Vintage Postcard Image of the Raulerson Building in its Original Glory

Photo courtesy of St. Lucie County Historical Society

See story p6
March was another great month of celebrating our historic downtown as Main Street kicked-off Spring with the annual Bev Smith Automotive Group Sandy Shoes Seafood & Brew. It was a fantastic event that brought thousands downtown for a day of fun. Festival guests enjoyed great seafood, lots of arts & crafts, the chowder competition, lively music, and much more. Thanks to our sponsors and volunteers who made this event possible!

We’re also busy at Main Street planning our 30th Anniversary year, which we’ll celebrate on May 2nd at the Platts/Backus House. We hope that all our members, sponsors, donors and volunteers will be a part of this special recognition of the years of making a difference for the community. As we trace our history and the significant contributions we have made in ‘preserving the past, and enriching the future,’ we’re very proud of how we have impacted Fort Pierce.

Thank you everyone for the support you have given Main Street over the last 30 years. Every success on behalf of our city is shared with thousands of people who have contributed their time, energy, expertise, and passion for making Fort Pierce the best place to live, work, and play. Support our local economy: Dine, shop & play in historic downtown Fort Pierce!

by Sue Dannahower

Sue Dannahower
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**THE FLORIDA HUMANITIES COUNCIL 2017–2018 SPEAKER SERIES**

The Florida Humanities Council 2017–2018 Speaker Series hosted by the A.E. Backus Gallery & Museum and Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc.

**APRIL SPEAKERS**

**Doc Anna: Swamp Doctor of Florida**

Presented by Carrie-Sue Ayvar

Tuesday, April 10 – 2:00 p.m. at the Sunrise Theatre Black Box Theatre

"If you've never heard the roar of a bull alligator and some night bird answer, you haven't lived." So said Dr. Anna Darrow (1876–1959) who, in 1909, became only the 2nd woman doctor licensed in Florida. She often braved swampland, alligators, venomous snakes, and some of the most dangerous outlaw law this state has ever seen, in order to heal the sick, nurse the wounded and deliver babies. Chautauqua Scholar, Carrie Sue Ayvar, introduces you to this fearless wife, mother, doctor, pharmacist, artist and even veterinarian when needed. The Q & A allows the audience to interact and learn more.

How is it that an Arabic surnamed, Eastern European Jewish girl from Pittsburgh, PA tells multicultual stories in Spanish and English? Perhaps it is because she is a 3rd generation award-winning storyteller who came of age in Mexico. Blending traditional, international and personal tales, bilingual storyteller Carrie Sue Ayvar (EYE-BAR) takes her listeners on a journey into the imagination connecting people, languages and cultures through her stories that flow effortlessly between Spanish and English. Her dramatic programs range from one-woman historica l presentations to interactive folktales and stories in Spanish and English.

Recipient of the National Storytelling Network Oracle Award winner for Service and Leadership, she is a nationally acclaimed bilingual storyteller dedicated to preserving oral traditions by storytelling, and promoting the art of storytelling. A Chautauqua scholar and Kennedy Center trained Artist in Education, her performances blend entertainment and education. Carrie Sue loves to share some of Florida’s unique history with audiences throughout the state.

**RAIN: A History for Stormy Times**

Presented by Cynthia Barnett

Friday, April 27 – 2 p.m. at the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery

An engaging natural and cultural tour of RAIN, from its key roles in civilization, religion, and art; to the peculiar history of the world’s first raincoat; to the rain obsessions of our “Founding Forecaster,” Thomas Jefferson – all building to the uncharted rains of climate change. We’ll also take a look at how many communities are coming to live differently with rain—as with all water, part of a new water ethic in America. Rain connects us in all sorts of ways—as profound as prayer and art, as practical as economics, as genuine as an exchange between strangers on a stormy day. Too much and not enough, rain is a shared experience, and one of the ways climate change can become a conversation rather than a confrontation.

Cynthia Barnett is a long-time journalist who has covered fresh-water issues from the Suwannee River to Singapore. She is the author of three books on water. Mirage: Florida and the Vanishing Water of the Eastern U.S., won the gold medal for best nonfiction in the Florida Book Awards and was named by The St. Petersburg Times as one of the top 10 books that every Floridian should read. Blue Revolution: Unmaking America’s Water Crisis, was named one of the top 10 science books of 2011 by The Boston Globe. The Globe calls Barnett “part journalist, part mom, part historian, and part optimist.” The Los Angeles Times writes that she “takes us back to the origins of our water in much the same way, with much the same vividness and compassion as Michael Pollan led us from our kitchens to potato fields and feed lots of modern agriculture.” Barnett’s latest book, Rain, comes out in spring 2015.

These lecture series are free to the public. Please call Main Street Fort Pierce at 772-465-3880 (Monday–Friday); or the A.E. Backus Museum at 772-465-0630 (Wednesday–Sunday) to reserve a seat. You can also register by visiting www.backus-museum.com.
The Raulerson Building – an Historic Landmark in Changing Times

by Debra Magrann

In 1908, he married Mrs. Effie Alderman in Kissimmee and Lucie county commission seat from its incorporation in 1905. ed among his peers, Raulerson held many public offices includ-

Ing. K. B. Raulerson arrived in 1898, joining forces with R.D. Holmes to form the East Coast Cattle Company. Well respect-

As President of the East Coast Cattle Company, Raulerson was said to be the most prominent man on the east coast. In 1911, he drove a 20-horsepower Model T Ford which was in vogue for the day. As recorded in the St. Lucie County Tribune, March 3, 1911, he “has joined the hosts of the autoists having bought a fine new Ford from the local agent, N.O. Penny.” Located at the intersection of Avenue A and North Sec-

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Indian River Lagoon and Swampland Boat Tours Inc.
Supports the Manatee Center

by Rachel Tennon, MOEC Manager, and Barry “Chop” Lege, Owner and Operator of Swampland Tours

The Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop, located at 480 North Indian River Drive in Downtown Fort Pierce, is not only a local gem but also a staple fundraiser for the Manatee Observation & Education Center. Every sale made at the gift shop supports environmental education programs and exhibits at the Manatee Center — meaning your gift gives twice. And we thank you for that.

You may also know that the gift shop sells tickets for eco-tour cruises on a local 40-foot, twin-pontoon boat named “Gator” with a passenger limit of 37. Tickets are $23 for adults, $20 for seniors 65+, and $15 for children 12 and under. These gift shop sales are the product of a special partnership between the Manatee Center and Swampland Tours Inc. — a partnership that began nearly 12 years ago and continues strong today.

Since September 2006, the Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop has sold over 15,000 tickets for educational boat tours through Swampland Tours. Barry “Chop” Lege, affectionately known as Captain Chop, leads this effort and donates a portion of proceeds from tickets sold through the gift shop right back to the Manatee Center — nearly $70,000 donated over the years. Captain Chop comes from a family with a long history of wildlife and lands management. He learned first-hand the subtleties and outs of birds and wildlife while working alongside his father as he managed the famed McIlhenny ‘Tabasco Sauce’ family properties in Louisiana. Chop moved to Florida in 1993 to start a wildlife boat tour program on Lake Okeechobee through the National Audubon Society’s 28,500-acre wildlife sanctuary, and soon after began representing the Audubon Society as a volunteer warden for the property, teaching visitors about the importance and how-to’s of land preservation.

In 1997, Captain Chop founded the 501(c)(3) Conservation Center for Lake Okeechobee, Kissimmee, & Indian Rivers & Everglades Education. And in 1997, he moved his boat tour operations to Harbor Branch, until moving to Downtown Fort Pierce in June of 2004, where he began his partnership with the Manatee Center and continues today.

During a cruise with Captain Chop, you may see many of the 2,765 animals and 1,350 plants that live in the Indian River Lagoon. This includes 685 species of fish and 310 species of birds, with Captain Chop or one of his peer captains, along with their knowledgeable first mates, leading the way. Traveling daily, Captain Chop and his peers take great care not to harm the wildlife during their boat tours, while also bringing you to areas where you are most likely to view critters in the wild.

Tours are seasonal, and offered Monday through Sunday from the Fort Pierce City Marina at 10:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m., and 3:30 p.m., with a minimum of 6 passengers. We recommend that you reserve a space in advance to ensure your spot — and remember, tickets purchased through the Vanishing Mermaid Gift Shop will support environmental education programs at the Manatee Observation & Education Center.

Hope to see you soon!

The Manatee Center April Events

by Rachel Tennon, MOEC Manager

Friday, April 13th at 12 p.m.
Become an Otter Spotter!

“Lunch & Learn:” Join us for a presentation by Dr. Megan Stolen, Research Scientist with Hubbs Seaworld Research Institute. You’ll learn all about river otters in Florida and how to become an official “otter spotter” to help gather research data.

Bring your lunch and learn! Free event.

Recurring Programs

Tuesdays, 1:30 p.m. — Fin-Tastic Fish Feeding — come meet the fishes in the Center!

Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. — Tide Pool Touch Tank — touch and hold theurchins, conchs, and more!

Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. — Meet the MOEC Reptiles — and witness Diego the corn snake eating.

Fridays, 1:30 p.m. — Seahorse Snack Time — watch the MOEC seahorses eat and play.

Saturdays, 1:30 p.m. — Fin-Tastic Fish Feeding — come meet the fishes in the Center!

Every 1st and 3rd Thursday at 10:30 a.m. — Mermaid Tales — join us as we share tales from the sea. From the fantasy world of mermaids to the real-life, awe-inspiring world of marine animals, this is one story time you don’t want to miss!
Downtown Fort Pierce Offers a Variety of Aquatic Adventures

by Britt Andersen

Why do people come to Fort Pierce? Two reasons that come to mind are the sun and access to the water. Fort Pierce has some of the best waterfronts in the state. The rides fill and flush our lagoon to create the unique estuary that supports a variety of aquatic mammals and fish. The barrier islands keep the large wave action to the oceanside for surfers and beachgoers, and the Indian River side of the islands is a haven for kayakers and stand-up paddleboard enthusiasts. There are several local businesses that operate within the Main Street Fort Pierce district that offer visitors and locals a chance to enjoy the local waterways.

1. Indian River Lagoon Wildlife Boat Tours is run by Captain “Chop” Lege. His large pontoon boat runs trips three times a day from the City Marina. The boat seats a maximum of 35 people. Captain Chop conducts most of the tours and goes in search of a variety of aquatic mammals and fish. Their powerboat takes six people for full or half days as well as the sunset cruises. Captain Ricky Spikes is a local with a wide range of experience. Snacks and beverages (non-alcoholic) are provided on board and you can arrange for a picnic or other items through local restaurants. A head (bathroom) is available on board. They seek to provide their passengers “a good day on the water.” Timing is at your schedule. The cost is $350 for a half day, $650 for a whole day, and $45 per person for a sunset cruise. For reservations, call 833-732-3294, or visit www.gypsytourboats.com for more information.

2. Gypsy Boat Tours, located at the City Marina, dock E, slip 119, is owned and run by Rob and Rickelle Parks. They offer a more personalized experience including snorkeling, beach picnics, sunset cruises as well as viewing the local sea and birdlife. Their powerboat takes six people for full or half days as well as the sunset cruises. The deadline for a submission is May 31, 2018. Please e-mail a PDF of your artwork to downtownfpfarmersmarket@gmail.com. Below is a description of the limited edition Market bag which will be sold at the Market anniversary on February 16, 2019.

3. Motorized Kayak Eco-Tours is special and I’ve included them here for that reason. Not only do they provide an on-water or in-water experience, but it makes that experience available to those who are disabled. You don’t have to be an experienced kayaker; they will give the basic instruction and you’ll travel in a group of eight kayaks with two guides. C. Gibson, the owner, has a degree in marine biology and is an expert on the environment. You can explore not only the water, but the shallow waters of the mangroves which form a major part of our water system. This is a unique experience. They will also work with children and those who may be afraid of the water. The cost ranges from $40 to $60 per person for a 3-hour session. If you have a disability, there is a 10% discount. If you have lost a limb the tour is free. For more information visit www.motorizedkayakadventures.com.

4. Dive Odyssey is located on Seaway Drive and 2nd Street. They are a full-service dive shop that offers dive gear rentals, tank fills, and scuba classes. They also rent kayaks and bikes. This shop is conveniently located on your way to the water near downtown Fort Pierce. Visit their website at www.diveodysseya.com or call them at 772-460-1771.

5. Last, but not least on my list is Treasure Coast Boat Rentals. I include them because they’ve been here for a long time and provide not only boat tours, but this is the place to go if your interest is fishing. They provide boat rentals and charters plus all the equipment you may need. Their shop, with a boat launch ramp, provides all the amenities for those who travel with their own boat in tow and for whom the water and the fishing is the reason they come to Fort Pierce. For the fishing enthusiast who left his/her gear at home, this is a must to checkout what they may need and to plan for their trip back to Fort Pierce. Boat rentals start at $175 for a half day and $265 for a full day. Call for reservations at 772-466-4680 and visit GetHookedFishingCharters.com or TreasureCoastBoatRentals.com for more information.

AQUATIC ADVENTURES … continued from previous page
The Eyes Have It! Awards Announced for Through the Eye of the Camera at the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery, on View Through April 27

The A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery has announced the award-winning works accepted into the annual juried photography exhibition, Through the Eye of the Camera, on view now through April 27th at the Museum, 500 North Indian River Drive in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce.

Through the Eye of the Camera accepted 115 works by 59 photographers in a competitive process from the Treasure Coast, other cities in Florida, and as far away as Annapolis, Maryland. The exhibition was juried by a panel of esteemed judges that included Juan D. Brown, Barbara du Pont, and Pat Rice.

“Blue Cypress Morning” by Phil Reid of Vero Beach was awarded Best of Show by the jury panel, and “Double Take” by Krystial Comins of Port St. Lucie was recognized with the Director’s Choice Award.

“Here’s Looking At You Kidd” by Maria Fernandez of Stuart received First Place in Digital — Great Outdoors; “Lure of the Sailfish” by Suzanne Bernetti of Fort Pierce received First Place in Digital — Sports; “Giddy Up” by Suzanne Kasven of Vero Beach received First Place in Digital — Color Still Life / Portrait; “Life on the Edge” by Susan Pantuso of Fort Pierce received First Place in Digital — Black & White; “Magical Moment” by Manuel Carela of Port St. Lucie received First Place in Manipulated Imagery; and “Girl in the Mirror” by Sally Stone of Stuart received First Place in Alternate Substrates. An additional 26 category awards were conferred, including Second, Third, and Awards of Merit. A complete list of winners is available at the Museum’s website, www.BackusMuseum.com.

The Eyes Have It! is an annual competition open to amateur and professional photographers.

March 2018 Winners

Touchstar Cinemas Luxury 6
Commercial Renovation
2539 S. U.S. Highway 1

Michael Menard Home
Residential Renovation
1211 S. 11th Street

Michael McLeod and Cathy Wassylenko
Residential Rehabilitation
820 Atlantic Avenue

THE KOBLEGARD LAW FIRM

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Amy R. Shervin
Associate Attorney

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Continued on page 17 ...
“We’ve been offering this opportunity for more than fifteen years now, and it’s really a great one for photographers at all levels,” said Museum director J. Marshall Adams. “Because we jury the physical work instead of by digital means, the judges get to really see it, hold it up, see how it is framed or presented, and how that can help or hurt an image. It makes entrants really be on their game and show their stuff. And especially for things that are printed on alternate substrates like metal or canvas; seeing them in person shows them off to their best effect. That’s one of the reasons people love this exhibition: the variety and quality is always top notch.”

During the presentation, through April 27, visitors are invited to share their own vote for their favorite work on display. The results will be tallied for the annual People’s Choice Award given at the close of the exhibition.

Continued on page 18 …
EYE OF THE CAMERA … continued from page 17

The exhibition is sponsored by Jiffy Photo & Framing, one of the oldest photography stores in the state of Florida, providing equipment and specialized services for amateurs, professionals, and institutions, as well as custom quality framing services. For more information on the exhibition, please visit www.BackusMuseum.com.

About the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery: Fresh from a multi-million dollar expansion, the Florida's most prominent citizens. A renowned humanitarian who abhorred the racist attitudes and segregation that engulfed the region, Backus taught and mentored the group of entrepreneurial African American artists who became known as the Florida Highwaymen. Their inspiring story is part of the A.E. Backus legacy. In addition to preserving and perpetuating the artistic and humanitarian legacy of Backus, the Museum organizes and hosts changing exhibitions from artists of national and international acclaim. It was voted “Best Museum 2018” in Indian River Magazine’s annual “Best of the Treasure Coast,” where it was described as “a fabulous place to visit.”

Regular Museum hours are Wednesday–Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sunday, noon to 4 p.m.; closed on Monday and Tuesday. The Museum is closed on Easter Sunday. Admission is $5 per person; AARP, AAA, and Veterans with appropriate ID receive a $2 discount. Students with school ID, children under 18, and active duty military are always free. The first Sunday of the month is Free Admission Day.

Florida-born artist to build his professional renown by painting the landscape and scenes from daily life of his native state. He was fortunate to have known great success during his lifetime, with paintings hanging in the businesses and the private collections of many of Florida’s most prominent citizens. A renowned humanitarian who abhorred the racist attitudes and segregation that engulfed the region, Backus taught and mentored the group of entrepreneurial African American artists who became known as the Florida Highwaymen. Their inspiring story is part of the A.E. Backus legacy. In addition to preserving and perpetuating the artistic and humanitarian legacy of Backus, the Museum organizes and hosts changing exhibitions from artists of national and international acclaim. It was voted “Best Museum 2018” in Indian River Magazine’s annual “Best of the Treasure Coast,” where it was described as “a fabulous place to visit.”

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most of her titled pieces. Her newest original painting is Bull Headed for a mahi dolphin that intently has his ‘eye on you.’

Linda always kept herself busy while balancing the responsibilities of wife, homemaker and mother of three. Being in business for 25 years, she began a creative life as a teen attending a tech center affiliated with her high school in New York. Based on grade averages, 11th and 12th graders received career training; she selected advertising and fine arts which lead to a Madison Avenue ad agency position in New York City.

With world-class advertising experience under her belt, she found a job with a subcontractor for Grumman. As a technical graphic artist with a high-security government clearance, she presented drawings for one of the largest defense contractors in the world. Moving to Illinois where her two sons were born, her technical illustration skills were needed at Northrop, the global aerospace technology company. It was there that she was trained in the emerging field of computer-generated graphics.

After starting a family, she still kept busy doing something creative. Living in different areas of the country added to her flexibility. She landed a job in Tennessee at Hess’s department store, creating Macy-styled set decorating for window merchandising. She designed murals for kinder-care centers or photorealistic, as in her tribute to the stallion titled Wind Dancer, her acrylic paintings are in a variety of styles depending on the subject matter: She is painterly, using bright hues on a free-spirited subject matter: She is painterly, using bright hues on a free-spirited inspiration. “I don’t have one medium; I like to mix it up.” Her forte is interpreting the visual environment, often through the lens of a camera.

Evidence of her openness to try new things abounds in her gallery. For her creative energies — as its vice president and CEO — a showplace for her favorite photographers, she promotes Linda to take on the responsibilities of the new gallery. His confidence, along with their daughter, Briana Nielsen, provided inspiration for the ever-evolving artist to venture into business. Residents of the PGA Village in Port St. Lucie, their children are now grown and the couple is building a house in Fort Pierce closer to the beach. “We have lived in many states. My husband’s career has taken us to so many places. Based on my clientele, he encouraged me to venture out of my home workspace and have a place of my own,” she says. "I'm always doing something different and learning something new," she adds. At heart, Knowles is an authentic visionary artist: she paints by inspiration. "I don't have one medium; I like to mix it up." Her forte is interpreting the visual environment, often through the lens of a camera.

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Florida Humanities Speaker Series

The A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery in partnership with Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc. are pleased to present the following FREE Florida Humanities Speaker Series topics:

Tuesday, February 13, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.
Race and Change Across Cultures and Generations: Florida Stories
PRESENTED BY DR. KITTY OLIVER
Location: Sunrise Theatre for the Performing Arts – Black Box Theatre
117 South 2nd Street
This multimedia program blends lively cross-cultural stories, research and discussion on coming of age with integration in ethnically diverse Florida in a 21st Century dialogue on race in a non-confrontational way. Dr. Oliver explores how far we’ve come and how progress can be made in a hopeful, inspirational approach.

Social Media: www.kittyoliveronline.com Race AND Change Facebook
YOUTUBE Instagram: #Race_and_change
MUSIC: Purchase “The Calling of Our Time” - Inspirational Jazz by Dr. Kitty Oliver on iTunes.

Tuesday, February 13, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.
Florida’s role in the war with Dr. Gary Mormino.
PRESENTED BY DR. GARY MORMINO
Location: Sunrise Theatre for the Performing Arts – Black Box Theatre
117 South 2nd Street
World War II galvanized Floridians, resulting in the influx of two million servicemen. The war also ignited a modern civil rights movement, and even veterinarian when needed.

Tuesday, February 27, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.
Florida Cattle Ranching: Five Centuries of Tradition
PRESENTED BY BOB STONE
Location: A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery
500 North Indian River Drive
Cattle were introduced into the present day United States when Juan Ponce de Leon brought Spanish cattle to Florida in 1521. Bob Stone’s multi-media presentation explores and celebrates the history and culture of the nation’s oldest cattle ranching state from the colonial period to the 21st century.

Tuesday, March 13, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.
Florida and World War II
PRESENTED BY GARY MORMINO
Location: Sunrise Theatre for the Performing Arts – Black Box Theatre
117 South 2nd Street
World War II galvanized Floridians, resulting in the influx of two million servicemen. The war also ignited a modern civil rights movement, new roles for women, and the dawn of the Florida Dream. Explore Florida’s role in the war with Dr. Gary Mormino.

Tuesday, March 27, 2018 – 2 p.m.
Margorie Harris Carr: Defender of Florida’s Environment
PRESENTED BY PEGGY MACDONALD
Location: A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery
500 North Indian River Drive
Through engaging historic postcards and photos and a lively presentation and discussion, author Peggy MacDonald blends Florida, women’s and environmental history to provide audiences with an inspirational message about the power a small group of committed citizens can have to defend Florida’s environment.

Tuesday, April 10, 2018 – 2 p.m.
Doc Ames: Swamp Doctor of Florida
PRESENTED BY CARRIE-SUE AYVAR
Location: Sunrise Theatre for the Performing Arts – Black Box Theatre
117 South 2nd Street
Dr. Anna Darrow (1876-1959) in 1909 became only the second woman doctor licensed in Florida. She bravely swampland, alligators, venomous snakes, and outlaw gangs in order to heal the sick, nurse the wounded and deliver babies. Chautauqua Scholar, Carrie Sue Ayvar, introduces you to this fearless wife, mother, doctor, pharmacist, artist and even veterinarian when needed.

Friday, April 27, 2018 – 2:00 p.m.
Rain: A History for Stormy Times
PRESENTED BY CYNTHIA BARNETT
Location: A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery
500 North Indian River Drive
Rain connects us in all sorts of ways – as profound as prayer and art, as practical as economics, as genuine as an exchange between strangers on a stormy day. Too much and not enough, rain is a shared experience, and one of the ways climate change can become a conversation rather than a confrontation.

These lecture series are free to the public. Please call Main Street Fort Pierce at (772) 466-3880 (Monday – Friday), or the A.E. Backus Museum at (772) 465-0630 (Wednesday – Sunday) to reserve a seat. You can also register by visiting www.backusmuseum.com.
Small Business Solutions: Four Ways Mom-and-Pop Businesses Can Outshine Their Bigger Competitors

by Bridget W. Pollack, Guest Blogger

March 29 was National Mom and Pop Business Owners Day — a day to celebrate the value that family-owned small businesses bring to their communities. These days, Mom-and-Pop businesses face many challenges as they compete against larger retailers and service providers with expansive budgets. But Mom and Pops have some strengths bigger companies don’t. By leveraging them, they cannot only compete successfully but also excel.

Here are 4 advantages small businesses have over big businesses:

**FIRST-NAME BASIS:** This brings to my mind some lyrics from the theme song for the television show, “Cheers.” “Sometimes you want to go where everybody knows your name.” I think we all can relate to how wonderful it feels when we walk into businesses where the owners or staff call us by name and make us feel valued. Unlike many large corporations, Mom-and-Pop businesses have opportunities to really get to know their customers — and vice versa. It’s not just business; it becomes personal as small business owners and their employees develop friendships with the people within their communities. Customers that know and like the owners or staff call us by name and make us feel valued.

Also, listen to your customers’ needs and go above and beyond to deliver personalized service. If you have employees, empower them to make decisions to do a little something extra when a prime opportunity for building customer loyalty presents itself. For example, think of the goodwill a Mom-and-Pop coffee shop might generate by giving its employees the authority to extend an occasional on-the-house cup of joe to busy professionals who visit them to make decisions to do a little something extra when a prime opportunity for building customer loyalty presents itself. For example, think of the goodwill a Mom-and-Pop coffee shop might generate by giving its employees the authority to extend an occasional on-the-house cup of joe to busy professionals who visit your location before work every morning.

**PART OF THE COMMUNITY:** Mom-and-Pop business owners have many opportunities to demonstrate their sense of social responsibility in supporting causes within their communities. And with 55 percent of consumers willing to pay more for products from socially responsible companies, giving back can have a direct result on a small business’s bottom line.

Also, listen to your customers’ needs and go above and beyond to deliver personalized service. If you have employees, empower them to make decisions to do a little something extra when a prime opportunity for building customer loyalty presents itself. For example, think of the goodwill a Mom-and-Pop coffee shop might generate by giving its employees the authority to extend an occasional on-the-house cup of joe to busy professionals who visit your location before work every morning.

How can you make the most of this strength? Make an effort to learn about your customers. Do your best to commit to memory changes you should consider acting on.

**NIMBLE AND FLEXIBLE:** Large corporations often have a lot of red tape and tiers of buy-in to get through before launching new products or services and making improvements in answer to customer feedback. In contrast, with their simple management structure that allows for fast approval, Mom-and-Pop businesses can respond to market demand and customer needs more quickly.

And with no messy hierarchy and bureaucracy to navigate, Mom-and-Pop businesses can more adeptly cater to special requests from customers and offer more than customers are expecting. With their quick decision-making capabilities, Mom-and-Pop businesses are well positioned to nurture customer loyalty, earning repeat business and gain referrals.

How can you make the most of this strength? Treat every buyer interaction as an opportunity to gain valuable knowledge, improve your offerings and enhance the customer experience. Critical to the process is keeping a close eye on trends in your industry and what competitors are offering. Also, seek to learn — and closely listen to — what your customers like and dislike about your products and services. Industry blogs, joining your local chamber of commerce, staying tuned into your competitors’ social media accounts and issuing customer surveys can help you recognize the changes you should consider acting on.

**SMALL AND LOCAL:** “Shop small” and “shop local” have become prominent mantras across the United States, raising awareness of small businesses’ contributions to their local communities. Mom-and-Pop businesses often provide unique artisanal products and offer one-of-a-kind experiences that draw visitors from other locations. Also, family-owned businesses account for 64 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product and 78 percent of new jobs created each year. Cognizant of small businesses’ impact on the local economy, people have a renewed interest in doing their part to keep their dollars in the local community.

How can you make the most of this strength? The American Express® Small Business Saturday website offers many tips and tools for promoting your local business year round. It also provides ideas for how you can use Small Business Saturday (which falls on the Saturday after Black Friday) to boost customer motivation to buy from local businesses as the holidays arrive. You can also leverage the Shop Small® movement by partnering with other local Mom-and-Pop shops in your community. By recommending each other to customers and cross-promoting each other’s products and services, you can all gain more exposure and make more revenue.

Need help with Your Mom-and-Pop Business? SCORE mentors have experience in all aspects of starting and running a business, and Mom-and-Pop business owners anywhere throughout the United States can take advantage of their insight and guidance. About the Author: Bridget Weston Pollack is the Vice President of Marketing and Communications at the SCORE Association. She is responsible for all branding, marketing, PR, and communication efforts. She focuses on implementing marketing plans and strategies to facilitate the growth of SCORE’s mentoring and trainings services. She collaborates with SCORE volunteers and develops SCORE’s online marketing strategy.
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Galleria of Fort Pierce Harbor Hosts Student Art Show

The annual St. Lucie County High School Art Show opening is Friday, April 20, from 5 to 8 p.m. This year’s show takes place in the Galleria of Pierce Harbor building at 100 S. 2nd St. in Fort Pierce. An awards ceremony will take place at 7:15 after the closing of “Peoples’ Choice” voting.

Students will be judged in six categories for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place, plus a “Peoples’ Choice” award. There is also a teacher component where teachers can show one piece.

The opening takes place the same night as Art Walk because the exposure to our vibrant art community is invaluable. The Art Walk artists love to mingle and mentor our students when they get a chance.

The show is on exhibit after opening night, April 21st through Saturday, May 5th, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Rooster in the Garden Opens in The Galleria at Pierce Harbor

Chef Chris Bireley of Osceola Bistro announced today that The Braford will open the first of its two dining rooms, Rooster In The Garden, at 100 S. 2nd Street, Suite 121 in downtown Fort Pierce.

“Rooster In The Garden will be a farm-to-table menu that not only uses local product but shows how high a quality what we get from our backyard is,” says Chef Chris Bireley.

In partnership with Adams Ranch, Rooster In The Garden is the first of two new dining rooms opening in the newly remodeled Galleria, located in downtown Fort Pierce at the intersection of Orange Avenue and 2nd Street.

Rooster in the Garden Mission Statement: Serving our community, family & friends by sourcing fresh, local and/or organic products; to enrich community relationships via locally focused commerce; to provide a unique hospitality experience for community enjoyment.

Abandon Ship by Arthur Silva, 2017 People’s Choice Winner

When: Starting February 10, 2018
Where: First United Methodist Church
616 Orange, Fort Pierce, FL 34950
For more information, call First United Methodist Church 772-464-0440 or www.TrailLifeUSA.com

Wooden Cutting Board — Scrub a wooden cutting board with coarse salt and massage with half a lemon to clean away food particles and food smells. Rub the board with food-grade mineral oil (find it at a hardware store) to condition the wood once a month.

Wooden Spoons — When wooden spoons don’t exactly look (or smell) like they used to, boil them in a pot of water and leave them lying in the sun to dry.

Keep your Wood in Shape

by Sue Dannahower

It will offer vegan, vegetarian and omnivore items on its local food menu. The emphasis will be on fresh flavors that highlight the quality of product used, featuring Chef Bireley’s international training and flair.

Situated in the lobby of The Galleria, it has an inviting courtyard appeal, with a light and airy space as well as an outdoor patio. It strives to be a place for the whole community to enjoy lunch and dinner, with brunch and ‘before theatre’ menu still to come. Stroll in and enjoy as reservations are not required, only suggested for groups larger than eight.

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Let’s Talk Snook!

by Captain Bo Samuel, Pullin Drag Charters

Fishing for snook this time of year is always a good idea. This game fish is every angler’s trophy because of its great fight and great taste. Easily recognizable by the black lateral line that extends onto the tail, these fish are known to jump and make quick runs when hooked. They like structure and moving current such as around docks, bridges, and jetties as well as near mangroves and sea grass beds.

Snook are ambush feeders and will wait for prey to be carried by the current. Although they will hit artificials, the best live bait is mullet, pilchards, threadfins or mojarra using 40–60 pound fluorocarbon with size 3–4 j-hook. Make sure your drag is tight, wait for the bite, and count to five before setting back on the rod and enjoy an impressive fight. Anglers are only allowed one per person per day with a slot size limit of 28” to 32”. Snook over 32” are the breeders which need to be protected to preserve fish populations.

Any way you want to eat fresh fish is ideal for snook and if you want someone else to do the cooking, take your catch to The Original Tiki Bar in downtown Fort Pierce. Check with your local bait and tackle shops for regulations and to purchase a snook stamp. Until next time, go after those linesiders and keep Pullin Drag!

Recipe Corner

by Sue Dannahower

Steak Oscar

1 envelope Knorr’s béarnaise sauce
1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed
½ pound crabmeat
1/2 teaspoon minced garlic
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon lemon juice
4 beef tenderloin steaks (1 1/4” thick)
1/8 teaspoon paprika

Take steaks out of the fridge 30 minutes before cooking. Allow them to come to room temperature.

In a large skillet, sauté crab and garlic in butter for 3-4 minutes or until heated through. Stir in lemon juice; keep warm. Grill steaks until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare 125.) Remove steak from the grill and tent with foil for 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, cook asparagus. Bring water to a boil; cover and cook for 2 minutes or until crisp-tender. Prepare béarnaise sauce according to package directions.


Best Baked Potatoes

The perfect baked potato is crispy on the outside and pillowy in the middle. Russets are the best potato for baking. The skins are thicker, and the starchy interior has a sweet flavor and fluffy texture when baked.

4 medium Russet potatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil
Coarse Salt & Pepper

Heat the oven to 425°F. Scrub the potatoes clean and dry completely. Rub the potatoes with olive oil, and sprinkle on all sides with salt and pepper. Prick 2 holes in the skin with a sharp knife to allow the steam to escape. Bake potatoes on a cookie sheet for 50 to 60 minutes. Serve with butter, sour cream, shredded cheese, bacon bits, chives, etc.

Classic Steak & Potatoes Elevated

Top rested steak with crab mixture, asparagus and béarnaise sauce. Sprinkle with paprika. Serve with baked potatoes.

Serves 4.

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Guitar, Harmonica & Vocals: Rick Colombo
Keys: Robert Dermarkarian
Drums: Christopher Rao
Bass & Vocals: Michael Carelli

Relapse
Lead vocals: John Cherveny
Lead guitar: Allan Colby
Rhythm guitar: Paul Lowery
Bass Guitar: Jason McManus
Keyboards: George Rittersbach
Drums: Larry Mufson

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