February is the month to get out and fall in love with everything Downtown Fort Pierce has to offer. Not many cities have that special waterfront view or such a rich history that dates back to the turn of the century. But I think our greatest asset is our friendly people who love Fort Pierce.

Lovers of education and the arts can enjoy numerous art galleries such as the A.E. Backus Museum, Art Mundo at the Orange Avenue Studios, the St. Lucie Art Association, the Sunrise Theatre, the Manatee Observation & Education Center, and so much more. Avid outdoorsmen and women can seek their passion from the Fort Pierce Marina, which is home base to some of the finest fishing and fishing charters on the east coast of Florida and America.

Don’t forget food lovers. With more than a dozen dining options, there is a restaurant for everyone. Floribbean to Italian, Asian to Spanish (tapas). We also have the popular Sailfish Brewing Company, and specializing in healthy fare are S&S Takeout and One Yoga Planet Co-op and Market. Everything to delight your culinary palate and more. Did I mention we have the best gelato around? For those traditional romantics, downtown offers beautiful gift stores, jewelry shops, hair salons and spas and a first rate flower shop.

I encourage you to become involved in our downtown by joining Main Street Fort Pierce as a member. We are a 501(c)3 nonprofit and are responsible for organizing over 30 community events in downtown Fort Pierce each year. In addition to hosting events, Main Street Fort Pierce has restored some of the most historically significant buildings in the downtown area. Main Street Fort Pierce is one of the oldest and most successful Main Street programs in Florida and the nation. We rely on help from the community in form of memberships and/or volunteers. Call me at (772) 466-3880 — I’ll sign you up today!

Would you like to volunteer? We have many positions available both in the office and during our events. You can write for the Focus Magazine, pour beer during Friday Fest, help with the Iron Chef or Chowder Competition at the upcoming Taste of the Sea Seafood & Sandy Shoes Festival, or help us plan future events. Call me now — I’m the Volunteer Coordinator.

Someone once asked me why I wanted to stay in Fort Pierce. “This is where my heart is,” was my reply. I hope you feel the same way. I hope you will love Fort Pierce as much as I do.

Sue Dannahower
President

British American
130 S. Indian River Dr., Suite 402
Downtown Fort Pierce
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**Calendar**

**DOWNTOWN FORT PIERCE LIBRARY**
For information, please call 462-2787 or visit www.stlucie.lib.fl.us

**ST. LUCIE COUNTY REGIONAL HISTORY CENTER**
For information, please call 462-1795 or visit www.stlucieco.gov/history.

**ST. LUCIE COUNTY AQUARIUM**
Please call 462-3474 for more info or visit www.stlucieco.gov/marine_center

**A.E. BACKUS MUSEUM**
For information, please call 465-0630 or visit www.backusmuseum.com.

**HEATHCOTE BOTANICAL GARDENS**
For information, please call 464-4722 or visit www.heathcotebotanicalgardens.org

T’ai Chi Classes: Every Tuesday 9 a.m. with T’ai Chi instructor, Charlie Ottesen; $10 per person.

Free beginners Spanish Class: Every Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

**SUNRISE THEATER**
For information, please call 461-4772 or visit www.sunrisetheatre.com.

Saturday, 2/21/15 @ 8 p.m. Robert Navarro & His Latin-Jazz Orchestra – Presented by Bluebird Educational Foundation; Tickets $70

Tuesday, 2/17/15 @ 8 p.m. Kevin Costner & Modern West; Tickets $49/39

Saturday, 2/28/15 @ 8 p.m. Scotty McCreery – See You Tonight Tour; Tickets $65/55

**SUNRISE THEATRE’S BLACK BOX PERFORMANCES**
For more information, please call 461-4772 or visit www.sunrisetheatre.com.

Saturday, 2/21/15 @ 8 p.m. Robert Navarro & His Latin-Jazz Orchestra – Presented by Bluebird Educational Foundation; Tickets $70

**FORT PIERCE JAZZ & BLUES SOCIETY**
Every Tuesday — Jazz Jam at the Sunrise Black Box Theatre, 7:00 to 10:00 p.m.
Every Saturday — Jazz Market in Downtown Fort Pierce (Arts & Crafts), 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**FORT PIERCE POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE**
For more information, please call 370-6162 or visit www.fpapolice.com

Volunteers needed for Ft. Pierce Police Athletic League. Persons interested in teaching the fundamentals of sports, mentoring and tutoring should contact Paul Pearson or Gabe Gonzales 772-496-0606.

**ART MUNDO**
For more information, please call 772-466-1010 or e-mail artmundo@artmundo.org. Visit www.artmundo.org.

**FORT PIERCE RIVER WALK CENTER**
For information, please call 489-6473 or visit cityoffortpierce.com

600 North Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce; Classes include: Jazzercise, Zumba, Zumba Gold, Duet Bridge, Ayusna Style Yoga, Ballroom Dancing, Belly Dancing, and Line Dancing.

**MANATEE OBSERVATION AND EDUCATION CENTER**
For information, please call 486-1600, ext. 3033 or visit www.manateecenter.com

**WANTED:**
**Horse Lovers & History Buffs!**
Come on Down for the 28th Annual Florida Cracker Trail Riders Parade

Join in the FUN as over 150 horseback riders and mules travel the historic route through Downtown Fort Pierce. Guaranteed to be a spectacle! Don’t miss it!

![The Parade](image)

There will be whip cracking, tall tale telling, horse petting, Florida Cracker souvenirs, bluegrass music and more.

**AJ Ghent Band First-Ever Hometown Show at Sunrise Theatre**

Renowned Atlanta-based group AJ Ghent Band will take the stage at the Sunrise Theatre in Fort Pierce on Thursday, Feb. 19th, at 7 p.m. for an unforgettable night of southern rock, blues, funk and soul music. Attendees can expect to hear original hits from the band such as “Elevator Love” and “Keep on Workin’” and cover hits like “Purple Rain” and “Dock of the Bay.” This will also be the first hometown show for front man AJ Ghent and sister/vocalist Tiffany Ghent, who both grew up in Fort Pierce.

AJ Ghent is a product of his respective environment. Born into a legacy of lap steel guitar players, AJ’s great uncle, Willie Eason, grandfather Henry Nelson and father Aubrey Ghent Sr., greatly influenced his burgeoning career and sound. In August 2012, AJ formed the AJ Ghent Band. Through a combination of unique and unpredictable sound and rhythm, the band aims to inspire the audience to come together with their message of love by having them take away a memorable performance. The band is currently working on their debut album to be released this spring.

“When we combine southern rock, blues, funk, and chiefly soul, we entice audiences with raw passion and honesty by presenting an invitation for people to simply get together and feel good,” AJ Ghent said. “I look forward to returning to my hometown of Fort Pierce and playing for all of our fans.”

Sunrise Theatre is located at 117 S. 2nd Street. For more information, visit www.ajgentband.com.
Cracker Trail Riders Parade in Downtown Ft. Pierce

by Kathleen Fredrick

Whips will be cracking and horses will be prancing as the Florida Cracker Trail Riders, nearly 170 strong not including horses, mules and wagons, will parade on horseback through downtown Ft. Pierce on Saturday, February 21, at approximately 10:30 a.m. The parade celebrates the end of the 28th Annual 120-20 Mile Cow-State Trail Ride commemorating Florida’s settlers and their rugged cattle raising heritage. The parade begins on the corner of North Indian River Drive and Seaway Drive and travels south along Indian River Drive to the traffic circle, meanders through the Farmer’s Market and finally commences at Cobb’s Landing by the traffic roundabout on N. Indian River Drive.

Following the Civil War, a rugged brand of individuals settled along Florida’s east coast and central flatslands. They scratched out a living raising cattle, pigs, vegetables and fishing. These early settlers became known as Florida Crackers, a reference to the cracking sound made by the braided, leather whips they used to drive their cattle rather than a food preference or a particular philosophy.

The leather-tough pioneers, known as Cracker Cowmen, from up and down the east coast and throughout central Florida, gathered with their scrub cows each year, congregating west of Ft. Pierce to drive their giant herd across the state to Punta Rosa, near today’s Sanibel. The passageway between Ft. Pierce and Punta Rosa was the only “dry” trans-Florida passageway. To the north of Ft. Pierce, the Kissimmee River and its floodplains blocked the way and to the south lay the big lake and further south the Everglades made passage impossible.

Once the cowmen survived the long and difficult journey north of Ft. Pierce, the Kissimmee River and its floodplains blocked the way and to the south lay the big lake and further south the Everglades made passage impossible.

The Florida Cracker Trail Association is a 501 (C)3, not for profit association dedicated to preserving the unique history of Florida through the reenactment of this historic ride and other educational activities. Visit their website at crackertrail.org for more information about the ride.
Tom Prestopnik’s Work on Exhibit at Art Mundo in February

by Holly Theuns, Executive Director, Art Mundo

Did you go to school in Martin County between 1973 and 2004? Or take college art classes at the then Indian River Community College between 1976 and 2000? If you did, then you probably recognize the name Tom Prestopnik. He was the cool art teacher who brought the best out in each of his students. The one who made you dress up to attend art openings; taught you how to stretch canvas and make frames. He was the teacher who worked alongside you.

Prestopnik trained as an art educator at State University College in Buffalo, New York, receiving both his BA and MA degrees in Arts Education. Buffalo State has graduated more arts educators than any other college or university in the United States. His work has been exhibited in New York and throughout Florida. An Andy Warhol portrait, appropriately created with Campbell’s soup can labels, was juried in to the 2014 Backus Museum’s Best of the Best Show and sold to a Vero Beach collector.

Tom has the teaching gift of being able to ignite the spark of creativity in each of his students. He says there is a fine line between being too strict, shutting students down, and giving them too much freedom — which results in total bedlam. He must have been doing something right, winning “High School Art Teacher of the Year for Florida” in 2003, and to this day, he is in

Continued on page 10…
touch with over 30 former students. His studio is not only a showcase of his own artwork, but also the work of many of the talented students who passed through his classes over the years. Tony DiTerlizzi, to name one, has gone on to create a career as a New York Times best-selling author and illustrator. DiTerlizzi is responsible for the Spiderwick Chronicles series and is the author of a new collection of Star Wars concept art books based on the original drawings that inspired the film dynasty.

Anita Prentice met Tom when she exhibited his work at the art gallery she owned in Jensen Beach, back in the day, and is delighted to be curating a show of his work at Art Mundo, in the Underground Hallway in February 2015. The opening reception will be at Art Walk on Wednesday, February 11th, from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Come and meet Tom Prestopnik or renew his acquaintance.

Tom's show will focus on work from his character paintings, featuring such favorites as "Dumbo," "Thumper" and "Figment.” There will also be work from his Circle Series and more than one nod to Andy Warhol in his "AW Bus" and the "Andy Warhol Meets Garth Brooks" and "Garth Brooks Meets Andy Warhol” works. Tom is the original owner of a blue 1971 VW Bus. His body of work has been somewhat influenced by the size canvas that would fit in his bus.

Though Tom is retired, he does more than paint and travel the world. He handles support and promotion for "McCartney Mania," a live Beatles tribute band that plays on the Treasure Coast. Their next performance will be January 31st at Catering Revolution’s 440 Peacock venue in St Lucie West. It will be a live show of the Beatles’ Abbey Road and you can get tickets online at www.curtaincall.com or by calling 772-777-1956. Tom is also active with the Martin County Arts Council's Exhibit Committee and available to encourage his former students on their chosen life paths. If you are planning to come to the opening and had Mr. Prestopnik as a teacher, don't forget that you need to dress up — every opening is a big deal and an opportunity for everyone to polish their inner peacock — whether you are an artist or not.

Tom Prestopnik’s show will be on exhibit from the Art Walk opening on Wednesday, February 11th through Tuesday, March 3rd.

Sunrise Theatre Foundation Presents Nashville Recording Artist Tom Jackson

The Sunrise Theatre Foundation is proud to host the Cattleman’s Dance on Saturday, March 7th from 6 to 10 p.m. at Adams Ranch. In the past the St. Lucie County Cattlemen’s Association sponsored the Cattleman’s Dance and the Foundation is excited to bring this dance back to the community. All proceeds will benefit the Sunrise Theatre Foundation, which brings the performing arts and cultural enrichment to our local children and the Treasure Coast community.

Carter’s Grocery is providing a delicious BBQ meal, packed with true country cooking! Southern Eagle Distributing is providing the beer and Bottom’s Up Beverage is providing the wine and cash bar.

After eating their hearty meal, guests can enjoy the music of Nashville recording artist, Tom Jackson, and his band. They will provide a variety of county dance and toe-tapping music and the Wild Roses Country Dance Group will teach the guests line dancing and couples dancing.

Dust off your western boots and hat and join us for an evening of entertainment, food and fun under the stars for the low cost of $45 per ticket. Each ticket also includes two complimentary drinks.

Tickets are available through the Sunrise Theater Box Office on Second Street, Carter's Grocery on Orange Avenue or call (772) 359-8198 for other locations.


For more information about this event, to become a sponsor, or to learn more about the Sunrise Theatre Foundation’s role in the community, please call (772) 359-8198.

Disclaimer: This event is not tied to or endorsed by the St. Lucie County Cattlemen’s Association.
Yankees Want to Know “What is a Grit?”

by Kathleen Fredrick, Executive Director A.E. Backus Museum of Art

This time of year brings plenty of visitors from across the globe to visit the Backus Museum. One recent guest from New Hampshire was reading a poster promotion for the upcoming All You Should Eat Backus Brunch and Raffle. He asked me “what exactly is a grit?” I felt like I was in the movie My Cousin Vinny. I explained to him that grits were and that they were even tastier with cheese added, which is how we serve them at the Brunch. He took my word for it and bought two tickets to the brunch and three for the Backus Painting Raffle. Trust me, they will not be sorry. They may not win the painting, but they will certainly enjoy a gussied up Brunch.

The signature menu items for the Backus Brunch, held this year from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Sunday, March 1st, are fresh-fried mahi-mahi, creamy scrambled eggs laced with cream cheese and other secret ingredients, southern-style biscuits and cheese grits. Naturally, there are all manner of other brunch delights like sausage, pancakes, biscuits and sausage gravy (made from a secret Summerlin family recipe), fresh squeezed Nelson Family Farms orange juice, Plant City strawberries, etc. However, the Brunch is really all about fish, eggs, biscuits, and grits. The question begs to be asked. Why?

When A.E. “Bean” Backus was born in Fort Pierce in 1906, it was a sleepy little fishing village. Fish was the mainstay of the local diet and was eaten sometimes three meals a day. Fresh fish was a luxury as was fresh bacon. Salt pork was the staple and it is more for cooking than for eating. Keeping chickens was virtually universal so eggs were plentiful. Biscuits are well, just biscuits. And, as every Southerner already knows, it just ain’t breakfast or dinner without grits. So, historically a Florida Cracker breakfast would have been comprised of fish, eggs, biscuits and grits.

For the most part, A.E.'s kitchen bills and pantry inventories were far too small to pay the rent. He had to eat out as much as he could afford. One recent guest from a secret Summerlin family recipe), fresh squeezed Nelson Family Farms orange juice, Plant City strawberries, etc. How-ever, the Brunch is really all about fish, eggs, biscuits, and grits. The question begs to be asked. Why?

When A.E. “Bean” Backus was born in Fort Pierce in 1906, it was a sleepy little fishing village. Fish was the mainstay of the local diet and was eaten sometimes three meals a day. Fresh fish was a luxury as was fresh bacon. Salt pork was the staple and it is more for cooking than for eating. Keeping chickens was virtually universal so eggs were plentiful. Biscuits are well, just biscuits. And, as every Southerner already knows, it just ain’t breakfast or dinner without grits. So, historically a Florida Cracker breakfast would have been comprised of fish, eggs, biscuits and grits.

Since we are the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery, we want to stay true, or at least close, to the preferences of our founder. A.E. Backus was primarily a vegetarian; eschewing the consumption of any creature he could love. As Bean stated to me many times, “chickens and fish were too stupid to love,” so he ate them. Cows and pigs were more intelligent so he chose not to eat them. In fact, for a period of time he had a pet pig who lived in the Old Studio, then located at 103 Avenue C, an address that no longer exists, thanks to the construction of the now-demolished, but not forgotten, King Power Plant. Ah, but I digress.

The point remains that pretty much every day at 6:00 a.m., Backus ate breakfast with his commercial fishermen friends; first at Simonsen’s Restaurant (which is long gone but used to be located near the end of Fisherman’s Wharf) and then later at the Captain’s Galley (pretty much everyone knows where that is). Without fail, he ate fish, eggs, biscuits and grits. All of which explains why we serve those iconic Florida Cracker foods at our brunch. We serve all the other tasty goodies to keep our guests happy. Without all the extras it would not be a brunch but simply a breakfast and that is not nearly as much fun. We are expecting well over 500 to attend this shindig.

You too can enjoy an authentic Florida Cracker breakfast along with all the tasty extras on Sunday, March 1st from 9:30 to 12:30. Tickets are $12.50 in advance and $15 at the door. While you are enjoying your brunch, hopefully with a mimosa or Bloody Mary alongside, (not authentic but quite tasty – and Backus would have definitely approved) be sure to purchase a raffle ticket or perhaps six to win the glorious nocturne scene “Moonlight Sonata” painted by A.E. Backus in 1984. The painting is valued at $30,000 and the winning tickets will be drawn at 1:00 p.m., immediately following the Backus Brunch. Tickets for the raffle painting are $20 each or three tickets for $50 or six tickets for $100. Why not just buy six tickets? It supports a near charitable gesture in 1931 blossomed into a lifelong friendship and an impressive collection of Backus paintings. Dorothy’s third husband, Don Blanding; poet, artist and self-described vagabond was also pivotal in promoting Backus, during the early part of his career, through his weekly column in the News Tribune. For this once-in-a-lifetime exhibit, the heirs of Dorothy Binney Putnam have generously loaned the Museum selected works by A.E. Backus from their collections. Most have never been exhibited before and may never be again. The Exhibition is on display from January 16 to March 6, 2015.

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The exhibition, titled The Power of Patronage, features the private collection of the Binney Putnam Family. Eighty-three years in the making, and spanning five generations, the collection encompasses the entire breadth of Backus’ work. A.E. Backus was a prolific painter who knew great success during his lifetime. There are literally hundreds of thousands of talented artists that no one of us has ever heard of and never will hear of. Besides raw talent, what is it that separates those unsung artists from a lauded artist like A.E. Backus? Could it be patronage?

Backus’ first significant patron was Dorothy Binney Putnam, daughter of Edwin Binney, inventor of the Crayola Crayon and wife of famed publisher, G.P. Putnam. In 1931, Dorothy recognized Backus’ raw talent and launched his career by hosting his first art exhibit at her home located in the Casa Caprona Apartments, a development built by her father. What began as a regular hours: Wednesday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Noon to 4 p.m. The Museum is closed on Monday and Tuesday. For additional information, please contact the Museum at 772-465-0630. Raffle tickets may be purchased on the phone or online at www.backusmuseum.com.
Find that Special Gift for a Happy Valentine’s Day in Historic Downtown Fort Pierce

**Okeechobee Main Street to host 9th Annual Top of the Lake Art Fest**

Okeechobee Main Street will host the 9th Annual Top of the Lake Art Fest and Taste of Okeechobee event on February 7th & 8th. The event will be held at Flagler Park in downtown Okeechobee. The two-day event showcases fine artists and craft artisans from all over the state, as well as local and student artists. This juried art show presents a host of awards to many talented artists. The art fest will also include the 3rd Annual Top of the Lake Chalk Walk with street painting artists creating chalk masterpieces on Fourth Street.

The Taste of Okeechobee will be also be held on February 7th & 8th, 2015 and will begin immediately following our Top of the Lake Art Fest in the evening. The event will be from 5 – 9 p.m. with the focus being our downtown Park Street (Main Street) area, which features a variety of local shops and restaurants. Tickets for the Taste of Okeechobee event are $25 and include a passport, map, and 10 food vendor tickets that enable the patron to sample a plethora of offerings from local restaurants. Tickets are available at the Okeechobee Main Street office located at 55 S. Parrott Ave.

Entertainment, food and a children's art area will also be featured. For more information, please visit Okeechobee Main Street's website www.okeechobee-mainstreet.org and/or its Facebook page. Join Main Street in supporting the heart of the Okeechobee community, its downtown. All proceeds for ticket sales will benefit Okeechobee Main Street to promote, preserve and enhance the downtown community.
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The Midtown Men
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Scotty McCreery
Sun., Feb. 28
Nathan Carter

Ocean National Ballet Theatre’s
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Sun., Mar. 1
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Wed., Mar. 4
An Evening with Paul Anka
Thurs., Mar. 5
Night Fever: An Evening of the Bee Gees
Fri., Mar. 6
The National Touring Co.
ABBA MANIA
Fri., Mar. 13
The Bee Gees
Fri., Mar. 20
Jekyll & Hyde
Fri., Mar. 27
The National Touring Co.

One Night of Queen
Sat., Mar. 21
The American Idol Zeppelin
Thurs., Mar. 26
Jay Leno
A Beloved Show at 3PM
Sat., Mar. 28
The National Touring Co.
Flashdance:The Musical
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The Orchestra
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(772) 466-3880 or PamGillette@MainStreetFortPierce.org
LeGit Cuts Barbershop — Groomed to Perfection
by Michael Howard

As I sat and waited to talk with Jose Alejandro Ruiz, better known as “Git,” the young, stylish barber and new owner of LeGit Cuts Barbershop at 206 N. 2nd Street in downtown Fort Pierce, a customer came in and sat down beside me. He had a hot date that evening and had waited to the last minute to get a haircut. It seemed no other shop could accommodate him but they recommended he see “Git” at his new LeGit Cuts Barbershop. Getting referrals from other hairstylists or barbers is the ultimate compliment. This customer was very satisfied with his cut and plans to return to LeGit in the future. I can’t vouch for the results of his hot date, but at least he was well groomed for it. That’s the goal of Git, his motto being “Groomed to Perfection.” As I watched him work, I understood this completely.

Git just opened his new business on December 1st. It’s a comfortable and friendly place, with relaxed paint schemes, new bamboo flooring and very stylish in the classic, men’s barbershop fashion. It definitely has a manly focus. There are three wall-mounted TVs to enjoy while you wait, but no one waits long. With Git and his other barber, John Torres, hard at work, they are able to work through a steady flow of customers, giving each one special and personalized attention. Git and John carry a professional, dapper look about them, dressed with ties and vests and both immaculately groomed. Git sports a Peter Grim Fedora and with his curled handlebar mustache, looks ready to accompany “Pit Bull” on stage. I was impressed with his confidence, sense of style and panache and he seemed to have a natural affinity with his customers. I liked him right away and I liked his new, retro method of barbering. He offers the vintage “Full Gentleman’s Treatment” including traditional haircuts, hot towel treatments, shaves, eyebrows shaped, shampoos, beards trimmed and hair “designs.” Git is highly skilled with it all, especially clippers, scissors and razor.

Git credits his girlfriend Ms. Nichole Marie Parker with getting him focused and moving forward with his new business venture. She’s his mentor, helped him put it all together and moved the business to the next level. “As we start this journey together I have to acknowledge her,” he said with obvious emotion. “God blessed the day she was born and me the day I finally found her,” he said.

The youngest of four brothers of Cuban heritage, he grew up being called “midget,” a name that would eventually transform into “Git.” His mother worked hard raising four boys in Miami and eventually moved the family here when Git was fifteen. He’s been cutting hair for as long as he can remember, initially a sort of forced labor by older brothers. But his skill and talent grew and ignited a passion. He became the “go to” guy for haircuts and he liked making other people look and feel good about themselves, which in turn, made him feel good about himself. It was empowering.

He brings the “Miami Style,” a clean, neat approach that few barbers provide in this area. And he brings it backed with many years of hard-earned experience.

Git says it’s not about the money. “Standing and working for twelve hours a day, day after day, focused on doing your best for each customer, has got to be about more than just a pay check,” Git stated emphatically. “You gotta love it. It’s my passion. I can change someone’s life by improving their appearance, giving them motivation and confidence to succeed or to get a job. And, I’m a trend setter too. This empowers me and I love it.”

Soon you’ll see the classic barber pole in front of LeGit Cuts Barbershop and other vintage items men used to see in past years when it was fashionable, and a relaxing experience, to visit a man’s barbershop. This classic, and classy, type barbershop has fallen by the way side as the “fast food” style salons have taken over. But even so, this is a new found niche and a pampering place for men that is long overdue. LeGit Cuts Barbershop is a perfect fit for Fort Pierce — something old, yet something new; retro with style. Every customer I saw left Git with a big thanks, quick hug and fist bump. Check it out for yourself the next time you have a hot date. Git will get your appearance right. For the rest, you’re on your own. You’ll enjoy this barbering experience and like that other guy, you’ll quickly abandon your old barber.

LeGit Cuts Barbershop is located at 206 N. 2nd Street in Fort Pierce. Hours: Monday – Friday, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Saturday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sunday – Appointments only. Phone: 772-801-5382, email: ruiz13rb@yahoo.com, Instagram @LeGitCutsBarbershop.
According to one of the largest organizations for young people and social change, children who study music reap some serious benefits. At Fort Pierce Jazz and Blues Society, we know this and see it every day, but in case you wondered why music education is so important and why we work so hard to ensure that students continue to have opportunities to learn to play instruments, study and perform, here are a few reasons why:

Children who study a musical instrument are more likely to excel in all of their studies, work better in teams, have enhanced critical thinking skills, stay in school, and pursue further education.

Secondary students who participated in a music group at school reported the lowest lifetime and current use of all substances (tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs).

Schools with music programs have an estimated 90.2% graduation rate and 93.9% attendance rate compared to schools without music education, which average 72.9% graduation and 84.9% attendance.

Regardless of socioeconomic status or school district, students who participate in high-quality music programs score 22% better on English and 20% better on math standardized exams.

Children who study music tend to have larger vocabularies and more advanced reading skills than their peers who do not participate in music lessons.

Children with learning disabilities or dyslexia who tend to excel in all of their studies, work better in teams, have enhanced critical thinking skills, stay in school, and pursue further education.

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City of Fort Pierce Public Works to Launch “Do More Blue” Recycling Campaign

by Tysha Williams

The “Do More Blue” Recycling campaign aims to motivate residents to become “Stewards of Sustainability.” The campaign illustrates that recyclable materials can be given another life when someone chooses to recycle.

Recycling tonnage in Fort Pierce has spiked nearly 200% percent since single-stream recycling was introduced in July 2013 and 100% in participation. Public Works Manager, Mike Reals praises residents for their commitment to recycling. We will begin focusing on more education to push recycling to record levels in 2015.

Americans recycle an average of 1.5 pounds out of the 4.4 pounds of trash they produce daily, which totals more than 250 million tons of trash a year. On average, City of Fort Pierce residential customers recycle 100.6 tons monthly. Nearly two years in, single-stream looks like a success. Once upon a time, people sorted various kinds of recycled materials into separate bins. Participation in recycling, however, was low…people who otherwise might be inclined to recycle didn’t like the bother of sorting. Enter single stream — everything goes into one bin and the city has seen a notable increase in collections.

Deputy City Manager, Nick Mimms will challenge residents to increase recycling by 5 pounds each month to help reach the city’s 50 percent goal by 2016. With help from all residents, we can make meaningful progress. We invite everyone to take part in this initiative and rise to the challenge of Zero Waste.

To spur Fort Pierce residents into action, the Public Works Department partnered with Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful Committee to localize the campaign by using television, radio, online, outdoor events and social advertising across the city. In addition, the city will distribute the campaign’s educational materials to schools and other civic organizations to increase awareness about the benefits of recycling.

Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful Earns National Recognition

by Shyanne Helms

For the third consecutive year, Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful has been awarded the “Keep America Beautiful President’s Circle Award.” The President’s Circle Award recognizes exemplary performance made by partners of the nonprofit in building and sustaining vibrant communities.

In qualifying for a President’s Circle Award, Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful has met standards of merit by conducting an annual Community Appearance Index, calculating the affiliate’s cost/benefit ratio, and administering activities in the areas of litter prevention, recycling and waste reduction, and beautification and community greening.

About Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful. The mission of Keep Fort Pierce Beautiful is to enhance community awareness and responsibility for litter prevention, to beautify and improve the community, minimize waste, and to empower individuals to take greater responsibility for their environment.

Everyone wants to live, work and play in a clean and green community, and together we can make it happen. Getting involved is easy. Contact the Public Works Department for more information by calling 772-467-3821.

About Keep America Beautiful. Keep America Beautiful (KAB) is the nation’s leading nonprofit that brings people together to build and sustain vibrant communities. With a strong national network of 1,200 affiliates and partners including state recycling organizations, KAB works with millions of volunteers who take action in their communities. Keep America Beautiful offers programs and engages in public-private partnerships that help create clean, beautiful public places, reduce waste and increase recycling while educating generations of environmental stewards. KAB helps create communities that are socially connected, environmentally healthy and economically sound. For more information, visit kab.org.
Melanie’s Bracelets — A Special “Neach”

by Michael Howard

Being selected as one of only five “Emerging Artists” last summer by Art Mundo was a great honor but more importantly it was the simple catalyst for Melanie Neach to take her hobby to a more professional level. She was assigned Jack Shelton as her mentor and things took off from there. As one of the most gifted wood turners in the country, Jack has helped Melanie learn the woodturning process; how to...
A “Sunrise City Café” for the Sunrise City

by Michael Howard

I first saw Jaclyn Wheaton, the owner of the new Sunrise City Café at 204 Orange Ave., as she emerged from a cloud of dust swirling around inside her new café. Her husband, Devin, was the cause as he busily refurbished the interior, hard at work sanding, cutting, hammering and grinding. It was the noise and dust of progress and renovation. She was quick to smile and point out that what looked like chaos was simply the final touches for her big opening day in February. I was surprised that the owner of such a promising and unique café was so young. But as we talked, I saw her confidence and courage and realized she had the skill and experience to put her dream into motion and succeed. She earned her skills and experiences the hard way, coming up through the ranks. After graduating from John Carroll High School, she worked for several years at Domenick’s Corner Grill on Orange Avenue. She then attended the University of Central Florida where she earned her degree in Hospitality Management, specializing in Restaurant and Hotel Management. Then she took the skills she had learned in the business well, working her way up through every position from server to cook to food orders, etc. All in all, it was a thorough and invaluable ten-year apprenticeship. Now she’s ready to do it herself.

Jaclyn’s Sunrise City Café will serve a traditional and hearty breakfast and host a unique salad bar lunch. It’s not your typical self-serve salad bar but a new trend in serving fresh and healthy salads that’s springing up in Miami and California. Customers will simply walk through and choose from several selections of lettuce, meats, toppings and dressings. You pay for your fresh and fast selections by weight. Also available are homemade dressings and homemade soups. She’ll also serve gourmet sandwiches. Her intent is to help the working people of downtown Fort Pierce by offering a place to eat quickly but healthy. She will also have a catering service focused on delivering to those in the more immediate area. She intends to be flexible and accommodating to meet all needs, able to cater office parties, special events and rental space for after hour occasions. She hopes to eventually franchise and I have no doubt this will become a reality as well.

Jaclyn is especially proud of how she combines the old with the new to create a unique ambiance. She explained the uniqueness of Fort Pierce in that we are equal distance from the beach to the east and country to the west. She blends the two in her own unique style. A sailfish and old photos of Fort Pierce will adorn the walls. It’s old Fort Pierce with a new twist. She’s ready to do it herself. Jaclyn is especially proud of how she combines the old with the new to create a unique ambiance. She explained the uniqueness of Fort Pierce in that we are equal distance from the beach to the east and country to the west. She blends the two in her own unique style. A sailfish and old photos of Fort Pierce will adorn the walls. It’s old Fort Pierce with a new twist. She’s ready to do it herself.

Jaclyn’s Sunrise City Café is located at 204 Orange Ave. in Fort Pierce and is open for breakfast and lunch, Monday to Saturday, 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact them at 772-370-1715 or e-mail jaclwnwheaton16@hotmail.com.
Chocolate Turtle Cake

My late husband, Dan, got this recipe from a flight attendant during his early years working for United Airlines. I have made it so many times — my kids love it! Great for Valentine’s Day, who doesn’t LOVE chocolate and caramel.

1 14-ounce bag caramels, wrapping removed
1 small can evaporated milk
Cake
1 chocolate cake mix
1 box chocolate pudding
1½ cups water
3 eggs
½ cup butter
1 cup chocolate chips
½ cup chopped pecans

Melt caramels and milk in double boiler. Mix together cake ingredients. Pour ½ of the cake mix into bottom of greased and floured baking pan. Bake 375 degrees for 15 minutes.

Pour caramel mixture over cake mix. Sprinkle with chocolate chips and nuts. Pour the rest of the cake mix on top. Bake 25 minutes more. Cool in fridge.

Serves 12.

Winter Fishing in Fort Pierce

by Larry Benning

The Big “O” — The speckled perch (speck) are turning on. There have been good reports from Indian Prairie, Okee-Tan-tie and Henry’s. Night fishing is still the ticket but daytime jigging is picking up fast.

Nighttime fishing is producing limits in a couple of hours. Some of the fish are up to 16 inches. Don’t forget the by-catch of speckled, yellow belly and channel cats.

If the speck are not biting in the daytime, be sure to bring minnows and work the cat tails around the canal. Big Blue Gills are a good way to spend the time until later in the day when the speck may turn on again.

Insore — Inshore fishing has been a little slow and the weather hasn’t been any help either. Snook season is closed but they have moved in around the bridges, docks and channels. The only trout I have been hearing about have been out of Sebastian.

If you’re looking for a fight in the river try top-gaff Sail Cats. They are a good fight and edible. If you are going to target them, live bait is best but cut bait works well in the muddy water.

Offshore — Dolphins are on the move back south. The weed lines are broken up pretty bad right now but trolling in open water can also be productive.

Bottom fishing is a little slow in the 60 foot and less depth; however, 80 feet and more are producing limits. Please don’t forget to check your limits and seasonal regulations. A lot of these fish have continuously changing regulations, which are hard to keep up with. If you’re like me and have trouble remembering all the fishing regulations, load the Fish Rules App on your phone. It certainly helps me.

Good luck and catch-em up.

Tech Bytes: Installing Updates

by Michael Lewis, Mike’s Downtown Computer Repair

Operating systems and programs occasionally need updates to patch security flaws and/or to fix an issue found within software. We have lots of customers tell us they simply do not install updates because they are too afraid the update could be a virus. Not installing certain security updates can actually cause more of a security risk. However, there is an easy way to perform updates and to minimize the chance of getting a virus during the process.

If you are using a Microsoft Windows operating system you will need to run Windows Update. You can find it located under all programs or it is in your control panel (you may need to show all control panel items). Make sure to install all critical updates; the optional driver updates can improve performance of your computer as well. For Apple operating systems you would click the Apple icon at the top left of your screen, choose About This Mac, and then choose Software update. This will list any official updates for your Macintosh. You can also find updates to your individual software programs by going to their official website and searching for software updates.

Good luck and safe computing!

Mike’s Downtown Computer Repair is located at 207 Orange Ave. Suite E in Fort Pierce; phone (772) 448-8153, cell (772) 480-3427.
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