Main Street Fort Pierce, South Florida Water Management District, and Friends
partner to create a florida-friendly landscape at the Platts/Backus House

See story on page 12 …
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It’s Spring – Think Green

by Anne Satterlee

The buzz these days is green. Going green is rapidly catching on with the public and is evident with individual’s purchasing behavior of products and services that are specifically “green” or environmentally friendly. Over 93 percent of U.S. consumers say they definitely or may purchase these products over others. Only recently, I attended a fabulous ‘green wedding’ that featured reused glass for candle holders, natural fibers for the tables, dresses, recycled paper for the invitations, etc.

Main Street Fort Pierce is doing its part to think and act green with a sustainable landscape for the renovated Platts-Backus House. Green landscaping is worlds apart from traditional landscaping techniques and emphasizes the conscious selection of appropriate plants, water efficiency/conservation, and the use of fewer resources to blend the landscape into the natural world and enrich the biodiversity of the surrounding ecosystem.

Any sustainable home should include enviroscaping as a way not only to beautify the home’s surroundings, but also as an eco friendly way to save energy and enhance the surrounding ecosystems. Enviroscaping cuts summer and winter energy costs by protecting homes from winter wind and summer sun, reduces the consumption of water, pesticides, and fuel for landscaping and maintenance, and helps to control noise and air pollution.

So when you are celebrating St. Patrick’s Day later this month, think about ‘green’ and how you can save time, money and our environment. We will all benefit in the long run.
Friday, March 6: **Friday Fest** — 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Main Street Fort Pierce, 466-3880, www.mainstreetfortpierce.org

Sunday, March 8: **Music on the Plaza at Marina Square** — Noon to 4:00 p.m.; 979-6176, www.bluebirdproductions.com

Sunday, March 8: **Avenue D Boys Choir Concert** — 4:00 p.m.; First United Methodist Church Sanctuary; 464-0440.

Wednesday, March 11: **ArtWalk** — 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.; Come to an exciting new Art Walk featuring famous Fort Pierce artists such as: The Highwaymen, Albert Black, Jimmy Stovall, Maryann Carroll and the art work of the mentor to the Highwaymen, A.E. Backus. Also featured: renowned watercolorist Colleen Becht, Shelly Crandall, T.J. Walker, David Van Deusen, Mark Johnson, A.J. Rose, R.L. Dav-enport, and Condelle Harding.

Tuesday, March 17: **St. Patrick's Day Festival** — Downtown Fort Pierce—Second Street; for more information, call 489-4255.

Friday, March 20: **Coffee with the Mayor** — 8:00 a.m. Historic City Hall; Main Street Fort Pierce, 466-3880, www.mainstreetfortpierce.org

Saturday, March 21: **Sandy Shoes Festival** — Veteran's Memorial Park; for more information, call 466-3880.

March 24 & 26: **How to Research the Law Class** — 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.; 218 S. Second Street; $25 for students, $35 for non-students. Pre-register by March 16th by calling 462-2370; Free parking is available in the garage across the street; *Accredited by the American Alliance of Paralegals, Inc. for four credit hours.

Wednesday, March 25: **Taste of St. Lucie** — Big Brothers, Big Sisters of St. Lucie County; Downtown Fort Pierce—Second Street; for more information, call 466-8535.

Friday, March 27: **Classic Car Cruise-In** — 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.fortpierce-fl.com

**MAIN STREET AND DOWNTOWN BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

**Calendar**

Dine, Shop and Enjoy Beautiful, Historic, Downtown Fort Pierce!

**WEEKLY EVENTS**

**ArtWalk** — Saturdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; North of downtown Fort Pierce

**Cafe Pier 22** — Noon to 9:00 p.m.; Pier 22, Downtown Fort Pierce

**Sunny Side Café** — 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; 2nd Street, Downtown Fort Pierce

**Fort Pierce Jazz Jams** — 7:00 p.m.; Fort Pierce Community Center; $2 Admission; Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society, 460-5124.

**DOWNTOWN FORT PIERCE LIBRARY**

For information, please call 462-2787 or visit www.st-lucie.lib.fl.us.

**ST. LUCIE COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM**

For information, please call 462-1795 or visit www.st-lucie.lib.fl.us/museum.

**SUNRISE THEATRE**

For information, please call 461-4775 or visit www.sunrisetheatre.com.

**BACKUS GALLERY & MUSEUM**

For information, please call 465-0630 or visit www.backusgallery.com

**March 6 & 7: Discover the Artist Within** — A weekend focused on exploring your creativity! Art Mundo will present a series of art demonstrations and workshops in conjunction with the Backus Tribute Show. The line-up includes demonstrations of watercolor painting, acrylic painting, wood carving, pottery wheel, painting oils with the palette knife. The workshops include sumi-e ink, miniature baskets, book arts, shaman’s necklace, oil paint and finishes, assemblage, botanical printing, paste papers, origami. There will also be a large community canvas for all to paint on! Pat Cochran will have a discussion on his recycled sculpture created on the museum’s ground during the Art of Living Green Festival. Admission to the demonstrations and workshops is free except for those that have a minimal materials fee.

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For more information, please call 370-6162, ppearson@fppd.org

**Saturday, March 7:** Pro Wrestling Fusion will be back at the Fort Pierce PAL Center on Saturday, March 7. Wrestling Superstars from all over the globe will compete to raise funds for PAL’s Youth Crime Prevention. Doors open at 7:30pm. General admission is $10; ringside seats are $20.00. For additional info: 772-224-9332 or www.prowrestlingfusion.com.

**February 18 to March 14: Tribute to Backus** — For more than 18 years, the Backus Museum has presented a Tribute to A.E. Backus the “Dean of Florida Landscape Painters.”

**Sunday, March 8: A.E. Backus Brunch & Painting Raffle** — Brunch served from 9:00 a.m. to noon, rain or shine. Brunch tickets sold in advance for $10.00, $15.00 at the door, children under 10, $5.00. The “all you should eat” Backus Brunch is legendary. Feast on fresh fried mahi-mahi, scrambled eggs, sausage, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, cheese grits, fresh-squeezed orange juice and much more. At 12:30, the ticket will be drawn to reveal the winner of this year’s original Backus painting. Over $6,000 in additional prizes will be awarded. Raffle tickets are $20.
The City of Fort Pierce is continuing to move forward in this challenged economy. The improvements and reconstruction of our beach parks, A1A and the look along U.S. Highway 1 are bringing a facelift to Fort Pierce’s landscape. High quality housing along 13th Street and Moores Creek are increasing the viability of the Lincoln Park area and our long awaited Federal Court House, located at the corner of US 1 and Orange Avenue, will be under construction at the time this article is in print.

The Fort Pierce Marina upgrades, awaiting final approval from the DEP could be under construction by this summer. This project under review and permitting since Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne graced our presence in 2004, will improve navigation and durability of our marina once completed, as well as, create a beautiful addition to our spectacular waterfront.

America’s new leadership in Washington under the direction of President Obama’s stimulus package (congratulations President Obama) will allow Fort Pierce the hope and funding to continue our progress with infrastructure improvement projects such as reconstruction of 13th Street from Virginia Avenue to Avenue Q, renovations to our important Veterans Park located on Indian River Drive, the restoration of the Historic Lincoln Theatre and the much needed relocation of the waste water treatment plant on South Beach. The request from the President was made, the design work for these projects was completed and the paperwork has been delivered.

You can help move Fort Pierce forward by contacting our representatives in Washington to show your support! Our local representatives include Senators Nelson and Martinez and Congressmen Rooney and Hastings.

Continue to be a part of Fort Pierce’s transformation, better times are ahead and we continue to move forward in these challenging times.
In Tribute: Anne Berner

Downtown Fort Pierce lost a familiar face in October, 2008. Ann Berner, Director/Manager of the City of Fort Pierce Seven Gables House Visitor Information Center, was hired by the St Lucie County Chamber of Commerce in July 1999 to manage the visitor center which was dedicated and opened by then Mayor Eddie Enns in November 1999. She served in this capacity until her recent death.

In addition to the securing of adequate volunteers, she trained them in the center’s history and all the tourist, business and area attractions of St. Lucie County. Ann was active in many civic events and was an essential committee member during the planning of the Fort Pierce Centennial celebration in 2001. She also served as the Visitor Center Director for the Port St. Lucie location in the Port St. Lucie City Hall while it was in existence.

She was known as the person to call for any information or to go to for assistance with a need. Most inquiries to the Chamber from all over the United States were directed to Ann for this reason. At the 2006 Annual
Volunteer Recognition Luncheon, Mayor Bob Benton presented Ann with a “Key To The City” in recognition and appreciation for her accomplishments at the Seven Gables Visitor Information Center. The Mayor’s office in subsequent years presented Ann and the Volunteers with Volunteer pins and City of Fort Pierce pins.

In addition to her role at the Seven Gables House she served on the Tourism and Education committees of the Chamber and was a member of the Hotel/Motel Association and Downtown Business Association of Fort Pierce.

Ann assisted Main Street Fort Pierce in many ways over the years. She was truly part of the renaissance that is occurring in Downtown Fort Pierce. Thanks to her hard work many visitors and part-time residents discovered all the wonderful attractions of our great city and continue to return year after year.

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Local Students Work to Feed Those in Need at Second Annual *Empty Bowls* Project

*by John Culverhouse*

The economic pinch has everyone feeling the effects, from individuals, to organizations. The Treasure Coast Food Bank, which supplies food to 158 food pantries along the Treasure Coast, is also feeling the pinch; and to add to that, an unprecedented number of people expected to be in need this year.

Local school kids are doing their part to give to those in need, donating their time, talent and resources. You can see their work and donate to a good cause at the second annual *Empty Bowls* Project, which will be held at the Downtown Fort Pierce Farmers’ Market on Saturday, March 7, from 8:00 a.m. until Noon.

**THE EMPTY BOWLS PROJECT**

Art students and art teachers from St. Lucie County’s public and private schools handcrafted and painted about 500 soup-sized ceramic bowls, which will be sold for $15 at the Farmer’s Market on Saturday, March 7. All proceeds will be donated to the Treasure Coast Food Bank.

Students will also sell soup and bread prepared by students of the St. Lucie West Centennial High School’s culinary arts program.

Students participated from Francis K. Sweet Elementary School, St. Lucie Elementary School, Lincoln Park Academy, St. Lucie West Centennial High School, John Carroll High School, Dale Cassens School and the Fort Pierce Magnet School of the Arts.

Ms. DiTullio says the goal of the Empty Bowls Project is to help end hunger in our community and provide education on hunger issues.
“This meager meal is symbolic of the simple meals that many in our community and the world consume daily, while the purchased handmade bowl serves as a take-home reminder of all the empty bowls still left to be filled,” she said.

John Meehan, of the Treasure Coast Food Bank, said that last year, his organization made 1.3 million meals available through Treasure Coast hunger relief agencies. This coming year, however, with a 40% increase in the local demand for food assistance, the Food Bank expects the number of meals it provides to increase tremendously.

“Every dollar donated helps to supply five meals for those in need,” he said. “Events like Empty Bowls make it possible for us to fulfill our mission of feeding our neighbors in need in our community. We are grateful to the students, teachers, and sponsors and we look forward to a wonderful outpouring of support from the public again this year.”

Project organizers are confident that this year’s event can surpass the success of last year’s event. There are already more schools participating than last year, but more community support and sponsorship is needed in order to achieve the Empty Bowl Project goal of raising at least $10,000 for the Treasure Coast Food Bank.

Sponsors include: the St. Lucie County Education Foundation, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, St. Lucie County Cultural Affairs Council, Scripps Treasure Coast Newspapers, the Downtown Fort Pierce Farmers’ Market, Publix, and other area businesses.

For more information, to contribute, or to become a sponsor, please contact Eileen DiTullio at 772-461-0465.
Extreme Yard Makeover!

*by Linette Trabulsy, South Florida Water Management District*

**Main Street Fort Pierce, South Florida Water Management District and Others**

Partner to Create a Florida-Friendly Landscape at the Platts/Backus House

In an effort to beautify and renovate the landscape at the newly refurbished office of *Main Street Fort Pierce*, several community partners will collaborate to transform the current garden area of the Platts/Backus House into an attractive Florida-friendly outdoor space perfect for gatherings, visiting and gazing.

In 2006, *Main Street Fort Pierce* renovated the historic Platts/Backus House to serve as the organization’s office and community center. But that was just the house. Now, several organizations and businesses have committed to assist Main Street with their efforts to finish the project with an “Extreme Yard Makeover!” When complete, the yard will not only serve as a beautiful entrance to the historic house and neighborhood, but a demonstration site for visitors and residents to learn and understand the importance of water conservation and how to create their own Florida-friendly landscape.

In typical *Main Street Fort Pierce* fashion, many partners are already working behind the scenes to begin the process of renovation. *Wachovia Bank* Foundation has donated a $5,000 grant to the organization and the South Florida Water Management District is assisting with the coordination and promotion of the project. Greg Lewis of *Conkling and Lewis Construction* has unearthed the old bath tub that “Beanie” Backus used as the fountain and is currently restoring it to use as a centerpiece for the new fountain. Bill DuMond of *Land South Design* has drawn and donated the landscape plans for the yard. Gary Gleichman of *Treasure Coast Irrigation and Landscape, Inc.* is working with *Hunter Industries Incorporated* to donate the irrigation work and supplies for the project. Other partners for the project include: the City of Fort Pierce, *Lewis and Associates/Hap Lewis*, Fort Pierce Utilities Authority, St. Lucie County Sheriff’s Office, *Burkhart Construction* and the St. Lucie County IFAS Extension office.

The house is located at a wonderful area for the demonstration site. It is at the entrance to the residential area of downtown Fort Pierce and can serve as an example of Florida-friendly landscape to the surrounding neighbors. Additionally, the historic building sits on the corner of a very important intersection in which the City of Fort Pierce is pursuing future development of a hotel and/or convention center on the city owned property. The Platts/Backus House/Main Street office serves as a community center for the downtown area with meeting space, event space and office space. Several community and fundraising events are held monthly at the...
Platts/Backus House with a diverse and broad spectrum of guests visiting.

Currently, the landscape plans are complete, yard preparation begins soon, installation will begin in March and official unveiling will take place in early April to commemorate Water Conservation Month.

Not only will this project serve as an educational demonstration on Florida-friendly yards and landscapes, but there will be three free Brown Bag Lunch seminars in March and April helping residents and visitors learn how to improve water efficiency in their own yards. The seminars will be held at the Platts/Backus House located at 122 A.E. Bean Backus Avenue in downtown Fort Pierce. In partnership with SFMWD, the St. Lucie County IFAS Extension Office and the St. Lucie County Master Gardeners, the seminars include:

- **Rain Barrels and Rain Gardens:** Wednesday, March 18 at noon; presented by Ken Gioeli, Natural Resources Agent at St. Lucie County IFAS Extension Office;
- **Native Plants & Wildflowers:** Wednesday, March 25 at noon; Anita Neal, Director of St. Lucie County IFAS Extension Office and the St. Lucie County Master Gardeners;
- **Right Plant, Right Place and Improving Water Efficiency in Your Landscape:** Wednesday, April 1 at noon; Kate O’Neill; Program Specialist and Master Gardener at St. Lucie County IFAS Extension Office; and Jesus Rodriguez, Water Conservation Officer, South Florida Water Management District.

To celebrate the completion of the project, an unveiling of the new landscape is planned for early April. Officials from the City of Fort Pierce, St. Lucie County, the South Florida Water Management District as well as other partners that worked on the project will be on hand to cut the ribbon and open the new garden area to the public.

For more information on Florida-friendly landscapes, visit www.savewaterfl.com. For more information about the historic Platts/Backus House, visit www.mainstreetfortpierce.org.
Classy Carriage Company

By Jeanne Johansen

Taxi service and foot power have joined forces to create a new attitude in transportation fun and entertainment in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce area with the introduction of Classy Carriage Company. The company is three months old and its owner, William Talley, opened his unique operations to allow residents and visitors to tour the town in human-powered taxis resembling a rickshaw.

Pedicab or bicycle taxis, are not new, but are gaining popularity in big cities like New York so it makes sense that it would work well in sunny Florida. Thanks to William Talley, you can now park in the new downtown parking garage and one of his two new bright yellow bicycle-driven carriages will pedal you to your destination and come take you back to your car when you’re done.

“The business brings the downtown area closer together,” says owner William Talley. “It is a novelty way of getting around the town, and it also adds to the historic aspects of the city.”

The bright yellow carriages not only enable people to move around the city easier, they add new pleasure to the residents’ and visitors’ special occasions. The company is currently operating full-time during Friday Fest, Sunrise Theatre events and other large downtown festivals.

“The company provides a point of contact for visitors and residents,” says local born and raised, William Talley, who knows a lot about his town. “I can provide information on things to do around the area.” The company has two additional employees, Mike Montgomery and Randy Walker.

The carriages provide valet service for the Sunrise Theatre during their performances. Rides are $5.00 each and with a completed coupon card the 5th trip is free. Be sure to place Classy Carriage Company’s phone number, 772-882-2464, in your cell phone and enjoy Friday Fest and other events with a taxi with a whole new pleasant attitude.

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Mardi Gras 2009 in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce

by Jeanne Johansen

Music filled the air on Saturday, February 7th as the Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society kicked off Mardi Gras early with a parade through Historic Downtown Fort Pierce. The colorful parade of over a half dozen floats snaked through town showering spectators with beads and candy.

“We come every year,” said Joseph and Dorothy Puntino of Stuart. Asked which float they liked the best, “The yellow car with the Red Hat Ladies” Dorothy Puntino exclaimed as the car drove past.

The events continued throughout the week with brown bag lunches from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and jazz on Melody Square. If you missed it this year, be sure to remember for next year.
Local Traditions – Local Entertainment

2009 Sandy Shoes Festival – Saturday, March 21

Presented by Main Street Fort Pierce, Budweiser, & the Long Branch Saloon

by Pam Gillette

The Sandy Shoes Festival was a St. Lucie County tradition that started in 1957 and brought music, local business competitions and fun to the tourists and residents of our community. Re-created in 2002, after a very successful Centennial Celebration, the Sandy Shoes Festival is now continuing those traditions and bringing those same values of yesteryear back to Fort Pierce.

Wanting to showcase St. Lucie County and her resources, the Sandy Shoes Festival was the perfect opportunity to highlight one of our major industries — citrus. The Grapefruit Squeeze-Off was one of the early traditions and has since returned to the Festival. Riverside National Bank has sponsored and organized this competition since its return in 2002. The Grapefruit Squeeze-Off is always an exciting part of the festival and Pat Alley, St. Lucie County President of Riverside National Bank will be on hand to emcee the competition between local banks, schools, and community leaders. Who will take away the top prize of Community Bragging Rights this year? Come find out for yourself at the Squeeze-Off contest which will take place at 2:15 p.m.

Taking its lead from the popular Food Network show, Main Street Fort Pierce created a new tradition, the Iron Chef Competition. Invited local chefs are given the same ingredients and time to prepare memorable dishes for chosen local judges. The chefs will be judged on taste and presentation and the right to be called the Top Chef in St. Lucie County for the day. The Iron Chef competition will begin at 11:15 a.m.

Remember back to those sunny days when you jumped into your car and cruised down the highway. Well the Sandy Shoes Festival is proud to present a Classic Car Show to this year’s event. Hosted by L.J. Davis Productions Inc., Muscle, Classic, Custom, Antique, or anything that has four wheels will be arriving at the Manatee Center Parking Lot from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Classic Car Show is free to the public and to those who would like to participate. Special event door plaques will be given out to early entries and participants can register to win a cruise. Trophies will be awarded for People’s Choice. So come on by and vote for your favorite classic car. Trophies will be awarded at 4:00 p.m.

If music is your love, the Long Branch Saloon continues the local traditions of Sandy Shoes by using local talents from around the tri-county area to perform through out the day. “Reggie” will be giving Line Dancing Instruction in front of the Community Stage from 3:30 p.m. to 4:15 p.m. and the music begins on the Community Stage with performances by, Anderson Council, Buck-n-the Odds, and Music by DJ Pulse.

Anderson Council is a four piece band that has entertained audiences of all ages around the Treasure Coast. The band is made up of Bill Few, guitar, Diane Few, vocals, Kenny Pangerburn bass guitar, and Mike Clemente, drums and percussion. They play a variety of music from Classic Rock to New Rock featuring artists such as Pink Floyd, Alanis Morrisette, Pat Benatar, Pink, Melissa Ethridge and many more. Anderson Council has performed at various venues throughout the Treasure Coast such as Friday Fest, Frog Leg Festival, Long Branch Saloon, Eagles Club, Backus Festival, Sandy Shoes Festival and many more. Anderson Council begins at 12:45 p.m.

Buck-n-the Odds is a home grown band from the Treasure Coast. The band started several years ago with a few lyrics written by Buck. With the chemistry and personalities of the band members, LH Buck (vocals,guitar), Bird (sound,monitor), Kevin (lead guitar,vocals), Brent (fretless bass), and Harold( Drums,vocals), a few lyrics grew into a boundless musical energy. Buck-n-the Odds begins at 4:15 p.m.

The Sandy Shoes Festival will wrap up the day of local music on the amphitheatre stage with great performances by Storm Rider and Tribal Tongue.
Storm Rider will take the stage at 6 p.m. This versatile group of musicians brings combined talent and experience to the stage for a foot-stomping, heart stopping event. Jim Cook, lead vocalist & lead guitarist, guides this act to a rolling crescendo with a lightning flash of excitement. The band’s influences of Santana, Deep Purple, Led Zeppelin, and Jeff Beck, bring a precise and soulful style to this Country/Southern Rock group. Based in Vero Beach, Storm Rider is exciting to watch and an experience to remember.

From classic to new rock, Tribal Tongue give you a little of everything...that rocks! Band Members; Keith Whalen - Lead Guitar, Ben Knosko - Lead Vocals, Dylan Thiebeau - Bass Guitar, and Gary Renshaw — Drums bring a driving rock and roll performance to the Sandy Shoes Festival.

Keith & Gary have both played & toured with Dave Hlubeck of Molly Hatchet, Garry Nutt from Tangier/Cinderella and Mike Estes from Lynyrd Skynyrd. Ben & Dylan have been amazing Florida fans for years with their musical abilities. Together they form the new evolution of Tribal Tongue, with new songs and a stage show that will definitely leave you screaming for more. Tribal Tongue takes the amphitheatre stage at 7:30 p.m.

The Sandy Shoes Festival has a lot more to offer the community. Each year our Arts and Craft section increases to bring the public a wide variety of handmade crafts and merchandise to choose from, as well as the non-profit organizations that are there to promote their organizations and provide activities. The St. Lucie County Historical Society will be there with books and merchandise on the history of our county and maybe even a glimpse as to the beginning of the Sandy Shoes Festival.

Don’t forget the children! Main Street Fort Pierce has teamed up with All-In-Fun to bring inflatables and games to the festival. All-In-Fun will have a 22’ high dual lane slide, a bounce house and much more. Also available for the kids is our Giant Sand Box, Coloring Wall, Face Painting, and Pony Rides.

Main Street Fort Pierce will have plenty of food to choose from at the festival. The food variety includes Greek, Caribbean, barbeque ribs & chicken, seafood, Americana, Latin and various snack items.

The Sandy Shoes Festival will be held on Saturday, March 21, 2009 at Veteran’s Memorial Park, 600 North Indian River Dr., Fort Pierce, FL from 11:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

What a way to spend a beautiful spring day but in downtown Fort Pierce! Come join family and friends, as we kick off our shoes, dig our feet in the sand and enjoy a great day of music, food and fun, while we continue to celebrate those St. Lucie County traditions.

For more information, sponsorship or volunteer opportunities on the Sandy Shoes Festival call the Main Street Fort Pierce office @ 466-3880.

The Main Street Fort Pierce Sandy Shoes Festival sponsors as of print date include:

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Classic Car Show: L.J. DAVIS PRODUCTIONS, INC.
Downtown Hero — John D. Wilkes

by Camille S. Yates

For years, the Sunrise Theatre sat vacant, like an ancient tomb, paying homage to those who once graced its doors. It seems that also for a number of years, Doris Tillman, the Main Street Fort Pierce Board of Directors, the Sunrise Theatre Board of Directors and other interested citizens lobbied to re-open the Sunrise. Now, the Sunrise Theatre is going strong, thanks in part to Main Street, but more important, this classy performing arts venue has a Director who knows his stuff. Born and raised in Canada, John Wilkes has been at the helm of the Sunrise Theatre for a year and a half. And Fort Pierce is seeing some changes because of John’s in-depth knowledge of the performing arts. Class acts such as Clint Black, Bill Cosby, Cats — the Musical, and many more entertainers have performed at the Sunrise under Wilkes’ watch.

Wilkes has been involved in the performing arts and entertainment industry for most of his life. While he was Vice President of the student body at St. Clair College, he booked Bob Seager for $500 at their local pub. That was just the beginning.

After graduating with a Business Degree from St. Clair College in Windsor Ontario in 1974, Wilkes became the Assistant Director of the University Centre at the University of Guelph, Ontario. In 1980, he moved to Toronto where he managed several theaters at once including the 10,000-seat Forum Amphitheatre; the 5,000-seat West Island Amphitheatre; an 800-seat IMAX Cinesphere; and finally, Theatres I, II and III (film and live theatre spaces). From 1983 – 1984, he was the Assistant General Manager for the O’Keefe Centre for the Performing Arts, which was Canada’s largest proscenium theatre. From 1984 – 1987, he managed the Dalhousie Arts Centre, overseeing all operations for the 1,200 seat Cohn Auditorium, the Sir James Dunn Theatre (280 seats), two studios, the Dalhousie Art Gallery and the Sculpture Court.

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— Alexis Pappas

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Before choosing a lawyer, ask for written information about the lawyer’s legal qualifications and experience.
One winter, while shoveling snow over his shoulder, Wilkes began to consider a move to Florida to be near his wife’s sister who had a home in Sarasota. Wilkes was not a newcomer to Florida. His parents had a home in Stuart and he came to Florida during his school breaks when he was a teenager. During the summer of 1987, Wilkes packed up his family and moved to Sarasota after being offered the Director’s position at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall. Then, in 1993, he became the CEO of the Kravis Center for the Performing Arts which included overseeing the 2,167-seat Dreyfoos Hall; the 400-seat Rinker Playhouse; the 1,700-seat Gosman Amphitheater; and the Cohen Pavilion (capacity 800). Between 1997 and 2007, he enjoyed being a performing arts and entertainment consultant as well as leading the Van Wezel once again. Finally, the call to Fort Pierce was too strong for him to ignore.

“It’s exciting to see people coming to Fort Pierce,” Wilkes says. Indeed, the Sunrise Theater is bringing people who would not ordinarily come to Fort Pierce, to its heart, its downtown main street. “We do informal surveys at each performance,” Wilkes explains. “I ask the audience to applaud if they have never been to Fort Pierce. The first time I did this, about 70% of the audience responded that this was their first time to visit Fort Pierce. Now, the average is between 30 – 40%.”

Wilkes has been so immersed in the Sunrise Theater that he has not spent much time on anything else. But, now that the theater is gaining momentum, he may be able to pursue some of his hobbies. Recently, he hiked in the Savannahs with his youngest daughter, Johanna (age 21) who is pursuing a degree in Agro-Economics, now at Santa Fe Community College and later at the University of Florida. He also enjoys reading and listening to music. Don’t be surprised if he dashes off to Arizona. He has a son, Johnathan (age 23), who recently graduated from the University of Florida with a degree in Construction Engineering and is now working for a firm in Phoenix. And, he makes regular visits to Canada to see his father and also, his stepdaughter Jacklyn (age 27) who is a teacher in Ontario.

In the meantime, Wilkes will continue to enhance the offerings at the Sunrise Theatre. His goal is to have the Sunrise continuously operate in the black. “It has been a challenge to turn around the operation,” he says. “My goal for this fiscal year ending in September is to have $2 million in sales. From October 2008 – January 2009, we totaled $1.3 million. I think that we will make our goal.” Main Street thanks John Wilkes for nurturing the Sunrise Theatre and helping downtown Fort Pierce prosper.
Get Outside!

by Meredith Bennett

Here in South Florida, many people feel we don’t experience a change-of-season, only a change of population. Not true! Our degree of change is just not as drastic as the northern climes. If you really pay attention you will notice the greens are brighter, the sky more blue and the critters a little more frisky. Try this exercise the next time you step out your front door. Close your eyes and take a deep breath. Hold it for a few seconds and release it slowly as open your eyes. What do you see? What do you hear? You should feel invigorated and realize we live in an almost perfect paradise. Now that you have all this energy, do something with it. Take the kids outside and enjoy nature.

If you would like your child to learn more about nature and our environment, enroll him or her in a program at the Manatee Center. The Manatee Observation and Education Center has age appropriate activities and opportunities for toddlers, youth, teens and adults. Many locals only think of the center as a field trip for school kids or a destination for out-of-town visitors but we are so much more! We are dedicated to the enrichment of your or your child’s life as we educate and inform through physical activities with a hands on approach.

From the Speaker of the House website: “On September 18, the House passed the No Child Left Inside Act, H.R. 3036.

One of the greatest challenges facing current and future generations is to build a more sustainable, energy-efficient world. By teaching students about the role of the environment as an important national resource, we can prepare them to take on critical issues – energy conservation, air pollution, climate change, wildlife protection – and become better stewards of the earth.

Studies show that environmental education can help boost student achievement, build students’ critical thinking and social skills, improve student behavior, and can enhance teaching. And as more and more businesses “go green,” environmental education will help prepare today’s students for the innovative, green jobs of tomorrow – strengthening our environment, our economy, and our competitiveness.”

What are you waiting for? Call the Manatee Center and get outside! We have numerous kayaking excursions, boat tours, and if you’re feeling frisky enough, sign up for our upcoming Manatee Center 5K! Phone: 772-467-1600 x 3071 or check out our website: manateecenter.com.

When you do visit the Center, be sure to pop in the Vanishing Mermaid gift shop – it’s not just for souvenirs! The hottest item to wear while you are enjoying nature is a Manatee Center color changing t-shirt. While inside the pictures on the t-shirt are just black and white but when you go outside the design becomes filled with color! Wear it on your hike or kayak trip. The important thing is to wear your shirt when you GET OUTSIDE!
Miramar Sports Bar & Grill
(formerly Governor’s Grill)

by Sue Dannahower

“A Taste of Mexico”
122 North 2nd Street, Fort Pierce, FL 34950
772.467.9092
Sunday – Thursday: 11:00 AM – 9:00 PM
Friday – Saturday: 11:00 AM – 2:00 AM

Muy Bueno! The recently opened Miramar Sports Bar and Grill offers superb Mexican cuisine and late night entertainment. Their menu is packed full of typical and not so typical Mexican favorites.

Lunch choices include Chicken Fajitas are served with grilled peppers and onions, Taco Salad nestled in a crispy flour tortilla, and Chili Rellenos (chicken, beef or cheese). Entrees come with rice, salad and very tasty refried beans.

The Chef’s Specials boast Churrasco (grilled skirt steak marinated in chimichurri sauce), Mojara Frita (whole fried tilapia), Alambre (chicken, shrimp or beef with bacon, jalapeno peppers, and onions), Pollo a la Plancha (marinated and breaded chicken breast) and Caldo de Camaron (Shrimp soup with vegetables).

Ninos (kids) can chow down on a Hamburger & Fries, Chicken Fingers, Cheese Burger, Enchilada and Burritos.

The Miramar Sports Bar & Grill offers entertainment three nights a week; Thursday through Saturday from 9 p.m. until 2 a.m. Thursday is Ladies Nights, ladies drink free wells from 9 until 11 p.m. The party is back in Downtown Fort Pierce!

With fast and attentive service Miramar will likely become a new downtown favorite.
Explore the Variety: Customize Your Fixed Income Allocation

Submitted by Jim O’Connor, CFP®, CIMA®, Financial Advisor, Vice President

All bonds are not created equal. Savvy investors recognize that asset allocation can help manage investment risk. Although there is no guarantee that a specific asset allocation will meet your investment objectives or generate a certain amount of income, diversifying your fixed-income portfolio may help you more effectively balance risk and return potential.

Consider Quality

With some types of bonds such as U.S. Treasury securities, which are backed by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government, the risk that the issuer may default on a payment of interest or principal is extremely low. However, modest yields often accompany this high degree of credit quality. If you seek higher yields by taking on a higher degree of risk through investing in issues of lesser credit quality, diversifying among different issuers may help reduce your total exposure in the event of any single issuer’s default.

Vary Maturities

Longer-term bonds usually offer higher yields¹, but are more sensitive to interest-rate fluctuations than similar coupon shorter-term issues. Some risk-averse investors purchase only short-term issues, settling for lower yield. Other investors choose longer-term bonds for higher return potential, taking on more market risk. Choosing a range of issues with staggered maturities, perhaps through a laddered portfolio, may help improve return potential and reduce interest rate risk.

What is your Tax Bracket?

Many investors who are in the higher (28–35%) tax brackets gravitate towards municipal bonds primarily for one reason: tax-exempt income.² Income from municipal bonds is generally federally, and if issued in your state of residence, state and local, tax-exempt. Additionally, municipal bonds are considered second to Treasuries in terms of credit quality, which adds to their appeal.

Explore the Diverse Market

The large domestic market for individual bonds offers many choices, such as U.S. Treasury, inflation-protected, tax-advantaged municipal, mortgage-backed, preferred and corporate securities, but there is also an entire world of bonds beyond our borders. Foreign countries and corporations may also issue bonds, many of which are denominated in foreign currencies, while others are denominated in U.S. Dollars.

Investment Considerations

As with all investments, fixed income securities have inherent risks. If sold prior to maturity, investments in fixed income securities may be subject to gains/losses based on the level of interest rates, market conditions and credit quality of the issuer.

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Fort Pierce Coffee
With The Mayor

Mayor Bob Benton Invites You To Join Him For Coffee,
Community News, Special Announcements, and More.

Friday, March 20, 2009 8:00AM
Historic City Hall *
315 Avenue A
Downtown Fort Pierce

Complimentary Coffee,
Orchid Island Juice,
& Breakfast Treats

Sponsor:
Berger, Toombs, Elam,
Gaines & Frank, CPA’S &
RK Davis Construction

Hosts:
Main Street Fort Pierce &
Orchid Island Juice Company
For More Information
Which bonds make sense for you? Contact us, and we can help you develop a well-diversified bond portfolio based on your needs, risk tolerance and investment objectives. Please write in care of Main Street Focus.

1 Bonds rated at less than investment grade may have speculative characteristics and present significant credit and default risks beyond those of other securities. Investors should be careful to consider these risks alongside their individual circumstances, objectives and risk tolerance before investing in high-yield products. High yield products should comprise only a limited portion of a balanced portfolio.

2 Some bonds may be subject to the alternative minimum tax (AMT). If bonds are sold before maturity, the actual yield earned may differ from the quoted yields. Insurance does not pertain to market values which will fluctuate over the life of the bonds; it covers only the timely payment of interest and principal. Credit quality varies depending on the specific issuer and insurer.

3 Investments in foreign securities involve risks associated with interest-rate and currency-exchange-rate changes as well as by market, economic, and political conditions of the countries where investments are made. There may be greater returns but also greater risks than with U.S. investments.

This material has been prepared for informational purposes only and is not an offer to buy or sell or a solicitation of any offer to buy or sell any security or other financial instrument, or to participate in any trading strategy. The securities/instruments discussed in this material may not be suitable for all investors. Any particular investment should be analyzed based on its terms and risks as they relate to your specific circumstances and objectives. Morgan Stanley does not render advice on tax or tax-accounting matters. This material was not intended or written to be used, and it cannot be used by any taxpayer, for the purpose of avoiding penalties that may be imposed on the taxpayer under U.S. federal tax laws. Clients should consult with their tax advisors before making any tax-related investment decisions.

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Branch Name: Stuart Florida; Phone Number: 772-223-2444.
Six year old Owen Biglin Gets Funky in Downtown Fort Pierce and is crowned the New YOUNG JAMES BROWN by Tony Wilson!

Above L-R: Producer Art Turner, Fort Pierce Commissioner Rufus Alexander, Publisher Hometown News Steve Erlanger, Tony Wilson and his agent Jeannie Thomson, Sunrise Theatre Director John Wilkes, Musical Director Jimmy Lee More, Percussionist Bishop Wilson...and of course, Owen Biglin, the winner of the Godfather of Soul Contest on January 24th.

Above: Owen Biglin gets a hug & autograph from Tony Wilson, personally blessed by James Brown himself to carry on his dream of uniting people through music.
Forget the Apollo in NYC – We Have the Sunrise Right Here in Downtown Fort Pierce!

by Renee Page

When the Sunrise Theatre, 104.7 the Flame and the Hometown News decided to sponsor the Get Funky and Get DownTOWN Godfather of Soul Contest on January 24th, we were all secretly hoping that we’d find the next young Michael Jackson, or even Alphonso Romero. We advertised throughout the airwaves, both on TV, multiple radio stations and in the Hometown News. We did Coffee with the Mayor. We went into the streets and marched during the Martin Luther King Jr. Parade, as well as, met people at the Farmer’s Market and during Jazz Music Festivals at the marina hoping that we’d find that hidden gem, that uncovered diamond in the rough, right here in our own backyard.

Well, what we got was far more than that. We were blessed by so many wonderful, local talented people, with a desire to perform and be heard and seen on stage. From adults of all ages, to young children, our judges and sponsors were equally as excited as we were at the Sunrise Theatre, to crown the next YOUNG JAMES BROWN.

We never dreamt that the winner would come in the form of a 6-year-old boy from Fort Pierce named Owen Biglin. With a stage presence of someone 5 times his age, Owen had moves and grooves that were so original and so amazing, they brought all of us to our feet. So, who is this newly discovered gem? Well, according to his biggest fan, his mother Danielle Biglin, here are his stats:

Continued on page 27 …
As Fort Pierce Main Street begins its 20th successful year, it is undertaking an aggressive Membership Drive. “The Next Big Thing” campaign took off in May, 2006. Please consider becoming a Main Street Member.

Membership in Main Street Fort Pierce is open to anyone interested in helping preserve our unique heritage. Our goal is to encourage and assist in keeping Downtown Fort Pierce a vibrant shopping and business district for future generations.

We invite you to share your expertise and contribute toward making Fort Pierce Main Street a success in historic preservation and revitalization. Donations to Fort Pierce Main Street, a 501(c)3 corporation, are tax deductible.

Complete the form below and join our growing group of committed members. By joining Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., you are supporting the economic well being of the entire community.

Main Street Membership Levels
Private:
- Student .................. $15.00
- Friend .................... $25.00
- Family .................... $50.00

Corporate:
- Small Business (less than 10 employees) .......... $100.00
- Medium Business (11 - 50 employees) ........... $250.00
- Large Business (51 or more employees) .......... $500.00
- Patron (all others) .................. $500.00
- Sponsor .................. $1,000.00
- I would like to become a Main Street volunteer.

Name: ____________________________
Company/Organization:________________________
Street Address:______________________________
City / State / Zip:______________________________
Phone:______________________________________
Email:______________________________________

Main Street Focus, Inc. • 122 AE Backus Ave., Fort Pierce, FL 34950
For information call 772-466-3880 • www.mainstreetfortpierce.org

Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., a 501©3 not-for-profit corporation, has encouraged and participated in the revitalization efforts of downtown Fort Pierce for the past 20 years. The efforts of many have paid off. Downtown Fort Pierce is now recognized as one of the most desirable locations to live and work on the Treasure Coast, as well as, in the state of Florida.

The Main Street program was created by the National Trust of Historic Preservation in the early 1980s. The program was designed to revitalize the historic commercial districts that were threatened to extinction by urban sprawl. The four-step Main Street approach is used by over 1,600 communities across the United States and its model has been studied internationally.

The success of Main Street Fort Pierce over the past 19 years is due to the faithful commitment of current and past members of the Main Street board of directors, the City of Fort Pierce, local community organizations, local businesses, and general public support. Currently, the program consists of fourteen volunteer board members and two full-time employees. During its existence, Main Street Fort Pierce has held approximately twenty-six downtown promotional events each year, educated public school children about the history of the area, won numerous local, state, and national awards, restored historic buildings including the Sunrise Theatre, recruited businesses to the downtown area, held downtown charrettes to encourage the public participation in revitalization efforts, created outdoor art programs, and helped fund an award winning image campaign along with the Downtown Business Association, the Community Redevelopment Agency, and the City of Fort Pierce.
Born Owen Happy Biglin on June 14, 2002.
He is 6 years old and in the first grade at Francis K Sweet Elementary.
He lives in an historic 1924 house in Fort Pierce.
Plays flag football for the Bobcats.
Loves to draw (wants to be an artist when he grows up).
Loves to dance (also wants to keep dancing).
Loves to ride his bike.
Interested in insects and underwater creatures.
He has a little brother, Miles, who is 4.
Parents are Kevin and Danielle Biglin.
There is no TV at home so he spends most of his time playing outside, dancing and drawing.
Favorite subjects are art, science and math.
Favorite music is Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, MC Hammer, James Brown.

“Learned” how to dance by watching Michael Jackson and James Brown on YouTube.
Thriller is his favorite video.
Gets most attention for his curly hair and calm, mild manner (except when he’s dancing).

Thank you Owen, for making the Ultimate James Brown Tribute a success, for showing us that you can have soul at any age, and for filling our hearts with joy.
We only have one question for you. HOW DO YOU DANCE LIKE THAT?
Fun on the Water

by Dan Dannahower

By the time you read this it will be March and we will be rapidly approaching some of the nicest weather of the year, my opinion of course! March often has a lot of windy days that aren’t particularly friendly to boating and fishing. The cold fronts have been rolling through us more frequently this winter than I can ever remember so one might guess that March may be quite blustery this year. We’ll see, just a guess on my part. However, April, May and June often bring us many days of very nice weather. Light winds, flat glassy boating conditions and warm but not hot temps make for some very nice days to be out on the water. Whether you’re a pleasure boater, boating fisherman, or just enjoy being near the water or fishing from shore, these are the days that epitomize our moniker “The Sunshine State”. Get ready to get out there and enjoy our fantastic water resources during some of the nicest weather of the year!

If you’re a boater and haven’t been out lately now’s a good time to charge the battery, wash down the boat, and check the motor in preparation for the summer boating season. Spring fishing on both the lagoon and in the ocean offers a huge variety of opportunities. Trout, snook
and redfish on the flats or bottom fishing for snapper, sheephead, drum and many others along the channel edges and rocky areas are just some of the popular targets in the river. Spring weather also brings calm conditions offshore and even smaller boats can have a good day “outside” looking for some of our bigger game fish. Kingfish, cobia, dolphin and wahoo can be caught trolling. Bottom fishing for snapper, grouper, sea bass and many others is also very popular. For those who are “boat less” a number of these species and many others can be caught from numerous shore fishing locales throughout the area.

If you’re new to the area or just beginning to take up fishing our many local tackle shops and marinas can offer a plethora of local knowledge on where to go and how to do it. There are numerous offshore charter boats, river charter boats and party boats available to choose from. Each offers a different experience. You can troll for sailfish in the gulfstream, cast to tailing redfish in the river, or bottom fish the ocean reefs. Again, check with tackle shops and marinas for recommendations. If you’re not into fishing there are river eco-tours and sightseeing trips and even rental boats for that self directed tour on our beautiful waters. Great weather is on its way. I hope you get the opportunity to get outdoors and enjoy it!
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Cobb's Landing Daily Happy Hour
4:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Featuring Pineapple Mojitos
Mesquite Grilled Steaks
Chops & Seafood
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Join Us in Our New Floridian Room
Open Friday & Saturday for Dinner
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Located at the beautiful Ft. Pierce City Marina

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In the middle of everything
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“In the middle of everything
that makes Fort Pierce Fun . . .
“We overlook nothing . . .
except the beautiful Indian River”

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