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FLORIDA'S OLDEST INDEPENDENT WEEKLY NEWSPAPER

No. 2993 November 12, 2026–November 18, 2026

Decoding Drama

By Victor Carr & Pat Solecki

You read the book. You saw the movie. Now watch the play.

Directed by Matthew McGee, freeFall Theatre's production of *The Da Vinci Code* is a moving experience exploring both symbology and religion. The story is a murder mystery that unfolds across three countries as two unlikely heroes, Robert Langdon (James Putnam) and Sophie Neveu (Noa Friedman), unravel it.

Someone has brutally murdered Sophie's grandfather, Jacques Sauniere (Jim Wicker), in the Louvre in Paris, France. Langdon was supposed to meet Sauniere to discuss Da Vinci's work and the symbolism behind *The Last Supper* as it relates to the Holy Grail, purported to be the cup Jesus Christ drank from the night before his crucifixion. But Langdon arrives not as a symbologist but as a suspect in the murder. Langdon and Neveu must run for their lives as they try to discover the truth behind this seemingly senseless killing.

Da Vinci continued on page 9



THEE PHOTO NINJA

Robert Langdon (James Putnam) and Sophie Neveu (Noa Friedman) study a clue. freeFall Theatre's *The Da Vinci Code* brings the thriller to the stage with a standout cast, clever staging and twists you won't see coming.

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VOICES

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Gulfport Boomerangs

The Gulfport Boomerangs Senior Softball League staged its 3rd annual Pink Jersey Game to raise money for the American Cancer Society's (ACS) Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Team and community donations totaled $2,500 and with a matching grant, the Boomerangs will donate $5,000 to ACS.

–Rob Sumner, Gulfport

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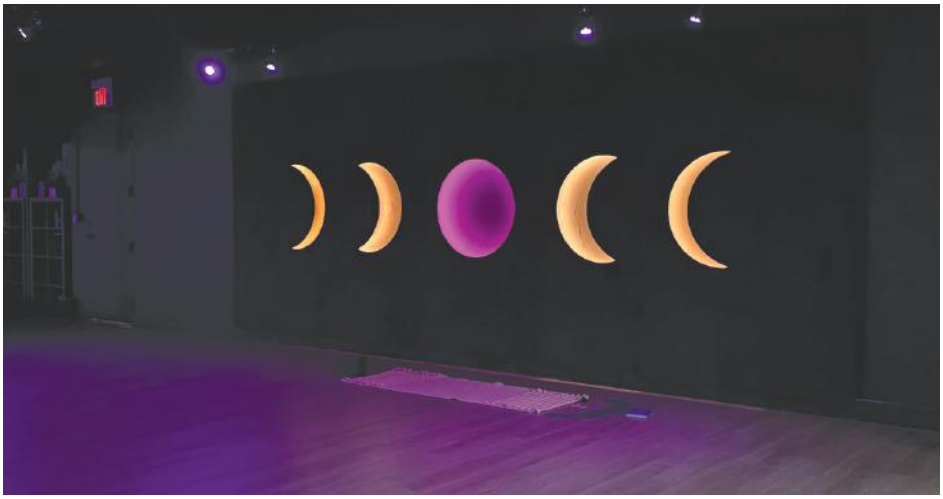


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Who Haunts The Velvet Mat?

A Ghost Hunt Under the Kress Building

By Brandy Stark



THE VELVET MAT

Lighted moon phases glow along a wall at The Velvet Mat, the yoga studio beneath the Kress Building. When the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg investigated the underground space, team members sensed a boxer and a mysterious little girl.

A welcoming presence surrounds downtown St. Petersburg's historic Kress Building. Crews built it at breakneck speed in 1927, and it has stood watch over the city for nearly 100 years.

The building blends the classical Commercial style with the Beaux-Arts movement. The goal was for it to look less like a five-and-dime and more like a work of art, something the city could be proud of. That philosophy long guided the company's founder, Samuel H. Kress. To achieve the effect, the building combines steel-frame construction with brick, decorated marble, and architectural terra-cotta. It stands five stories tall, and its basement extends under part of Central Avenue. Rumor has it that Al Capone used this area to host a speakeasy and to reach a private theater now long buried under the 400 Central Avenue tower.

Energy Upstairs and Down

People often ask the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg, a paranormal investigative team, about the Kress building. Many feel that it's haunted. Its long history certainly adds to the mystique. The building belonged to the Kress company until 1981, when the company closed as part of a nationwide chain of liquidations. The City of St. Petersburg then used the building for municipal and departmental offices before moving out in 1995. Parts of the upper levels may also have served as living spaces, though that use appears to have been limited in size and duration. The city also had the property listed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places. Since 1996, private owners have run it as commercial office and rental space.

The enigma is its connection to the paranormal. To date, the SPIRITS has received invitations to investigate two parts of the building. People inside sometimes feel an energy, a sense of movement and of people passing by. That energy seems tied to the building's past as a bustling department store, and it is certainly present on the upper floors. One business on an above-ground floor invited the team in to investigate, and the team tapped into that energy. But what would we find underground?

Ghosts **continued on page 4**

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Ghosts **continued from page 3**

Come for the Movement

Crystal Kage, owner of The Velvet Mat, invited us. I first met her when she was doing pop-up yoga tours at the St. Petersburg Museum of History. Since then, she has opened a permanent space in the basement of this historic building: The Velvet Mat.

"We are a little different from your traditional studio. We're an independent, non-heated yoga studio and community space tucked underground in downtown St. Pete. I always say, 'Come for the movement, stay for the magic,'" Crystal said.

As for the space, "We wanted to create a place that feels welcoming, a little unexpected, and not intimidating as it can be for a lot of people," she added. "Honestly, when I was looking for a permanent home for The Velvet Mat, I didn't want something that felt like every other fitness or yoga studio. A friend introduced us to this underground space in a beautiful historic building, and we immediately saw the potential. It screams 'speakeasy vibes' ... the basement already had so much character. Instead of trying to make it shiny and new, we leaned into the history, the underground entrance, the moodiness, and that feeling that you've discovered a place you weren't necessarily supposed to find. It became part of our identity."

What makes it more interesting is that the studio shares the space.

"We are part of a larger underground footprint with a private gym. Our studio has its own distinct space and identity, but we're part of this larger basement environment underneath the building and Central Avenue. I actually think that makes the whole thing even more interesting ... There is much more underground than people walking down Central Avenue probably realize," Crystal said.

Speakeasy Vibes

This investigation took place during August's Second Saturday. As people moved about downtown, the SPIRITS descended into the basement to meet our hosts. The yoga studio looks classically gothic, draped in purples and blacks and framed with lighted images of the moon's phases. There's even an antique piano named Alberta.

The space has evolved into a mix of old St. Pete, speakeasy, magical, rock 'n' roll, and wellness.

"But more than the decor, I think what makes it welcoming is the community. We work really hard to make sure people don't feel like they have to look a certain way, know any yoga terminology, or already be flexible to belong here. You can walk downstairs exactly as you are. And apparently that invitation extends to both the living and the dead," said Jesse Kage, Crystal's husband.

Strange Little Things

Crystal and Jesse met us there with a friend and stayed for the investigation.

"Nothing has ever felt threatening or scary. It's actually become something we have a little fun with," she told us. "Every so often, the lights



FLORIDA MEMORY

Shoppers filled the green benches outside the S.H. Kress & Co. store in this 1948 postcard. Today, the nearly 100-year-old building's basement is home to The Velvet Mat, where the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg went looking for ghosts.

will start flickering. We'll literally say out loud, 'Hello, whoever is here!' and the flickering stops. There have also been times when the entire studio is dark and a light will seemingly decide to turn itself on."

"The Ring camera is probably the strangest one," Crystal said. "When no one is in the studio, and all of the lights are off, we sometimes see these little flashes or what I call 'energy zoomies' moving across the camera. We've even talked through the camera while watching it and noticed flashes happening right after we're speaking or asking a question like, 'Are you having a good time after hours?' almost as though something is responding."

So they invited the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg to investigate.

"Once you spend enough time in a 100-year-old basement and strange little things start happening, eventually you have to investigate!" Crystal said. "We had heard there had been paranormal investigations on other floors of the building before. Between that history and some of the things we had experienced ourselves, our curiosity got the better of us."

A Light in the Dark

Following SPIRITS protocol, the investigators went in without any prior information. At our request, the owners also shut down several light displays and sound systems that ran on wireless connections. A few minutes into the investigation, a single bulb on the now-disconnected system turned itself on. It had never done that before, and the owners had no explanation for it.

The Boxer

As the night wore on, the gym area drew the group in. There, three SPIRITS team members and one of the owners' guests noticed the palms of their hands turning red, as if they had been hitting something. Yet no one had touched anything, there were no chemicals in the area, and nothing in the air gave any reason for concern. Their hands returned to normal when they left the area, then promptly darkened again when they went back.

Several team members felt the presence of a boxer, a large, powerful man who identified strongly with the sport. He did something unusual: When the team split up to focus on different sections, he tried to communicate. Two team members set up light sensors, a REM pod (a theremin-like device), and a spirit box (a radio that scans the airwaves).

They invited the presence to interact with the devices or communicate through the spirit box. The light sensors went off at that request. When the team asked questions through the spirit box, he indicated that he had been present in the area from the 1980s through 2020. At one point he also said "here," and he indicated that he had worked there by answering "yes" twice within five seconds. Beyond that, we couldn't get much more from him.

Ghosts **continued on page 6**

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Ghosts **continued from page 5**

The Little Girl

The other presence that responded seemed to be a little girl. She appeared very attached to Jesse. The temperature dropped noticeably around him, including on his hand and arm, where he felt the child place her own hand.

Another SPIRITS member sat down next to Jesse and had an interaction, too. She felt as if the little girl were sitting in her lap and just wanted someone to hold her.

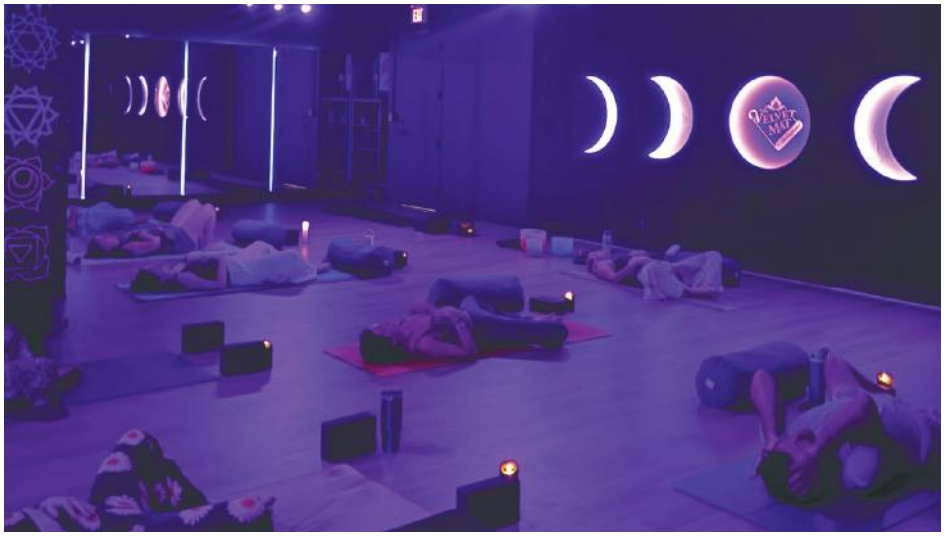
Only two words really came through on the spirit box: a female name, Bridgette, and "Hooley," the name of one of the studio's instructors. That surprised the owners, who felt the name was too unusual to be a random response. The little girl seemed very fond of this teacher.

Searching for Answers

Research after the investigation proved a bit difficult. We found no records of any deaths or injuries in the building. During the five-and-dime years, the area we investigated served as the bargain basement, and we found no historical sign of a boxing club or boxing event there while it operated as a department store. Later, however, someone converted the space into a fitness area that included some boxing equipment. The man who ran it died unexpectedly of a heart attack just a few years ago. Could he be checking in on a place he loved in life? That would explain why he answered "yes" to working there, though he had little else to say.

The little girl remains unknown. Again, no one died in the building, and it's unclear whether anyone ever lived there for any length of time. So who is she, and why is she there? Is she a drop-in, drawn by the music and energy of the location? Is she drawn to someone who works there? Perhaps time will tell.

The now-closed Iberian Rooster once showed the team a video of a container inexplicably flipping off a counter, though the restaurant never invited us in to investigate. We didn't learn much from that incident beyond the general sense that people feel a presence in the underground.



THE VELVET MAT

A class rests in candlelight at The Velvet Mat, the underground yoga studio beneath the Kress Building. The owners say the studio welcomes everyone, and apparently that includes a few unseen guests.

Good Roommates

Just as the Kress Building has quietly watched over St. Petersburg, it also keeps a few secrets deep within its walls. Specters of the past may find its charm irresistible and stop in for a visit.

"Our attitude is basically: this building was here long before we were, so if something else is hanging around, technically we're in their space too. We try to be nice roommates," Crystal said. "Could there be perfectly normal explanations for all of it? Absolutely. But in a 100-year-old basement, it definitely makes you wonder. It's possible!"

That attitude may serve them well. On Oct. 3, the SPIRITS held a Halloween meditation and ghost tour with participants at the yoga studio. Jesse joined the meditation portion. As everyone listened to the clear tones of the crystal bowls, he noticed a sensation: a little girl lying next to him on the mat. When he opened his eyes, no one was there. She remains a presence, and a mystery, in that spot. Perhaps over time, we will discover who she is and why she's there.

Brandy Stark is the founder of the SPIRITS of St. Petersburg. ◈

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Coffee, Doughnuts, and Tea

Stay Up-to-Date With Pinellas Businesses

By Ester Venouziou

This fall has brought a mix of new restaurants, shops, and services to South Pinellas, along with a few notable closures and changes for longtime businesses. Here's what opened, closed, expanded, or changed across Gulfport and the Gulf Beaches.

Gulfport Business News

Nanday Café, from Gulfport Brewery owners Paige and Matt Acree, opened Nov. 9 at 3107 Beach Blvd. S., in the former GulfPerk Coffee Bar space. It will serve coffee, matcha, breakfast, lunch, and rotating from-scratch soups. The name comes from the nanday parakeets found around Pinellas County.

Socotra Restaurant & Cafe is taking over the former Heavenly Donuts & Deli space at 2025 49th St. S. An opening date has not been announced.

Violet's Cuppa Tea, an English afternoon tea spot, plans to open Nov. 15 at 5325 Gulfport Blvd. S., in the former Sail Market Boutique & Gifts space. Owner Amanda Kitto is the youngest daughter of Jillian Frers, the former longtime owner of The Chattaway in St. Pete. Kitto is carrying on the afternoon tea tradition after The Chattaway's new owners discontinued tea service following the September sale.

Gulf Beaches and Beyond Business News

Coco Wood Grill ended its four-year run at 17814 Gulf Blvd. in Redington Shores. Owners Chris and Jennifer Lazorcheck said a hefty increase in their mortgage payment made it impossible to continue.

Fray's Donut House is opening a new location at 1200 Pasadena Ave. S. in South Pasadena, in a former Dunkin' space. It's expected to open in January 2027 and will offer more than 30 doughnut varieties.

CAMERON HEALY



Nanday Café opened Nov. 9 at 3107 Beach Blvd. S., in the former GulfPerk Coffee Bar space.

Moon by Malio's opened Oct. 8 at the Berkeley Beach Club, 109 8th Ave. in St. Pete Beach's Pass-a-Grille neighborhood, in the former space of The Dewey, which closed after flooding during the 2024 hurricanes. Derek and Jen Iavarone's concept focuses on relaxed coastal dining, a departure from the steak-focused Malio's brand their family has run since 1969. The name comes from the couple's daughter, whose middle name is Moon.

Willow & Wonder, a sensory play studio for children 7 and under, opened Nov. 1 at 6541 44th St. N., Unit 6004, in Pinellas Park. Samantha Marti owns the studio.

Willy's Burgers & Booze, at 645 Corey Ave. in St. Pete Beach, has begun rebuilding after being destroyed in the 2024 hurricanes. The rebuild follows 14 months of permitting delays. No reopening date has been announced. ◈



From Park to Gym

Coach Brings Jiu-Jitsu to Gulfport

By Mason Chambless



JOSEPH RESENDEZ

Gulfport Jiu-Jitsu owner Joseph Resendez went from teaching in a park to opening a gym with classes for kids, adults, and families.

Coach Joseph Resendez began teaching Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu classes in early 2024 at the Gulfport Recreation Center. Before that, he trained those interested in the art in a park, starting with a single student. More than a year after starting at the Recreation Center, Coach Resendez decided to open his own brick-and-mortar martial arts gym, Gulfport Jiu-Jitsu. The gym, which Coach Resendez owns and operates, opened in February and offers classes for both adults and children.



"I started from the ground up," said Coach Resendez. "From outside in the park to brick and mortar with absolutely no help, except a little from my Professor Robson."

From the Camera to the Mat

Coach Resendez began practicing Jiu-Jitsu in 2011, when *Florida Weekly* sent him to photograph a gym in Charlotte County. The assignment came shortly after multiple people jumped and beat him up at once. Resendez eventually left his career as a photojournalist and devoted himself to Jiu-Jitsu.

Over the 15 years Coach Resendez has studied and practiced Jiu-Jitsu, he says it has saved his life on four separate occasions.

Teaching has been part of Resendez's life for a long time.

"I volunteer at a ventilator-dependent children's camp every year called Trail's Edge Camp [in Michigan]. And I've been doing that for a very, very long time," said Resendez. "Because the way my childhood was, people gave back to me and gave me an opportunity to have a successful life and career that I have. I've always wanted to give back."

Learning the discipline of Jiu-Jitsu hasn't come easy for Resendez, who was born with Congenital Central Hypoventilation Syndrome (CCHS).

"Basically, my brain doesn't tell my body to breathe," said Coach Resendez of CCHS, before adding, "Oh, and I beat Stage Four Cancer."

Resendez said he is the only person in the world who has CCHS and practices Jiu-Jitsu.

On top of the physical demands Jiu-Jitsu places on him, his passion for practicing and teaching the martial art takes up a significant amount of his time. In addition to teaching classes and running the gym Monday through Friday, Coach Resendez spends two hours each week volunteering to teach Jiu-Jitsu to officers of the St. Petersburg and Clearwater police departments. He also offers all first responders one free class a month at his gym. On top of that, he works another job every day from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Still, Resendez makes sure he keeps training himself. Currently a brown belt, he intends to earn his black belt soon and continues to train five hours a week under black belt "Professors" Robson Moura and Rodrigo Praxedes in Tampa.

In all, Resendez estimates he spends around 24 hours a week practicing or teaching Jiu-Jitsu.

A Gym for the Whole Family

Resendez said all ages are welcome to attend a class, and the gym splits its sessions into adult, young kid, and kid groups. He said he has students as young as 4 and as old as 65.

"My goal is to be a pillar in the community that provides a safe space, while teaching people to defend themselves and others," said Resendez, who also hopes his gym can become a community space where all are welcome. ◈

Da Vinci continued from cover

Three Countries, One Stage

In books and movies, moving between countries is easy. On stage, it is not. McGee uses sophisticated technology to transport the fugitives from Paris to London to Edinburgh. Though McGee only hints at each change in locale, the suggestion is enough to convey the action's relocation.



THEE PHOTO NINJA

Sophie Neveu (Noa Friedman), Robert Langdon (James Putnam) and Sir Leigh Teabing (Larry Alexander) discuss Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper, projected onto a sheer curtain, in freeFall Theatre's *The Da Vinci Code*.

A Cast in Hot Pursuit

The police (Brian Shea and Jenna Jane) pursue Langdon and Neveu, as do Silas (Robert Teasdale), Sir Leigh Teabing (Larry Alexander) and Remy (Luis Rivera), who also seek the Holy Grail. Teasdale's Silas deserves special mention; his passion for his cult and his willingness to torture himself for his faith in God are overwhelming. Audiences can feel the character's pain with each stroke of the cat-o'-nine-tails in the opening scene. The scene seems like a senseless display of violence until you understand its importance to Silas' motivation. The closing scenes, which contain several unexpected twists, make that motivation clear.

Rounding out this wonderful cast is the very talented Vickie Daignault, who plays Sister Sandrine, Vernet, the Docent, and Marie.

By the final scene, the play has delivered several twists and at least one earth-shattering revelation, and first-timers won't see it coming.

See *The Da Vinci Code*

freeFall Theatre, 6099 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. Now through Dec. 6. Weds.-Sat., 7 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., 2 p.m. freefalltheatre.com, 727-498-5205. ◈

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A Snapshot of the Soul

St. Pete Aura Photography Shows the Color of Your Energy

By Maggie Duffy

Have you ever wondered about your aura, the invisible energy field that surrounds you? Like, what color it is and what that means about you?

You can find out, thanks to Stellar State Aura Photography, a new St. Petersburg-based mobile business that pops up around Tampa Bay and beyond.

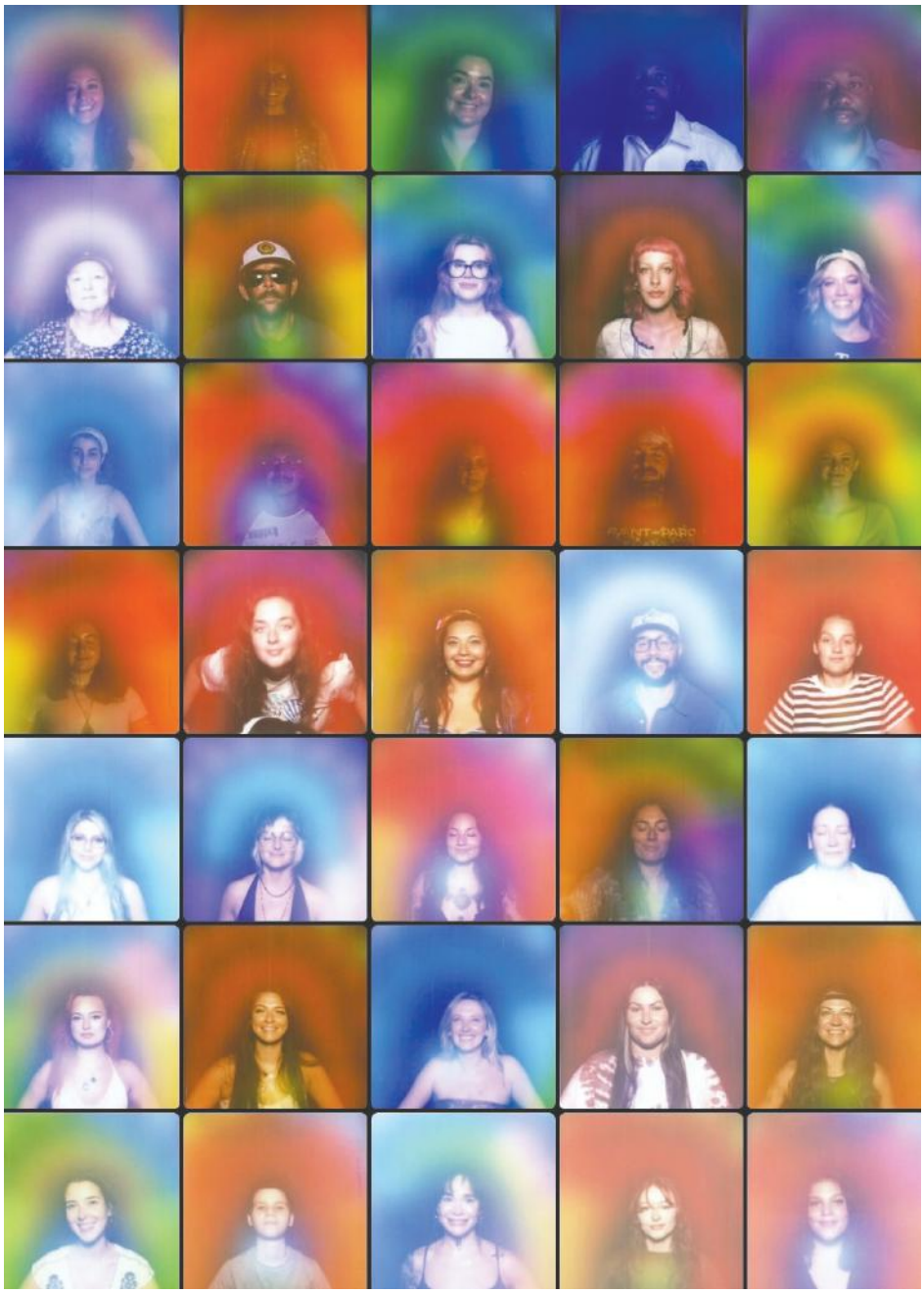
Founder Lauren Ashley said she can thank her day job as a user experience designer for a software company for helping her discover aura photography. Nearly three years ago, Ashley attended a design tech conference in San Francisco, where Google had hired several photographers to capture people's auras with special cameras.

But after Ashley got her photo and asked for an interpretation, the photographers said they were just there to take pictures, and simply gave her a list of descriptions of the colors.

Still, Ashley had an epiphany of sorts, as she'd never seen aura photography before then. Ashley said she's always considered herself "spiritual or witchy or woo-woo, if you must."

"I was just shocked," she said during a phone interview. "I was like, 'Why is nobody doing this in St. Pete?' Is this my calling?"

Turns out, it was. While she enjoys her career designing interfaces for webpages and applications, the rise of artificial intelligence in the tech industry made her long for human connection.



LAUREN ASHLEY

Curious about your aura? Stellar State brings St. Pete aura photography to local pop-ups, capturing your energy's colors and what they mean.

Following the Signs

After that experience, Ashley dove into research, learning about auras and chakras, the body's seven main energy points. She became master certified in Reiki, a type of hands-on energy healing, which she says helped her personally.

Before that, she researched the camera: the AuraCamera 6000, an analog instant film camera that is the industry's oldest and most popular.

While she didn't specify an exact amount, the camera's price tag was hefty enough that buying one was a major life decision that she mulled over for two years. But she decided to go for it and bought the camera in May, while simultaneously launching Stellar State.

How the Camera Reads Your Energy

Ashley said the camera, first developed by Guy Coggins in the 1970s, is based on the chakra colors and is supposed to represent which ones are blocked or open. She said 20 years of research went into the colors and how they're placed on the aura and the photo.

The camera works by measuring the subject's body temperature, heart rate, and other biometric factors through hand sensors.

"It's reading the meridian end-

points in your hands," Ashley said. "Our meridian system ... carries our chi, our life force energy. So this is an illustration of your current life force energy through this biofeedback from your palms."

There are no bad aura colors, Ashley said. But a rainbow aura is the ideal, because it means all of your chakras are present. The hand sensors determine which colors show up in your aura. The placement of those colors around the body carries different meanings.

Your aura can change, based on what's happening physically or mentally, Ashley said. Hers is consistently mostly the same.

"I'm pretty much always red and purple, and sometimes blue and yellow," she said. "But after I've had a meditation or a massage or meditated for an hour, I'll show up rainbow or almost rainbow."

Making People Feel Seen

Stellar State frequently pops up at metaphysical stores Ace of Cups and Spellcrafter. Ashley said the owners have "taken her under their wing." People can hire her for private events. She has also taken the business to Richmond, Virginia, where she's from, and to California. She was surprised to find there wasn't a resident aura photographer in the San Diego area. So she's filling a void there, too.

The instant aura photos come in a

Aura **continued on page 12**



LAUREN ASHLEY

Stellar State uses the AuraCamera 6000, an analog instant film camera first developed in the 1970s. Hand sensors read the subject's biofeedback and translate it into colors on the photo.

Look for Restaurant Specials on page 22

Dentistry with a personal touch



FREE 2ND OPINION

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Pier Dental

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727-363-6169
pierdental.net

Aura **continued from page 11**

card that explains the colors' meanings. For a little extra cost, Ashley will also do a reading of your aura. She talks through what the colors mean personally, making sure "people feel seen."

People open up in the sessions, she said, revealing deeply personal details. Ashley thrives on that human connection, and thinks people are primed for it.

"It's almost like the world's been in shambles for this period of time, and it's kind of forcing us to look within," she said. "As a collective, we all seem to be starting to heal ourselves, which in turn heals the planets and all this evil in the world."

For more information, follow Stellar State at instagram.com/stellarstate-aura. ◈



LAUREN ASHLEY

Stellar State founder Lauren Ashley at one of her pop-up booths.

MEET THE PRESS!

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 12 P.M.

Why do newspapers do things the way they do? Why did *The Gabber Newspaper* print that story? Why didn't they print that story? What's it like being part of a newspaper?

Come ask owners and staff all your questions, make your voice heard, and meet the press that loves Gulfport as much as you do at this quarterly forum!

Gulfport Library • 5501 28th Ave. S.



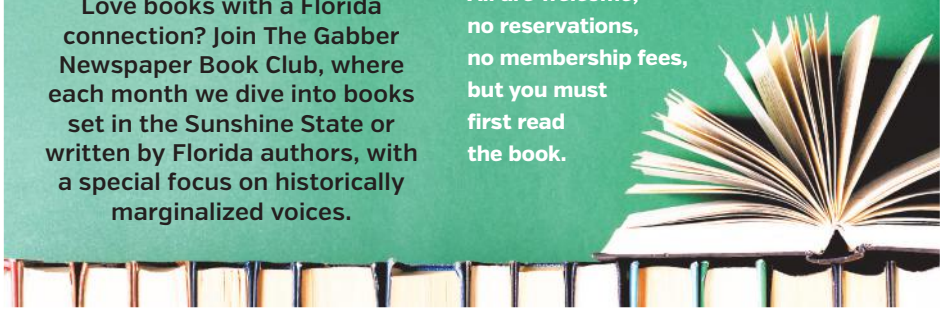
The Gabber Newspaper

BOOK CLUB

Love books with a Florida connection? Join The Gabber Newspaper Book Club, where each month we dive into books set in the Sunshine State or written by Florida authors, with a special focus on historically marginalized voices.

For dates, location, and book list, scan the QR code or visit thegabber.com/events-directory/gabber-events/

All are welcome, no reservations, no membership fees, but you must first read the book.





ONLY $25

Gulfport Rising

A Florida Beach Community Reflects on Hurricanes Helene and Milton

Curated by award-winning writer Lynn Taylor, this hardcover, 80 page, full-color book contains essays, poetery, photography, and art from more than 40 Gulfport creatives and serves as a testiment to the community's resiliance in the wake of 2024's devistating storms.

AVAILABLE NOW
AT *THE GABBER NEWSPAPER* OFFICE!

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Headlines and Heartstrings

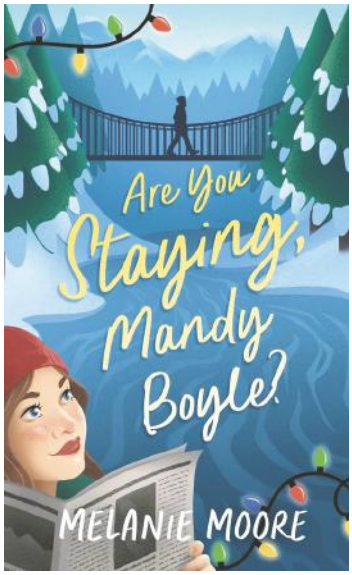
A Rom-Com With a Message About Small-Town Papers

By Cathy Salustri

Typically this newspaper reviews books about Florida or written by Florida writers.

Typically.

When a press release for *Are You Staying, Mandy Boyle?* showed up, though, we made an exception. It's set mostly in Vermont, which is almost as far north as you can get in the United States without getting government-funded healthcare. Author Melanie Moore lives in Columbus, Ohio, which is not a state known for warm winters and white sandy beaches. *Are You Staying, Mandy Boyle?* has nothing to do with Florida.



MELANIE MOORE

Author Melanie Moore's *Are You Staying, Mandy Boyle?* is a heartwarming, sobering look at the state of small weekly papers in the U.S. It's fiction, but barely.

So Why Are *We* Reviewing It?

It's a fictional story – her publisher markets it as a romantic comedy – that tells the heartbreaking truth about owning and running a small-town weekly newspaper. It's funny and heartwarming and sobering all at once. Moore's crafted a small town where everyone seems to know everyone's business, and everyone has *feelings* about the local paper. There's Facebook drama, a council member who steals money from the town, and a weekly paper that's limping along despite how much the community relies on it.

Swap a snowstorm for a hurricane and Moore has written about Gulfport and *The Gabber Newspaper*.

Except, you'll realize as you read the book, it's not about *The Gabber Newspaper*. It's about *every paper like us in the United States*. The themes echo from one newsroom to the next: Newspapers hold governments accountable. Newspapers keep a community informed. Newspapers *matter*.

And it's incredibly difficult and heartbreaking to own one. In the story, Mandy Boyle writes an essay as part of a contest to win the paper so the current owner can retire. She wins and moves from a shrinking newsroom in New York City to an almost-bankrupt one in Vermont. She falls in love, makes friends, and finds herself utterly charmed by the community. Aside from the storyline about the paper running out of money, *Are You Staying, Mandy Boyle?* is a warm hug of a book, delightful through and through.

If you've ever wondered what a day in the life of a small-newspaper publisher looks like, or what goes through her head, read this book. Because as one, I can tell you Moore nailed it. She may as well have been in my head while she was writing it. She wasn't – I've never met her, and I'd never heard of her before we received the press release about this book. That tells me we're not the only ones living this story.

I won't tell you how it ends, because it's an excellent book that deserves to be read. But it's a rom-com, so it's not all doom and gloom.

Even if the message hits really close to home, at least this newspaper knows it is not alone.

Want to win a copy of this book? Email info@thegabber.com and tell us why you think local journalism matters. The winner will be announced Dec. 3. ◈

Town Shores Waterfront

New on Market
Waterfront, oversized 1 BR, 1B. Remodeled to "the nines." 1,060 sq ft, steps to the pool
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An Aquarium in Your Window
Looking West, Southwest at the wonderful unobstructed view of Boca Ciega Bay, a remodeled 1BR, 1½ B
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A Beautiful, Unique 2/2 Corner
Large, remodeled, nicely appointed
Water on two sides and a pool on the third.
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CROSSWORD

Solution on page 19

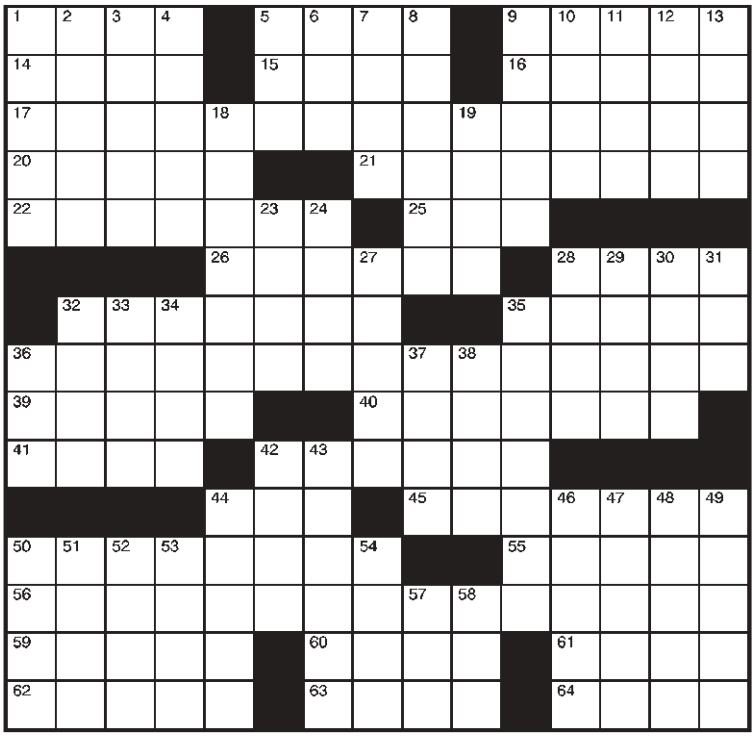
ACROSS

1 Bull bait
5 Bryn ___: college for women
9 Chromatic jazz
14 "___ le roi": 1793 outcry
15 Caesar's wings
16 Frankie or Cleo
17 Cousteau's deadening device
20 Gradually empty
21 Ant, for one
22 Agents of destruction
25 Cuba libre ingredient
26 Lady with a lei
28 Kind of sister or brother
32 Fitting room actions
35 Actress Teegarden
36 Perón's gift to Evita?
39 Small bay
40 Baleful look
41 Queen of Folk
42 Levels
44 Frat letter
45 Nag hubby
50 Farewell parties
55 Land: L.
56 Monet's sky picture
59 Used crosshairs
60 HOMES member
61 Slip ___: err
62 Intersects
63 River duck
64 Turner, before Tina

DOWN

1 Louisiana cooking style
2 Degrade
3 "___ in Terris": 1963 encyclical
4 Burl or arab trailer
5 Fannie ___
6 Roker and more
7 WWII soldiers
8 Spiritually regenerated
9 Youthful glow
10 Merit
11 Netanyahu, to friends
12 Ten to a sawbuck
13 Sassy
18 Some hairdos
19 Twist around, var.
23 ___ up!
24 Restaurateur Toots
27 Gather from the facts
28 Take on
29 Fukien port
30 ___ majesty
31 Charge
32 Sandwich stuff
33 Rough respiration
34 Suffragist ___ Haynes Gillmore
35 Site of Olympic bombing
36 Flying sail
37 "Well, did you ___?": Porter ditty
38 Give a ticket
42 Diamond call
43 Miss Muffet's seat
44 Bolender and Duncan, of the performing arts
46 Rose segment
47 She's Jong at heart?
48 Entertain baby
49 Roo's mother
50 Three-card monte, e.g.
51 Sculptor Nadelman
52 Romeo or Juliet
53 Tune for two
54 Kind of loser
57 Creek
58 Harris or Gibson

Puns Head!



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SUDOKU

Solution on page 19

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Artist Talks, Bike Tours, and Yard Sales



ABBY BAKER

Sort through Gulfport's finest finds at the City-wide Yard Sale on Saturday, Nov. 14.

Thursday, Nov. 12

Helping Your Orchids Look Their Best Join the Florida West Coast Orchid Society for a presentation by Corinne Arnold on keeping your orchids healthy and beautiful. Beginners can learn basic repotting with Bret Ullery at 6 p.m. *Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, 10891 102nd Ave. N., Seminole. Doors open at 5:45 p.m. parnold3@tampabay.rr.com. 727-475-0750.*

Zee's Barbeque Fall Night Market Shop from more than 30 local vendors, grab some barbecue, and support Friends of Strays at this fall night market. Bring your pup along for the fun! *Foodie Labs, 515 22nd St. S., St. Petersburg. 6-9 p.m instagram.com/zeesbarbeque, 727-238-5063.* F DF

Hot Tonic at Mazzaro's Jazz and wine are a classic pairing. Sip your way through Mazzaro's Wine Event while Hot Tonic brings the live music. *Mazzaro's, 2909 22nd Ave. N., St. Petersburg. 6:30-8:30 p.m. mazzarosmarket.com, 727-321-2400.*

Happy Hour with the Historian Did Al Capone have a house in St. Petersburg? Author Scott Deitche explores Tampa Bay's organized crime history and its ties to the Sunshine City. *St. Petersburg Museum of History, 335 Second Ave. NE, St. Petersburg. 6:30 p.m. $7-$15. historystpete.org, 727-894-1052.*

Native Plants Learn which native plants can thrive in your yard at this Thursday night class. IFAS Extension Agent Steve Robinson discusses Pinellas County's native plants, soils, and climate, with practical advice for local gardeners. *Hammock Hall, 3010 31st St. S., St. Petersburg. 7 p.m. boydhillpreserve.com, 727-893-7326.*

Friday, Nov. 13

FloridaRAMA Fest Get a first look at new installations, the Mobile Mini Museum, and diorama entries inside FloridaRAMA's immersive experience. Tickets include early festival access, the Artists' Reunion, and two drink tickets. *FloridaRAMA, 2606 Fairfield Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 6-9 p.m. $35. floridarama.art, 850-896-1639.*

Deer Tick Grab a cold one and catch indie rockers Deer Tick as they bring their rowdy, roots-tinged sound to St. Pete, with special guests opening the night. *Bayboro Brewing, 2390 Fifth Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 7-11 p.m. $30-$35. deertick26.eventbrite.com.*

Saturday, Nov. 14

Gulfport City-wide Yard Sale Spend the day hunting for bargains and secondhand treasures throughout Gulfport. Pick up a brochure of participating addresses at City facilities now or at Gulfport Public Library on sale day; locations will also be mapped online. *Throughout Gulfport. Dawn to dusk. mygulfport.us, 727-893-1000.* F DF

Black History Bike Tour Explore St. Petersburg's Black history on a five-mile bike ride with local historian Josette Green, followed by a conversation with Mr. B about his lived experiences. Ages 13 and older are welcome; youth must attend with an adult. Bring your own bike and helmet; RSVP required. *2198 15th*

TTD **continued on page 16**

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TTD **continued from page 15**

Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Suggested donation $25-$40; free for those unable to contribute. blackhistorybiketour.com, 727-503-4736.

Gulfport Blues, Art & Seafood Festival Come hungry for seafood and stay for live music, local art, and vendors at this celebration of Gulfport's 49th Street corridor. Catch Henry Ashwood, Delta Swamp Rats, Tony & Sal, and Tommy Z, who takes the stage at 6 p.m. *Trolley Market Square, 4900 Tangerine Ave. S., Gulfport. 10 a.m.-8 p.m. facebook.com/fusion49thdistrict, 727-710-6676.* F

The Market Marie Shop more than 125 local vendors, browse fresh produce, and enjoy DJ music, kids' activities, and pet adoptions at this free waterfront market. *Coachman Park, 300 Cleveland St., Clearwater. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. facebook.com/themarketmarie, 727-667-3060.* F DF

"The Gift of Art" – Holiday Gifts, Show and Sale This Saturday evening, shop handmade gifts, ornaments, jewelry, small artworks, and mystery grab bags at this holiday show and sale. Meet the artists at the reception with refreshments and live music by Grey and Dented. The show runs Nov. 12-Jan. 2. *GCAA ArtWorks, 5546 1st Ave. N., St. Petersburg. 5-9 p.m. gcaa-artworks.com, 727-738-8010.* F

Second Saturday ArtWalk Explore galleries and studios across St. Petersburg's arts districts, meet local artists, and discover new exhibitions. *Various locations, St. Petersburg. 5-9 p.m. stpeteartsalliance.org, 727-754-6404.* F

A Wreath for Every Soldier Enjoy live music by the Surfin Racoons and support remembrance wreaths for Bay Pines National Cemetery at the eighth annual fundraiser. Sponsor a wreath for $17; food and drinks are available for purchase. *Mastry's Brewing Co., 7705 Blind Pass Road, St. Pete Beach. 7 p.m. wreathsacrossamerica.org/fl0519.* F

Painting with Both Sides of the Paint Watch artist Steve Pennisi demonstrate his technique, peeling away film to reveal the hidden side of the paint, during Second Saturday ArtWalk. His exhibition runs Nov. 1-Dec. 31. *Mirella Cimato Gallery in the St. Pete Opera Building, 2145 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 7:30 p.m. pennisiart.com, 207-318-3080.*

Sunday, Nov. 15

Historic Kenwood Porch Music Day Enjoy 30 musical acts across 14 porches, featuring Americana, Celtic, pop, classic rock, and more. Bring a portable chair and cash to tip the musicians at this neighborhood event. *Throughout Historic Kenwood, St. Petersburg. 1-5 p.m. historickenwood.org, 513-223-2599.* F

Tuesday, Nov. 17

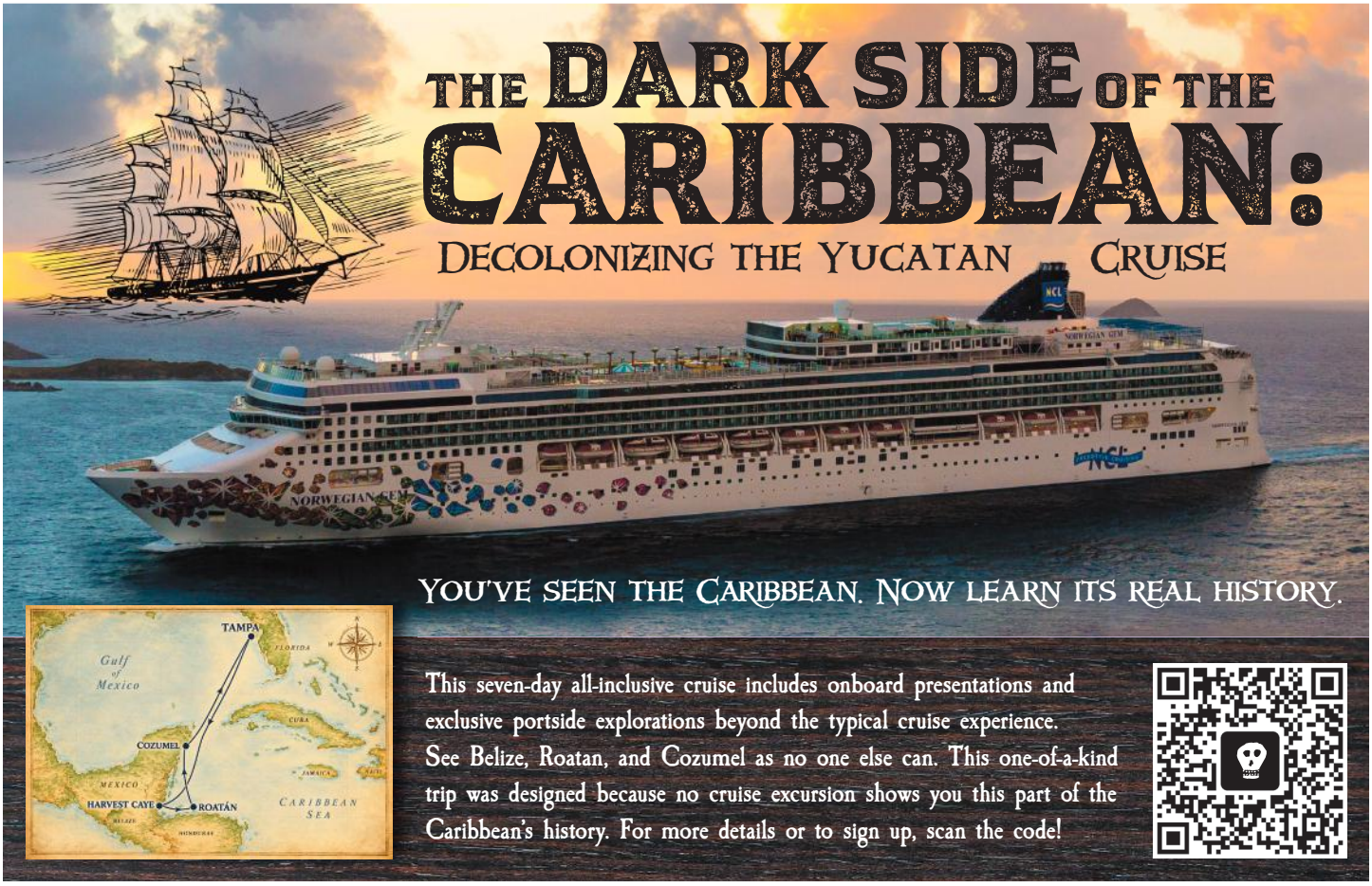
Gulfport Tuesday Fresh Market Spend your Tuesday strolling Gulfport's historic Waterfront District at this year-round market packed with vendors, shops, galleries, restaurants, and plenty of Old Florida charm. Parking is free, so make a whole day of it. Every Tuesday. *Beach Boulevard below 28th Avenue South, Gulfport. 9 a.m.-2 p.m. visitgulfportflorida.com, info@visitgulfportflorida.com.* F DF

Conversations with the Mayor Pull up a chair with Madeira Beach Mayor Anne-Marie Brooks to share ideas, ask questions, and hear about City projects and priorities. *DeLosa's Pizzeria, 12800 Village Blvd., Madeira Beach. 11 a.m.-1 p.m. madeirabeachfl.gov, 727-391-9951.* F

Bonsai & Brews Sip a beer by the beach while creating your own bonsai tree. Thunderstruck Bonsai will guide guests through the basics of bonsai design, and everyone takes home their finished living creation. *Mastry's Brewing Co., 7701 Blind Pass*

TTD **continued on page 18**





TTD **continued from page 17**

Road, St. Pete Beach. 7-9 p.m. $75. facebook.com/mastrysbrewingco, 727-202-8045.

***Everything is Fragile*: Artist Talk** Meet artist Becca McCoy as she discusses her solo exhibit, *Everything is Fragile*, and demonstrates the cyanotype process. *Studio Grand Central, 2260 First Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 7 p.m. facebook.com/leafmorestudios, 727-202-7019.* F

Wednesday, Nov. 18

Paint the Holidays Bright Get creative for a cause with Gulf Coast JFCS at this holiday pottery fundraiser. A $36 donation includes painting and firing two winter-themed clay items, holiday treats, story time, and a pop-up shop with local artist Jenipher Lyn. *Practically Pikasso, 6850 Central Ave., Suite A, St. Petersburg. 6-8 p.m. $36. gulfcoastjfcs.org, 727-479-1800.*

Trivia Wednesdays at Neptune Grill Test your knowledge with host Greg Anderson in three rounds of trivia, with prizes for winners. Play solo or as a team using your phone. Free to play! *Neptune Grill, 5501 Shore Blvd. S., Gulfport. 6-8 p.m. facebook.com/neptunegrillgulfport, 727-623-4823.* F

Thursday, Nov. 19

Collage for Adults Use tape to transfer magazine images and create layered collages at the Gulfport Arts Center. Supplies are limited; register ahead! *Gulfport Arts Center, 2726 54th St. S., Gulfport. 5-6:45 p.m. artscenter@mygulfport.us, 727-893-1162.* F

Potluck & Artist Talk Meet Morean Center for Clay's new artists in residence, Jess Rossi, Kira Straub, and Quinn Hanna, at its annual community potluck and artist talk. *Morean Center for Clay, 420 22nd St. S., St. Petersburg. 6 p.m. moreanartscenter.org, 727-821-7162.* F

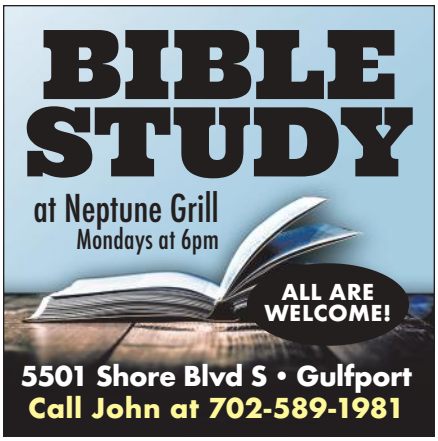
Puzzle Panic Race to finish a 500-piece mystery puzzle in teams of four. Come solo or with friends; all ages and skill levels welcome. Reserve ahead. *St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club, 559 Mirror Lake Dr. N., St. Petersburg. 6-8 p.m. $12 per person. stpeteshuffle.com, 727-822-2083.*



BECCA MCCOY

Meet artist Becca McCoy and explore her solo exhibit, *Everything is Fragile*, at Studio Grand Central on Tuesday, Nov. 17.

WORSHIP







SOLUTION

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The GABBER **ADVERTISING DEADLINE FOR NEXT THURSDAY'S ISSUE IS FRIDAY BY 3 p.m.**

GABBER ON VACATION



SANDY MARTIN

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Locally owned Sunshine Grout and Tile that specializes in grout repair, grout cleaning/coloring/sealing, re-caulking, tile replacement, Shower/floor/countertop rejuvenation. Anything tile related we can fix. Make your floors, bathrooms, and kitchens look new again. Free estimates. sunshinegroutandtile.com 727-900-9955

TILE AND MARBLE INSTALLATIONS & PRESSURE WASHING

Includes bathroom remodels, flooring (interior or exterior), repair & shower remodels a specialty. No job too big or small. Competitive rates with 37 years experience. Call Dave Smith day or night, 727-798-2075.

PARRISH AND SONS ROOFING CO.

Gulfport's premier roofing contractor, proudly serving our community since 1979! Specializing in residential and commercial roof replacements, repairs, and maintenance. Quality craftsmanship, honest service, and local reliability. CCC1330293. Call Jon at 727-477-5313 to schedule your free estimate.

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Lawn / Landscape

GOOD RIDDANCE LANDSCAPING: 727-265-6454

Great work with great prices. We do it all. Check us out on Google at Good Riddance Landscaping. 727-265-6454.

MAKE IT BEAUTIFUL AGAIN - 407-244-6045

Flower beds made new again. We install mulch, shells, rocks, sod, plants, and rock gardens. Small tree removed/installed, weeding done. 30 years experience. Free estimates. St. Pete/Gulfport. 407-244-6045. CLEAN UP CLEAN UP CLEAN UP.

FRESHLY CUT LAWN MAINTENANCE & TREE SERVICE

Veteran owned and operated. Reliable, great rates, clean-outs, year-round service, tree trimming & removal. Free estimates. 30+ years experience. Serving S. Pinellas Call 727-343-6759.

LOCAL RELIABLE LAWN MAINTENANCE

Berry Land Services is a Gulfport based lawncare and landscaping company focused on reliable, professional and friendly service. Call or text at 727-479-2331. Email at berrylandservices@gmail.com. Or book at www.berrylandservices.com. Lets make Gulfport Shine!

OUTDOOR CLEANING & TREE WORK Trimming trees including palms and removing big and small trees, all kinds! Cleaning garages, mowing, and hauling. Call Sylvester 727-460-8721 or 727-215-8293 for all your clean up needs!

Miscellaneous Service

EARLY AIRPORT RIDES

Furnishing rides to the airports, cruise lines, and wherever you may need. TEXT Nancy at 860-719-5099 to set up your ride to your next destination!

Moving / Hauling

HB HAULING & HANDYMAN SERVICES

House/garage clean outs. Demolition. Shed removal, fence removal, yard clear out, etc. Dump trailer rental. Lowest price guaranteed. Local family owned business. Call Kenny at 727-793-5816.

JUNK REMOVAL – FULL SERVICE

Big or Small, We Haul it All. Eviction/hoarder/property cleanouts. Shed/fence removal, carpet removal, garage/storage clean outs. Too much stuff, let us help! Fully Licensed and Insured. Free estimates. Lamys Hauling and Removal Service. 727-501-6464. Lamyshaulingandremoval.com.

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CUSTOM PAINTED KITCHENS, FURNITURE & MORE!

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If stress, tension, and tight muscles are catching up with you, INFINITY MASSAGE THERAPY is here to help! Customized therapeutic massage sessions tailored to your body's needs. 5702 Gulfport Blvd S, Suite 6, Gulfport. Call/Text:727-560-3485 or 727-667-6280.

DEB WOLFE'S PETSITTING I love all dogs and cats and I'll come to your home and treat them like my own. Enjoy your vacation knowing I'm looking after your fur babies. Photo reports with each visit. Reasonable rates from a local who is also an area homeowner; resident since 1985. Voicemail or text: 727-871-6658.

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Now hiring: Part-time salesperson. Outbound calls from our office. $15/hr to start plus bonuses; pay weekly. Leads provided. Will train, but outbound sales experience a huge plus. dog-friendly workplace. Contact advertising@thegabber.com.

HELP WANTED

Looking for experienced house cleaners, up to $20/hr., 30+ hours a week (hours may vary), weekly pay. Call 727-743-0701.

MISCELLANEOUS

For Sale

ITEMS FOR SALE

Kayaks - separately $450 each, $800 for pair. Pongo 120 - new seat - equipped for fishing - orange. Pongo 100 - new straps - green. Consoles for each included. Kayaks have been well-used and have some minor signs of love but float and track well. Call or text 727-656-5420.

PASS-A-GRILLE COMMUNITY CHURCH THRIFT BOUTIQUE

Now open at 1606 Pass-A-Grille Way, St. Pete Beach (corner of 17th Ave. & Pass-A-Grille Way). Open Tuesdays, Thursdays, & Saturdays from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Legal Notices/Fictitious Name Notice

NOTICE UNDER FICTITIOUS NAME LAW Notice is hereby given that Michael J. Section 865.09, Florida statutes. notice is hereby given that Forever Endeavors llc, desiring business under Fry Guy in Pinellas County, Florida, intends to register said name with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations.

RESTAURANT SPECIALS

NOVEMBER AT MADEMOISELLE PARIS GULFPORT!

Join our Burgundy Wine Dinner November 18th at 6:30 PM, featuring French cuisine and wine pairings. Celebrate Thanksgiving November 26th with delicious holiday specials! Reservations recommended. Call 727-547-0367 to reserve your table!

CENTRAL DINER SOUTH PASADENA COME SAY HI!

SPECIALS Full breakfast special - $10.75 • Pancake/Waffle/French Toast special - $11 • Cheeseburger w/fries - $13. Village Plaza, 2525 Pasadena Ave S Ste C

BLUE SUN TEA BAR GULFPORT

Discover Gulfport's newest hidden gem! BLUE SUN TEA BAR at Red Feather Studios offers nourishing farm-to-table bites, specialty teas, coffee, boutique shopping, and a lush plant nursery. Come sip, savor, shop & stay awhile! Friday–Sunday | 12–5 PM. 1301 49th St S, Gulfport.

Scan the QR code to see Gulfport restaurant specials on your phone.

Yard/Garage Sale

HUGE CARPORT SALE

We are joining the town wide yard sales! Come find some great bargains! • Household items • Kitchenware • Decorations • Lots of miscellaneous treasures! Great prices – something for everyone! Date: 11-14, Time: 8-noon, Location: 5935 30th Ave S, Gulfport

ESTATE SALE, SATURDAY, 9 TO 2

vintage clothing, mid century modern knick knacks, household items. Come on by! 5713 13th Ave S, Gulfport

Commercial Properties Rent

HOUSE FOR SALE OR RENT

Completely renovated 3BD/2BA near St. Pete College with washer/dryer, and ample parking. $2200/monthly plus security deposit/first/last. No pets. No smoking. Sale price $425K-seller will help with closing costs. Call 727-686-9942 or 727-776-1794.

Furnished Rentals

1BR HOUSE ADJACENT TO GULFPORT

Large 1BR w/off street parking. Private, furnished, W/D, utilities included. Available for the winter season. Adjacent to Pinellas Bike Trail. $1950 monthly. Call Ed at 678-488-7152 or Dina at 727-800-5906 or 727-410-5035.

Real Estate For Rent

FULLY RENOVATED GULFPORT CONDO FOR RENT

2BR, 2Bth, 1st floor, end unit, Avalon Building. $1950 monthly. Completely refurbished, all new. Lots of windows, very bright open concept. 3 swimming pools. Bus service at complex. Call Ed 678-488-7152 or Dina 727-800-5906 or 727-410-5035.

STUDIO FOR RENT IN GULFPORT $950 plus electricity. Unfurnished. Quiet private yard. Sewer, water, and trash included. First, last, and security deposit. Call Dave 216-536-4727.

GULFPORT FULLY FURNISHED 2BR APARTMENT

Private deck, yard & pool. Walk to beachfront restaurants, shops, pubs, art district. No pets. Tenant pays background check. Utilities included. No onsite laundry. $2000/mo + 1 month security. Call/text 727-365-9440.

LAND FOR SALE 2 submerged land parcels behind Shore Plaza Condominiums, 1893 Shore Drive S. $33,777. Call 702.504.2644.

2BD/2BA GATED CONDO

2nd floor, 1,025sf. Stainless steel appliances, washer/dryer, central A/C, eat-in kitchen, screened terrace, covered parking, pool, gym & more. Walk to shops, restaurants. On St. Pete Beach near Palms Hospital. $350,000. 718-549-7636 adielpny@outlook.com



Gulfport Real Estate Sales

Find More Home Sales at thegabber.com

Here are some Gulfport homes sold from Oct. 30-Nov. 6.



CATHY SALUSTRI

5980 Shore Blvd. S., #907 (Town Shores)
This one-bed, one-and-a-half-bath condo, built in 1972, has 1,170 square feet. It listed for $229,000 and sold for $215,000.

6343 Vista Verde Dr. E. (Stetson)
This three-bed, two-and-a-half-bath townhouse, built in 2003, has 2,332 square feet. It listed for $649,900 and sold for $620,000.

5950 Pelican Bay Plaza S., #705 (Pasadena Yacht & Country Club)
This two-bed, two-bath condo, built in 1982, has 1,476 square feet. It listed for $389,000 and sold for $360,000.

2960 59th St. S., #311 (Town Shores)
This two-bed, two-bath condo, built in 1973, has 1,120 square feet. It listed for $149,900 and sold for $140,000.

3128 59th St. S., #115 (Town Shores)
This two-bed, two-bath condo, built in 1972, has 1,250 square feet. It listed and sold for $147,500.

The Gabber lists real estate sales every week, as space allows. This may not be a comprehensive list of all homes and condos sold in Gulfport, and often does not include commercial properties or business sales.

City of Gulfport, Florida
Notice of 2027 Municipal General Election and Qualifying Period

Notice is hereby given that, in accordance with Charter provisions, the City of Gulfport will hold a Municipal General Election on Tuesday, March 09, 2027, for the election of two (2) Councilmembers – Ward II and Ward IV. Qualifying begins at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, December 07, 2026 and ends at Noon, Monday, December 14, 2026. Candidates for Councilmember shall be a resident of their Ward for at least one (1) year prior to the date of qualification. Please contact the Office of the City Clerk for further qualifying information and paperwork, 893-1012.

Ciudad de Gulfport, Florida
Aviso de Elección General Municipal 2027 y Período de Calificación

Por la presente se notifica que, de acuerdo con las disposiciones de la Carta, la Ciudad de Gulfport llevará a cabo una Elección General Municipal el martes 09 de marzo de 2027, para la elección de dos (2) concejales: Distrito II y Distrito IV. La clasificación comienza a las 8:30 a.m. del lunes 07 de diciembre de 2026 y termina al mediodía del lunes 14 de diciembre de 2026. Los candidatos a concejal deberán ser residentes de su distrito durante al menos un (1) año antes de la fecha de calificación. Comuníquese con la Oficina del Secretario Municipal para obtener más información y documentación sobre los requisitos, 893-1012.

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