compensation based on the results of these goals. Assure that no projects or resources are spent unless it is proven that they are directed towards completion of these goals and objectives; List city council agendas to assure that meetings don't last past the regular scheduled hours and assure that the "hot" items are covered early in the agenda while people are still present and awake at home; and city council must hold the city manager accountable for staff's performing to acceptable standard.

Swiacki

To restore trust in city government we must elect three new individuals to city council who are willing to work together. Presently the council is dysfunctional and has been unable to hire a permanent city manager for the past 20 months. City employees are in fear for their jobs. The new councilors will need to work with those who remain on council as a team in a transparent manner to find and hire an experienced professional city manager who has a proven history of successful city management. The city manager must be allowed to do his/her job without interference and micromanagement from council. Employees deserve respect and support for their work. Finally, the new council should have a workshop in which the vision and goals of the city should be established for the future.

Young: Trust will only be restored if council proceeds quickly to get the city back on track. This means hiring a competent, qualified city manager, with a strong emphasis on hiring an individual with experience in a coastal Florida city. Then insure council interacts only with the city manager. The City Charter prohibits council members from interacting with city staff.

6. Please comment about staffing levels for the different city departments. Are any departments over or under staffed?

Brechnitz:

Staffing levels, hiring and firing are clearly the responsibility of the city manager according to our Charter. The city council can play a role in the budgeting process and should construct the budget in a way that supports staffing levels that are consistent with service level requirements. We should not try to staff for peak service levels which many not be needed except in emergency situations.

Richards:

A comprehensive review of each department's workload and staffing should be under the purview of the city manager. While I have met with each department director, the decision as to staffing should be handled by the city manager, not the city council. Our job as city council is to ensure our employee's compensation packages are equal to or slightly better than surrounding communities and they are respected and appreciated for the dedication service to our Island community.

Rios:

The biggest staffing issue is in the building department since most, if not all the cost of that department is borne by the people who need those services, additional staff may be considered. We should also look



at “outsourcing” some of their effort to better deal with the ups and down of the organization’s needs to meet workload. Staffing is the responsibility of the city manager and directors reporting to the city manager. That’s where the buck stops. Council is to hold the city managers feet to the fire!

Swiacki:

Our city staff does twice the work with half the staff and 10% less pay than Naples. The city manager needs to assess staffing levels, workloads and compensation and report back to council on how to remedy the situation. Council should not interfere until the manager has made his analysis.

Young:

This is a matter for the city manager to determine. I do believe city council can play a stronger oversight role in budget meetings, where goals and objectives as dictated by citizen input are discussed. Then the City Manager can determine the proper staffing levels based on using the Management by Objectives (MBO) approach with citizen driven goals, supported by strategies, and tactics with associated timelines to meet the goal.

7. Should taxes be raised, lowered or remain the same? What about fees?

Brechnitz:

The budget standard is the roll-back rate. This allows government to operate at the same level as the prior year. Increases that come about because our property values are rising are a stealth tax. City council should discuss and vote on tax levels in the sunshine, explaining their rationale. Fees on Marco Island are already very high, in some cases discouraging business involvement.

Richards:

We should evaluate both taxes and fees annually based on the projected needs of our community. Increasing our revenue stream through other areas can give us more room to provide enhanced services to the citizens.

Rios:

As councilor I believe it is the taxpayers’ money and we should be judicious on how we spend it. I support keeping the taxes at the lowest possible level while still maintaining the level of service expected by our taxpayers. Council should also have an expenditure line item (Reserve for Asset Replacement) for future unforeseen items!

Swiacki:

Over 50% of our ad valorem property tax bill goes to Collier County Schools. The taxes paid to the city from that bill are some of the lowest in the state. Only 17% of our taxes go to the City of Marco Island. Taxes should remain low. A yearly budget analysis needs to be done to see what funding is appropriate for services that our citizens require and desire. Fees are “targeted” taxation. Where appropriate they should be evaluated.

Young:

The budget standard is the roll-back rate. This allows government to operate at the same level as the prior year. Increases that come about because our property values are rising are a stealth tax. City council should discuss and vote on tax levels in the sunshine, explaining their rationale. As to fees, fees on Marco Island are already very high, and in some cases they discourage business investment. We can add more bodies to the city payroll, but that doesn’t fix a bad process if the current process is inefficient. Getting the waste out of current processes that have gone unexamined and with no objective for continuous improvement will only result in creating more wasted tax dollars.

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City Council Candidates' Questions... Continued from page 27

8. Are the annual survey results of the MICA membership of value to you in developing your position on community issues?

Brechnitz:

Of course! I have strong opinions on many issues, but I always benefit from hearing what the Marco Island community thinks. MICA's reach is so large that it provides an invaluable "poll."

Richards:

Yes, anytime you can get more resident input the better the city government will be.

Rios:

YES. I would like to see the city do a quarterly survey of resident satisfaction, so the city and staff can monitor how they are doing in meeting customer expectations.

Swiacki:

The annual MICA membership survey results are of great value to me. It allows me to feel the pulse of the community. I am able find those issues which are uppermost in citizens' minds and to formulate solutions which are compatible with the community.

Young:

Of course! We as a community always benefit by participating in and learning the results of MICA surveys, as in my response to water quality, more data is better, and more data helps city government identify citizens' needs. I would suggest the city also reach out, on a regular basis, quarterly at least, to solicit citizen input that can be used to identify city goals and objectives to create better citizen (aka customer) satisfaction. It wouldn't be hard to do. We can't just rely on MICA data, the CITY needs to generate citizen input surveys to confirm MICA data and use all of it as our compass to a better Marco.

9. Do you support an assisted living facility on the island even if it requires changes in density credits?

Brechnitz:

No. I believe an assisted living facility can be built on Marco Island without exceeding the density credits of the comprehensive plan by applying the same standards we use for the permitting of hotels. That permits 26 living units per acre, which would give owners of larger tracts of property the ability to make an ALF commercially feasible.

Richards:

This particular issue is of great importance to our citizens. I believe we need to study more about this before coming to a conclusion. As we all would like to have a facility within a few miles of our homes for our loved ones and ourselves, we also have to look at the zoning, density credits, parking and so on. It is the citizens of Marco Island who should have the strongest voice as to whether or not an assisted living facility is right for our Island.

Rios:

The density credits have nothing to do with ALF's. The issue on the current request is changes to the LDC, the Comprehensive Plan and zoning. The issue is not being for or against ALF's, but they need to comply with all the zoning and other city guidelines and ordinances as well as State requirements. I would approve of ALF if the need was justified and it received significant approval of the planning board and the city staff. Built in proper zoning district and not CHANGE existing LDC to FIT owners profit needs!



Swiacki:

Many Marcoites support some type of assisted living facility. Issues need to be resolved regarding density, impact on infrastructure and evacuation during an emergency on a barrier island. I could support an assisted living facility if there are solutions to these issues.

Young:

No, not yet. We have to remember that we live on a barrier island, with mandatory evacuations as we all recall from a year ago with Irma; lives are at stake here! The first recommendation from both the planning board and city staff advised against an ALF. I've seen no proposed ALF evacuation plan signed off by the county EMS and or the city EMS. Further details will be presented by the planning board and city staff, which will also include the implications to our Comprehensive Plan and our Land Development Code relative to density. So, until all the information is in, and thoroughly discussed at city council, I cannot support it with incomplete data.

10. How will you address more equitable water-sewer rates across the island?**Brechnitz:**

Our rates have remained the same for decades. In Florida law, there is a "presumption of fairness" when rates are unchanged for long periods of time. From 2012 to 2015, city council examined three different proposals to change rates and all three proposals called for increasing costs for homeowners. I do not believe any change needs to be made. As a matter of fact, the water utility is financially doing quite well. They are systematically reducing debt and developing system reserves.

Richards:

I would develop a multi-year (8-10 year) plan that would eventually integrate all water and sewer rates to one level.

Rios:

Water and sewer rates have been a divisive issue for years. I personally proposed a KISS plan where everybody would pay the same for every gallon of water. Unfortunately, it failed to get city council approval and subsequent proposals have died also. That said, I would start to decide on rates by getting a total handle and agreement on who is using the water, how much and when and then have rates aligned with usage. City should have one CLASS of customer and each customer should pay a DEMAND charge and USAGE charge based on consumption.

Swiacki:

A gallon of water is a gallon of water and it should cost the same no matter who uses it. In 1998 the Florida Water Company designed a rate structure which was approved by the Public Utility Commission of Florida. Since that time there have been drastic changes to the water system on Marco Island. The sewer system has been created and the acquisition of fresh water has changed. However, our rate structure has not changed. We need to move to a more equitable rate structure.

Young:

Our rates have remained the same for decades. In Florida Law, there is a "presumption of fairness" when rates are unchanged for long periods of time. In 2012 to 2015, city council examined three different consultant proposals (\$) to change rates, and all three proposals called for increasing rates for Homeowners. Homeowners already pay too much. I don't believe we need to make any changes at this time, but our water rates should come down commensurate with reductions of bond debt, as we have been experiencing.

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- 11. What is your position on the current Veterans' Community Park proposal, which includes a stage, restrooms, lighting, parking along the perimeter, open space for community events and Farmers' Market and landscaping with plenty of shade?**

Brechnitz:

I am prepared to support either of the two options being considered by Parks & Recreation pending a thorough analysis of the costs of each option and a public discussion of how we pay for it. At the moment, no cost estimates have been discussed.

Richards:

I totally support the plans presented by Kimley-Horn and the Park and Rec Board with one exception, the parking. I would remove all the interior parking spots and place them in a state of the art, extremely attractive, multi-tiered parking garage on the lot across Park Blvd. near to Veterans' Community Park. This would provide more greenspace, which is what many of the citizens have voiced. I would also suggest a parking fee for all non-residents during peak season. The parking garage could be used for beach parking; restaurant parking and event overflow parking. The real question is and has been, where is the funding coming from. Until we know the answer to the funding formula this is a moot discussion. We are putting the cart before the horse.

Rios:

I have been an advocate of "green spaces. I have supported the farmer's market and I have listened to our citizens and what I hear is that many would like to go to the basics they were sold on when the Glon property was bought, and that was a band shell and permanent bathrooms. Of course, trees and proper lighting for shade and safety. If you recall I led the charge on stopping a government building in the Park. I also led the charge in stopping a developer using Veterans' Community Park to build a hotel. As a result, I successfully worked with my fellow councilors and passed the proper resolutions to make the park a park, not just in name only. It took a while because it had to go to the State for approval. I also led the charge to eliminate density credit transfers which were being manipulated. The bottom line is that green space is paramount for our citizens and as a councilor I listen to them and support their desires. Campaign to approve of the purchase was based on the property being green space forever.

Swiacki:

Having served as chairman of the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee, I have always supported maintaining at least 94% green space in Veterans' Community Park. The 2009 Master Plan was updated by my committee in 2015 and is essentially the same as the one being presented at this time by Kimley-Horn. The parking lot needs to be replaced by perimeter parking. Shade trees need to be planted with appropriate walkways and lighting while maintaining open space for special events. Most citizens want a bandstand with restrooms and changing rooms. Improved landscaping is essential. It is time to complete this project.

Young:

I am in favor of either option as recently proposed. Ironically, the current "new" versions are almost identical to the proposed options 10 years ago. We won't know the costs of the amenities included in either of the two options until the consultant's report in January. I do not support a costly parking garage or a costly city utility building, unlike other candidates who have openly expressed support for those projects.



12. Is it important to improve the City of Marco Island's relationship with Collier County? If so, what steps would you take to achieve this?

Brechnitz:

Marco Island enjoys a very good relationship with Collier County. For example, we reached a favorable agreement for the repair and future maintenance of San Marco Road to Goodland. We need to continue to work with county officials on matters of shared concern, such as ambulance service. Regular joint meetings should continue because they have been very productive in the past.

Richards: Yes, it's important to improve the relationship with Collier County. I would first and foremost improve communication and the encouragement of joint projects and collaboration. Partnership!

Rios:

A simple concept is to name an individual in the city, it may be a city councilor, that is a permanent liaison with the county to keep the communications going both ways. Also, regular combined quarterly meetings alternating locations between our community center and the commissioners' chambers assure we try and get the county to give us what we want and need before threatening to take a function over from them.

Swiacki:

Collier County has been less than supportive of Marco Island. Joint meetings with our city council and the Board of Collier County Commissioners have produced few results. We should continue to meet with county officials, at least annually and present our issues with clear, well formulated plans to arrive at solutions to our problems. We are a "donor" community to Collier County and it is important that we receive adequate benefits for our tax dollars. This does not mean that we have to be adversarial but it does mean that we must have strong convictions and a compelling argument when we negotiate.

Young:

Yes, it is very important! We need to continue to work with County officials on matters of shared concern, such as the ambulance service and county growth management. Regular joint meetings should continue, and Marco representatives should continue to serve on County committees and vigorously represent Marco Island.

13. What do you see as the top three infrastructure needs that must be addressed, and how should they be paid for?

Brechnitz:

1. Storm water management & clean canal water;
2. Fix the damn roads and do it right; and
3. Assess the structural integrity of Marco's older sewers which are made of clay.

Funding for these and other important needs will have to be discussed in detail in city council meetings where the public has input as well. In some cases, the city might look to a bank loan or a bond. I see no case that would suggest increasing taxes.

Richards:

1. Potable and waste water treatment plant fortified to withstand natural disasters (could be eligible for state-federal grants).

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City Council Candidates' Questions... Continued from page 31

2. Waterways quality as discussed in question 3.
3. Completion of Veterans' Community Park to the wishes of the community - I would address these by finalizing the plan and creating a 5-year budget plan to pay for it out of the park and recreation budget.

Rios:

The issue is not which or how many, but some considerations:

1. Any infrastructure projects should be done if, and only if, they are meant to meet the goals and objectives that the residents had agreed to (see 5 above);
2. If infrastructure costs, designed to meet the goals and objectives, exceed \$5 million then a binding referendum should be required to proceed with the project. The referendum must have clear and accurate statements of impact on property taxes.

Swiacki:

The three top infrastructure needs are: storm water control, completion of the roadway resurfacing project and having the city maintain our sidewalks. These should be paid for by our present budget. In addition, various state funds should be available for these projects and obtaining these funds should be championed by our lobbyist and our elected state officials.

Young:

1. Water quality; it drives our economy! Storm water management/restoring swales/ retention first, conveyance second/ fertilizer ordinance update;
2. Create return on investment model for tax dollars spent measured to citizen satisfaction; and
3. Roadways, bridges, green space, and wildlife protection. Funding for these and other important needs that are citizen driven will have to be discussed.

14. What top three priorities will you give the city manager if elected? Describe how you will gain consensus from fellow councilors on these priorities?

Brechnitz:

The first job for a new city manager is to assess the city workforce and repair morale. The city staff needs to know that when they make decisions, the manager has their backs. Effectiveness of department heads, staffing levels, (too many or not enough) and compensation levels are more than enough to occupy a new manager. After that, developing capital project priorities and developing good working relationships with Collier County officials and with Marco Island stakeholders should be more than enough to keep a new manager occupied.

Richards:

Have him/her understand the history and culture of Marco Island; Ensure he/she earns the trust of the citizens of Marco Island; and develop a productive and respectful work environment for our city employees. I would work with the city council members to develop, and agree to support a decision in the best interest of the whole. Oftentimes this may be a resolution that may not be a "favorite" of each individual, but can be supported based on the greater good for what the community wants. The way I suggest we can accomplish this feat is to hold a workshop once a month to discuss issues and a city council meeting once a month to decide policy.

Rios:

A major action to improve city government approval and government effectiveness is to assure that



everyone, city council, the city manager and city staff are all on the same page. That can only be done if all are committed to meeting the set of measurable goals listed in 5, above. Accordingly, some of the first priorities for a new city manager would be:

- Develop a measurable set of goals and objectives that have input and “buy-in” from residents, staff and council. Assure the staff “team” is all pulling in the same direction with a common purpose.
- Follow-up to assure that the employee “environmental” survey that was done in 2017 is followed up on. That survey listed numerous employee morale issues that need to be addressed. It must be understood that you cannot have high levels of “customer” (resident) satisfaction with low levels of employee satisfaction.
- City council and city manager’s JOB!

Swiacki:

The first priority for the new city manager is to meet with department heads and other employees to assess the “State of the City”. Secondly, he should develop an action plan to address the deficiencies he has discovered. Finally, he must come to city council to share his findings and solutions so that appropriate action can be taken. If these issues are discussed in an open, transparent fashion, consensus can be obtained. There can be no personal agendas. A “give and take” is necessary to arrive at a good result.

Young:

1. A review of the employee survey, verification of its findings, and a plan of action to address important matters.
2. Regular outreach surveys to all citizens to validate alignment or disagreement with response to what priorities the city council and others advocate.
3. Review current written processes and create them where there are none. We can help the city apply modern business techniques, for example using a Lean Six Sigma approach to reduce waste and strengthen efficiency with current staff.

15. What are your thoughts regarding the pay discrepancy between the City of Marco Island employees and those in the City of Naples and Collier County government?

Brechnitz:

When you include total compensation, it appears the gap is not large. Having said that, I have not seen reliable data on the subject that does a good “apples to apples” comparison. That will be an early job for the new city manager.

Richards:

Pay our employees a comparable rate, based on a compensation survey, to Naples and Collier County staff. Why? The cost of turnover is much more than the hard costs such as recruiting/advertising, there is lower productivity of the department due to the vacancy, overworked remaining staff, lost knowledge of the specific role and training/ramp up position costs.

Rios:

Where there are discrepancies they should be addressed. Also, be data driven and make sure that when comparisons are made they are apples to apples measurement.

Swiacki:

I am aware of the pay discrepancies. We need to seek ways to have our employees fairly compensated in order to recruit and keep them. A careful assessment of our budget needs to be done to see if monies are

continued on page 34



City Council Candidates' Questions... Continued from page 33

available that can be shifted to salaries. Just as important is the way our employees are treated. If they are treated with respect and appreciation, I feel that the wage discrepancy is more tolerable.

Young:

We have to realize we are competing for good employees with Naples, Collier County, and private businesses (consultants, contractors, clerks). Employees should enjoy a culture that supports and rewards good work. This includes competitive wages and fringe benefits, which need to be examined. An outside firm completed an evaluation in 2017, but it has not been presented to city council. City council should help the city determine where we stand, and then we can have a discussion about where we want to stand.

16. Do you support increased athletic facilities for youth on the island? If so, what do you suggest and how would this be funded?

Brechnitz:

Of course! We should lobby the Collier County School Board to provide our schools with the same kind of athletic facilities that are routinely provided to other Collier schools. We send a huge amount of money to the school district and get pennies in return. The YMCA does a great job in providing recreational opportunities for the local children but our schools need and deserve more support to service the needs of our children.

Richards:

I don't support increased athletic facilities because we have a sufficient amount of facilities on the island. But, I believe we can increase the athletic programs at the current facilities and enhance the current facilities. We can also lobby city council to start setting aside funds for youth athletic activities perhaps partnering with the Marco YMCA or Optimist Clubs; possibly start using our beautiful beaches for open water swim teams or any type of team building and athletic water sports.

Rios:

We as a city had a referendum and approved a new building and facilities which has been built and it is used by many of our citizens, young and old alike. We have many athletic programs sponsored by the city and complemented by the YMCA and schools' facilities. We should not blindly add any unless we are data driven, evaluate the need and get the citizens input for both, what is desired and how it is going to be paid for?

Swiacki:

At the present time we have three large parks on the island. Mackle Park and Winterberry Park are used for athletic events. At this time there appears to be no public support to have athletic events held at Veterans' Community Park. A consideration may be to lease school property at Tommie Barfield Elementary or the Charter Middle school and use these sites for athletic venues.

Young:

Of course! The YMCA and the Island schools already do a tremendous job. Mackle Park and Winterberry Park provide additional athletic facilities. The city also bears the cost of maintaining the Tommie Barfield baseball field, which is owned by the school board, for use by Marco Island Academy. Tommie Barfield has an expansive and enclosed footprint that includes their athletic fields. The Marco Island Academy (MIA) is faced with much larger issues in not having enough athletic fields within their campus footprint now that Tract K is unavailable, consequently MIA is lacking proper facilities such as bathrooms, places to evacuate to other than buses when lightning warnings sound. They have had to rent Barron Collier's football stadium to host a "home game." My answer to fund this is to go back to the School Board and ask for more and equitable funding.



Audubon of the Western Everglades Events

Sugden Park Field Trip - November 3, 2018

Great birding in a serene park around Lake Avalon.

One of Naples' best-kept secrets for birding. 8:00 - 10:00 am

Registration required

Evening Speaker - November 13, 2018

The Lake O-Algae Connection - Speaker: John Cassini, Calusa Waterkeeper*

Naples Botanical Garden, 7:00 pm

Registration required.

This will also be AWE Annual Meeting.

* Each Waterkeeper around the USA and world has an area of jurisdiction that they patrol and work to protect and improve. The Calusa Waterkeeper jurisdiction includes the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary, Lake Okeechobee, Nicodemus Slough, Charlotte Harbor, Estero Bay, and the near-shore waters all along Lee County. John Cassini is the Calusa Waterkeeper. He has spent his long career as a scientist and outspoken water advocate. He is retired from Lee County Hyacinth Control District where as a biologist he led a range of programs including the regional grass carp breeding program.

In addition to being a founding member of Caloosahatchee Riverwatch, John founded the Watershed Council of Southwest Florida, which he led until being selected as the first Calusa Waterkeeper in 1995.

AWE events are open to anyone interested in birding, wildlife watching, and exploring Florida's natural areas. For more information visit <https://www.audubonwe.org/>

Beach Clean-up Schedule

- **Saturday, October 13th, 8 a.m.**
Beach clean-up at Residents' Beach
sponsored by MICA
- **Saturday, October 27th, 8 a.m.**
Beach clean-up at South Beach
sponsored by Marco Island Woman's Club
- **Friday, November 2nd, 5 p.m.**
Beach clean-up at South Beach
sponsored by the Optimist Club of Marco Island
- **Saturday, December 8th, 8 a.m.**
Quarterly Beach Cleanup at Tigertail Beach
sponsored by Friends of Tigertail

MICA supplies gloves, water, trashbags and the beach vehicle to haul trash to the dumpster. Bring your own reusable bottle for water to fill up from our Igloo water dispenser. Marco Island Area Chamber of Commerce supplies buckets and grabbers.



Everglades National Park and FWC to Expand Python Removal Efforts

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



*The Burmese python is one of the largest snakes in the world.
Adult Burmese pythons caught in Florida average between six feet and nine feet;
the largest Burmese captured in Florida measured over 17 feet in length.*

FWC photo by Kevin Enge

Everglades National Park and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) are partnering together to expand efforts to remove Burmese pythons from within the park. The partnership will expand the park's Python Removal Authorized Agent Program by allowing paid FWC contractors to remove pythons in Everglades National Park. The expansion will triple the maximum allowed number of participants in the park from 40 to 120, allow FWC contractors to use

firearms or other humane methods to euthanize pythons in the wild, and qualify additional trained National Park Service personnel to live capture and turn in pythons. The purpose of this controlled invasive species management program remains to remove invasive pythons and other invasive species from the wild and advance research in methods to control pythons.

"We are excited to partner with FWC on invasive species management and are certain this partnership





***Director Nick Wiley and
Commissioner Bergeron with Python***
FWC Photo by Carli Segelson

will increase python removals within our park,” said Everglades National Park Superintendent Pedro Ramos. “We worked hard in planning this expansion to ensure it won’t harm the park and its exceptional resources.”

To that end, the Park and the FWC will hold a required Everglades National Park orientation for the contractors so they fully understand the park’s program and rules they must follow prior to beginning removals within the park.

Burmese pythons pose a significant threat to the Everglades ecosystem. Along with State, Federal, Tribal, and local partners, Everglades National Park and the FWC have invested millions of dollars and countless hours in developing and testing ways to remove pythons from the Everglades. While this research has improved knowledge of the python population, eliminating pythons using current



Law Enforcement caught a wild python.
FWC Photo archives

technology is impossible. Search and removal by trained individuals remains the best method to remove pythons. The park used volunteers for removal in the past, and while it will continue to do so, the addition of FWC contractors will allow greater numbers of skilled people to engage in removals than ever before.

Burmese pythons became established in Florida as a result of escaped or released pets. People should never release non-native pets in the wild in Florida. It is illegal and can negatively impact native wildlife and habitat. The FWC has an Exotic Pet Amnesty Program that allows non-native pets to be surrendered without penalty.

***For more information about the
FWC’s Python Removal
Contractor Program or
Exotic Pet Amnesty Program,
visit MyFWC.com/Python***

Fun at Sarazen Park



***Winners of the May, 2018 bocce ball
tournament, Bill Christ and Veli Lapinoja.***



Pat and Vic Bermeo enjoying the fun and games

Photos by Marie Johnson



Live Eagle Cam Delivers the Magic at the Marco Island Nature Preserve

by Maria Lamb

Florida has the largest bald eagle population in the lower 48 states and bald eagle sightings are not rare. Still catching even just a glimpse of their white head and large white tail as they soar high above is a magical experience.

Even more special would be watching your favorite pair at close range. Just in time for the official start of bald eagle nesting season, the Eagle Cam at the Marco Island Nature Preserve is now LIVE! You can view the eagle's nest by visiting www.marcoislandnaturepreserve.org. The eagles can also be viewed LIVE through the Coastal Breeze News' website and Facebook page.

The Marco Island Nature Preserve and Bird Sanctuary (MINP) is located at 665 Tigertail Court on 11.6 acres of land. It is the vision of the MINP

to "preserve the land and protect the wildlife for future generations and to educate children and adults about our ecosystem and the environment."

According to Linda Turner, Director of Communications for MINP, "you can usually observe some activity around the beginning of October. A couple of bald eagles have already been observed checking out the nest. The eagles would fly in and around the MINP poking around. Sometimes they would bring a fish and have lunch at the nest."

The eagle camera was made possible by the generosity of the Calusa Garden Club of Marco Island and many good citizens, especially David Gardner, who was a major contributor by matching all donations in honor of his wife, Anne.



Photos by: Jim Robellard





The equipment for the camera was installed during the summer of 2017 but the camera mounting was delayed by Hurricane Irma and the nesting season. According to MINP, “the Eagle Cam will be a very valuable educational tool broadcasting the eagles’ activities online to all school children and eagle lovers. People everywhere will be able to view the eagles from anywhere in the world.”

Ways to be part of the Bald Eagle Conservation at the Marco Island Nature Preserve:

- Customized brick pavers are available for purchase in three sizes. These are installed in front of the MINP. Check them out at www.marcoislandnaturepreserve.org.
- Eagle Cam Sponsors are welcome. Please contact: 239-269-1754.
- Join the Christmas Home Tour featuring four homes decorated for the holidays scheduled for November 30, 2018 – a collaborative event hosted by the MINP and Calusa Garden Club. Tickets are now available for purchase at www.eventbrite.com. Includes deluxe coach transportation.

*For more information visit:
www.marcoislandnaturepreserve.org*

Bald Eagle Watching Etiquette

For the safest and least intrusive viewing experience, please follow these guidelines when observing or photographing nesting eagles:

- Use binoculars or a spotting scope to observe eagles closely. Photographers should use telephoto lenses.
- Do not stand directly under an eagle’s nest or in close view of the eagles. The recommended viewing distance is at least 330 feet.
- Once parked safely off the road, remain in or near your vehicle. Vehicles can serve as very effective “bird blinds”.
- Do not make loud or sudden noises. Avoid yelling, car door slamming, or horn honking.
- Move quickly and quietly to any designated observation areas.
- Never try to make eagles fly or stand up at the nest.
- Keep pets at home.

Recommendation from Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

- Always give eagles and other wildlife the space they need.



Habitat for Humanity of Collier County - A year in review

by Andrea McKenna, Donor Relations, Habitat for Humanity of Collier County

June marked the end of a fiscal year for Habitat Collier which certainly brought its share of ups and downs. Hurricane Irma changed the planned course of events but much was accomplished through the generosity of faithful supporters. The dream of homeownership came true for 96 hard-working families, 10 of whom lost their previous homes to Irma's wrath. Additionally, Habitat Collier completed 326 home repairs, many on homes that are not owned by Habitat partner families.

Providing a path to affordable homeownership remains Habitat's top priority. The importance of a secure stable home was never more apparent than when Irma struck. All living in Habitat homes had a place to return to after the storm passed. Those living in substandard housing, trailers and manufactured homes could not say the same. They were the hardest hit. As a result, over the course of the year, nearly 1,900 families inquired about purchasing a Habitat home in hopes of qualifying for a decent

place to raise their children. Sadly, more than 1,800 were told this wasn't their time.

Forty percent of all Collier County residents are cost burdened, meaning they pay more than 30% of their gross income on housing. Twenty percent is severely cost burdened, paying 50% or more, leaving little for food, gas and clothing. There is certainly no reserve if an unexpected expense occurs. Rents continue to rise and available units are scarce. To address the continuing need, Habitat's goal is to build 100 new homes this year while continuing to assist with needed repairs.

Our newest community, Dockside, located off 951 near U.S. 41, will be a convenient location for those working on Marco Island. This will be our first multi-unit, town-house style complex with both three- and four-bedroom units. When complete, 44 families will call this home. Already, three families working on Marco Island have chosen this location as their forever home.



Kenneth Vasquez, who works on Marco Island, with his family after purchasing their new Habitat home



Each year we continue to have about eight families who work on the Island apply for a Habitat home. Nearly 100 families who support the island lifestyle now live in a Habitat home or soon will be moving into one. They are working their required 500 hours of sweat equity anticipating the day when they too will be safely settled in a home of their own.

One Marco Island employee, Jean Joseph, is a single dad recently approved to purchase a Habitat home. He and his two sons, 12-year-old Jean and 10-year-old John, rent one room in a two-bedroom apartment. All three sleep in the same bed. The room holds their few possessions; the bed, two bikes and a small refrigerator. The landlord mistreats them, restricting their use of the kitchen and living room. The air conditioning is never turned on causing health problems for the boys. Dad works 60 hours a week at two jobs to provide for his boys. His primary job is working nights at the Marco Island Hilton.

When Jean applied for his home he said "I just want to live happily with my two boys and give them a better life. I didn't bring my boys to the U.S. to go through the emotional pain we are feeling. I feel the opportunity to purchase a Habitat home is all that I have."

Over 2,100 families and 5,100 children now know the safety and security that come with owning their forever homes. Soon Jean and his sons will join this group of grateful, hard-working families. They are thankful everyday to be free from the worry of making ends meet, especially when rent alone takes up the bulk of their income for conditions that are deplorable.

We need your help! Thank you to all who have volunteered or donated their time, talents and treasures. If you haven't done so already, now is the perfect time to get involved with Habitat Collier. Every helping hand makes a difference! All of us at Habitat Collier are grateful to all who have partnered with us for the past 40 years, helping us get one step closer to the day when everyone has a simple, decent place to live.

Keep up to date on what is happening by visiting our website www.habitatcollier.org or contact Andrea at 239-775-0036 or amckenna@habitatcollier.org.

Coming Soon: Beach Access From Your Smartphone

We are always working to improve the value of your MICA membership and that includes increased convenience. We are working on a smart phone app that will give you access to so much of the valuable information on our website right from your phone. Soon, you will be able to visit Residents' Beach using a digital membership ID on your phone, check beach opening and closing times, view Paradise Grill's menu, review MICA Membership Discount Program participants and even access membership renewal information.

About Habitat for Humanity of Collier County

This year for the second time, Habitat for Humanity of Collier County is among the 1% of charities to have earned a perfect 100 score from Charity Navigator, the largest and most utilized evaluator of charities in the U.S. Additionally, 14 times Habitat Collier received a four-star rating. In 2014, Habitat Collier was recognized as #1 in the nation for Housing and Community Development. 95¢ of every donated dollar is used to build homes and serve families.

*Follow Habitat for
Humanity of Collier County...*



Your American Cancer Society - #1 and Still Making Magic!

by Maureen Chodaba, Publicity Volunteer, American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society is a nationwide, community-based, voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer through prevention, saving lives and diminishing suffering from cancer through research, education, advocacy and service. Your American Cancer Society, right here on Marco Island, is doing all of that while performing many magical feats!

The 2018 ACS Relay For Life of Marco Island, presented by Robert J. Flugger and chaired by Cathy Nelson, placed first in fundraising in the state of Florida for the second consecutive year.

“Relay”, as it is nicknamed, is a community-based global movement that has been raising funds in the fight against cancer since 1985. Despite hardships caused by the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, 21

registered fundraising teams became a magical force in raising well over \$300,000 that will aid in research, patient services and help the American Cancer Society make a global impact on cancer.

Highlights of the event held at Veterans’ Community Park included the Survivor and Caregiver Laps, the poignant Luminaria Ceremony accompanied by the live music of saxophonist Eirinn Abu, and the presentation of the Sandy Holdgate Spirit of Relay Award to cancer survivor Anthony DeLucia.

And the magic hasn’t stopped there! On February 1, 2019, the new Banyan Ballroom of the JW Marriott Marco Island will be aglow as Phoenix Roofing presents “A Magical Night to Finish the Fight”, the 2019 ACS Imagination Ball. Chaired



Scenes from the successful 2018 Relay For Life



by Debra Shanahan for the 7th consecutive year, this gala fundraiser will feature fine food, music, and both silent and live auctions. Each year at the gala, the prestigious Grado Award is presented to individuals who have contributed significantly in the fight against cancer. This year's recipients are Marco Island's beloved philanthropists, Gary and Anne Landis.

Once again, the magic will not stop there. The fight against cancer will not end until this deadly disease is eliminated from our world. The real magic will come when we no longer need to merely imagine a world without cancer. One day that world will be our reality.

But we need more than just the word "abracadabra" to make that magic happen. We need YOU!

Please donate, volunteer and become involved in the quest for a cure. For more information, please contact your American Cancer Society at 239-642-6217 or Sue.Olszak@cancer.org

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2018 Imagination Ball was held at the JW Marriott Marco Island Resort



Love Those Shells!

by Paulette Carabelli, The Marco Island Shell Club

The Marco Island Shell Club will begin its season for craft making on October 30, 2018, at the United Church of Marco on Barfield Drive. There are many other activities to enjoy besides the craft making sessions at the Club. There are monthly seminars with informative speakers, outings and special events. Check out the website for all the dates and information: marcoshellclub.com.

Anyone is welcome to attend. We have many members that are snowbirds, some as far away as England that join us for just a few weeks. Participants enjoy our club for many different reasons. Some like to make crafty objects, others enjoy the library or learning about the different shells. And many just like the friendship of the members and delight in discovering many common interests while on the island. And, of course, we have the year-round local members who keep us informed.

The Club has many knowledgeable members. If you get inspired you might want to think about collecting some shells and enter your exhibit in the Shell Show in March. Or you might want to show your creativity by gluing together a breath-taking

item to enter in the artistic division. You could decorate a purse, hat, make jewelry, beautify a mirror, or glue together shells to make any item that piqued your interest. Floral bouquets are wonderful and some have been sold for wedding presents.

Come to visit us to see just how diverse and beautiful the objects can be. Join us for some fun and excitement.

While on the Island you probably walk the beach. Some folks just like to walk for exercise, talk to a friend, and enjoy the fresh air and the sights and sounds around the water.

Look down at the sand as you walk the beach. Check out the diversity of the shells you find. So many shapes and sizes and colors and patterns. Nature is indeed wonderful. Low tide is the best time to discover shells. When looking at shells, if there is an animal inside the shell, one should return it to the Gulf so it will continue to live.

Looking forward to seeing you at our first craft session, 9 a.m, October 30, 2018, at the United Church of Marco on Barfield Drive.

You will not be disappointed.



LCEC Updates New Customer Care & Bill System

Thank you for your patience while we adjust. LCEC has been working for more than a year to replace the flagship computer systems with a single solution that has been adopted by more than 800 electric and telecom utilities across the nation. The new system offers opportunities for cost savings, which will help to keep electric rates competitive for customers. It also offers enhanced efficiency for LCEC stakeholders.

The new system was rolled out in September and adjustments will take place throughout the rest of the year and for as long as needed. LCEC is committed to addressing any issues or concerns that may result from the transition. Customers are thanked for their patience as the new systems are adopted.

The first phase of the initiative is just the beginning of a host of possibilities customers can expect for the future.

Upcoming system enhancements will bring more improved technology features and added convenience and value to customers. Be sure to visit www.lcec.net and enroll in SmartHub!

Marco Cat, continued from page 12

"This exhibition is the culmination of a long-term vision to bring these incredibly important artifacts to Marco Island on loan in order to educate and inspire people of all ages about the fascinating history of our region," says MIHS Curator of Collections Austin Bell.

For updates on the exhibit and information on how you can support MIHS in preparing for the return of the Key Marco artifacts through a sponsorship or donation, call 239.389.6447 or visit www.theMIHS.org

Hidden Gems



Children helping to decorate rocks during MICA's Fourth of July Spectacular.

If you hide it, they will find it. Residents' Beach Park has become a hunting ground for painted rocks, a hide-and-seek craze crossing the country. Children and adults helped us decorate rocks during our Fourth of July Spectacular. The rocks were then hidden around the park and have been discovered and re-hidden many times over. We have spotted some of your gems on the Marco Island Rocks Facebook page, a place to post hints of hiding spots and newly decorated rocks. We hope you will keep painting, hiding and posting!

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next to Marco Island Public Library
239.394.0080 - www.themihs.org



New Teaching Artists and Classes for 2018 – 2019 at Marco Island Center for the Arts

In 2020, Marco Island Center for the Arts will be celebrating its 50th year of celebrating the arts, growing artistic skills in newcomers, developing expertise in the talented and promoting an appreciation of arts for patrons, the public and tourists. The core of the educational programming is the talented teaching artists that treat students like artists while focusing on fundamental skills and their specialized medium techniques. New classes in clay, metalsmithing, mixed media, oil and watercolor are being offered during the 2018 – 2019 season.

Tracy Gamble joins the Art Center's clay instructors as a visiting artist with over 25 years of experience as a studio potter and member of Actors' Equity. She describes herself as a continual student with a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre, Master of Library Science and a Master of Business Administration. Tracy is an educator for the American Art Clay Co., Inc. and will be teaching a related glazing workshop.

Indiana native Glenn Woods will be teaching in the clay studio. He is known for creating functional and decorative pottery with strong influences from nature. Most of his work features stunning crystalline glazes, both gloss and matte. His class will explore two important forms – the vase and the bottle. As a child growing up near an Amish community, he learned to crochet and appreciate the fine stitching patterns in Amish quilts. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Art from Indiana Central University.

Designing contemporary pieces from historical elements, teaching artist Amy Butts learned metalsmithing from her tool and die maker father and veteran crafter mother. She received her Bachelor of Fine Arts in Metalsmithing and Master of Fine Arts in Sculpture from the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Humorously, she grew up on "Jewel Avenue" in Chicago. Amy will be teaching a beginning metal jewelry workshop.

One of the foremost mixed media artists and creator of an art form call "Layered Imagery", Marjorie Pesek will be teaching workshops based upon her collage technique. This unique work describes both the process of creating each piece, as well as the visual story it reveals. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of St. Thomas, Minnesota.



Tracy Gamble



Glenn Woods



Amy Butts



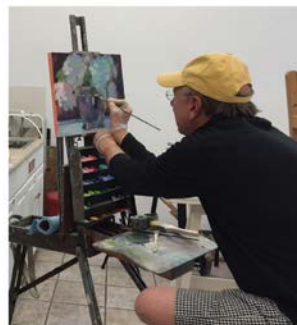
Marjorie Pesek



Rita Schwab



Charles Pompilius



Douglas David



Nancy Falciani



Karen Swanker



Since childhood, German born artist Rita Schwab has always loved to paint and be connected to nature. On scholarship, Rita attended the University of South Florida in Tampa where she received her Bachelor of Fine Arts. With her Master of Fine Arts in hand from Florida State University she has been a self-employed studio artist and a mixed media abstract painter for decades. Rita will be teaching a fun and action packed class called "Mask Making." Whimsical masks will be created from palm fronds that will be embellished with organic collectables.

New to Florida is Charles Pompilius, a figurative painter from Detroit. He completed the official portrait of Michigan's former Governor Jennifer Granholm that hangs in the state capital building. He has taught mixed media classes in art centers, school systems and at the University level. Charles will combine the use of watercolor and pastel for his mixed media workshops. He holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts and Master of Fine Arts from the University of Iowa.

Oil painter Douglas David has a painting in the Collection of the Vice President's Residence in Washington DC. His paintings reflect comfort, warmth, meaning and simplicity. David's class will teach the basic principles of oil painting, painlessly. He received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Visual Communications from Indiana University Herron School of Art.

Sometimes you just fall in love with the luminosity of watercolors. Charleston native Nancy Falciani

did almost 40 years ago. She began taking pastel and oil painting lessons as a child. Nancy went on to become an exhibition director for the National Watercolor Society's national show. Her watercolor classes will be using Yupo paper, a slick synthetic paper. She majored in Studio Art at the College of Charleston.

Well-known local artist Karen Swanker will be teaching a specialty workshop on quilling. In this class, students will learn how to cut and curl paper to create a snowflake and a floral design.

Before becoming a full-time artist she created advertising for over 600 colleges and universities across the country. Karen holds a degree in art and computer graphics.

Marco Island Center for the Arts' has a stellar group of education instructors that will be returning to teach their exciting classes and workshops. The following are the teachers: David Becker, Judy Becker, Shirley Blake, Linda Chambers, Diane Reed Eiler, Fran Foley, Barney Halaschak, Sandy Moore Howe, Inez Hudson, Hannah Ineson, Cedar Kindy, Jerry Leeman, Edythe Newbourne, Nancy Norman, Tara O'Neill, Johanna Petropoulos, Phyllis Pransky, Rinny Ryan, Jo-Ann Sanborn, Sonny Saunders, Joan Scherer and Ann Vreeland.

The 2018-2019 Classes & Workshops catalog is available at the Art Center located at 1010 Winterberry Drive. The center is open Monday thru Friday, 9:00 am – 4:00 pm. All education classes can be found on the website, marcoislandart.org.



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News From Across the Bridge

Continued from page 4

artifacts from that expedition, and will receive the loan from the Smithsonian Institute in or around November or December, but will not be introduced until probably January. There are many security hurdles that must be traversed before it will be open for public inspection. I'm sure, no matter where you look, it will be making news! The loan will extend for two years, and will be kept under tight security the entire time. The Historical Society, the Board of Directors, the effervescent Executive Director Pat Rutledge, (who never seems to run out of energy!) and especially Austin Bell, our Curator, are thrilled beyond words. Austin had many connections and friends in high places that helped make this all possible. It's been an expensive venture, and the board has received monumental financial support from the Marco Island community, making it all possible. To all of you who helped make this effort happen, we all thank you! Our community thanks

you! Even our children, who will learn much about history from this fantastic show of history, will thank you! You won't want to miss any of the events surrounding this dig and the artifacts. See you there!

Some have wondered what is being built on U.S. 41 East across from Outback Steakhouse, and next door to 5th Third Bank. It's a Wawa Gas Station, although I've been corrected and told it's more than a gas station, it's a legend! The Wawa name comes from Pennsylvania, and is an American Indian word for a bird native to Pennsylvania. I've learned a lot from audiences. I've also learned they love the place and they follow it religiously. They talk about the great, fresh sandwiches they make specifically for you, not ready made, about the service, about the quality, and more. I can hardly wait to try it, once they open, which is a couple of months away. There will also be some related retail stores, such as (but not limited to) a tire store and possibly an automotive parts store. At this time, I'm not certain what the final outcome will be on those outparcels.



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Rookery Bay Research Reserve Will Collaborate with University Partners on Two Grants

by Renee Wilson,

~ Grant funds awarded to Duke University and USF will address ecosystem services and habitat changes in Southwest Florida ~

Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve announces new collaborations with Duke University and the University of South Florida (USF) to conduct research on Rookery Bay lands and waters. The projects are supported by two National Estuarine Research Reserve System Science Collaborative catalyst grants of \$114,000 to Duke University and \$182,000 to USF.



Mangroves make up roughly 36,000 of Rookery Bay Research Reserve's 110,000 acres

"These projects will provide important information about ecosystem services and habitat changes to support protection and restoration of coastal habitats," said Keith Laakkonen, Rookery Bay Research Reserve director.

The USF project will use high-resolution satellite imagery and advanced-processing techniques to map habitats throughout the research reserve's 110,000 acres. This will provide detailed maps to help staff determine how habitats have changed from one year to the next, or over longer periods of time. The maps also can inform habitat restoration projects and management actions to enhance resiliency in other locations.

"Newer, high-resolution maps of coastal wet-

lands will help assess habitat loss, recovery from hurricanes and shifts in marine and coastal vegetation resulting from sea-level rise," Laakkonen said.

The Duke University project will develop a new tool to help determine the value of ecosystem services provided by the coastal environment. These services include food production, nutrient cycling, oxygen production, aesthetic and recreational benefits and more. This tool will help coastal managers and community leaders identify and promote these values that help sustain and strengthen the local economy, particularly in relation to tourism and recreation.

Both projects are scheduled to begin September 2018 and continue through August 2019.

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Residents' Beach Uncle Sam's Sand Jam - July 4th 2018





See more pictures on pages 10 & 11



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Butterfly Beach, Esplanade
www.butterflybeachmarco.com
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394-0837

Georgie's & the Shoe Resort
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www.sunshinestitchers.com

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www.bellafloralstc.com

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Knights of Columbus

Upcoming Activities and Events

Knights of Columbus (K of C) San Marco Council #6344 members have an ambitious program for the upcoming season of Fall 2018 to Spring 2019, including many activities and events here on Marco Island. Our Knights participate in many community activities, social functions, goodwill initiatives, spiritual strengthening, and play a large role both in the Marco Island community and in the San Marco Parish. San Marco Council #6344 is part of the K of C, the largest lay Catholic Fraternal Service Organization in the world. Our Order was established in Connecticut in 1882 by Father Michael J. McGivney and a small group of men. They called themselves the Knights of Columbus and embraced the principles of charity, unity, fraternity and patriotism. Today, our Order has over 1.9 million members in about 14,200 Councils worldwide. Each year Knights raise funds for charity (over \$1 billion last year) and provide hours of volunteer service (over 600 million last year) through programs for the Faith, Community, Family, and Life.

Under the Faith Program, Council #6344 Knights will coordinate the Ushers for the Masses, lead the Fifth Sunday Rosary before the 8:00am mass on months containing a fifth Sunday and participate as Lectors and Eucharistic Ministers. Also, under this program, Knights also support Vocations by providing funds to Seminarians.

Under the Family Program, Knights will continue to provide insurance for members and their families, hold monthly socials with speakers or entertainment and hold socials after Council ceremonies, such as Officer Installations and Exemplifications. Also, under this program Knights support Veterans Programs, Meals on Wheels, Bread Runs, Scholarships, Keep Christ in Christmas, and Providence House.

Under the Community Program, Knights will hold:

1. Twenty Bingo Nights (Every Thursday from Oct. 18 - Nov. 15, 2018). Seven Fish Fry Dinners (Every Friday from March 1 - April 12, 2019)
2. Five Spaghetti Dinners to benefit the Police Foundation, Firefighter Foundation, Sons and Daughters of Erin, and St Vincent de Paul Society (Tuesdays on Oct. 9 and Nov. 13, 2018, and Feb. 19, March 19, and April 9, 2019)
3. Car Show - Saturday, Nov. 3
4. Golf Tournament (45th year) March 10, 2019

5. Tootsie Roll Drive to benefit the Intellectually Challenged from February 22 - 24, 2019

6. Habitat for Humanity event was held Sept. 2018

These events benefit Council supported charities and are open to the public and everyone is invited. Also, Knights will participate in a community wide Chili Cook-off (Saturday, October 20, 2018), the Marco Island Christmas Parade (Saturday, Dec. 15, 2018) and St Patrick's Day Parade (Saturday, March 17, 2019). Also, Knights will hold a Free Throw Contest for local youths (Friday, Jan. 11, 2019) and assist in Special Olympics events. Finally, Knights will support Disaster Relief.

Under the Life Program, Knights will participate in peaceful prayer vigils outside abortion related facilities and provide support to the March for Life, Pregnancy Center, Fill the Crib/Playpen, and Sunlight House.

Knights also support the events of the San Marco Columbiettes, the Council ladies organization and their events. The Columbiettes will hold two Treasures in the Trunk Sale fundraisers (Saturday Nov. 10th, 2018 and Feb. 23, 2019) in the parking lot of the San Marco Parish Center from 8:00am – 12 noon. Vendors sell new, used or antique treasures from the trunk of their vehicle, or a table, for a nominal fee. Refreshments and home baked items are available for purchase. The Columbiettes also hold a dinner dance with entertainment, a great menu, and a cash bar. These events are open to the public and everyone is invited. In the past many Marco Island residents have joined the Columbiettes for a day of fun.

The Council is always looking for help in these many activities and events, particularly the fundraiser events, such as the spaghetti dinners and fish fries so that the Council can continue each year to provide donations in excess of \$20,000 divided up among over twenty different charity funds and organizations.

If you want to join, contact San Marco Council #6344 at 239-389-5633 or visit our website at www.marcoknights.com.

It is also possible to join the Knights of Columbus on line at www.kofc.org/join



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