Postcards from Fort Pierce

Dear Lucille,

Having a wonderful time in Ft. Pierce. The hotel is so elegant. Everywhere we look we see grapefruit trees.

Today was a wonderful day. We swam in the ocean and just wait for the next lazy breeze as the sun set every night. We are looking forward to another day of sun and relaxation.

Coconut palms and pineapple plants are just outside our door. The sand is so warm and I love it. The mangoes are omnipresent. They are everywhere here. True paradise. Wish you were here!

See “Then & Now: Destination, Fort Pierce” page 6 ...
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Broker participation welcome.
In February, the Main Street Board was fortunate enough to have Laura Lee Corbett, former Florida State Main Street Executive Director, come to Fort Pierce and assist the board in developing some new goals and strategies. It had been three years since the board gathered to discuss the direction we were going to take Main Street Fort Pierce.

I appreciate the Main Street Board devoting time for most of a Saturday to work on new ideas and strengthening our organization for the future. As usual when this group gets together we have a lot of fun, but we also brought new ideas to the planning session and we managed to be focused and task oriented. We developed an annual work plan that defines specific goals, objectives and activities.

With the “big” project completed, the Sunrise Theatre, the board focused on our “Next Big Thing,” the renovation of the Backus House, our office and home for Main Street. In the next few months you will be hearing more about the fundraising efforts and events Main Street is planning for this historic structure. Our goal is one million dollars for the Backus House. Of course, there is the opportunity for you to be involved! The board suggested we take our events to a higher level and have the Sandy Shoes Festival as Main Street’s “signature event,” and develop Sights and Sounds on Second as a stronger public event. With strategies and goals in place we are optimistic that we can improve on a good thing for our community during the year.

We also established a mission and vision statement for Main Street Fort Pierce. The mission statement is: To preserve, promote and build on the historic and natural treasures of our downtown waterfront community. And, the vision statement is: Downtown Fort Pierce, the heart of St. Lucie County, will have an inviting atmosphere, highlighted by historic architecture, unique natural assets and will enhance the civic, cultural and economic viability of the entire community—retail, service, academic, government and industry.

We have a strong, aesthetically-pleasing downtown with decorative lights, brick paver sidewalks, landscaping, restored buildings and housing. All Main Street Programs have challenges in their cities with government, merchants, etc. But when you look around our Downtown, we have worked together with the city, county, merchants and property owners to have a vibrant, interesting waterfront community. With your continued help and support, Fort Pierce Main Street will provide a valuable asset to our area. We look forward to our 18th year.
Calendar

Dine, Shop and Enjoy Beautiful, Historic Downtown Fort Pierce

❖ SATURDAY, APRIL 1 ❖
Carl Hiaasen
Sunrise Theatre, 461-4775

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
Mt. Pierce Farmer’s Market
8:00 AM to Noon
Marina Square on Melody Lane
Market Manager, 940-1145

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
Renee Taylor & Joseph Bologna
“If You Ever Leave Me... I’m Going With You”
Sunrise Theatre, 461-4775

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
Ramsey Lewis & Angela Hagenbach
8:00 AM to 2:00 PM
600 N. Indian River Drive
F.P. Jazz & Blues Society, 460-5124

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
SLIMNASTICS ❖
Mon., Wed., Fri., 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Ft. Pierce Community Center, 462-1792

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
JAZZERCISE ❖
Mon., Wed., Fri., 10:00 to 11:15 AM
Ft. Pierce Community Center, 462-1792

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
ADULT FLAMINGO CLASS ❖
Tuesday, 5:30 to 6:30 PM
Ft. Pierce Community Center, 462-1792

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
ADULT SOCIAL DANCE CLASS ❖
Wednesday, 7:00 to 8:30 PM
Ft. Pierce Community Center, 462-1792

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
THE ORIGINAL TIKI BAR ❖
461-0880
Sunday Afternoons 3:00 to 7:00 PM
Music by “Barely Broken”

❖ SATURDAYS ❖
GOVERNOR’S GRILL ❖
466-6900
“Open Mike Night”
Tuesdays, 9:00 PM to Closing
“Blues Night at the Grill”
Wednesdays, 8:00 PM
“Ladies Night”
Thursdays, 10:00 PM to 12:00 AM
Live Music - Friday Evenings
Live Jazz with Matrix - Saturday Evenings

~Event Spotlight~

Are you a wine connoisseur or a wanna-be wine connoisseur? All degrees of wine enthusiasts are invited to Main Street Fort Pierce’s Annual Spring Wine Tasting at the Seven Gables House on Friday, April 28. The event will be held from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and will include live music, entertainment, a free collectable wine glass, and samples of some of the finest wines from Keith Anderson’s stock at Roy’s Liquors.

Tickets are $40.00 per person and can be reserved by calling the Main Street office at 466-3880.
Annual Cowboy Golf & BBQ Fundraiser at Adam’s Ranch on Saturday, May 13

This nine-hole course looks simple, flat and narrow, but hooks and slices are severely punished. The rough is brush, dust and roots. Some shots chase down rabbits; some fall down varmint holes. Putting on miles and miles of pastureland is a challenge.

The event will be held at the Adam’s Ranch, a working ranch, which will be transformed into a makeshift golf course. The event will provide many laughs and raise money for Main Street Fort Pierce. It's true pasture out there. No one will ever confuse it for a finely manicured country club.

Generally, the same rules of golf apply out on the pasture. You pretty much play through whatever comes up out here. There's one concern, however, that escapes no one and they have a politically correct name for it. You don't want too many fresh hazards out here on the fairway. Remember, this course gets fertilized year 'round. We invited Tiger Woods but he sent his regrets.

The tax-deductible cost is $100.00 per cowboy. Fees include 9 holes of Cowboy Golf, Goody Bag, Continental Breakfast, BBQ and entertainment. Extra BBQ tickets for family and friends are $25.00 for adults; $10.00 for children under 12. For more information or to sign up please call Main Street Fort Pierce at 772-466-3880.
Then and Now: Destination, Fort Pierce

by Patty Moll

In an era of hotels stringing along the interstate like mini beacons inviting the harried traveler to stop and rest, our downtown seems to have been passed by. This hasn’t always been the case and with the advent of the Marina Square project, won’t be for long. Before taking a look at what’s in store for tomorrow, let’s remember some of the hotels that have called Fort Pierce home, and how they fit into the landscape of a bustling community.

Say “hotel,” and what comes to mind? A place to stop on your way to somewhere else? In a more relaxed time, hotels were at the heart of every town. When out of town guests came to visit they were often times “put-up” at the local hotel. Then, as now, grand parties and small social events were thrown in banquet rooms, business was transacted and families took a break from the routine of day to day life. During the Second World War, hotels were vital to the support of our troops and the military families stationed here. When it comes to places to stay, Fort Pierce has had its share in the past.

Talking to H.C. and Mary Dixon, I learned that H.C.’s dad, H.S. Dixon, owned and operated several hotels in the area during the boom years of the 1920s. They were bustling, profitable enterprises up until the 1930s, when the Great Depression changed the backdrop of our community, as it did communities all across the country.

H.C. was born in January 1930 at the Dixon Hotel on 2nd Street and Avenue C, later known as the Sunrise Hotel. The structure was located just across the street from Beanie Backus’ home, site of Main Street Fort Pierce’s new office, the Sunrise Hotel was a Second Street landmark. When it was finally sold to the City of Fort Pierce by the estate of Mrs. J.L. Kicliter, it fetched the princely sum of $25,000.00 in 1966. Looks like real estate prices have changed a bit over the years.

Just three days old, H.C. moved from the Dixon on 2nd Street to the Dixon Hotel on Avenue C and US1.

We know this because his mom recorded it in his baby book (thanks, mom). Although the hotel name changed frequently, the face of the Dixon remained constant throughout the years. The earliest picture we have of this building is as the Taylor Hotel. Look closely and you’ll notice that there are no electric lines. In H.C.’s photo of the building as the Taylor Hotel, look closely and you’ll notice that there are no electric lines. In H.C.’s photo of the building as the...
Dixon Hotel, we see that power has arrived, along with the Register house next door. Next in line at this address was the Hotel Snellgrove, who advertised “reasonable rates, open all year” and finally we have the Biltmore Hotel, advertising “Free parking ... in the fishing capital of Florida.”

H.C. also has a picture of the Dittmar Hotel and Apartments located on 4th Street (SE corner of US1 and D). Standing in front of the Dittmar is H.C.’s second cousin Inez Brodie, in town visiting the family.

H.C.’s daughter-in-law, Susan, sent me this information:

“We believe the Dittmar Hotel was named after Albert C. Dittmar, first elected mayor of Ft. Pierce. Albert was the fourth child of John H. Dittmar, farmer, of Fond Du Lac, Wisconsin. Moving to this area about 1884 Albert married Cora Hood. Right around 1904 he sold a piece of property in Ft. Pierce to the East Coast Lumber Company. The Harbor Insurance Agency’s history indicates that the Dittmar family ran that business from 1907 to 1926 when the Haynes family bought it.

Albert and Cora had four children: Katie D., Johnnie, Blanche (St. Lucie County High School class of 1914 - married Mr. Roberts), and Beatrice (St. Lucie County High School class of 1916 - married J.G. Overstreet)

Fort Pierce has long been a socially diverse community. The Burston Hotel, located on South Second Street near the site of today’s courthouse complex, was a gathering place and the location of the first Seder conducted by Rabbi Freedman. At that time George Gilbert managed and owned the hotel. During the war the US Navy was headquartered at the

Continued on next page...
Burston. Overall, Ft. Pierce saw some 150,000 Navy, Marine Corps, and Army personnel pass through amphibious training, including elite scouts, raiders and frogmen. While women’s auxiliary groups such as the Coast Guard SPARS and the Navy WAVES had comfortable lodgings in local hotels, the men were billeted out on the island in less ideal conditions. Unlike today with modern mosquito control, the men slept in tents and found no relief from the incessant pests.

At one time, Fort Pierce even boasted a casino. The Beach Casino Hotel, that is. At the end of Seaway Drive, the Beach Casino is reputed to have housed a bit of back room gambling, though the only traces that remain of those heady times are in the memory of a few old timers.

The Altadena Hotel is something of an enigma. This post card says “overlooking the beautiful Indian River,” but my inquiries didn’t lead to her location. All of these hotels have been lost to the sands of time. One of the few grand old ladies still standing is the Fort Pierce Hotel. She is also heir to an architectural mystery. The hotel you see today is part of a much larger hotel originally built in 1917. Named the New Fort Pierce Hotel, we wonder if there was an earlier “Old” Ft. Pierce Hotel and what her history, and fate, might have been. The only clue we have lies in this post card showing a wood framed Ft. Pierce Hotel very different from the one we’ve come to know through the years.

... continued from page 7

STOP the CLOG
G - Get rid of the FOG

FOG - Fats, Oils, and Grease can clog your drains. Ordinary kitchen cooking grease can be a real terror in the pipes beneath your home and in our sanitary sewage system.

How can grease damage your home?
Grease builds up over time and clogs pipes just like it does the arteries in your body. Greasy pipes act as a magnet for other debris.

What happens?
Eventually this build-up can clog pipes enough to result in a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO). An SSO is the backup of raw sewage into the street, the environment, or even into your home through your sinks, showers, or toilets.

Get rid of the FOG!
~ When cooking with grease or oil, pour the used liquid into a can or canister for disposal; once the hot grease has cooled, just toss it in the trash can.
~ Wipe additional grease from pots, pans, and plates with a paper towel before placing them in the sink or dishwasher.
~ Throw fat trimmed from meat and poultry in the trash can, not the garbage disposal.

For more information, call Fort Pierce Utilities at 466-1600 ext. 3900.
Our Fort Pierce Hotel has weathered the test of time. On August 26th, 1949, a hurricane with 140 mph winds blew the roof off. She sustained heavy damages, but was rebuilt to face and withstand later storms. When I was a girl, my grandmother worked the switchboard. Back then the hotel was owned by Col. Fennimore. The lobby of the hotel provided a cool haven to escape the sticky Florida summer, and the Colonel’s pet boxer always seemed to have a litter of puppies for me to play with. Though her expression has changed some, the heart of the old girl remains strong. Still known as the Fort Pierce Hotel Building, today she houses professional offices and proudly stands where she began nearly 90 years ago.

Ending our retrospective here, let’s slip ahead to the Marina Square project. A mixed use facility of retail, dining, condominium living and beautiful hotel rooms, the Catalfumo Construction Company of Palm Beach Gardens is investing in our downtown redevelopment. Currently in the permitting stages, once complete, the four story building will boast a rooftop garden and pool with breathtaking views. Hoping to be operational by late fall 2007 or early spring 2008, Marina Square will be a welcome addition to Main Street. We wish them bright skies and gentle breezes as they navigate through construction and launch Ft. Pierce into a new era of luxury hotel accommodations.

The Focus is looking back in time to see how our town has grown and changed through the years with a “Now and Then” segment. We’re looking for folks who have old photos of the area, and a willingness to share their memories. If you’re interested, call Patty Moll at 461-2450, or Main Street at 466-3880. Thinking about calling, but hesitant to loan out your priceless photos? We’re happy to scan your photos and return them to you quickly.

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Gates “Flips” Back Time And the Rooster Stays…

Philip C. Gates Jr. is well known around Fort Pierce by his nickname Flip. That’s how he introduces himself, too. His wife, Sunny, is also well known around town and currently serves on the Historic Preservation Committee for Fort Pierce and for the state of Florida’s Historic Preservation Board. Together, Flip and Sunny form a perfect team to restore their Orange Avenue building to its original look from 1924!

I met with Flip recently to see the progress of his building that was the home to Babe’s Billiards for the past 13 years. The currently big gutted building holds a treasure of stories perfectly fitting the “Main Street” movement to refurbish the beauty of Historic Ft. Pierce.

“This building has been handed down through the family from my grandfather C.B. Gates,” said Flip as we walked to the door. “Sonny found some old files from the 20’s and began reading through all of them”, he continued. In doing so she found a rendering that is now displayed on the windows facing Orange Avenue. The rendering of the 9,800 square foot building is a hand-drawn pastel by William Hatcher, an Architect apparently prolific in Fort Pierce during the 1920’s. Hatcher also designed the Arcade building on the corner of Orange Avenue and US1, the original Fort Pierce City Hall on the corner of US1 and Avenue A, and building that stands on the corner of Orange Avenue and Second Street which will soon house the Yellowtail Grill and Raw Bar on the corner of Orange Avenue and Second Street, according to the Gates’ research.

C.B. Gates passed away in 1951. In the years he ran the leasing of the space it was home to a bar and a working garage. Flip remembers, as a boy, the Western Auto Parts store. He said they found old pieces of car parts under the flooring that had to be torn out. He then walked to the back of the building explaining this portion would be an office for...
Sunny and himself. I looked up to see a painting on the brick wall and commented to Flip that I found it really interesting, asking if it could stay. “Oh yes,” he said, “the Rooster stays!” It will be part of our own office décor, he chuckled. I don’t know where SB beer came from, he continued, but notice the hen on the top? She’s eyeing one rooster with a dollar sign over his head with the words ‘Hey Toots’ written next to him while the other rooster only has a one-cent sign over his head. Flip also noted he doesn’t know who the artist was for this mural.

If anyone knows the artist for this mural, or the origins of SB Beer, please contact the Main Street office or contact Flip directly. He is Vice President/Treasurer for Kanawha Groves at 772.461.8600.

The Gates plan to provide 6 mixed-use spaces for office and retail stores when the building is complete. If permits are granted on a timely basis, then Flip plans on having the building ready to open in July of this year. There’s been a great deal of restoration completed all ready with the remaining work under contract.

Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne, not to be forgotten by any of us soon, also swirled in revealing the original building design by blowing off the façade that was built over it in the 1960s. One of those blown-out items was a wall that covered the original windows. Flip climbed a ladder to show how the original windows are in tact and how they pivot to maximize the use of prevailing sea breeze winds. The hurricanes also soaked through the drop ceiling from the 60s revealing the original wood ceiling. “We’ve even taken time to install all the air conditioning and electrical conduits above the 16 foot high ceilings of the 1920s,” Flip noted.

Continued on page 15 ...
A Talk with Jon Ward, Director, Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency

by Leslie Olson

Some big changes in downtown parking and commuting are under way. The City, through its redevelopment arm, the Ft. Pierce Redevelopment Agency (FPRA) is preparing for the construction of a beautiful 5-level Mediterranean-styled parking garage/retail/office complex on Indian River Drive. In addition, the County, funded by an FPRA grant, will be adding 2 stories onto the parking garage near the County Courthouse, as well as restyling the facility with a new façade. The Downtown Trolley, another FPRA-funded asset, is now here and soon will move shoppers easily to all areas of downtown, alleviating congestion in prime parking areas.

The Parking Garage Site work for the new garage is scheduled to begin by construction manager Catalfumo Construction and Development this summer with the construction of the garage finishing in late Spring, 2007. “These parking garages go up incredibly fast after the site work is finished,” says Jon Ward, FPRA director. “They are built in pre-cast modular units that are molded off-site and brought to the location to be assembled, sort of like a giant Tinker Toy set. The basic underlying bones of the structure will be finished very quickly.” The 5-level garage will hold approximately 308 parking spaces with a possibility of some retail space on the first floor facing Indian River Drive. “We will put in the drainage infrastructure anticipating being able to accommodate retail and then let market demand determine whether the space is used for retail or parking. There would be a total of 12 parking...
spaces less if we chose to put in the retail stores.”

This parking structure will use two-thirds of the south end of the lot. On the north third of the lot, a four-story mixed-use retail/office building is planned. This will not be built at this time, but will be put out to bid for private developers. The plans for the building have already been drawn, and the developer would be required to build the project as it is now planned to mirror the Mediterranean look of the parking garage. The site currently holds 113 parking spaces. Since the new garage will have approximately 300 spaces, and the new levels on the county garage should add about 130 more spaces, by late Spring 2007, we should have well more than 300 downtown parking spaces than we do today.

The Downtown Trolley

As Ft. Pierce has so much office space on the street breaking up pedestrian traffic patterns between retail stores, one of the downtown’s long-standing challenges has been enticing shoppers from the high traffic areas like 2nd and Orange to lower-traffic areas like 2nd Street Station. A charming, two-toned red and green trolley has now arrived to help solve this problem. The preliminary route map is pictured here. Fortunately, this route covers not only all of downtown, but crosses to the west of U S 1. This will allow residents who live in nearby neighborhoods to pick up the trolley into downtown without having to take their cars. This could mean even more shoppers and fewer cars—an ideal situation. “Also,” says Jon Ward, “we’ll retrofit a bike rack on the trolley.” As the trolley rolls out, service the hours of operation will initially be Monday through Friday, 7a.m. to 6 p.m., plus special events. “If we see high attendance and increased demand, we’ll increase the hours and days of operation,” says Ward. As a resident who lives near Oakland Park,

Continued on next page …

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I hope that day comes soon! The day may soon be here when I can take a leisurely, early Saturday morning walk down to Mervis, catch the open-air trolley down to the waterside Farmers Market, load up for the week on locally grown veggies, fruits, and clams, pick up some fantastic bread and an almond croissant, some fresh salsa and pickles, stock up on handcrafted soaps and lotions, grab a latte and hop the trolley back home, daydreaming about the next few meals to assemble from the bounty. Now that’s a Saturday morning!
The land behind the Gates’ building runs angled to the railroad tracks and will provide substantial private parking for the new tenants. As we walked back through the building Flip explained the restoration to its Mediterranean style will cost about $800,000. What a nice treasure to get back in our town, I thought.

We walked along the front of the building as Flip explained how the original columns had been covered. “I just started knocking on the outside stucco, Flip said, and could hear it was hollow.” When they discovered most of the columns were still in tact, they created a mold to restore the portions that were hammered off during the 1960s renovations.

When you go past the building, look to see the gargoyles are back on the top of each column and a large sconce centers the building front. Ramon Trais helped Flip find some of the original architectural characteristics of the building. Anna Brady, Officer for the City’s Historic Preservation, helped the Gates locate the aged looking Mediterranean barrel tiles for the roof.

“We looked at every detail in restoring the original architecture my grandfather originally commissioned by Hatcher,” Flip stated as we stood across the street to see the entire building.

I can see a wonderful celebration, in the 1920s style, coming in July! I admire the Gates for working physically, mentally and financially to restore this important part of Historic Downtown Fort Pierce.
As Fort Pierce Main Street begins its 18th successful year, it is undertaking an aggressive Membership Drive. “The Next Big Thing” campaign takes off April 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.

Membership Benefits:

- Subscriptions to Main Street Focus and Website Links to Focus On-Line
- Advance Notice and Invitation to Special Events
- Membership to St. Lucie County Preservation Association
- Listed on our On-Line Membership Page (Corporate & Private)
- Networking & Volunteer Opportunities

When residents support and appreciate the business district, the businesses flourish. When the businesses flourish, the residents in the neighborhood prosper as well. We are all neighbors investing in each other’s success.

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.

Main Street Fort Pierce, 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 18 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 18 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 twelve 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.
Main Street Fort Pierce Celebrates 18 Years of Growth in Fort Pierce

by Anne Satterlee

The Main Street Program in Fort Pierce began as a way to redevelopment and improvement downtown business districts that were finding themselves vacant, in disrepair and unattractive. The new kid on the block in the 1970s was the newest trend—the shopping mall. Larger retail shops left the downtown and smaller “mom and pop” stores were forced out of business. Downtown theaters closed, restaurants were abandoned and private reinvestment diminished. The once historical valuable districts became crime ridden areas as property values continued to drop. Historical architecturally significant buildings were decaying or finding their fate with the wrecking ball.

With the National Trust for Historic Preservation’s Main Street Program, cities like Fort Pierce looked for an opportunity to stop the “mall migration” and preserve and revitalize downtown. Through a four-step approach, the Program consisted of promotions, economic restructuring, design and organization. In 1987, the Fort Pierce Redevelopment Agency (FPRA), City Commissioners and concerned citizens completed the necessary paperwork to hopefully receive Main Street community designation. Tom Kindred became the first Main Street manager. It was the beginning of what we enjoy and sometimes take for granted today. Kindred began working as soon as he could—decorative light posts and benches were purchased and installed, popular promotional events such as Friday Fest, Sights and Sounds on Second and the Backus Festival were created and a façade improvement grant was offered.

Kindred resigned in 1991 and in came Doris Tillman to serve as Main Street Manager. With the growth

Continued on page 19 ...
PRE-CONSTRUCTION CONDOS

Spacious condominiums in the heart of St. Lucie County. Fabulous location east of US-1 on the Savannah Preserve. Minutes to the Beaches, Shopping, Restaurants and Hospital. 2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms, Patio & 1 Car Garage. 6 floor plans from 1,725 to 1,867 sq. ft., - CBS Construction.

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and popularity of Tom Kindred’s leadership, Main Street’s work on large projects was just beginning. In 1993 the fate of historic Fort Pierce City Hall, built in 1926, was questionable. Main Street formed St. Lucie Preservation Association, Inc. to serve as a restoration arm of Main Street. The Association could secure historic grants and restore historic properties. Historic City Hall was restored to its original elegance and now serves as a meeting area for weddings, parties, meetings, etc.

In the mid-90s, Main Street forged ahead working to build the Manatee Observation and Education Center, hired a professional marketing company to survey the area to study what types of businesses were desired in downtown and assisted the City of Fort Pierce by conducting a public charrette to develop a master plan for public improvements and design. With most of the groundwork done, the big restoration effort came with the acquisition of the Sunrise Theatre. The restoration work began in 2002 and today we have a beautiful, performing arts theatre in the heart of downtown. The theatre is proving to be not only a wonderful cultural asset but an economic one too.

With the successes in the last 18 years, what does the future hold for Fort Pierce? With the continuing street reconstruction and improvements along Indian River Drive, new retail and upscale housing in downtown, new condominium owners in Harbour Isle, growth in St. Lucie County, Sunrise Theatre events and the myriad of monthly events hosted by Main Street and the Downtown Business Association. We now are facing the reality we worked so hard for some 18 years ago. It is an exciting and challenging opportunity and one that we do not want to lose sight of because we have all worked so very hard to have the promise of so much in Downtown Fort Pierce.

...continued from page 17...
18th Annual Backus Arts Festival

PHOTOS BY ART BOYD II
“Celebrating Vanishing Florida”  
March 21 – April 8  
Artists Explore the Nuances of the Florida Landscape in Oil. Featured exhibitors include Jackie Brice of Jupiter, Michael G. Enns of Coral Gables, James Gibson of Ft. Pierce, and Dorothy Starbuck of Santa Rosa Beach. Sculpture of wild creatures by David Price of Lake Wales.

“The Eye of the Camera”  
Juried Photography Show  
April 12 – May 13  
Open to both amateur and professional photographers, this exhibit is sure to bring fierce competition. Last seasons juried photography exhibit brought 258 entries in six categories. Applications are available at the Gallery or on our website. Entries accepted March 28 – April 8, 2006.

“The St. Lucie County High School Show”  
May 17 – May 27  
The best of things to come from the areas public and private high schools. These include Fort Pierce Central High School, Fort Pierce Westwood High School, Lincoln Park Academy, Port St. Lucie High School, and St. Lucie West Centennial High School.
Madama Butterfly
Presented by The Treasure Coast Opera Society
Saturday, April 2
A poignant drama, drawn with all the delicacy of an Oriental scroll, emphasizes the hopelessness of “Butterfly’s” dream (Hilda Ramos), and the unwitting callousness of “Pinkerton’s” actions. In spite of tragic overtones, the opera thrills the heart with its tender love story set to what a Japanese poet described as “the very music of Heaven.”

Charleston Ballet Theatre
“Rite of Spring” – An All-Stravinsky Evening
Thursday, April 6
Every year an internationally acclaimed dance company from South Carolina steals the Spoleto Festival. Find out why as this exceptionally moving vision of Stravinsky comes to life before your eyes on the Sunrise stage.

Renee Taylor and Joseph Bologna
“If You Ever Leave Me … I’m Going With You”
Tuesday, April 11
Don’t miss this winning evening of Marital Bliss and Blunders, headed for a permanent home in Las Vegas after it’s boffo Broadway box office success!

Ramsey Lewis and Angela Hagenbach
Saturday, April 15
The Fort Pierce Jazz and Blues Society welcomes three time Grammy award winning pianist and composer Ramsey Lewis to the Sunrise stage. Opening for Ramsey is internationally acclaimed Angela Hagenbach, whose sultry vocals currently set the Kansas City jazz scene on fire. Banish those tax days blues with the Treasure Coast’s most significant jazz event of the season.

The Smothers Brothers
Presented by Harbor Federal Bank
Thursday, April 20
What can you say about the Smothers Brothers… except that they’re heroes to a generation and finely tuned comedic craftsmen whose supremely popular blend of folk music and silly sibling rivalry has remained unmatched for almost five decades. We’re honored to welcome Tom and Dick to the Sunrise stage, and have our yo-yo’s at the ready!

Michael Garasi
And the Treasure Coast Symphony Orchestra
Sunday, April 23
The Sunrise Theater welcomes back to its stage award-winning conductor Michael J. Garasi and the Treasure Coast Symphony Orchestra. Get set for an afternoon of romance and passion as the Orchestra presents the beautiful music of Tchaikovsky’s “Romeo and Juliet Fantasy Overture,” and Howard Hanson’s “Romantic Symphony.” Also featured will be the Young Artist Concerto Competition Winner from our local Treasure Coast area.

Sunrise Theatre, 461-4775, www.sunrisetheatre.com
24 MAIN STREET FOCUS April 2006

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Downtown Heroes: Dave Miller

By: Kathleen McKee

Dave Miller is the “Downtown Hero” for the April issue of Main Street Focus. Prior to Dave’s move to the area in 1984, he had such an intense work schedule as a C.P.A. he was unable to give time to his community. Once he settled in Ft. Pierce he stated he could “visualize the great potential of the area”. He became involved with the American Red Cross Board, his Condo Board, and the Code Enforcement Board. He then discovered Main Street Fort Pierce and the St. Lucie Preservation Association, Inc. He has since used his skills to serve as Treasurer for both organizations for many years.

Dave works full time at Lawmen and Shooters in Vero Beach but the spirit and diligence of the people he has volunteered with has kept Dave donating his time. His experience in the business world has been instrumental in his budget advice for Main Street.

Dave, known as the “fill in guy” will be found at many Main Street events such as Friday Fest where he can be found selling beverages, tokens, or shirts. Dave also helps plan and coordinate annual gala’s such as the Reverse Raffle and the Wine-Tasting events for Main Street. He has recruited his wife Barbara to give assistance at many activities.

Dave’s vision many years ago has become reality. This “hero” has given so much but has received the reward of knowing that people can make a difference. His energy continues as he talks about future events. Many thanks to Dave Miller and best wishes as he celebrates his birthday on April 13th.
Happenings at the Library

What is Waggin' Tales?
It is a reading program designed to help children increase their reading skills. Children will read to a therapy dog for a period of 20 minutes. Our volunteers will assist the children as necessary in learning to read. Children may bring in their own books to read or one will be selected by the volunteer.

Computer Classes
"Basic Windows and the Internet" Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 9:15-10:45 a.m. For additional information please contact Reference Services at 462-2187.

Children's Programs
Pre-K Jamboree for Ages 4-6 years, Wednesdays 1:00-1:45 p.m.; Toddler Time for Ages 18 months-3 years, Fridays 10:00-10:30 a.m.

Great Library Book Club
1st and 3rd Thurs. 10:00 a.m., Ft. Pierce Branch Library. Call Joan Simplicio, Adult Services Librarian for more information, 462-2787.

Lakewood Park Book Discussion Group
First Mondays at 3:00 p.m., Lakewood Park Branch Library. Call Carol Shroyer, Branch Manager, for more information, 462-6870.

Free Monday Movies @ your Library
Every Monday at 2:00 p.m. Classics, Literary based, Foreign and Suspense films. Ft. Pierce Branch Library.

Young Adult Book Club
Third Saturdays of the Month. Sponsors lively discussions including favorite fantasy novels, mysteries, renaissance literature, Florida history, writing workshops. For readers 9 years old and up. Get a schedule at the Ft. Pierce Branch! 462-2787.

"Featured" Local and Florida Author Book Signings
Authors vary locations and times, please check with the library to see who will be visiting next.

Treasure Coast Writers' Guild
Guest Speakers. Interested in publishing, marketing or locating editors for your writing? 4th Fridays at 2:00 p.m.

Library Events
Author Marshall Frank, former Homicide and CSI Commander for the Miami-Dade Police discusses his new murder mystery novel, Latent, on March 10, 2006 10:00a.m. at Morningside Library, 2410 Morningside Blvd, Port St. Lucie and 2:00 p.m., Fort Pierce Branch Library, 101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce free. For more information, call 462-2787.

Diabetes Workshop "It Could Be You?" Carol Casanova, MS, RN, Director of the Lawnwood Diabetes Center discusses diabetes symptoms, diagnosis, care and management at the Fort Pierce Branch Library, 101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce 1:30 p.m.; free. For more information, call 462-2787.
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Cigar smokers can be very passionate about their smoking, so when Dede Wilson and Jim Wetzel were researching different tobaccos for their own pleasure they decided to open a cigar shop. They knew the Carolina Cigar Company, McFarland Company, a family business that began eleven generations ago, put out a great product so they approached Larry McFarland about selling his company’s cigars. The company has been growing and curing tobacco using a blend of tradition and technology that produces a unique cigar taste that is also chemical free. The tobacco is Dominican, Honduran, and Canary Island seed grown in Paraguay. This blend of tobacco gives Carolina Cigars their distinctive taste.

Carolina Cigars continues its tradition of excellence by using only the skilled hands of a roller to roll, inspect and prepare the cigars. This process produces the many varieties of cigars to please the customer.

Cigars can be purchased for $1.00 up to $9.00 and include mild, medium and full flavored. The $1.00 cigars are made from the tobacco remnants from the rolling process. The $9.00 cigars are comparable in flavor to a more expensive cigar, but because there is no middle man, Dede and Jim are able to keep the cost very affordable. The company owns the land that grows the seeds and all aspects of the production are controlled by McFarland.

If you are looking for a unique gift, Dede makes customized cigar bands for any occasion. She also sells gift baskets created by Jo Pye at the Gift Horse. Pipe tobacco is available in vanilla, natural, whiskey, and cherry blends. Chewing tobacco is for sale.
Cigarettes in all the popular brands are stocked and include some specialties such as the Kretek brand which is a clove cigarette in cherry, vanilla and black and Bidi’s. Also, supplies are available if you want to roll your own cigarettes. Cigar accessories such as lighters, cutters, and humidors plus a selection of pipes are additional gift ideas.

Dede and Jim wanted their business to be located in Historic Ft. Pierce. The shop at 207 Avenue A was part of a storage area for Coke’s Stationers. It was decorated with wood from an old barn in North Carolina. The back area of the shop is the humidor which keeps the tobacco products at the correct humidity and temperature.

Dede Wilson has been in the area for 18 years and remains very involved with the advertising of the Inside Track Almanac with a special interest in the downtown Fort Pierce area. Jim Wetzel is a general contractor and he and his wife Sheri are owner/brokers of Re/Max Midway.

Store hours are 11 - 7, Tuesday through Saturday and they are open late for special events. Phone is 772-461-6006. Dede and Jim invite everyone to come and visit their unique store.

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Driving west along Orange Avenue, you may have noticed renovations in progress on the southwest corner of 6th and Orange. The art deco style architecture is sure to catch your eye as it did for Vincent Lloyd, who’s had a long time interest in purchasing and renovating the property. When the opportunity arose, he couldn’t pass it by.

Working with Don Willems, who provided building and renovation services, he was able to update the structure to include all the modern amenities while retaining the character of the building’s art deco heritage. With colors inspired by the Carlyle Hotel at Miami Beach, the building tastefully reflects the flavor of the times.

First built in 1948, 601 Orange Avenue has been home to the Silver Palace Drug Store, and more recently, Andy’s New and Used Furniture. Today the renovations are nearly complete and leasing has begun. Denise Barron and Cynthia Johnson, partners of The Flower Patch TLC are looking forward to opening a new store in the Lloyd building. Currently at 112 South US1, the Flower Patch is a long time community neighbor, doing business in Fort Pierce for the past quarter century. Denise and Cynthia purchased the flower shop about two years ago, and are looking forward to expanding and moving to their new location.

With room for two more tenants, Lloyd Properties has once again preserved a piece of our history, revitalizing the area as we move forward into a future bright with possibilities.
Main Street Fort Pierce Employee Profile: Pam Gillette
by Doris Tillman

Main Street welcomes Pam Gillette to fill the shoes left behind by Joanne Davis. Pam has been on the board of Main Street for 5 years so she knew what she was getting into, good and bad! Her first involvement was participating in 2001 as a volunteer for the City of Fort Pierce’s Centennial. Born in West Palm Beach, Pam’s family later moved to Orlando. In Orlando, her family owned and operated for 20 years a top-ten restaurant called Freddie’s Steak House. Her father sold the restaurant and decided to retire where the fishing was good and moved to Fort Pierce. In 1979 Pam joined them and came to Fort Pierce to help with the new family business Orange Garden Center on Orange Avenue.

PROFILE

Pam is a graduate of Indian River Community College and is married to another great Main Street volunteer, Gary Gillette. They have four sons and a new grandson. Both Gary and Pam have a history of volunteering. They have each volunteered with the Boy Scouts for over 17 years and both have won the highest award the Boy Scouts gives, called the Silver Beaver.

For the past four and a half years Pam has worked for ACS, Inc., an organization that helps at-risk youths stay in school. She was the administrative assistant working mainly with human resources and finances.

Gary and Pam both enjoy the outdoors playing golf, fishing and boating. They also enjoy volunteering for many things. Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. is pleased to have Pam join the team and welcome Gary who is forever supporting our cause.
Getting Your Car Ready for Summer Storage

**QUESTION:** I am leaving my car here unused for 4 or 5 months while I go north, what should I do to get it ready?

**ANSWER:** Have the vehicle serviced. Vehicles that have been driven daily then sit can collect moisture in the fluids. Having the fluids changed will eliminate this. The shop can also make you aware of any potential problems such as leaks, the condition of your tires or a weak battery.

**QUESTION:** Should I disconnect my battery before I leave?

**ANSWER:** On most vehicles this is not necessary. Look in the Owners Manual for your vehicle. It should show you where to pull one fuse or connector that will shut down any electrical draws on the battery. If you can’t find it, contact your dealer or servicing shop; I am sure they will be happy to show you. Most vehicle manufacturers have included this feature so they can store vehicles before they are sold. If your vehicle has an alarm, be sure to ask whether or not this disables it.

**QUESTION:** Is there anything I should do to the interior of the vehicle?

**ANSWER:** You should consider whether the vehicle is stored outside or not. If left outside consider a dash protector or sunshade. A quality car cover is even better. Before you leave be sure to thoroughly clean the inside of the vehicle, check under the seats for any mystery items such as food or candy that may attract bugs. I recommend not leaving a window cracked open for ventilation; I have seen to many cars become homes for critters here in Florida.

Charlie’s Dodge has been doing business on the Treasure Coast since 1973 and at their current location, US 1 and Midway Rd, since 1984. Soon, they will be moving into a new state-of-the-art facility to better serve the entire Treasure Coast as a Five Star Dodge Dealer. Their Service Manager, Scott O’Keefe, has been in the service business since 1979 and with Charlie’s since 1994. He can be reached at 461-4770.

How many times have you found yourself with a tough question? Now you can “Ask A Professional.” Send your questions to Main Street Focus “Ask A Professional.” We’ll ask one of our Main Street professionals to reply, and we will publish the answers right here in the Focus—where we can all learn from them.
Easter A Time To Celebrate Community For Downtown Churches
by Thondra Lanese

Always considered a time of rebirth, Easter will be marked with extra enthusiasm by downtown churches this year as several historic churches rejoice in a return to normalcy after many months recovering from hurricane damage, and one new church celebrates its first anniversary in the community. Look for both community and church-specific events throughout Holy Week and join in the celebration.

**Community-Wide**
April 14 – Good Friday – 1:00 p.m. Downtown churches join for the Way of the Cross, a procession through downtown Fort Pierce commemorating the 14 stages in Jesus’ journey to Calvary.

**First United Methodist Church 616 Orange Avenue**
April 9 – Palm Sunday
8:30 a.m. Traditional Passion Service
9:45 a.m. Celebration: Releasing The Passion Within You
11:00 a.m. Cantata
April 12 – Seder – 6:00 p.m. Family Celebration of the Last Supper
April 14 – Good Friday – 12:00 p.m. Candlelight Service

**St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church 210 Indian River Drive**
April 13 – Maundy Thursday – 6:00 p.m. Service
April 14 – Good Friday – 12:00 p.m. Service
April 16 – Easter Sunday
6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service, Liturgy on the River, Communion Indoors
8:00 a.m. Service
10:15 a.m. Service
12:00 p.m. Easter Egg Hunt
Call 461-5009 for more information.

**Surfside Community Church 615 S. U.S. 1 (Elk’s Lodge)**
April 13 – Holy Thursday – 7:00 p.m. Community Celebration of the Last Supper, Jaycee Park Pavilion 2
April 14 – Good Friday – 7:00 p.m. Sunset Service and Candlelight Prayer Vigil, Jaycee Park Pavilion 2

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April 16 – **Easter Sunday** – 6:30 a.m. Sunrise Service, Surfside Beach, south end of Kimberly Bergalis Park. (Also, a celebration of the church's first anniversary.) Call 466-5399 for information.

**Common Ground Ministries, 600 Atlantic Avenue**
Please call the church for their Holy Week schedule at 460-5414.

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Tournament Time
by Dan Dannahower

Fort Pierce has long been a popular venue for a number of offshore fishing tournaments. A quote I saw recently on the internet called Fort Pierce “the super bowl of offshore fishing!” Quite a compliment, and an acknowledgement of the world-class sport fishing opportunities we have right here at home.

Several big tournaments are headed right here to Fort Pierce in the near future with some serious prize money available to the winners. A winning boat in some of these tournaments could earn $30,000-100,000 dollars in prize money. Winners are often professional charter captains or tournament pros who follow the tour throughout the year. Some tournaments are only open to members of the sponsoring agency while others are available to anyone who cares to give it a try. Entry fees typically run $200-500 dollars and most events run 3 or 4 days.

The Southern Kingfish Association, or SKA is one of the biggest tour sponsors with a dedicated following. Fort Pierce was lucky enough to be the site of their 2005 National Championship, scheduled for last fall, but inclement weather caused a total cancellation of that event. The SKA felt strongly enough that Fort Pierce was the right place for the Nationals and re-scheduled for this April. The delayed 2005 SKA National Championship will be held here from April 20th through 22nd. An awards ceremony will be held Sunday April 23rd at 8 a.m. For more info contact SKA at www.fishska.com or 904-819-0360.

Another SKA event, the Yellowfin-Mercury Kingfish Classic will also be held out of Fort Pierce from April 27th through 29th. Top prize is $30,000 and info is available at the same contacts above.

Another large sponsor, the Wal-Mart Kingfish Tour, will host a Fort Pierce tournament from June 1st through 3rd. This event is co-sponsored by the Saint Lucie County Chamber of Commerce and features a total purse of $330,000 with the winning boat possibly taking $100,000! For information, visit www.flwoutdoors.com or call the Chamber at 772-595-9999.
Callaway & Price, Inc. is pleased to announce their newest partner, Stephen G. Neill, Jr., MAI. Stephen has been a fee appraiser for the firm for over six years, having worked out of the Fort Pierce and West Palm Beach offices. He joined the firm as a partner on January 1st, and will be working out of the Fort Pierce office. He received his B.S. degree in Business/Real Estate from Florida State University, as well as an A.A. from Indian River Community College. His appraisal experience dates back to 1997, and includes both residential and commercial. Stephen resides in Fort Pierce with his wife, Stephanie.

Don at Whites Tackle reports fishing in the river has been very good with snapper, sheepshead, and other bottom fish being taken. Trout and snook fishing have also been very good. Offshore action has been slow primarily due to the weather. You can call Whites at 465-7637 or contact any of the local tackle shops which are always a great source of information for how to catch and what's biting.

Whether you're watching a weigh-in at one of the tournaments or trying for a string of trout on the grass flats, enjoy the fantastic fishing opportunities available right here on the Treasure Coast!
“Tomatoes and oregano make it Italian; wine and tarragon make it French. Sour cream makes it Russian; lemon and cinnamon make it Greek. Soy sauce makes it Chinese; garlic makes it good.”
—Alice May Brock, Alice’s Restaurant Cookbook
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Drink Specials

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Tiki Haze</td>
<td>$5.00</td>
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<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Sunrise Margarita</td>
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<td>Thursday</td>
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<td>Sunday</td>
<td>Bucket of Beers</td>
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