Stars Over St. Lucie
Marina Square, Fort Pierce

Family Fun All Weekend

Presented by:
Bluewater Grill, Cobb’s Landing & the Original Tiki, Budweiser, Chuck’s Seafood,
Clear Channel Communications, Fort Pierce Yacht Club, Hoskins, Turco, Lloyd & Lloyd,
Lawnwood Regional Medical Center, Ocean Chiropractic & Health,
St. Lucie News Tribune, Sunrise Ford, and Waste Management.

see page 6
Downtown Fort Pierce Honored with National Award

by Beth Williams

Last month was exciting for Main Street Fort Pierce! We had another reason to celebrate at our 23rd Annual Meeting due to the announcement that MSFP had earned the prestigious Great American Main Street Award. The award and all of the very positive media coverage both locally and nationally brought well-deserved attention to our beautiful downtown district and entire community.

I’ve had so many people send messages of congratulations on the GAMSA win. There is tremendous pride throughout the community for this accomplishment, and there should be! The award underscores how hard people have worked to make improvements and ensure a healthy downtown. The award belongs to everyone who has been a part of MSFP for the last 23 years. From the first Friday Fest that was basically a group of Fort Pierce supporters standing around a keg and grill on Second Street, to the completion of renovations to historic buildings like the Sunrise Theatre, thousands of people have played a role in the success that led to this incredible recognition.

Our next big thing to focus on is the Annual Reverse Raffle in August. Who wouldn’t want to be a part of this fun event that always delivers on being one of the best local events of the year? If you have attended before, then you know you want to get your tickets early to ensure you get in on all of the fun. Bring friends and family to help us support the many activities and projects MSFP delivers to bring people downtown, enhance and preserve our historic character, and boost our local economy.

I also want to encourage everyone to support our downtown businesses this summer. With our winter friends gone, it’s important for “locals” to shop, dine, and play in our own community to help businesses during the slower season.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of MSFP, I want to invite you to be an active member and volunteer with this great organization. Our successes are based on the generosity and energy of donors, members, sponsors, and volunteers. Join today to keep the momentum going for our great American main street!
Main Street Fort Pierce 17th Annual Reverse Raffle
Double D … Denim & Diamonds
Saturday, August 20, 2011 at Pelican Yacht Club,
6:00 to 11:00 p.m. Tickets go on sale 7/15/2011.
The label reads “Unwined” embodies a state of mind that all can attain, where everything is as it should be, honest, serene and simplified. From white sands to white tablecloths, you’ll find a casual purity that is amplified. From white sands to white tablecloths, you’ll find a casual purity that is completely enjoyable.”
FRIDAY FEST kicks off the July 4th weekend on July 1st from 5:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Just like Cheers, Friday Fest is the place where “everyone knows your name.” Come down and meet your family, friends, and co-workers at the longest running street festival on the Treasure Coast (23 years to be exact).

On Saturday morning, bring your appetite and recyclable grocery bags to the DOWNTOWN FORT PIERCE FARMER’S MARKET. The view, the entertainment, and the variety of vendors make Fort Pierce’s market one of the best in the country. From fresh vegetables to homemade soaps, everything bought helps support local and independent businesses.

Downtown Fort Pierce is the Place To Be for the July 4th Weekend

The annual STARS OVER ST. LUCIE 4TH OF JULY FESTIVAL will be held on Monday, July 4th at the City of Fort Pierce’s Marina Square. STARS OVER ST. LUCIE will begin at 5:30 p.m. and the band Category 5 & Storm Horns will entertain crowds until the fireworks begin at approximately 9:15 p.m. This year’s festivities will kick off with live entertainment, delicious food, arts & crafts, children’s activities, and non-stop family fun. Come early to find your spot to watch the fireworks shine bright over the beautiful Indian River.

Main Street Fort Pierce would like to thank the law firm of Hoskins, Turco, Lloyd & Lloyd for sponsoring the STARS OVER ST. LUCIE Fireworks Show. Without businesses like Hoskins, Turco, Lloyd, & Lloyd’s, STARS OVER ST. LUCIE and other free community events would not be possible. Their commitment to the Treasure Coast community is evident with its sponsorship of this very patriotic event. This is the second consecutive year that Hoskins, Turco,
Main Street Summer Quarterly Meeting

Have you ever wanted to know what it takes to restore a historic building? That was the theme of the summer Main Street State Quarterly meeting hosted by Main Street Fort Pierce last month at the restored Historic City Hall. The quarterly meeting brought over 50 Main Street managers and board members from all over the state to attend the quarterly meeting. Mayor Bob Benton was on hand to welcome the Main Street attendees to Fort Pierce and Doris Tillman began the meeting. The goal of the sessions was to show the steps needed to renovate a historic building and all the people you need to make your renovation a success.

Joe Lelonek and Vivian Browning spoke about the existing building development, while Eddie Becht and Pat Murphy spoke on the purchasing and real estate transaction. We heard perspectives from architect, Raul O’Campo; engineer, Bill Blazak; Teresa Lamar-Sarno from the CRA; David Webb from 1st United Bank of Vero Beach; and David Carlin from the Planning and Zoning Department City of Fort Pierce.

Ramon Triage and Building Inspector Mark Meyers talked to the group about the codes and rules needed to take on a historic project.

Continued on page 11…
Picture Perfect Closes Its Doors in Downtown Fort Pierce

by Pam Gillette

After 30 years, Loretta Northrop has decided to close the doors, do a little fishing, finish some home projects, and travel with her mother. Her time at Picture Perfect has been a wonderful experience and a part of her life she will always remember.

Loretta and her husband moved to Port Salerno in the 1970s from Winston Salem, North Carolina. They worked together selling real estate, until Loretta decided to go to work for Frank's Hang Up in Vero Beach. Frank thought it would be a good idea to expand the business to Fort Pierce so he opened a shop on Okeechobee Road. After a short time, he realized that owning two stores was not what he wanted and offered the store to Loretta. On January 1, 1985 Picture Perfect was born and in June of 1997, she moved the store to Downtown Fort Pierce. Loretta smiles as she remembers, "It was the hottest month in the history of the world, but we were glad we made the move."

Downtown Fort Pierce was the perfect spot for Loretta. Over the years, she has used her knowledge of framing, the proper handling of art and her professionalism to educate the public.
Fort Pierce and Its Connection to the Civil War
by Jean Ellen Wilson

The year 2011 is the 150th anniversary year of the American Civil War. St. Lucie County, in 1861 part of Brevard County, was far from the action although blockade runners occasionally ran into the lagoon eluding federal gunboats patrolling offshore.

The same tragic choices that separated some families into blue and grey uniforms set men who had once fished together at the lonely outpost that was Fort Pierce during the Seminole War had to make hard decisions when Civil War broke out. For some, like William Tecumseh Sherman, it was the War of the Rebellion and he chose the Union. For others, like Joseph E. Johnston who had graduated from West Point with Robert E. Lee, it was the War Between the States, and he joined the Confederate Army.

In October of 1840, when Lt. Sherman arrived at Fort Pierce, the possibility of his fellow West Pointers being in his gun sights was unthinkable.

Young Sherman described his arrival thusly: “About two miles from the Young, we emerged into the lagoon, a broad expanse of shallow water that lies parallel with the coast, separated from it by a narrow strip of sand, backed by a continuous series of islands and promontories, covered with a dense growth of mangrove and saw-palmetto. Pulling across this lagoon, in about three more miles, we approached the lights of Fort Pierce . . . we walked up a steep sand-bluff on which the fort was situated, and across the parade-ground to the officers’ quarters. These were six or seven log-houses, thatched with palmetto-leaves, built on high posts, with a porch in front, facing the water.”

In 1838, Lt. John Bankhead Magruder was the first officer to land at Fort Pierce, commanding a mixed force of Navy and Army personnel. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he infamously surrendered all posts to the Confederate Army, getting the worst of it when Joe Johnston took charge of the small force of regulars, positioning the troops to guard the retreat of the beleaguered seamen at the Battle of Loxahatchee on January 14th.

The Civil War was a madhouse; getting the worst of it when Joe Johnston took charge of the small force of regulars, positioning the troops to guard the retreat of the beleaguered seamen at the Battle of Loxahatchee on January 14th.

Johnston became the highest ranking officer in the United States Army to leave that service, April 22, 1861, in loyalty to his native Virginia. He held many high positions with the Confederate Army, commanding the Army of the Shenandoah and the Army of the West. He attempted to defend Jackson, Mississippi from his old friend Sherman’s advance.

Daniel Emanuel Twiggs was the one officer who fought in all three Seminole wars. He laid over at Ft. Pierce on a march from Fort Melbourne (Sanford) to New River in 1838. Later, as commander of United States forces in Texas at the outbreak of the Civil War, he infamously surrendered all posts to the Confederacy on February 18, 1861.

When his native Virginia seceded, he resigned his commission. He commanded the troops that held McClellan on the peninsula but his talents were not appreciated by Jeff Davis and he was eventually posted to Texas. After the war, he sojourned to Mexico with defeated Confederates.

Joseph Hooker was another West Pointer who did duty at Fort Pierce. His career during Union service in the War of Northern Secession was controversial. His man had a bad reputation for their purported behavior that popularized the word “hooker” from the nature of a certain element in the Brigadier General’s camp followers.

There were other combatants in the War of the Rebellion who had been comrades in the Seminole War service, including Abner Doubleday, A. P. Hill, and Braxton Bragg, who were stationed at Fort Capron, the fort established in old St. Lucie in the 1850s.
Jazz Society Awards Music Scholarships
by Gene Hull

The Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society awarded six $1,000 music scholarships to area high school seniors. The performance presentation was made Tuesday, May 24 at the Sunrise Theatre’s Black Box venue before a live audience.

Over a period of weeks, sixteen high school musicians from Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River Counties competed for the scholarships. Each was required to perform two songs with the Jazz Society’s professional Jazz Ensemble, submit an essay about their qualifications and be recommended by their high school band director.

At the conclusion of elimination weeks, the six winners performed again with the Jazz Ensemble before a capacity crowd at the Black Box Theatre. They were each awarded $1,000 to be used to further their music studies. Each winner also received an engraved trophy and membership in the Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society.

St. Lucie County Commissioner, Chris Dzadovsky, addressed the audience about the importance of music in the high school curriculum and the valuable contribution the Arts make in attracting new business and industries to any area.

Awards were presented by Fort Pierce Jazz & Blues Society President, Don Bestor, Vice President, Chris Hulka, Mia Batalini, and Board Members: Chauncey Mays, Gene Hull, Stix Nickson, Bob Sagnella, and Bill Genson.

Scholarship Winners with Congratulations Cake: (Left to right) Jake Popple, Nancy Carvajal, Maya Ratsey, Rianna Elliott, Robert Geniti, and Mary Kelly.

Scholarship Winners with Congratulations Cake: (Left to right) Chris Hulka, FPJ & BS Vice-President, Mary Kelly, Robert Geniti, Rianna Elliott, Al Hager, Scholarship Chairman, Maya Ratsey, Jake Popple, Nancy Carvajal, and Don Bestor, Jr., FPJ & BS President.

The winners were:
Vocalist, Nancy Carvajal, Indian River Charter High School
Vocalist, Rianna Elliott, Treasure Coast High School
Guitarist, Robert Geniti, Treasure Coast High School
Trombonist, Mary Kelly, Jensen Beach High School
Percussionist, Jake Popple, Jensen Beach High School
Guitarist, Maya Ratsey, Indian River Charter High School
Main Street Fort Pierce Celebrates the Great American Main Street Award

by Pam Gillette

On Wednesday, June 1, Main Street Fort Pierce was proud to present the Great American Main Street Award to our dedicated members, volunteers and supporters at the 2011 Main Street Fort Pierce Annual Board Meeting. The celebration kicked off with music by “The Big Coque Band,” followed by Beth Williams, president of Main Street Fort Pierce calling the meeting to order.

Beth Williams thanked the people in attendance for their continued support of Main Street. This award is not just about Main Street. This award is for the entire community; for without your volunteerism, your commitment to our projects, and your financial support, we would not live in such a beautiful city or have been able to obtain this award.” After thanking everyone, Beth Williams introduced the 2011-2012 Main Street Board of Directors and she called for a vote to swear in the new Board of Directors.

Mayor Bob Benton then expressed his gratitude to Main Street Fort Pierce for their outstanding work over the past 23 years and presented Doris Tillman with a key to the city. The plaque read: Doris D. Tillman Manager, Main Street Fort Pierce, Inc., 1990 – 2011, For Outstanding Vision, Dedication, & Commitment to Excellence in the City of Fort Pierce. Doris Tillman accepted the plaque and challenged those in attendance to each spend $60 in a downtown business in celebration of the award and her upcoming birthday.

Main Street Fort Pierce would like to thank Mayor Bob Benton and the City of Fort Pierce for attending the meeting. We would also like to thank the “Big Coque Band” for the music at the Annual Meeting, Uncle Carlos Gelato for supplying the gelato, St. Lucie Medical Center for supplying the cake and Budweiser for the “Unwined” wine tasting after the meeting.

The celebration continued on Friday, June 3, as Main Street Fort Pierce, Budweiser and the St. Lucie News Tribune shared the Great American Main Street Award with the entire community at Friday Fest. Mayor Bob Benton kicked off Friday Fest at 5:30 p.m. and at 7:30 p.m., Jeff Brown of Clear Channel Communications called to the stage Main Street Board Members and staff, Chief Sean Baldwin of the Fort Pierce Police Department and Lisa Mowers of Budweiser, our yearly sponsor of Friday Fest, for a toast to the award. It was a beautiful night to celebrate at Marina Square with the sounds of OPM and the community coming together to share this award.

A community coming together is what it takes to make our city great. The volunteers, members and business partners know this. That is why our downtown has been so successful and is a winner of the Great American Main Street Award. Since the announcement of this award even more people know that Fort Pierce is one of the best cities in the nation. This is what residents of Fort Pierce have known all along.

See more photos pages 18, 19 …
**Mushrooms at the Market**

by Linda Hudson, Chair, Downtown Farmers Market of Fort Pierce, Inc.

A love of mushrooms and a happy happenstance of living in the right place at the right time brought Mike Johnson to his current passion of growing mushrooms on the Treasure Coast and selling them to patrons of the Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce. Mike was living in Occidental, California, when he started learning to grow gourmet and medicinal mushrooms as the solo employee of a local mushroom farmer. Mike began to learn from the experts on mycology, the study of fungi, about growing mushrooms. Since 1992, Mike has lived in the Treasure Coast area and grown mushrooms, but in 2010 his commercial venture became a reality.

Mike Johnson grows shitake mushrooms, using the log technique, and oyster mushrooms, using the wheat straw method. He plans on adding other varieties in the future. Originally, he grew mushrooms to supply to the finer dining establishments in the area, but eventually began to sell at the Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce. “My favorite market is the Fort Pierce market,” say Mike. “The ambiance of the river front and the well-organized combination of the craft market in its own and close proximity to the farmers market is well planted, in my opinion. People come from a fair distance because the Market is open year-round and has developed a reputation for quality.”

Patrons can learn about growing or cooking mushrooms or order Shitake or oyster mushrooms from www.23shrooms.com. Check out the website for mushroom recipes and how to grow your own. Mike encourages anyone who wants to grow their own mushrooms, to write or call for help; e-mail Mike at mike@23shrooms.com or call 772-388-2468. Find Mike at the Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce Saturdays, from 8 a.m. to Noon, at Marina Square, between the library and the marina. Find the Market on Facebook or on the web, www.ftpiercefarmersmarket.com or call 772-940-1145.

**Good Dog Bakery: 100% Natural Treats and Biscuits**

by Linda Hudson, Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce, Chair

In 2007, Fred Kugel decided that dogs deserved people quality food and began making 100% natural dog biscuits and treats. Like most pet owners, he was appalled when he discovered that most commercial dog food and dog treats are more noxious than nutritious. After much research into pet nutrition, he decided that he would raise the standard for dog treats. Dakota, Fred’s 12-year-old Chocolate Lab never misses an opportunity to test a new recipe.

Good Dog Bakery never uses artificial ingredients, by-products, fillers, food coloring, salt, sugar or soy in our biscuits, and they are always corn and wheat free! With more than a dozen flavors to choose from, Fred says dog lovers always find the right ones for their dog.

A marketing and business school graduate, Fred left New England winters behind and settled on the Treasure Coast. Good Dog Bakery is a regular vendor at other markets in the area. But the Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce is special because the “customers are extremely loyal and appreciative,” and “Marina Square on the Indian River is spectacular.” Fred also likes the diversity of vendors.

Good Dog Bakery regularly makes donations to and supports local humane societies, animal welfare organizations and service dog training centers.

Customers can order from the website at: www.GoodDogBakery.net. In addition, Good Dog Bakery 100% all natural biscuits and treats are available at select veterinarians and groomers shops on the Treasure Coast. Veterinarians can call 772-345-2500 or e-mail BiscuitBaker@GoodDogBakery.net to stock Good Dog Biscuits and Treats.

Find Good Dog Bakery on Facebook and every Saturday at the Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce, 8 a.m. to Noon, at Marina Square, Historic Downtown Fort Pierce, between the library and the marina, at the waterfront. Find the Farmers’ Market on the web at http://www.ftpiercefarmersmarket.com/ and on Facebook or call Market Manager, 772-940-1145.
Healthy Breakfast

Aunti Mame’s Granola

This recipe comes from a personal chef in California. This granola is over-the-top delicious.

4 cups of old fashioned Rolled Oats
1 can of Coconut Milk
½ cup sugar free juice (orange, berry, cranberry)
½ cup Maple Syrup or Honey
2 teaspoons of Garam Masala (see note)

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Combine all ingredients in a mixing bowl and blend well. Spread oat mixture on a cookie tray. Bake tossing often, just until lightly crunchy until golden, about 1 hour. Cool before added the fruit and nuts.

1 cup toasted nuts, chopped (pepitas, pecans, walnuts, sesame seeds, almonds)
1 cup dried fruit, chopped (prunes, dates, apples, berries, apricots)
¼ cup coconut flakes (optional)

Mix baked oats with fruit and nuts. Refrigerate until ready to eat. Makes 12 ½-cup servings, approximately 225 calories.

Note: Garam Masala is a blend of ground spices common in North Indian and other South Asian cuisines. The ingredients include peppercorns, cloves, malabar, mace, cumin, cinnamon, cardamom, nutmeg, star anise, and coriander.

Fruit Smoothie

My daughter, Kristen, has a smoothie every morning. It’s a healthy breakfast and very filling.

1 cup non fat yogurt
½ cup sugar free juice (orange, berry)
1 cup frozen mixed fruit (berries, stone fruit)

Place all ingredients into a blender and mix for 2 minutes. Pour into a glass and serve. Serves 1, approximately 300 calories.
Artichoke & Bacon Dip

This is one of the best artichoke dips I’ve ever had. I served it at a Main Street function and was asked numerous times for the recipe. So, here it is!

½ pound Swiss cheese
½ pound bacon, fried & crumbled
2 6½-ounce jars marinated artichoke hearts, drained & chopped
¼ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
1 loaf round bread

Mix all dip ingredients together. Put in a round of hollowed round bread. Wrap in tin foil.

Bake at 450 degrees for 45 60 minutes. Serve with crackers or torn bread. Serves 10 – 12.
Paranormal Team Explores the Platts-Backus House

by Tamara Dourney

The Platts-Backus house has long been a cornerstone of our community. Originally built in 1896 by Dr. Clyde Philip (CP) Platts, the area's first full-time doctor, the two story home also played host to a thriving artistic community throughout its period as A.E. Backus' residence and studio. That storied past is exactly what led our local paranormal investigation group, the G.R.I.M. Society, to turn their attention to the building that now houses the offices of Main Street Fort Pierce.

Founded in 2007 by my husband James and I, the G.R.I.M. Society is comprised of a small team of researchers operating with the mission of scientifically exploring claims of the paranormal. We do this through the documentation and recording of data which we then share with the community at large. The G.R.I.M. Society is not a group of ‘ghost hunters’ looking for a thrill; instead, we hope to document enough of the often-reported yet inexplicable occurrences that are labeled as paranormal to provide at least a glimpse into the origins of these phenomena. The nature of our investigative strategy, which focuses on buildings with an extensive history, made the Platts-Backus house an ideal location for study.

Prior to the investigation, I'd heard the occasional reference to odd activity in the building, but couldn't find any real accounts of the paranormal. Naturally, I asked my husband if he knew of any.

“I'd heard rumors several years ago about strange footsteps and sounds in the building, but it's been so long ago that I don't remember when, where or who told me. I think I just filed it away in the back of my head until the opportunity came up.”

The quiet nature of the building provided a wonderful chance for us to bring our two children, Samantha and James, along on an investigation. They rounded out our team of four and we spent the night prowling the darkened halls of the Platts-Backus house. Without any specific area of the building to target, we decided to set up an array of video cameras and audio recording equipment to cover the major traffic areas, then carried additional cameras and environmental data loggers as we moved through the site.

“Our time in the house was seemingly quiet, with only the occasional sense of activity. The activity that was experienced was completely auditory—the sound of footsteps or the occasional hint of music playing. We continually checked the environment noting that there were no fluctuations in temperature or in the electromagnetic field. After our allotted time was up, we headed home and got some rest. We knew we'd need it in order to review the data we'd collected; in total, there were seven hours of video recordings, six hours worth of audio and numerous still pictures that required sifting through.”

The audio and video collected that night turned up some interesting results, some of which appear to corroborate the personal experiences previously reported. Several times during the night, various members of the group heard the faint sound of music in different locations. During the investigation, a camera placed in the attic recorded what sounds to be faint music coming from somewhere in the distance. Another example of this dual documentation comes when all four of us are standing on the upstairs landing; while there, we heard what sounds like several voices in conversation coming from downstairs, a sound that seems to be captured by the recording equipment.

“Samantha Dourney, junior investigator for The G.R.I.M. Society, entering the Platts-Backus house during the recent paranormal investigation.”

Continued on page 28 …
Summer on the Water

by Dan Desmond

Our beautiful spring weather has arrived. Many days this time of year offer smooth, glassy conditions on the Indian River Lagoon and very tame conditions on the ocean. It’s a great time of year to get out on the water, unwind, and bring home a fresh seafood dinner. There’s always action to be had, it’s just a matter of doing a little checking around in order to be successful. Your local tackle shops and marinas are a great source of information and are always willing to help with advice on where to go and what’s biting.

For those who might want to step it up a notch and maybe even win a prize there are a number of summer fishing tournaments and events that are fun for both the participants and observers. Many tournaments have a wide variety of participants and winners, or not, you’re sure to have a great time competing. If you’re interested you can get more information on any of these events by going to www.MarineCleanupInitiativeInc.org and sign up, or call Captain Don at 772-528-0675.

The popular Hibiscus Tournament benefits the Hibiscus Children’s Center which is well known for its work with disadvantaged children in our area. The Florida Law Enforcement Tournament scheduled for June 25th should also be complete.

Upcoming tournaments include the very popular Hibiscus Tournament, the Ska Saltwater Classic and the Hibiscus Tournament, H Club Fishing Tournament on September 3rd and 4th. For most tournaments, weigh-ins and award ceremonies are open to the public and even if you don’t care to enter an event they provide an opportunity to view some incredible catches or maybe cheer on your favorite contestant.

Whether you want to participate and try your hand as an entrant, or just come out and watch the amazing catches that come from our local waters the summer tournament schedule offers a little something for everyone. Come out and experience the fun and camaraderie our beautiful coastal resources have to offer.

Fort Pierce Inlet Pier Cleanup

On Saturday, June 4th the Marine Cleanup Initiative, Inc., (MCI) with 16 volunteer divers, three captains and their vessels, cleared less than 10% of the debris from under the waters below the fishing catwalk on the northwest side of the South Causeway. Over 1,600 pounds of mid to large-sized debris was cleared before strong winds and shift in current ended the dive. “If trash were treasure, we brought in some booby today,” said Captain Voss, Operations Director for MCI. Divers brought up 20 casting nets, several anchors, 100’ of chain and rope, numerous lures, fishing gear and miscellaneous debris. Four of the nets were so large it took a come-along to pull them onto the boat.

This collection brought the 10-year total of debris removal by Marine Cleanup Initiative to nearly 100 tons. “We are making great strides in getting this under control,” said Voss. “Every piling and post connected to a fishing pier is covered with nets upon nets and there are crabs, fish and other marine life trapped in each one. It is our mission to release these animals and remove this debris from our estuary, inlets and near shore reefs.”

Underwater cleanup continues throughout the summer along the Treasure Coast. For more information go to www.MarineCleanupInitiativeInc.org and sign up, or call Captain Don at 772-528-0675.

Volunteer divers, George McDaniel & Cris Gosse unload casting nets cleared from under a local fishing pier.

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In addition to these two incidents, we found odd sounds on the recordings that did not match any of the participants or observers. Many recordings have a wide variety of participants and their vessels, cleared less than 10% of the debris from under the waters below the fishing catwalk on the northwest side of the South Causeway. Over 1,600 pounds of mid to large-sized debris was cleared before strong winds and shift in current ended the dive. “If trash were treasure, we brought in some booby today,” said Captain Voss, Operations Director for MCI. Divers brought up 20 casting nets, several anchors, 100’ of chain and rope, numerous lures, fishing gear and miscellaneous debris. Four of the nets were so large it took a come-along to pull them onto the boat.

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Volunteer divers, George McDaniel & Cris Gosse unload casting nets cleared from under a local fishing pier.
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