VISIT FLORIDA™ Visits Fort Pierce
See story on page 7
I’m excited about the opportunity to serve as President of Main Street Fort Pierce this year. Having been on the board for the last decade, I know the incredible impact this organization has and will continue to have on our historic downtown. Main Street Fort Pierce is blessed with a fantastic staff and a dedicated Board of Directors who truly take to heart the mission of this organization.

At our Annual Meeting in May, we celebrated the partnerships that have resulted in so many successes in our community. Whether with the city or county, non-profits or local businesses, we have enjoyed strong support in our efforts to revitalize, renovate, and restructure downtown assets to promote a healthier city. Through events and marketing, we’ve helped bring thousands of residents and visitors to our downtown who boost our businesses and overall economy. Our volunteers have provided hands-on help to ensure every project we take on is beneficial, and our sponsors and members have been the financial back-bone to allow us to move forward. On behalf of the Board, I want to thank you all for your continued support!

This year, more than ever, we need to grow our base of members and business sponsors. With reductions in public funding, we will need to be creative and focused to ensure that Main Street Fort Pierce doesn’t miss a beat as we continue the work begun over 20 years ago to make our downtown THE destination for shopping, entertainment, and business. If you are not a member, I urge you to consider joining today. For as little as $25 a year, you can make your mark on our downtown by helping to fund the vital efforts of this organization. If you are already a member, talk to a friend about the importance of joining. A membership application is provided in the Focus. Feel free to make many copies to hand out to prospective members!

I’ve been involved with many organizations, but none has won my heart the way Main Street has. It’s the reason I’m still involved. If you don’t know the organization well, I encourage you to get involved in one of the many activities and events we produce. You’ll be hooked from the start. The people are fun and enthusiastic. The events are first-class. And the personal satisfaction you’ll get from knowing you are making a difference in our community is the big door prize!

We have a great year planned and I look forward to working with our long-time supporters as well as those of you who decide to make this the year you get involved with Main Street Fort Pierce!
Dine, Shop and Enjoy Beautiful, Historic, Downtown Fort Pierce!

**Calendar**

**Tuesday, June 1:** Coffee with the Merchant — Speaker, Fort Pierce Police Department; Sunrise Theatre, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.; Main Street Fort Pierce, 466-3880, www.mainstreetfortpierce.org.

**Friday, June 4:** Friday Fest — Come celebrate Juneteenth with Ossie Wright and the Groove Division Band; 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Main Street Fort Pierce, 466-3880, www.mainstreetfortpierce.org.

**Wednesday, June 9:** ARTWALK — 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 461-0655, www.fortpiercefl.com.

**Friday, June 11:** Classic Car Cruise-In — 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**Wednesday, June 16:** ARTWALK — 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 461-0655, www.fortpiercefl.com.

**Friday, June 18:** Classic Car Cruise-In — 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**Art Mundo Open Studio —** Wednesdays, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; The ArtBank at 111 Orange Avenue, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**Art Mundo Open Studio —** Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**May 19 to June 26:** The Eye of the Camera — Juried Photography Show. Open to both amateur and professional photographers, this exhibit is sure to bring fierce competition. Applications are available at the museum, Jiffy Photo, and on the web at www.backusgallery.com.

**March 27 to May 3:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**May 29:** The Eye of the Camera — Juried Photography Show. Open to both amateur and professional photographers, this exhibit is sure to bring fierce competition. Applications are available at the museum, Jiffy Photo, and on the web at www.backusgallery.com.

**June 4 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Wednesdays, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; The ArtBank at 111 Orange Avenue, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 4 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 11 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Wednesdays, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; The ArtBank at 111 Orange Avenue, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 11 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 18 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Wednesdays, 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; The ArtBank at 111 Orange Avenue, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 18 to June 26:** Art Mundo Open Studio — Thursdays, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**June 25:** Classic Car Cruise-In — 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**Wednesday, June 27:** ARTWALK — 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 461-0655, www.fortpiercefl.com.

**Friday, June 29:** Classic Car Cruise-In — 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.; Downtown Business Association, 465-7080, www.shopfortpierce.org.

**Tuesday, June 30:** Coffee with the Merchant — Speaker, Ft. Pierce Police Athletic League; Sunrise Theatre, 8:30 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.; Main Street Fort Pierce, 466-3880, www.mainstreetfortpierce.org.
Visit Florida™ is Helping Floridians Share A Little Sunshine
by Hilda S. Mitrani

Visit Florida, the state’s official source for tourism information, uses various strategies for promoting the Sunshine State. Through the Florida Insiders program, eight bloggers (like me) publish articles and photos and create videos highlighting some of Florida’s interesting spots.

We cover topics including family, luxury, the arts, fishing, nature, adventure, golf, family, and more. Based on our knowledge of the state, we also suggest editorial content for the website.

That’s how I came to film a video about Main Street Fort Pierce in April that is now on www.VisitFlorida.com actively promoting this destination.

Visit Florida and all of the Insiders are also using Facebook and Twitter to spread news about our state.

Another tool is the “Share a Little Sunshine” campaign that helps make it even easier to lure friends down to Florida. “Share a Little Sunshine” offers Floridians a variety of jazzy video messages with homespun images or vintage-style postcards to invite friends and loved ones to visit the Sunshine State.

Both the sender and the recipient receive benefits. For instance, residents who send an invitation are entered into a contest for a seven-day vacation or a Mazda Miata. Recipients get a variety of discounts to use on their trip to the Sunshine State.

All of us know the vital role that tourism plays in Florida’s economy. It’s our largest industry, and more than 80 million visitors annual spend over $60 billion and generate 21% of our sales tax revenues. Tourism also employs more than one million residents.

Main Street Fort Pierce is a great example of the work being done throughout our state to make it better for residents, and the tourists who visit for a dose of our sunshine, beaches, history and Florida attractions.

St. Lucie County Awards Tourism Development Council Grants
by Debra Magrann

Illumination is rising on the Sunrise City with the assistance of our tourism industry.

The A. E. Backus Museum and Gallery and Heathcote Botanical Gardens were awarded $308,000 and $148,000, respectively, from the St. Lucie County Tourism Development Council (TDC) and Board of County Commissioners in March. The grants were decided on factors such as project readiness, matching funds, scope of work and tourism development. These funds will be used for capital improvements on future expansion projects for the popular attractions.

The Backus Museum will begin its expansion sometime in the coming weeks. The long-awaited plans have been anticipated to give the site a renewed perspective and range of vision in the art world. Just over the horizon is a new addition to the existing building which will be a wing devoted to the legacy that Beanie Backus left to Fort Pierce, which will also be a venue for the history of his proteges, the Highwaymen.

What makes this expansion project notable is the opportunity to transition from a regional gallery to fully-accredited, world-class museum status. Backus is already known as a venue for nationally-acclaimed touring exhibitions that have ranged from Ansel Adams to the National Geographic Society.

“The difference between being a museum and a gallery is that we have a permanent collection of more than 100 works. We have been very fortunate because people have donated paintings. Our supporters knew Beanie and many families have bequeathed his works to us. Beyond that, the art includes all the Indian River school of artists. The building [new addition] will be a showcase for the art,” said Robin Dannahower, marketing director for the museum.

Albert Ernest Backus is only 1 of 44 painters inducted into the Florida Hall of Fame, an honor and distinction in the state held by Beanies contemporaries such as Ernest Hemmingway, Zora Neale Hurston, Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings and Ray Charles. The permanent collection contains two prized pieces: the earliest known Backus, painted in 1918 when he was 12...

Continued on page 12 …
Main Street Fort Pierce Revives Backus’s Bathtub

By Alli Langley

Even Beanie’s bathtub will be a work of art. As part of Main Street Fort Pierce’s renovation of the house where artist A.E. “Beanie” Backus lived and worked, local artist, Anita Prentice, revitalized his bathtub with a mosaic. The tub will be placed in a courtyard in front of the Backus House, which Main Street Fort Pierce bought in 2005 and currently occupies.

Prentice donated 30 to 40 hours of labor and covered the outside of the tub with her stained-glass mosaic. “This has been a long, hot bath,” she joked and noted it was the first time she had to create a piece upside down. Prentice said she liked the idea of adding her own piece of history to an already historic object. “I’m attracted to something with a story … and I bet this tub has many stories,” she said. “If this tub could talk …”

When describing her artwork, Prentice said, “Beanie was known for his beautiful skies, so I thought I’d put the pink skies in, and the motif of the palm trees because he did landscapes, and the paintbrushes because he was an artist.”

She used tiles from a pool as well as glass from an old chandelier. “It’s adding to history, but it’s also green, to utilize something that’s already there, I like that kind of thought.”

Prentice met Backus in the late 1980s through a group of his students and friends. Backus served as a mentor for many of these kids, now known as the Backus Brats. Kathleen Fredrick, a Backus Brat and current director of the A.E. Backus Museum & Gallery, remembered that Backus never put the bathtub inside. Fredrick said the tub was originally from the Old Fort Pierce Hotel. Backus buried the tub in his yard and used it as a fishpond. Birds would eat the fish and the tub would fill with leaves. Then Backus would pay students and friends $20 to clean it out. Fredrick said this was an ongoing project.

Backus bought the house on the corner of Second Street and Avenue C, now renamed A.E. Backus Avenue, and he lived there until his death in 1990. He had an open-door policy; thus, his house became a gathering place for artists and musicians.

Prentice will feature her mosaic mirrors in a fashion and handbag show at the Backus House on November 19.
The Power of Main Street — National Main Street Conference in Oklahoma City

By Pam Gillette

As Main Streets from around the country converged on Oklahoma City to attend the National Main Street Conference, Main Street Fort Pierce was proud to be there to celebrate the “Power of Main Street.”

Over the past three decades, Main Streets have seen incredible accomplishments through billions of dollars in reinvestment, thousands of new jobs and new businesses, and hundreds of thousands of volunteer hours, leading to thousands of revitalized communities. “The Power of Main Street” brought over 800 Main Street managers, board members and volunteers together with a common goal: to join forces, network and share.

The National Main Street Conference is an important opportunity to learn new strategies and techniques to continue revitalizing our communities. It is a time to speak with other Main Street programs and discover fresh ideas. It is a time to explore the host city and see the development of their historic districts. And last but not least, it is a time to celebrate our accomplishments.

In November, Main Street Fort Pierce was selected as one of the ten semifinalists for the 2010 Great American Main Street Awards® (GAMSA). The National Trust Main Street Center’s annual GAMSA semifinalists are recognized for their exceptional accomplishments in revitalizing the nation’s historic and traditional Main Street commercial districts by using the proven Main Street Four-Point Approach®: organization, economic restructuring, promotion and design.

During this year’s convention, The National Trust for Historic Preservation announced the winners of this year’s award at the Main Street Awards Ceremony. Unfortunately Main Street Fort Pierce did not reach the final 5, but we were very honored to be one of the semifinalists. We are very proud of all of the accomplishments in downtown Fort Pierce and for being one of the top ten Main Street programs in the nation.

As we returned home we thanked Oklahoma City for welcoming the Main Street programs with open arms. We enjoyed the gracious people, the fabulous museums, the beautiful landscapes, their historic stories and Oklahoma songs. We watched as the Oklahomans embraced their Western and Indian heritage. But most important we bring home a renewed spirit and a new energy to continue the Main Street Approach.

National Farmers’ Market Week

National Farmers’ Market Week is celebrated every year in early August. Summer is the best time for farmers’ markets for most of the 50 states, but what about the sub-tropics of South Florida?

The Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce operates year round and we celebrate the goodness of a farmers’ market 12 months of the year. Last year, the Farmers’ Market Coalition, a national not-for-profit support organization for farmers’ markets, collected these testimonials about why patrons love farmers’ markets.

- I love my farmers’ market because I trust the food more when I can shake the hand that raised it.
- I love my farmers’ market because good food is the foundation for the health care of the future.
- I love my farmers’ market because it means my community has access to fresh local produce.
- I love my farmers’ market because everyone knows my name and no one knows my name at the supermarket.
- I love my farmers’ market because I can get heirloom varieties of fruits and vegetables for a good price.

The Downtown Farmers’ Market of Fort Pierce is one of the coolest places in the summer and that’s why lots of people love it. First, it’s on the waterfront and you can usually count on a breeze. Second, the market manager brings her “cooling station,” a market tent, rigged to spray cool water on patrons. The cooling station is the gentle version for market patrons of the sprinkler, hose or fire hydrant of the summers of youth.

Plan to spend your Saturdays in Fort Pierce this summer by heading to downtown Fort Pierce. You can park in the parking garage (where it’s cool), or at the Manatee Center or River Walk Center for free. You can shop for fresh fruits and vegetables, plants and flowers, sauces and spices, baked goods and many other local products. You can eat breakfast or lunch along the seawall or at the picnic tables by the marina. You can listen to live music and cool off at the cooling station. The market is open from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m., and is located at Marina Square at the east end of Avenue A or Orange Avenue, between the marina and the library. Visit us on Facebook or at our website www.frpiercemarket.com or call 772-467-1246.

In an effort to better serve our customers, you may make your utility payment at the following locations.

No additional fees charged for this service.

Riverside National Bank
Fort Pierce Locations
Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 6:00 pm
Sat 8:00 am to 1:00 pm

Jackson Drugs
2300 Oceanbreeze Road
Mon-Fri 8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Sat 9:00 am to 1:00 pm

Art Craft Express
1835 US 1 Highway
Inside Traffic Circle Convenience
Mon-Thur 9:00 am to 7:00 pm
Fri 9:00 am to 8:00 pm
Sat 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Droon Check Cashings
2411 Avenue D
Mon 7:00 am to 7:00 pm
Sat 8:00 am to 6:00 pm

Droon Check Cashings
430 N US 1
Inside Citrus Convenience
Mon-Fri 8:00 am to 7:00 pm
Sat 8:00 am to 1:00 pm
Sun 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm

The mission is to provide our customers with economically, reliable and friendly service as a combined effort to enhance the quality of life in our community.
Now, picture in your mind a greenway space the size of Central Park, linking the Sawannas to the south and historic downtown Fort Pierce’s waterfront plaza and beyond. That is the scope of the Master Plan for Heathcote Botanical Gardens. The partnership between the non-profit and government agencies has benefited the area and Phase I, when completed in 2011, will provide work for local contractors, inevitably stimulating economic growth in the neighboring corridor. On the minds of many is the eco-tourism that will spur, creating a “green” heart in Fort Pierce.

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Heathcote Botanical Gardens is a non-profit organization established in 1985 on the former site of Heathcote Nursery. It was expanded in 2000 to its present 5 acres featuring gardens, environmental and educational programs, and a calendar of special events. Individual, family, and corporate memberships are available. For more information, visit heathcotebotanicalgardens.org or call 772-464-4672.

Imagine the excitement of being trained as an apprentice graphic designer and learning the tricks of the trade. Consider going on a visual scavenger hunt to train your brain in observation skills. Or what about attempting wild and crazy drawing techniques like telling your hand where to move a pencil without looking down on your paper!

These are but a few of the artistic exercises that campers will be offered at the Art Mundo Summer Camps at the Art Bank, 111 Orange Avenue in historic downtown Fort Pierce. Youth ages 9 – 16 will enjoy creating unconventional artwork using a variety of methods including drawing, collage, watercolour, paper arts and assemblage. Projects center on a weekly theme and finished pieces will be displayed on Fridays during the Student Art Exhibit where guests and families are invited to attend. A required materials list will be included with registration.

The three class sessions, held Monday through Friday, begin the week of June 14 – 18 with Nature Art; July 12 – 16, Summer Art Splash; and August 16 – 20, Let’s Trash This Place!

Each week focuses on art precepts in an ordered fashion, building upon design principles. Nature Art will explore positive and negative spaces and elements of design composition while assembling a pressed flower paper quilt. A self portrait will be fashioned using objects from nature. A rain stick will be made from recycled materials and the Art Bank will be transformed into a fairyland as students build cabana castles, lizard lounges and grasshopper shacks. Summer Art Splash! will take students on an artistic adventure of a vacation paradise; Hawaii. Campers will make their own leis, craft seashell art, enhance their writing and sketching skills in an artist journal and get wet and wild with watercolor!
Suddenly, I started sweating, my heart started to pound, and I was short of breath. I was in love! I sure didn’t expect that! Heck, I didn’t even know what was wrong with me! I yelled to Ken, “What in the world? What is that little blond over there?”

“That’s one of my sisters,” he answered. “Her name is Sue.”

“Hey girls, come over here for a minute,” he yelled. And here they came and I could hardly breathe as they, and especially Sue, approached. Ken said, “As long as you are going anyways, bring me back a Coke and a bag of peanuts. Jack, what do you want?”

Well, I knew this was the big chance for my Romeo and Juliet speech, and neither she nor I knew how many millions of others have quoted those first few wonderful, romantic words slipped straight from my heart to hers as I almost whispered them. "Ken, I’m going to marry your little sister someday!” And since she was only 14, and I was but 17, it took a little time. But “Ken,” I said, “Who is that little blond over there?”

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“Hey girls, come over here for a minute,” he yelled. And deep down inside, I just knew she was to be mine. And as the girls walked on, I looked at Ken and said slowly, “Ken, I’m going to marry your little sister someday!” And since she was only 14, and I was but 17, it took a little time. But

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3rd Annual Souvenirs of Downtown, Plein Air Paint-Out Wrap Up

by Pam Gillette

The 3rd Annual En Plein Air Paint-Out started out with a few rain clouds but that did not stop our artists from arriving, choosing their location and creating Souvenirs of Downtown. As the first day progressed, the clouds parted and the sun returned, making the 3-day event a great success.

We would like to thank this year’s participating artists: Kirsten Andreason, Colleen Nash Becht, Gail Boardman, Carol Boye, Kay Braswell, Sally Browning-Pearson, R.L. Freeman Davenport, Randi Jane Davis, Gabby DuCharme, Ellen E. Fischer, Angela Guettler, Dorothy Hudson, Joy Jackson, Richard Kelly, Chris Kling, Barbara Landry, Michael V. LasCasas, Debra Magrann, Harry McVay, Diane Mesagno, Dawn K. Mill, Marlene E. Putnam, Jackie Schindehette, Lee G. Smith, and Emily Tremml.

Each artist brought their own individual style into capturing the beauty of Fort Pierce. The artists painted in different locations in downtown Fort Pierce from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 21st through Friday, April 23rd. The public was invited and encouraged to come watch the artists paint and interact with them about their artwork. If you missed this wonderful event you can still see the artwork that was created by joining Main Street Fort Pierce on Facebook and clicking on the 2010 Plein Air Paint-Out in the photo section.

Each year Main Street Fort Pierce chooses a painting to be next year’s signature painting. We are happy to announce this year’s winner — “Downtown Library.” “Downtown Library” is an 11 x 14 oil painting of the St. Lucie County Library in Marina Square and was painted by Chris Kling. Chris is a new artist to Souvenirs of Downtown and we are happy she decided to join our event.

Souvenirs of Downtown is an event that really showcases our beautiful city. Each artist came into town and brought their own unique perspective and artistic look at Fort Pierce. It takes more than just our artists to make this event a success. We would like to thank Seacoast National Bank and St. Lucie News Tribune for being the sponsors of this event. We would also like to thank the many volunteers, the citizens of Fort Pierce who welcomed each of the artists, and those who purchased a special piece of art. Your support made this a great event and will help make a difference in the historic preservation of our unique heritage.
Mr. Smith’s donation of 100 trees will be one of the largest public bonsai displays in the world. The importance of this collection, and the merit of our Gardens’ impact on tourism and the community, earned a $148,720 grant from the St. Lucie County Tourist Development Council and Board of County Commissioners.

In accordance with the Heathcote master plan, the bonsai display will be situated on the south east corner of Heathcote Botanical Gardens. Propagation and maintenance facilities are being relocated to the back of the Heathcote House (office) and the old Orchid House is being dismantled. The orchid collection will be housed in the Rain Forest until a new structure can be built.

The plans for the bonsai gardens are being drawn by Sam Comer of Hayslip Landscape and Jim Van Landingham, the collection’s curator, based on Jim Smith’s unique idea. Typically, public gardens display bonsai in rows on shelves or tables, but the Heathcote bonsai display will extend our peaceful meandering pathways into an area where visitors will “discover” a bonsai at every turn. The natural beauty of St. Lucie County will be demonstrated through materials including native field stone and vegetation. The setting will be simple and serene.

Morgan Stanley Smith Barney

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Vice President
Financial Advisor
3555 Ocean Drive
Vero Beach, FL 32963
772-234-1804

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The James J. Smith Bonsai Collection at Heathcote Botanical Gardens

by Debra Magrann

Avenue D Boys’ Choir Finds New Digs in Downtown Fort Pierce

Success is forward motion for the hard-working troubadours. Since its humble birth in 2004, the choir has made strides in the community, winning hearts and raising awareness and has blossomed to include a female counterpart: the Avenue D Girls’ Choir.

The Avenue D Boys’ Choir began with vision in March, 2004. Mary Hendricks’ early work establishing a boy’s choir in Jamaica laid the groundwork for her avowed vocation to offer opportunities to youth who were headed nowhere with no future ambitions.

It begins with a creed. “We are … Young Men of Honor, Pursuing Excellence and Leading by Example.” It continues in faith. “I Believe.” And faith is what has carried the Avenue D Boys’ Choir to its current quarters in the former Sun-Trust building on SE Second Street in downtown Fort Pierce.

They are on a mission: to develop an excellent, well disciplined boy’s choir, while equipping the young men with personal, academic and social skills they need to attain success in life. And succeed they are.

I believe I can be a good student and citizen. I believe I can achieve great things in my life. I believe if I work hard I will succeed. Therefore, I will work hard each day to do my best, and I will allow nothing or no one to hinder my success.

Continued on page 22 …
A new store called Yarn-It! recently opened downtown at 205 N. Second Street next door to Beads & Baubles. The store sells yarns, fabrics, threads, notions and other fibers and accessories for spinning, weaving and needlework. Yarn-It! also offers classes in knitting, weaving, needlepoint, crochet, sewing, yarn design, rug hooking and embroidery. The store welcomes all experience levels.

“Yarn-It! is like a Rocky’s Hardware for yarn,” Celeste Briglia, the store’s owner, said. “It’s different than the average yarn store.” Unlike most fiber art stores, where customers are often unable to select the right amount or color of fiber they need, Yarn-It! allows customers to buy the exact amount and design their own yarn by blending it together. The store carries cottons, wools, alpaca fleece, bamboo and acrylics. Briglia would like her customers to know that “almost everything is organic, recycled and American-made.”

Briglia takes donations of old yarn and resells it. She also keeps “experienced needles” on hand for those who want to try fiber art before buying needles.

Briglia began making her own clothes when she was 8 years old. For the last 20 years, she has been making specialized items for people, and she will continue to do alterations at the new store.

A Fort Pierce resident for 28 years, Briglia owned two houses on Second Street. She has wanted to open a fiber art store for some time and always loved downtown Ft. Pierce. “The downtown area is beautiful, and I think we need to bring in as many different things as possible,” Briglia said before she opened Yarn-It!, the nearest stores that sold fiber art materials were in Jensen Beach and Cocoa Beach. She envisions she store becoming a learning center for the exchange of ideas and knowledge. “I want to make a community of people who share with each other, learn from each other, glean ideas from each other,” she said. “I’d like to get a guild going for spinners, weavers and other fiber people. That would be excellent.” “I would say fiberistas,” Briglia added, “but there are some men involved, too.” She explained that fiber art was traditionally reserved for men until the age of mechanics. Yarn-It! features several antique machines, including a sock machine from the World War I era and a 150-year-old weaving loom, which Briglia plans to let patrons use.

Yarn-It! will host week-long summer camps for children in June and July. Each week costs $150 and includes the class fee and supplies for making two projects. Call the store at 418-0933 to register. Yarn-It! is open Tuesday to Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Yarn-It! owner Celeste Briglia uses a 150-year-old weaving loom.

Yarn-It! has a vast selection of materials.
Mary Hendricks is a determined woman with a love for young people. Together with her husband, Dr. Earl Hendricks, the duo’s vision continues to boost both choirs to heights beyond the confines of small town America. In the last two years they have toured in Italy and France, met with the Vienna Boy’s Choir, performed for Gov. Charlie Crist, sang at Motown studios and they were presented the keys to the city of Detroit and a commendation from the Governor. Along the way, the young men have visited museums and cultural sites and gained keen insights into their own personal development and self-reliance.

The backbone of these awards is at the local level – the community involvement has been vital to the Choirs’ outreach and support has come from a spectrum of sources: from gated communities and churches to fraternal organizations and banks. Fundraising is an essential component of their non-profit operations and new projects developing in exciting avenues. A corps of volunteers assist the Hendricks’ in day-to-day operations and an anonymous benefactor provided a pair of passenger vans to overcome the difficulty of transporting the group and its equipment.

Service to others and passing that on to youth is vital to strong cultural volunteerism. In view of her outstanding public service benefiting the community, Mary Hendricks was the recipient of a Jefferson Award for Public Service, the national service benefiting the community. Every boy has remained with the choir and adding, “I want to create a new generation of male leaders to better the community. Every boy has remained with the choir and turning to Battle Creek. Higher education is a key component in the youth of Avenue D and to that end they have been awarded a $150,000 Youth Development grant from the Kellogg’s Foundation. Since its beginning in 1930, the foundation seeks to assist those who lack opportunity based on economic and social needs. The grant will be used to incorporate a computer lab with an instructor for tutoring and homework.

“College is not a natural progression for these young men,” said Dr. Earl Hendricks. “I tell them, ‘Look at the struggle your mothers have had … consider your future. You want to be able to provide a stable home and environment for your children.’”

There’s more good news. His dream may be coming true. The Avenue D Boys and Girls Choirs will soon be sharing space downtown for rehearsals. Offices in the former Bank building are being transformed and renovations will make 110 South Second Street a place to call home. The group is raising funds to complete the work and hope to achieve a goal of $30,000. A gala Red Carpet fundraiser is planned at the Black Box Theatre, Saturday, June 26. Activities will include a walk on the red carpet that will span Second Street, a silent and live auction and the architectural rendering of the new location will be on view. Both choirs will be headliners at stage on the Black Box. Tickets are $100 per person and are available at the Sunrise Theatre box office. To contact Dr. Earl and Mary Hendricks phone: 772.342.6317.

Contact Info: Avenue D Boys’ Choir, PO Box 2046, Fort Pierce, 34982. E-mail: avenueboyschoir@yahoo.com. Avenue D Boys’ Choir is a 501(c)(3) designated organization.

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This tantalizing Shrimp Crostini was part of his winning appetizer plate. Serves 4.

Ingredients:

- 12 each Shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 each Baguette slices cut on a bias about 1 inch thick
- 2 ounce Goat cheese (½ ounce per portion)
- 2 ounce Micro greens (½ ounce per portion)

Marinade

- 12 ounce Micro greens (½ ounce per portion)
- 2 Tablespoon Olive oil (reserve 2 Tablespoon for baguette)
- 1 Tablespoon Brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon fresh cilantro, chopped fine
- 1 teaspoon fresh Parsley, chopped fine
- 1 Tablespoon fresh garlic, chopped fine

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients in blender except olive oil and blend
2. Pour marinade over shrimp, cover and refrigerate
3. Preheat oven to 425 degrees
4. Combine marinade and olive oil and place in a small saucepan
5. “College is not a natural progression for these young men,” said Dr. Earl Hendricks. “I tell them, ‘Look at the struggle your mothers have had … consider your future. You want to be able to provide a stable home and environment for your children.’”

Combine all ingredients in blender except olive oil and blend for a minute. Continue to blend adding olive oil slowly to emulsify. In a heated sauce pot add marinade and bring to a simmer, add shrimp and simmer for two minutes. Remove from heat. Coat baguette with olive oil and place on heated grill until brown. Arrange shrimp on baguette then layer goat cheese and micro greens. Serve immediately.

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Summer Presentations from the Sunrise Theatre and Missoula Children’s Theatre

The Missoula Children’s Theatre presents Sleeping Beauty, an original adaptation of the classic fairy tale, performed by over 50 local children on the Treasure Coast.

A new princess is born, and from far and wide the people of the kingdom gather to celebrate. One simple mistake is made — an invitation is misplaced — and the wrath of the vicious Scarella falls upon the poor infant in the form of a spell. Sleeping Beauty is now destined to sleep for eternity if she should prick her finger on a spindle before she reaches her sixteenth birthday.

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This production is part of the Missoula Children’s Theatre’s unique international touring project and is presented locally by the Sunrise Theatre. Children are in camp from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday, and then Friday night, the kids put on the performance in front of a “hopefully” sold out audience.

Sleeping Beauty — a Rock ’n Roll Fable for the ages. This is definitely not a sleeper!

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Summer Eye Protection by Shannon Clark Leitenbauer, O.D., F.A.A.O, Optometric Physician

As summer approaches, the issue of sun damage to the eyes becomes more of a concern. Every person, especially those of us who live in Florida, should be concerned and should become educated about what eye conditions have been linked to UV light damage and what can be done to protect the eyes from the sun.

Worldwide, people seem to understand very little about the relationship between UV damage and serious eye disease. It has been stated that, according to one American survey, 80% of the people asked were aware that UV rays can cause skin cancer. However, only 6% realized that UV rays contribute to cataracts. It has also been stated that the human eye is ten times more sensitive to harmful UV rays than the skin. UV light damage has been linked to the following eye conditions:

Cataract: A cataract is defined as a cloudy area in the lens of the eye. Visual problems may include the following changes:
- Cloudy, fuzzy, foggy, or filmy vision
- Loss of color intensity
- Double vision
- Difficulty seeing at night
- Frequent changes in spectacle or contact lens prescription
- Seeing halos around lights
- Being sensitive to glare
Most people with cataracts have similar changes in both eyes, although one eye may be worse than the other. The only treatment is surgery.

Macular Degeneration: Macular degeneration is an eye disorder that damages the center of the retina, which is called the macula. This makes it difficult to see fine details. There are two forms of macular degeneration: dry and wet. Macular degeneration typically never affects the peripheral vision but central vision can be severely impaired and may lead to “legal” blindness. There is no treatment for dry macular degeneration but some patients may slow the progression through an “AREDS” vitamin formulation.

Treatment for wet macular degeneration may include: laser surgery, photodynamic therapy or medication injected into the eye.

Keratitis: is an inflammation of the cornea—the domed, transparent circular portion of the front of the eyeball that lies over the pupil. Often referred to as “snow blindness” or “welder’s flash”, keratitis may also occur due to excessive sun exposure. Symptoms often include: redness, pain and blurred vision. Keratitis may also increase risk of infection. Treatment includes supportive therapy in the way of lubrication and, medically appropriate, topical eye drops.

Skin Cancer on the eyeball or eyelid area: The most common types of skin cancers which can occur in the ocular area are Basal Cell Carcinoma and Squamous Cell Carcinoma. The risk of malignant Melanoma increases if other skin cancers have been diagnosed.

The most logical protection against the damaging UV rays of the sun is in the form of sunglasses. Wearing good quality sunglasses can protect the eyes and significantly lower the risk of damage. However, poor quality sunglasses may actually increase the risk of damage. The following is a general check list to ensure your sunglasses are of the best quality possible.

• Sunglasses should absorb as close to 100% of UVA and UVB rays as possible.
• Store bought sunglasses should have a label indicating the level of UVA and UVB protection. Professionally-made sunglasses will have required protection.
• The color or darkness of the lenses does not determine the level of UV absorption.
• A UV absorbing (clear) coating may be added to any spectacle lens, even if the lens is not tinted in color.
• Polaroid lenses provide the best protection against glare.
• The shape of the frame does play a role in the level of protection. Sunglasses of a larger size or “wrap around” frames help keep UV light from coming in around the edges of the sunglasses. The sunglasses should be close fitting.

Sun protection for the eyes is especially important for children and young adults. The internal lens of a child’s eye may allow up to 70% more UV rays to reach the delicate retina than an adult’s. A large percentage of our time in the sun occurs during the first twenty years of our life. Instilling the habit of putting on a hat and sunglasses when outdoors should be instilled in children from the time that they are babies. If it is expected from an early age, it will become a natural act that each child will continue throughout life. It is similar to teaching a child that a seatbelt must be worn whenever riding in the car. It is a positive habit that will help protect the eyes for many years.
Fee, DeRoss & Fee Relocate Back to Downtown Fort Pierce

by Beth Williams

When the law firm of Fee, DeRoss & Fee opened the doors of their newly renovated building last October they accomplished two important things. First, they moved “back downtown” after a three-year stint on Virginia Avenue, and second, they played a major role in the continuing efforts to restore and redevelop historic downtown Fort Pierce.

St. Lucie County’s oldest law firm now resides in the Poppell House, located at 426 Avenue A, just to the north of the Arcade Building. Built in 1913, the two-story building was once home to F.C. Poppell, the county’s first Property Appraiser, and his family. Over the years some renovations had been made but the house sat empty until the firm purchased the building in 2009.

The bright yellow building is inviting and adds flair to the block. Upon entering the newly renovated office, visitors are welcomed with earth tones, early 20th century furnishings, and a fabulous display of work by local artist Rick Kelly. On the second floor the colorful paintings of Colleen Becht adorn the walls. “My wife LeVan took on the task of designing the interior,” says Frank “Speedy” Fee. “She gets the credit for how well it turned out.”

Fee says the decision to purchase the house for their offices was based on several things. “It’s close to the courthouse and other legal offices which is important for us, it was available at a good price, and we were anxious to continue to be part of the history of Fort Pierce. Prior to moving to Virginia Avenue in 2006, the firm was headquartered downtown at Citrus and Indian River Drive since 1979. “Coming back downtown was very important to us,” he said.

Joe DeRoss agrees. “I used to come downtown for lunch every day because I missed being here,” he said. “Being downtown just has a special feel to it. It’s a great place to be.” Fee says things are just going to get better in the district. “It’s a progression of change and the improvements made by the city in terms of infrastructure along 7th Street have helped greatly. The new federal courthouse will have a big impact as well,” he said.

DeRoss credits prior city planners and the work done by Main Street Fort Pierce in creating a vision that is coming to reality for the community. “Doris and the staff have grown Main Street into a great organization that has really made a difference downtown.”

Fishing for Kids

by Dan Dannahower

Saturday, May 8, saw the running of the 2010 Hibiscus Children’s Center Offshore Big 3 Fishing Tournament. This popular tournament is closely followed by locals and visiting fishermen alike and is well known for the very worthy cause it supports. An accomplished and established tournament, this one is revered for its cash prizes in a number of categories and for the great contribution it makes to a needed and deserving local non-profit that provides immeasurable benefit to children on the Treasure Coast.

The Hibiscus Children’s Center is a not-for-profit charitable organization that serves the Treasure Coast, Brevard and Palm Beach counties. Since 1989 it has provided a safe environment with a variety of services to children who have been removed from their families by court order. Shelter, medical and dental care, mental health and caring, are just a few of the many services provided to kids in need. Hibiscus Children’s Center is the only organization of its kind on the Treasure Coast.

The Offshore Big 3 Tournament began years ago with the express purpose of supporting the Hibiscus Children’s Center. The “Big 3” are dolphin, kingfish, and wahoo. Additional categories include grouper and yellowfin tuna. The one day tournament awards a number of prizes ranging from $250 to $2,500 in a variety of categories and places. Results from this year’s tournament plus a number of prior years can be found at offshorebig3.org. Proceeds go to Hibiscus and help keep this very worthy organization operating.

This is a great event. Check out the results on their website and see all the great work they do for our disadvantaged youth.

Fort Pierce hosts a large number of tournaments each year. The St. Lucie News Tribune recently published a list of upcoming tournaments and should be a good resource. Fort Pierce City Marina and your local tackle and bait shops are other good resources for information on what’s happening on the tournament scene. Find an event that you like and participate in one of our many local fishing events. You might win a nice prize, introduce a young person to the fun of fishing, or just have a great time on our awesome lagoon and ocean resources. Good luck and good fishing!
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- Advanced notification of shows and the opportunity to purchase UNLIMITED tickets in advance
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