

Painting a Safer Path

By Maggie Duffy



MAGGIE DUFFY

On Aug. 14, Maximo Elementary students helped paint a 400-foot mural at the Lakewood Trail Connector, part of a push for a safer route to the school.

On an August afternoon in St. Petersburg, as rain loomed overhead, groups of Maximo Elementary students frolicked with cans of spray paint to add the finishing touches

to a new mural on a 400-foot long wall.

They were there to celebrate the unveiling of the vibrant mural at the Lakewood Trail Connector, a pre-

viously neglected pedestrian-only connection across I-275 between 31st Street South and US 19.

The mural was a group effort in-
Mural continued on page 13

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VOICES

Remember: "Trust, but verify."

Gulfport's Flock Cameras

We've been Flocked!

On Nov. 3, 2023 former Chief [Robert] Vincent entered into a mass public surveillance contract with Flock Safety by simply filling out a purchase order in the amount of \$10,950 and signing an order form.

That's all it took – just his signature and a really big taxpayer-funded check.

I find it disturbing that 1) the cost of Flock is buried in the current budget so well I that can't find it which begs the question of what else is buried; 2) City Council did not approve this purchase; and 3) no public hearings were held.

Had public hearings been held we would have all learned how every vehicle in the Flock system is tracked, how Flock misreads tags and sends out "alerts" resulting in innocent people being arrested or worse, how some police officers stalk people, and how Flock shares its data.

The Gulfport Chief of Police stated that Flock only reads license tags but Flock does a lot more. Paragraph 4.1 of Flock's Terms and Conditions states as follows: "Customer hereby grants to Flock a limited, non-exclusive, royalty-free, irrevocable, perpetual, worldwide license to [a] use and disclose Customer Data to provide the Flock Services; and [b] use Custom-

er Data to support and improve Flock's products and services."

So can someone tell me why the Gulfport Police Department needs to know what doctor you went to, where you shop, who you visited, where you bank, etc. because, by its own admission, Flock tracks your movements and invades your right to privacy.

Thankfully on June 29, 2026 the U.S. Supreme Court issued a long-awaited decision in *Chatrie v. United States*. The majority of the Supreme Court Justices concluded the police conduct a Fourth Amendment search when they obtain a person's location data – even from a private company, even for a short window of time. This ruling only applied to cell phone location data but can easily be applied to Flock as it too uses location data.

In conclusion, I can only assume that privacy has no meaning in the City of Gulfport.

Or does it?

–Deborah Blake, Gulfport

The Gabber Newspaper encourages letters (one per person, per month). Include your real name and city, and please keep it short – <250 words. We may edit letters for content, clarity, and length. We don't print letters that incite violence, include attacks on private citizens, or that intentionally mislead people. Letters may appear online and/or in print. Comments on The Gabber's website and social media may get printed. Opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the views of The Gabber owners, advertisers, or staff. Send letters to news@thegabber.com or 2908-B Beach Blvd. S., Gulfport, FL, 33707.

Consider the Cost of Tax Cuts

Mayor's Corner: What Amendment 3 Could Mean for You

By Karen Love



Mayor Karen Love explains what Gulfport residents should know about Amendment 3, City services, tax revenue, and the upcoming vote.

While I am not in a position to advocate for or against Amendment 3, I certainly can educate residents on the proposed tax reduction. I have heard the scare tactics, and I have heard the nonsense. The correct vote may differ between you and your neighbor.

School taxes are protected from this proposal, so we do not need to squabble about paying for another child's education.

What Would You Be Willing to Give Up?

If you do not use or enjoy the programs and services provided by tax dollars, your vote should be easy. If you or your visitors use the parks, beach, pier, library, senior center, GEMS program, recreation center, History Museum, dog park,

or Art Center for free, your vote may require you to consider what you would be willing to pay if ad valorem revenue, or property-tax revenue, no longer supported them.

Have you ever had to call the police or fire-rescue department? Did you notice that they showed up and did not send you a bill? Would you like to see our parks, roads, and sidewalks maintained, or is that a service you no longer want to fund?

I understand that each resident must and will decide whether preserving City services or eliminating approximately \$1.1 million in revenue in 2027 and \$1.8 million in 2028 from the City of Gulfport's budget is the right choice.

The amendment does not change Save Our Homes. The 3% cap on annual assessment increases for

homesteaded properties remains the same.

Know What You're Paying For

Please look at your property-tax bill, identify the amount of money you pay specifically to Gulfport, and consider the alternatives before you vote. Please visit the City's website at mygulfport.us and enter "How are my taxes spent?" in the search bar.

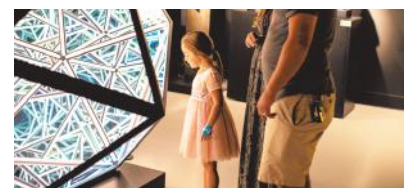
Please note that the amount Gulfport collects in ad valorem revenue, compared with the amount it spends on police and fire-rescue services, currently places us among approximately 100 cities that must support these departments with other revenues. Would you prefer that we contract these services out?

Please forward your cost-cutting measures to me at klove@mygulfport.us.

I would also like to invite you to a workshop on Dec. 3 at 6 p.m., where we will begin the conversation about slashing \$1.1 million from the following year's budget if Amendment 3 passes.

Always working toward the goal,
Mayor Karen Love ♦

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Hops and Headlines

From News to Brews: Gulfport Brewery's "Sea Breeze"

By James Schnur

Since opening in June 2020, the Gulfport Brewery + Eatery has grown into a popular gathering spot. Located at 3007 Beach Blvd. S., this converted 1933 bungalow has become a place to enjoy craft brews, tasty food, and entertainment.

Gulfport Brewery will soon release a beer called "Sea Breeze." More than a bayside gust that keeps Gulfport cool, the name "Sea Breeze" honors the legacy of the first newspaper on the lower Pinellas Peninsula.

Before Gulfport was an incorporated municipality, a small settlement named Bonifacio had approximately 150 rugged residents. Once the largest settlement in lower Pinellas, the soon-renamed Disston City had *The Sea Breeze* newspaper, which connected pioneers in the area.

Fair Winds Ahead

William J. McPherson and his father, Elias, came to Bonifacio in 1885 from DeLand in Volusia County. A year before their arrival, Hamilton Disston had started to develop lands in the area that he purchased from the state's Internal Improvement Fund in February 1881.

Disston had great ambitions. He sought to connect his land holdings to distant locations via a railroad.

On April 1, 1886, Will McPherson published the first issue of *The Sea Breeze*. Only 20 years old at the time, McPherson benefitted from the assistance of G.W. Bennett in creating the newspaper.

The first two issues of the paper mentioned its place of publication as Bonifacio, but that soon changed. Hamilton Disston paid for advertisements in most of the early issues. The paper soon marketed the community that had renamed itself Disston City.

The Sea Breeze joined Disston in calling for improved roads locally and the arrival of locomotives that would allow this settlement to grow.

Issues of *The Sea Breeze* appeared



Edwin A. Markham, a local real estate agent and regular fisher, became the owner of the *Gulfport Tribune* in the mid-1940s.

irregularly between April 1886 and April 1887. McPherson published 17 issues of *The Sea Breeze*. Usually two or four small pages in length, this paper dealt primarily with the lives of local settlers.

Breezy Days and Cloudy Plans

Lower Pinellas remained part of Hillsborough County, with most commercial activity involving boat travel to Tampa and other locations. Aside from Disston's ads, merchants from Tampa purchased many of the other ads, targeting the farmers and fishers who lived in Disston City.

From April to December 1886, Disston's advertisements helped to subsidize the costs of this small paper.

Disston met with Peter Demens in December 1886, hoping Demens would extend his Orange Belt Railway to Disston City. When Demens requested additional land from the Disston interests, they turned him down.

By early 1887, plans called for the railway to turn away from Disston City. The Orange Belt Railway instead reached Tampa Bay at present-day Demens Landing in mid-1888, connecting with the site that became St. Petersburg rather than his city.

No longer having the prospect of railroad service, Disston ended his ads in *The Sea Breeze* by January 1887. The last edition of *The Sea Breeze* appeared on April 1, 1887, a year after the first one.

At that time, the nearest settlement to Disston City with more than 100 residents was Bayview, a community near where the Bayside Bridge meets the Courtney Campbell Causeway in eastern Clearwater.

McPherson sold the paper to H.M. Langstreth. He and R.E. Neeld of the Pinellas settlement along Big Bayou's northern shore published at least one issue of the renamed *Point Pinellas Herald* in 1887, though no known copies exist today.

Next Came the Tribune

Gulfport's first weekly hometown paper appeared in the late 1930s. Haughton B. Barlow arrived in the area in the mid-1930s. He soon published a small St. Petersburg paper entitled *Town Gossip*. Around 1937, Barlow also launched the *Gulfport Tribune*.

The earliest issues of the *Tribune* may have been more of a newsletter than a newspaper. In addition to publishing the paper, Barlow also ran

unsuccessfully to become Gulfport's mayor in the November 1940 election.

When H.B. Barlow passed away on Jan. 7, 1941, his widow Gladys took control of the *Gulfport Tribune*. After running the paper for 1.5 years, she sold the *Tribune* to a group of investors in July 1942.

Edwin Asa Markham acquired the *Tribune* in 1944. A realtor at the time, Markham moved the paper to 5427 Shore Blvd. S. In addition to owning this paper for a few years, Markham also launched the *Florida Sportsman* magazine and served as president of the Florida Wildlife Federation.

Sadie Weidra became the editor of the *Gulfport Tribune* in 1945. On May 16, 1947, she bought the paper, becoming publisher and president. Weidra also wrote occasional "Gulfport News Briefs" for the *St. Petersburg Times* (now *Tampa Bay Times*).

■ A Competitive Citizen

On Aug. 12, 1947, Ruth W. Hutchins announced her plans to establish a second weekly newspaper in Gulf-

port. A former correspondent for *St. Petersburg's* afternoon newspaper, *The Evening Independent*, Hutchins began publishing the *Gulfport Citizen* in September 1947.

The *Citizen* had a motto that pledged "A Constructive Paper for a Progressive Town." Sensing the competition, Weidra hoped to expand her paper's readership by also selling copies in downtown St. Petersburg.

From September 1947 until November 1948, Gulfport held the unique distinction in Florida of having two weekly newspapers, each owned and managed by a woman.

The ownership of the *Tribune* and *Citizen* is especially notable considering the many legal obstacles women faced in Florida at that time. For example, women could not serve on Florida juries until 1949, and then could do so only if they volunteered for service.

Hutchins sold the *Gulfport Citizen* in November 1948. Weidra sold the *Gulfport Tribune* a few years later. The papers merged in July 1956, often carrying the nameplate *Gulfport Tribune*

and The *Citizen* until the paper's demise in the early 1960s.

■ Making News

Editors and publishers occasionally made news due to their interactions with City officials. The most notable example was mentioned in issues of the *St. Petersburg Times* for more than a week beginning on July 28, 1950.

In her *Gulfport Tribune*, Sadie Weidra printed a story condemning Mayor Cliff Hadley's promotion of Perry Weiss, a senior patrol officer, to acting chief of police. Hadley made this decision after the former chief, Ed Lisenby, resigned to become a Pinellas sheriff's deputy.

The majority of the Town Council opposed Weiss's promotion. In the *Tribune*, Weidra referred to Weiss as a "deflated egoist" and alleged that he had gold-plated his badge at taxpayer expense. Weiss confronted Weidra while on duty on July 27, demanding an apology or retraction.

Weidra refused, instead slapping

See continued on page 6

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Sea continued from page 5

the acting chief twice in the face in front of the paper's office. After slapping him, Weidra went into her office, locked the door, and telephoned sympathetic Town Council members.

As Weiss asked a constable to issue an arrest warrant with assault charges, Weidra said she only felt safe being handcuffed by a St. Petersburg officer, not a Gulfport one. Former Chief Lisenby ultimately took her into custody and transported her to the St. Petersburg City Jail.

Instead of posting the \$50 bond, Weidra chose to spend the night in jail. She told police in St. Petersburg that she had always wanted to spend a night behind bars, demanded a pencil and paper, and said the experience "would make a great story." She posted bail the next morning.

Crowds packed the Gulfport Casino for the Aug. 1 Town Council meeting to learn details of the arrest. Ultimately, on Aug. 5, Weidra's attorney paid \$15 in court costs and Weiss returned to patrol duties.

Gathering Gulfport Gabbings

After the *Gulfport Tribune* and *Citizen* ceased publication, George W. Brann noticed the void in local news coverage. In his opinion, the larger St. Petersburg daily papers – the *Times* and *The Evening Independent* – did not adequately cover Gulfport City Council meetings.

Brann started the *Gulfport Gabber* – today's *The Gabber Newspaper* – in November 1968. As a largely retirement community at the time, one might believe local politics had a sedate character. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Known in the community as "Mr. Gabber," Brann even entered the mayor's race in 1971. Although he lost the election, *The Gabber Newspaper* soon won the hearts of the community by its focus on hyperlocal journalism that captured the pulse of Gulfport.

Wild Times in Gulfport

City politics heated up 55 years ago. Two newspapers briefly competed with the *Gulfport Gabber* as tensions rose.

Herman Perkins, a former stock broker and undertaker who lived in the Seminole area (never in Gulfport), started attending Council meetings. In early 1971, Perkins began publishing a small, free paper, the *Midnighter*, that hurled insults at one commissioner regarding drinking and adultery. Lawsuits and threats followed, as Perkins attended Council meetings, distributed his *Midnighter*, and tensions increased by November 1971.

Soon, a retired roofing contractor named John Tonkin who also lost in the mayor's race started the *Gulfport-Pasadena Sun*. Similar to the *Midnighter*, this paper lambasted Gulfport officials until at least mid-1972. These papers disappeared, while *The Gabber's* readership grew.

An Independent, Locally-Owned Paper

"Mr. Gabber" Brann expanded the focus of the *Gulfport Gabber* beyond events in city hall. Elsie and Theodore "Ted" Havness acquired the paper from Brann in 1980.

Deb and Ken Reichart took over the paper in 1992. A June 2, 1994 advertise-

ment in *The Gabber* even attracted national attention. When someone wanted to sell an Elvis canvas image that "looks more like Prince," news of the ad soon reached *Tonight Show* host Jay Leno.

During a segment where Leno poked fun at odd and interesting newspaper pieces, he mentioned the ad. He mistakenly referred to the paper as the "Gulfport Grabber." The segment brought attention to the Reicharts and the paper, along with a few laughs.

Since the 1990s, *The Gabber Newspaper* has bucked many trends. At a time when many smaller weeklies have disappeared or become mouthpieces for larger papers, *The Gabber* has remained a locally-owned, independent voice – the oldest such paper in Florida.

Shutdowns during COVID-19 led to the paper's brief closure in March 2020. A few months later, longtime *Gabber* journalist Cathy Salustri Loper and Barry Loper acquired the paper from Ken and Deb Reichart. The transition took place on June 22, 2020. Print issues resumed on July 9.

Toasting Historic Headlines

The Gulfport Brewery + Eatery's "Sea Breeze" honors a frontier paper in a settlement that later became Gulfport. Much has changed in lower Pinellas since readers picked up the first copy of *The Sea Breeze* 140 years ago.

Although the present-day *Tampa Bay Times* traces its origins to the *West Hillsborough Times* that began in Dunedin in 1884, from 1886 to 1887 *The Sea Breeze* exclusively served our small but growing community. ♦



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Big Plans with Big Prices

St. Pete Beach Commission Approves City Contracts and Projects

By Trei Johnson

The St. Pete Beach City Commission unanimously approved a \$3.7 million law enforcement contract, \$73,500 in parking license plate readers and a \$100,410 security-system replacement on Aug. 19.

Commissioners also set a Sept. 16 groundbreaking for Fire Station 22 and received updates on public transportation and other City projects.

Sheriff's Contract Tops \$3.7 Million

The Commission approved a \$3,707,724 agreement with the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office for law enforcement services from Oct. 1, 2026, through Sept. 30, 2027.

The contract represents a roughly 5.7% increase. Assistant City Manager Adam Poyer said the City receives about a 30% discount from the full cost because residents already help fund Sheriff's Office operations through county taxes.

The City of St. Pete Beach previously cut its community policing deputies from three to two and reduced funding for additional law enforcement services from about \$250,000 to \$150,000.

Poyer said the City has spent less of the additional funding than expected this year, so he anticipates the City will receive some money back.

Parking License Plate Readers Approved

Commissioners also approved a previously budgeted \$73,500 payment to Conure Telecom Services for license plate recognition equipment that the City will use for parking enforcement.

Poyer said the system differs from Flock Safety, the license plate reader technology used by law enforcement agencies. The City of St. Pete Beach will mount its readers on parking enforcement vehicles.

"Once the license plates are inputted into our program, via resident tag, or one of our pay stations, or online app, then this system would



On Aug. 19, St. Pete Beach Commissioners approve a \$3.7M sheriff's contract, parking license plate readers, and a new security system.

basically scan the license plates as they drive through the parking areas," Poyer said.

When the system detects a potential parking violation, it will alert parking enforcement officers. Poyer said the equipment does not search for other information about vehicles or their owners.

New Security System

The Commission approved a \$100,410.60 contract with Empire Consulting Inc. to replace the City's aging security and access-control system.

Technology Director Candyce Galloway said the manufacturer discontinued the existing system, leaving the City without regular support or security updates and creating potential security vulnerabilities.

The replacement will also bring Fire Station 23 and Public Services onto the City's access-control system. Both locations currently use

separate security measures.

The three-year contract includes the system replacement and implementation. Galloway said the City expects the new system to save about \$7,000 annually after implementation.

Fire Station 22 Groundbreaking Set

St. Pete Beach will break ground on the new Fire Station 22 at 10 a.m. Sept. 16 at 1950 Pass-a-Grille Way, the site of the former station.

District 1 Commissioner Karen Marriott also told residents that PSTA is considering eliminating Route 90, which runs from the county park area to 34th Street in south St. Petersburg.

Marriott, who represents St. Pete Beach on the PSTA board, said the agency will hold a public hearing on the proposed elimination at its next board meeting.

The next St. Pete Beach City Commission meeting in Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. ♦

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Public Access on Trial

St. Pete Beach Cites Customary Use in Beach Access Lawsuit

By Trei Johnson

St. Pete Beach will use the public's historical use of its shoreline as a defense in a federal beach-access lawsuit. The City plans to ask residents for photographs and other evidence of recreational use in the area involved in the case.

City Attorney Ralf Brooks told Commissioners on Aug. 19 that the City filed its answer that day in litigation involving the Undertow and Plaza Beach Hotel. The answer's ninth affirmative defense invokes Florida's common-law doctrine of customary use, which can recognize public recreational use of privately owned dry-sand portions of a beach when that use meets standards set by Florida courts.

The City will focus its evidence-gathering on an approximately half-mile stretch south of the public beach at issue in the lawsuit. Brooks said photographs and other historical evidence from longtime beachgoers could help document activities such as paddleboarding and skimboarding and show the public's longstanding use of the shoreline.

City Raises Customary Use Defense

Brooks said the City's defense applies if the plaintiffs' claims seek to exclude the public from the dry-sand



St. Pete Beach will use customary use as a defense in a federal beach-access lawsuit and seek residents' historical photos and evidence.

area in question.

"The public's recreational use to the relevant general area of the beach has been ancient, reasonable, without interruption and free from dispute," Brooks read from the City's affirmative defense.

Brooks cited the Florida Supreme Court's 1974 *City of Daytona Beach v. Tona-Rama Inc.* decision and an 11th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals case involving the Town of Redington Beach.

He also updated Commissioners on *Daniels v. Town of Palm Beach*, another customary-use case involving the law firm representing the plaintiffs in the St. Pete Beach litigation. Brooks said both parties appealed the ruling to the 11th Circuit.

City Seeks Historical Evidence

Vice Mayor Lisa Robinson raised the

issue after the City's customary-use workshop and asked Commissioners what steps, if any, they wanted the City to take next.

During the discussion, City Manager Frances Robustelli asked Brooks to clarify the geographic area covered by the City's request. Brooks said the City will focus on the approximately half-mile stretch south of the public beach involved in the lawsuit, rather than the entire shoreline.

The City plans to create instructions explaining what information residents can provide and how they can submit it. Brooks said residents with old photographs or other evidence of historical beach use could send the material to the City.

Broader Action Waits

Brooks advised Commissioners against taking broader action while the federal case proceeds. He said courts created Florida's customary-use doctrine and cautioned that a City-created regulation could raise different legal issues.

Mayor Scott Tate also expressed concern about discussing matters publicly that could affect the pending litigation. Brooks said Commissioners can discuss litigation strategy during a closed shade meeting now that litigation has begun.

For now, the City will pursue customary use as an affirmative defense while gathering evidence of the public's historical use of the affected beach.

The next St. Pete Beach City Commission meeting in Aug. 25 at 6 p.m. ♦

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Fear for Future Funding

Treasure Island Mayor Warns of Amendment 3

By Christopher Richard



CHRISTOPHER RICHARD

On Aug. 18, Treasure Island Mayor John Doctor warned Amendment 3 could reduce local property-tax revenue and threaten cities across Florida.

On Aug. 18, Mayor John Doctor warned that proposed changes to Florida's property-tax system could threaten the financial stability of cities across the state.

Doctor raised the issue at the end of the Treasure Island City Commission meeting after attending a statewide gathering of Florida mayors and commissioners in Hollywood. He said property taxes dominated the conference, including six workshops featuring lobbyists, public-relations firms, and economic experts.

Amendment 3 Would Change Homestead Exemption

Florida voters will decide Amendment 3 in the Nov. 3, 2026, general election.

The proposal would increase the homestead exemption for non-school property taxes to \$150,000 in 2027 and \$250,000 in 2028. School district property taxes would not be affected.

The amendment also would reduce the annual assessment cap on non-homestead property from 10% to 5%. That category includes commercial and rental properties.

Supporters, including Gov. Ron DeSantis and state lawmakers, say the measure would provide significant property-tax relief to homeowners.

Local governments, however, have raised concerns about the potential loss of revenue. Cities and counties

rely on property taxes to help pay for police, fire protection, infrastructure, and other public services. Doctor said municipal leaders at the conference questioned how local governments would replace that revenue.

Warnings of Bankruptcy

Doctor said speakers at the conference warned that as many as 100 Florida cities could face bankruptcy within four years if property-tax revenue falls significantly. He also said some cities could dissolve and return to unincorporated county government.

Doctor said speakers raised similar concerns about counties, with as many as 25 potentially facing consolidation with neighboring counties. Doctor described the numbers as statewide warnings, not a forecast for Treasure Island specifically.

"What's going to replace it?" Doctor said of the property-tax revenue cities could lose.

Local officials have pressed state leaders for a plan. Doctor said the response has often been, "We'll get through it."

"They don't have an answer," Doctor said. He called the uncertainty "scary."

Doctor Says He Opposes Amendment

Doctor said the Florida League of Cities and Florida League of Mayors are working on the property-tax issue.

He also told Commissioners and residents that he personally plans to vote against the property-tax reduction. He urged residents to study Amendment 3 before voting in November.

The issue could have particular significance for Treasure Island, which faces rebuilding costs, infrastructure needs, and redevelopment decisions.

The next Treasure Island City Commission meeting is Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. ♦

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CITY OF MADEIRA BEACH PUBLIC NOTICE PLANNING COMMISSION VACANCIES

The City of Madeira Beach is accepting applications to fill **four seats on the Planning Commission:**

- **One vacant seat** for a partial term expiring **September 30, 2027**. The appointed member may apply for appointment to a full three-year term upon expiration of the partial term.
- **Three seats** with current terms expiring **September 30, 2026**, followed by new three-year terms expiring **September 30, 2029**.

About the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a **seven-member advisory board** that meets regularly on the **first Monday of each month at 6:00 p.m.** Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Members serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for authorized training, travel, mileage, and per diem expenses as provided by law.

Eligibility and Qualifications

Applicants must be **residents and qualified voters of the City of Madeira Beach**. District residency requirements do not apply.

Appointments will be made in accordance with **City Charter Section 12.2**. Whenever possible, consideration will be given to applicants with demonstrated experience or qualifications in one or more of the following areas, pursuant to **City Code Section 2-77**:

- Architecture or landscape architecture
- Civil engineering
- Real estate sales or land development
- Natural or environmental sciences
- Urban planning

Financial Disclosure Requirement

Planning Commission members are required to electronically file **Form 1, Statement of Financial Interests**, with the Florida Commission on Ethics within 30 days of appointment and annually thereafter, as required by law. Penalties may apply for late filing.

Application Deadline

Interested persons must submit a **completed and signed application no later than Tuesday, September 8, 2026**, to be considered for appointment at the **Board of Commissioners Meeting on Wednesday, September 9, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.**

Applications are available at City Hall, from the City Clerk, or on the City's Advisory Boards webpage.

Submit Applications To

City Clerk
City of Madeira Beach
300 Municipal Drive
Madeira Beach, FL 33708
Email: cvanblargan@madeirabeachfl.gov
Phone: 727-401-1792

The City encourages qualified residents interested in serving their community and participating in the local government process to apply.



September 2026

CLUB CONNECTION

Gulfport Multipurpose Senior Center | 5501 27th Ave. S. | 727-893-5657 | mygulfport.us/recreation/senior-center

For more information or to register for any of these activities, call (727) 893-5657.

Annual registration required. FREE, residents; \$100 non-residents. All programs are subject to change without notification. Mon-Fri., 8 AM – 9 PM

Please stop by the Senior Center, join our weekly newsletter, or like us on Facebook to see a complete schedule of daily events.

HCA Lunch & Learn: ER vs URGENT CARE

Must Pre-Register 9/1 @ 2:00 PM

Intro to Veteran Disability Benefits Must Pre-Register 9/3 @ 10:00 AM

DanceHall Fit: GET YOUR SEXY BACK! 9/3 @ 3:30 PM

Veteran's Coffee Connection 9/4 @ 10:00 AM

Gulfport Rocks Must Pre-Register 9/4 @ 1:30 PM

RECOGNIZING SIGNS OF STRESS Must Pre-Register 9/8 @ 2:00 PM

Good Neighbors Food Giveaway 9/9 @ 12:00 PM

iPhone Instruction Must Pre-Register 9/10 @ 12:30 PM

Scams & Tricks to Avoid Must Pre-Register 9/10 @ 3:30 PM

Coffee Chat with Mayor Love 9/11 @ 10:00 AM

Moore Medicare Mondays Must Pre-Register 9/14 & 9/28 @ 10:00 AM

3D Printing Club 9/14 @ 1:00 PM

Memory Screenings By Appointment Only Must Pre-Register 9/14

Sunshine Club: Card Making Group 9/14 & 9/28 @ 2:30 PM

Workout with Noa Must Pre-Register 9/14 @ 4:00 PM

OTC with Cliff 9/15 @ 10 AM–12 PM

Gather & Share 9/18 @ 11:00 AM

Antique Day 9/18 @ 2:30 PM

Seasonal Circles: THE HEART OF DEEP LATE SUMMER Must Pre-Register 9/21 @ 2:00 PM

Dance Party: BRING YOUR 80's SPARKLE Must Pre-Register 9/21 @ 5:30 - 7:30 PM

Standing Strong Must Pre-Register 9/22 @ 10:00 AM

Gulfcoast Legal Assistance By Appointment Only Must Pre-Register 9/22

Armchair Adventures Must Pre-Register 9/22 @ 2:00 PM

Happy Birthday to YOU! 9/23 @ 3:00 PM

What is Pace & How it Can Help You Must Pre-Register 9/24 @ 3:30 PM 9/25 @ 10:00 AM

LGBTQ+ Coffee & Conversation

Matinee Movie 9/25 @ 1:00 PM

Got It! 9/28 @ 5:30 PM

AI for Seniors: OUTSMART TODAY'S SCAMS 9/29 @ 2:00 PM

 [gulfportseniorcenter](https://www.facebook.com/gulfportseniorcenter)

Debating Development Strategies

Treasure Island Rejects Planned Development Ordinance

By Christopher Richard

Treasure Island Commissioners voted 3-2 on Aug. 18 to reject a proposed planned development ordinance, but agreed to revisit the issue during a Sept. 9 workshop.

Commissioners Chris Clark [District 2], Arthur Czyszczon [District 3], and Arden Dickey [District 4] voted to deny the ordinance. Mayor John Doctor and Vice Mayor Tammy Vazquez voted against the denial.

The proposal would have created a new application process for planned developments in the city.

Commissioners Debate Development Rules

Commissioners debated whether Treasure Island should establish the planned-development process now or wait for additional redevelopment guidance.

The discussion centered on height, density, and comprehensive-plan limits.

The City Attorney explained that the proposed ordinance would create a process for developers to seek approval for planned developments. Any request to exceed comprehensive-plan limits



Treasure Island rejected planned development ordinance 3-2, with Commissioners set to revisit development rules at the Sept. 9 workshop.

would require additional action.

Commissioners ultimately rejected the ordinance but agreed to continue discussing the issue at the September workshop.

The planned-development debate comes as Treasure Island works through major redevelopment and rebuilding decisions.

Commission Addresses Meeting Conduct

Commissioners also took up the increasingly personal tone of recent public meetings.

Doctor asked the Commission to support stronger rules against personal attacks involving City employees and charter officers.

The Commission unanimously agreed.

The City Attorney will draft language for future board rules.

The meeting ended with Doctor raising a broader issue facing Treasure Island and other Florida municipalities: the potential impact of proposed property-tax changes.

Doctor warned that a reduction in local property-tax revenue could make it more difficult for Cities to pay for public safety, infrastructure and other services.

He said the issue could add another financial challenge as Treasure Island weighs growth, rebuilding and redevelopment.

The next Treasure Island City Commission meeting is Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. ♦



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MAGGIE DUFFY

All the World's Kids received a \$5,000 art grant from the City of St. Petersburg to fund the project.

volving transit non-profit Connect Pinellas, youth empowerment organization All the World's Kids, the Lakewood Estates Civic Association, and Oak Park Villas, the apartment complex adjacent to the connector that owns the wall. The Vitale Bros. spearheaded the mural's artist team.

It was made possible by a \$5,000 art grant All the World's Kids received from the City of St. Petersburg.

Artists Johnny Vitale, Derek Donnelly, Nick Kekillas, Sionna "Sio" MacLeish, Taylor "Dreamweaver" Smith, and Arturo Romero used their skills to create the mural. It features plants and animals that live around the nearby Boyd Hill Nature Preserve, including a raccoon, blue jay, turtle, alligator, and an armadillo. Maximo students filled in outlines and painted their own flowers.

"Now it's just a big community mural," said Johnny Vitale. "This is something that everybody in the neighborhood can take ownership of."

"Art beautifies and revitalizes spaces, and also kids can create

what they can't communicate. So through visuals, they can come and throw something up on the wall and feel invested," said Lauren Hubbard, founder and CEO of All the World's Kids. Hubbard tapped Vitale to lead the project.

A Safer Route to School

Aesthetics aside, the mural is meant to establish safety in an area previously riddled with trash, including drug paraphernalia.

"It's the first step towards a safer route to Maximo Elementary for students and for neighbors alike," said Kristen Ehrlich, president of Connect Pinellas, during the ceremony before the ribbon cutting. "I urge everyone, particularly city council members ... to take a look at the actual trail connector and its condition. We still have a lot of work to do."

What Comes Next

Hubbard said they will continue to

Mural continued on page 14

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GULFPORT BREWERY
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2024 Awarded 4.8/5.0 by Yelp, 2023-2024

NEPTUNE GRILL
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2024 Awarded 4.7/5.0 by Yelp, 2023-2024

STORMRUNNERS
Experience the best of the outdoors at Stormrunners, where you can enjoy a variety of outdoor activities, including hiking, biking, and more.
2024 Awarded 4.9/5.0 by Yelp, 2023-2024



Community members, students, and project partners gather for the ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Lakewood Trail Connector.

maintain the area through monthly cleanups, and that this is the first phase of upgrades for the Lakewood Trail Connector.

"It's an artery of our ecosystem because it essentially connects the Lakewood Estates area with the Skyway Marina District," said Hubbard. "If that artery isn't flowing, then that's

not good for the ecosystem. So we came to breathe life into that, and we're pumping the artery back to life by connecting this corridor. That gives youth who attend Maximo Elementary School safe access to get there."

At the end of the ceremony, each student received an award for participating in the mural and a color-

ing page of the mural. There was also free pizza.

The Lakewood Connector Trail Community Mural is located near the 31st Street Sports Complex, where you can park, 4801 31st St. S., St. Petersburg.

For more information, visit connectpinnellas.org and alltheworldskidsinc.org. ♦



CITY OF GULFPORT MEETINGS

City Clerk's Office • September 2026

September 2, 2026 Planning and Zoning Board – CANCELLED

September 3, 2026 Council Meeting – 6:00pm (Thursday)

September 4, 2026 Historic Preservation Committee – 11:00am

September 7, 2026 City Hall Closed – LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

September 9, 2026 Board of Adjustment – 6:00pm

September 10, 2026 Special Magistrate – 9:30am

September 15, 2026 Council Meeting – 6:00 pm

September 16, 2026 Neighborhood Watch – 6:00pm

All meetings are open to the public and are held in the City Hall, City Council Chambers, 2401 53 rd Street South, In Person, unless otherwise noted. Meetings may occasionally be added, cancelled or rescheduled after this list is published. Please check the city's website mygulfport.us for updated information.



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CROSSWORD

Solution on page 19

ACROSS

- 1 Conceals a card
6 Underwear
10 Fruity confection
13 Nothing doing!
14 Storyteller
15 IOU component
16 Matador's opponent
17 Cause
19 Searcher for missing person
21 Detained
22 Blacken
23 Listen
24 ____ -Locka, FL
26 Dye out?
27 Half full, perhaps
31 Tito, for one
34 Na+ and Cl-
36 One of the King Sisters
37 Type of detective
40 Tuft of hairs: bot.
41 Race car driver
Luyendyk
42 Rabbit ____
43 Mystic scriptural interpretation
45 Snatches
47 Bambi's aunt

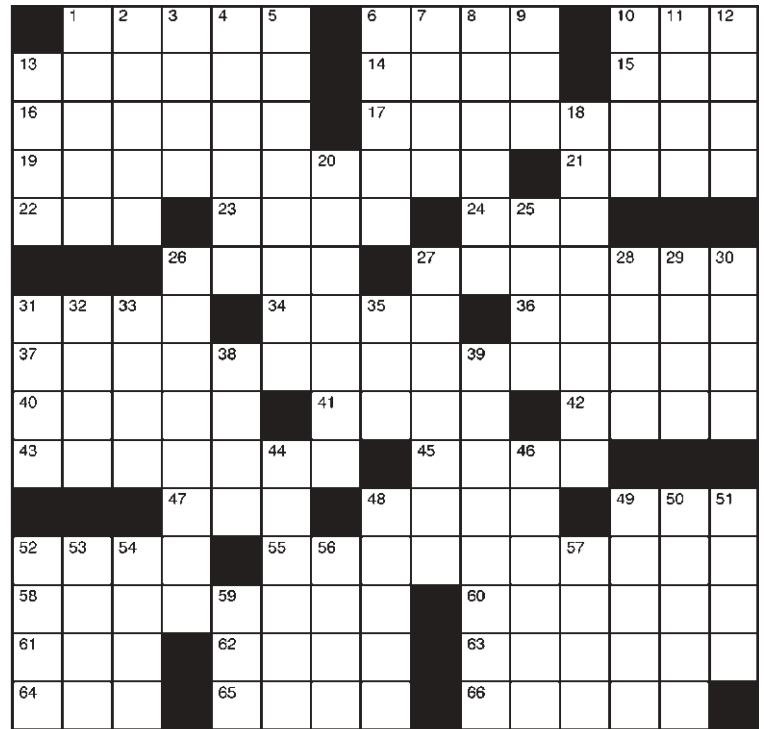
- 48 Concluding part
49 Golfer's goal
52 Frank
55 Tec for hire
58 Beavis' pal
60 Bombed due to pressure
61 Age
62 *Commedia dell'arte* ____
63 Bridge holding
64 On the other hand
65 Flanders stream
66 Sibilants

DOWN

- 1 *Beer Barrel*, for one
2 Moving
3 Barnstorming feat
4 Choreographer
Graham
5 Irregular
6 Urban land unit
7 Immorality
8 Polyester fabric
9 Mex. missus
10 ____ de vivre
11 Potential deserter
12 Fix
13 Egg depository
18 Sherlocks
20 Rings of darker skin

- 25 Brazilian soccer great
26 Special investigator
27 Actor/writer Peter
28 Tucson's county
29 Authoritarian
30 Wistful thinking
31 Animal-rights org.
32 Small NC college
33 Cine ender
35 Grieg's birthplace: abbr.
38 Tubular lamp
39 Acute problem
44 Starers
46 Mawkishness
48 Fruit drink
49 Black tea
50 ____ Rock: Australian monolith
51 Bolsheviks
52 Comply
53 Undiluted
54 French state
56 Deserve
57 Long times
59 Redtop or timothy

Leftovers



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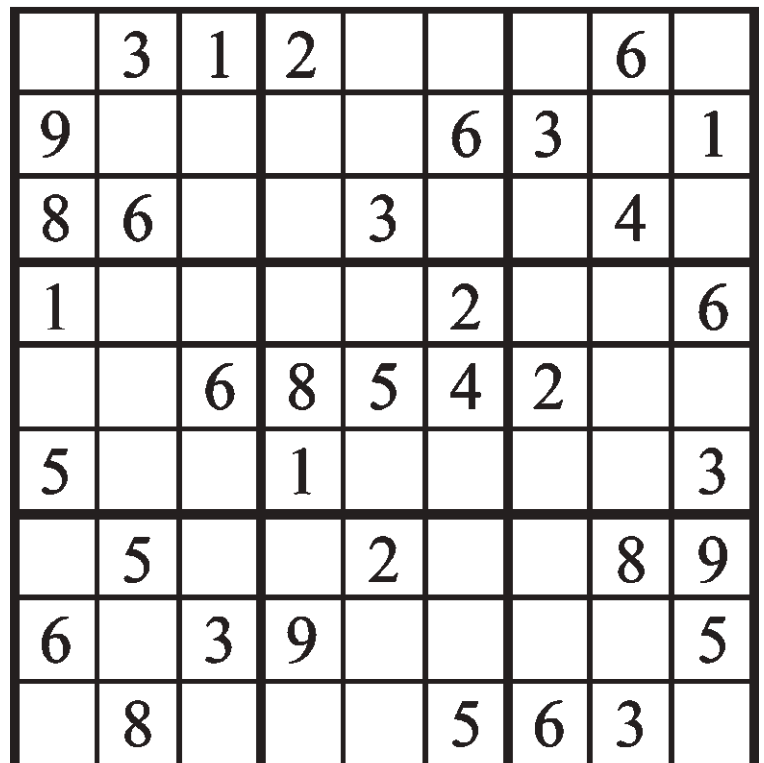
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SUDOKU

Solution on page 19



Cupcakes, Gecko Ball, and Potlucks



CAMERON HEALY

Gecko Ball returns this Saturday, Aug. 29.

Thursday, Aug. 27

Gallery Readiness: Workshop for Artists Learn what galleries, curators,

and collectors look for when considering artists for exhibitions, representation, and collections. Led by Browne Art founder and chief curator Jovian

Browne, the workshop covers stronger submissions, professional gallery outreach, collector expectations, and practical next steps for artists. *Imagine Museum Theatre, 1901 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. 6-7:30 p.m. eventbrite.com, 727-300-1700.*

Rainwater Harvesting Town Hall

Learn practical ways to manage rainwater, reduce flooding, protect local waterways, and conserve water at this Gulfport Town Hall with Mayor Karen Love. Environmental scientist and certified rainwater harvesting practitioner Diane Willis will share tips tailored to Florida's climate. *49th Street Neighborhood Center, 1617 49th St. S., Gulfport. 6-7:30 p.m. mygulfport.us, 727-893-1070. **F***

Friday, Aug. 28

Coffee With Neighbors Start your

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Friday with coffee and conversation at Indian Rocks Beach's Coffee With Neighbors. Meet fellow community members and catch up on what's happening around town. *Civic Auditorium, 1507 Bay Palm Blvd., Indian Rocks Beach. 8:30-9:30 a.m. indian-rocks-beach.com, 727-595-2517.* **F**

Charity Drag Bingo Girl... Get your bingo cards ready for Allendale's Monthly Charity Drag Bingo. Play 10 games for \$10, with proceeds benefiting Allendale's Community Outreach programs supporting people experiencing homelessness and food insecurity. Food from Bellie's Food Truck is available for pre-order. *Allendale United Methodist Church, 3803 Haines Road N., St. Petersburg. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.; show starts at 6:30 p.m. \$10. allendaleumc.org, 727-527-6694.*

Mystery Science Theater Tribute Show Bad movies meet good comedy at Spitfire Comedy House. The cast improvises a B-movie based on audience suggestions. This is for ages 16 and up. *Spitfire Comedy House, 1920 1st Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 9-10 p.m. \$17.40. spitfirecomedy.com, 727-329-6290.*

■ Saturday, Aug. 29

Secondhand Market Give old stuff a new life at the St. Pete Youth Farm's final Secondhand Market of the season. Browse secondhand finds, uncover new treasures, and help keep reusable items out of the waste stream. *St. Pete Youth Farm, 1664 12th St. S., St. Petersburg. 9-11 a.m. stpeteyouthfarm.org, 727-565-3930.* **F**

Great St. Pete Cupcake Contest Got a sweet tooth? Help crown St. Pete's most artistic cupcake at the 15th Annual Great St. Pete Cupcake Contest. Grab a box of 12 mini cupcakes from youth, novice, professional, and specialty bakers, then vote for your favorite for the People's Choice Award. Boxes historically sell out, so advance reservations are strongly encouraged. *Morean Center for Clay, 420 22nd*

St. S., St. Petersburg. 12-3 p.m. \$25; \$20 for Morean members. morean-artscenter.org, 727-821-7162.

Gecko Ball 2026 It's time! Gulfport's annual Gecko Ball returns with live music, dancing, costumes, auctions, food trucks, and plenty of Gulfport chaos. This time, the theme is the Gecko Music Awards. Dress as your favorite rock star, pop icon, music legend, or red-carpet celebrity for the costume contest, and stick around for the crowning of the Gecko Queen. Each attendee also receives a complimentary Gecko Music Awards T-shirt featuring artwork by local artist Daniel Cruz. *Stetson University, 1401 61st St. S., Gulfport. 6-10 p.m. \$40; reserved tables of 10 are \$450. visit-gulfportflorida.com, 727-222-3252.*

Joe Marcinek Band at The Blueberry Patch Catch the Joe Marcinek Band for a night blending Chicago blues, New Orleans funk, Grateful Dead psychedelia, and jazz fusion. The opener is riskay. Plus, catch live painting and veggie burgers. BYOB. Ages 18 and up. *The Blueberry Patch, 4923 20th Ave. S., Gulfport. 7:30-11. \$20 in advance; \$25 at the door. blueberrypatch.org, 727-914-0226.*

Backtrack Blues Band Catch an evening of original blues with the Backtrack Blues Band, featuring guitar from Kid Royal, blues harp from Sonny Charles, soulful vocals, and a tight rhythm section. This Tampa Bay group has toured with legends including B.B. King, Buddy Guy, Robert Cray, and Gregg Allman. *Catherine A. Hickman Theater, 5501 27th Ave. S., Gulfport. 8-10:30 p.m. \$30. eventbrite.com, 727-893-1070.*

■ Sunday, Aug. 30

Save Our Streets St. Pete Save Our Streets is coming to St. Pete with an afternoon of free resources for teens, young adults, and families. Stop by for free haircuts, health checkups and medical testing, food distribution,

TTD continued on page 18

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TTD continued from page 17

clothing, gun-safety education, and community support services. *E2K Vintage*, 2655 6th Ave. S., St. Petersburg. 12-3 p.m. [instagram.com/e2kvintage](https://www.instagram.com/e2kvintage). **F**

Charity Bath Day Stinky dog? Dog Bar has you covered. Volunteers from Women's Krewe Rugby will wash pups while you hang out; ear cleaning and towel drying are included. Nail trims are available for an extra \$5, and proceeds benefit this month's charity partner. First come, first bathed. *Dog Bar St. Pete*, 2300 Central Ave., St. Petersburg. 1-5 p.m. \$10 for small dogs; \$15 for medium, \$20 for large. [facebook.com/dog-barstpete](https://www.facebook.com/dog-barstpete), 727-317-4968.

Zil Finger Cymbal Workshop & Persian Mini-Market Learn the art of finger cymbals with dancer and instructor Yasmina Mahal at this all-levels workshop. Afterward, browse a mini-market featuring new and gently used costumes, jewelry, and other dance finds. *Paramount Ballroom*, 4615 Gulf Blvd., Suite 204, St. Pete Beach. 2-4 p.m. \$45. Space is limited. Register at alexandra.treiber@yahoo.com, 727-642-7899.

Plant-Based Community Potluck Looking for your plant-based community? Bring a homemade plant-based dish to share and meet neighbors while learning about whole-food, plant-based nutrition. The first gathering includes an introduction to plant-based diets, their health benefits, and a tea bar. *St. Luke's Methodist Church*, 4444 Fifth Ave. N., St. Petersburg. 5:30-7:30 p.m. RSVP at tinyurl.com/5n926mve. **F**

Wednesday, Sept. 2

Dalí's Coffee with a Curator Explore tarot's journey from a 15th-century card game to a cultural phenomenon that inspired

artists and thinkers like Salvador Dalí, W.B. Yeats, and Carl Jung. Tarot professional and author Christiana Gaudet leads the talk. *The Dalí Museum's Will Raymund Theater*, 1 Dali Blvd., St. Petersburg. 10:30-11:30 a.m. Registration required. Gallery admission is not included. thedali.org, 727-823-3767. **F**

Chicago Give 'em the old razle dazzle at The Beach Theatre with a screening of *Chicago*. Follow murderesses Roxie Hart and Velma Kelly as they chase headlines in 1920s Chicago. *The Beach Theatre*, 315 Corey Ave., St. Pete Beach. 7 p.m. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. \$15. thebeachtheatre.org, 727-340-2866.

The Original Bandingo at Twisted Tiki Play music bingo while supporting Friends of Strays at Twisted Tiki. Bring a bag of dog food, cat food, or clay cat litter to get two free dabs on your Bandingo card, plus stick around for a chance drawing and 50/50 raffle. *Twisted Tiki*, 340 Corey Ave., St. Pete Beach. 7-9 p.m. friendsofst-rays.org, 727-914-8881. **F**

Thursday, Sept. 3

Free Italian Language Classes Ready to finally learn Italian [or brush up beyond "ciao" and "espresso"]? The Italian American Society of St. Petersburg is offering free Italian language classes for all ages, with beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels available. Classes meet weekly and welcome students of all experience levels. *Gulfport Senior Center*, 5501 27th Ave. S., Gulfport. Thursdays, 6-8 p.m. iasosp.org, info@iasosp.org.

Singles Flamingles Single and ready to flamage? Head to the St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club for a casual singles tournament featuring shuffleboard. *St. Petersburg Shuffleboard Club*, 559 Mirror Lake Dr. N., St. Petersburg. 7-10 p.m. \$5. stpeteshuffle.com, 727-822-2083.

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3	9	6	8	5	4	2	1	7
5	4	2	1	6	7	8	9	3
7	5	4	6	2	3	1	8	9
6	1	3	9	4	8	7	2	5
2	8	9	7	1	5	6	3	4

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PSA

Who: Red Feather Studios, Creators' Collective What: Yoga, Workshops, Music, Community, Celebration of Art & Wisdom When: Movement Classes All Week, Cafe 12-5 PM Friday and Sunday, 9 AM-2 PM Saturdays Where: 1301 49 St. S, Gulfport, FL For more info, contact Ocean: 561-528-9102

Legal Notices

FICTITIOUS NAME NOTICE Notice is hereby given that Salty Pup Enterprises LLC, desiring to engage in business under the fictitious name of "Electric Flamingo Vintage" intends to register the said name with the Division of Corporations of the Florida Department of State.

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Real Estate For Rent

2-BED/2-BATH ACROSS FROM GULFPORT BEACH FOR RENT

2 Bedroom/2 Bathroom Condo-Completely turnkey-Beach Living at it's best downtown Gulfport across from Gulfport Municipal Beach - Long Term-\$3000-month(12-mo), Short Term-\$3500-month(min 6-mo) includes all utilities, Internet & Cable - NO PETS - CONTACT PAULA BURNIE - 517-388-0682



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FIVE TOWNS CONDO FOR SALE 2bedrooms/2baths updated condo on second floor. Fully furnished. Vicinity of elevator and laundry. Carport included. Enclosed lanai for your morning coffee. All amenities including 6 pools, 2 clubhouses, tennis, pickleball, bocce and much more. Call 508-873-7269. Priced to sell 117,000.

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Gulfport Real Estate Sales

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Here are some Gulfport homes sold from Aug. 14-21.



2921 Dupont St. S. (Waterfront)

This two-bed, two-bath home, built in 2001, has 1,350 square feet. It listed for \$625,000 and sold for \$600,000.

3025 56th St. S. (Waterfront)

This two-bed, two-bath home, built in 1925, has 1,044 square feet. It listed for \$500,000 and sold for \$477,000.

5610 19th Ave. S. (Tangerine)

This three-bed, two-bath home, built in 1963, has 1,266 square feet. It listed for \$425,000 and sold for \$410,000.

5210 Jersey Ave. S. (Tangerine)

This four-bed, three-bath home, built in 1960, has 1,677 square feet. It listed for \$420,000 and sold for \$390,000.

1099 52nd St. S. (Tangerine)

This three-bed, two-bath home, built in 1970, has 1,258 square feet. It listed and sold for \$400,000.

6012 Tangerine Ave. S. (Stetson)

This two-bed, one-bath home, built in 1959, has 1,008 square feet. It listed and sold for \$400,000.

5313 18th Ave. S. (Tangerine)

This four-bed, one-bath home, built in 1925, has 1,264 square feet. It listed for \$399,000 and sold for \$397,000.

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One-Piece Design	✓	✗	✗	✓
Customized to Your Home	✓	✗	✗	✗
Never Have to Clean	✓	✗	✗	✗
No Clog Guarantee*	✓	✗	✗	✗



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