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**Majestic Isles News**



Volume 24

Summer 2021

Issue 10



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**Editorial Policy**

*We welcome articles by residents, whether or not you choose to join the newsletter staff (which we'd love you to do). We reserve the right to reject material that may be inappropriate for any reason whatsoever. For example, we do not print letters to the editor or opinion pieces. The staff also reserves the right to edit for content, length, clarity and accuracy.*

**MANAGER'S CORNER**



In response to some inquiries about the plan for palm seed removal, I can report that they will be removed again in October.

I encourage all residents in town to follow Channel 63 for updates on Majestic Isles news. Since we are in the midst of hurricane season, there are times when we need to bring all the furniture inside as we had to do in July. We always try to keep residents informed as to what is going on in the community. By checking Channel 63, you will be made aware of all updates; in addition, residents receive weekly email updates.

Please make sure to check your documents regarding trash pickup in the community. Residents are not allowed to leave the trash can in front or on the side of the house after 6 p.m. on the day of trash pickup. We also want to remind everyone to please pick up after your pet.

There will be no Board meetings in August unless an emergency arises.

I hope everyone is having a great summer and stays safe!

If you have any additional questions let me know.

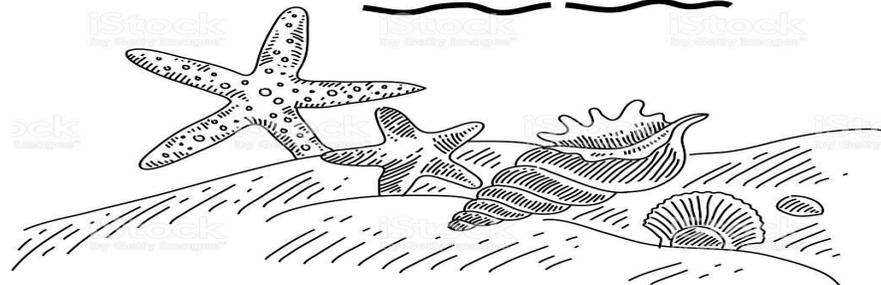
Regards,

Jay Peskoff, Property Manager

Email: [jpeskoff@castlegroup.com](mailto:jpeskoff@castlegroup.com)

Phone: 561-734-8738

Happy Summer



**REMINDER**

Copies of this newsletter are available for pick up on the table in the back lobby of the clubhouse as well as at the pool. Be sure to pick copies up for your homebound neighbors! **SNOWBIRDS** can also find the current issue at [MajesticIsles.com](http://MajesticIsles.com) under the heading "Newsletter," and past issues are available for your enjoyment through the resident portal on the website.

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## Robert D. Schwartz

Attorney At Law • Certified Public Accountant

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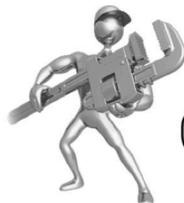
1901 S. Congress Avenue, Suite 215, Boynton Beach, FL 33426  
2385 N.W. Executive Center Drive, Suite 100, Boca Raton, FL 33431  
2101 Vista Pkwy. South, West Palm Beach, FL 33411  
14255 US Hwy. 1, Suite 270, Juno Beach, FL 33408

*(Available by Appointment)*

**Mr. Schwartz's qualifications include:**

Graduate of Univ. of Florida College of Law w/honors  
Graduated Cum Laude from Florida State University  
National Speaker on Estate & Tax Planning

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By **Bob Edinger**

As we hit the anticipated hurricane and sweltering heat season, we will try to do our best to remain cool and attempt to anticipate what we, as a community, can do to make life interesting at Majestic Isles. It is incumbent on everyone who lives here to participate. It is quite easy to be heard - just drop an email to Jay Peskoff, our property manager, or leave something in writing at the office and signed by you.

Music at poolside has been a success and there will be more to come. The Event Committee is entrusted with coming up with plans for the future. Whether it's food trucks brought into our parking lot for people to sample, a lecture series, movie nights, or other events, we hope you partake and also share your ideas for other events with us.

Recently we became aware of a possible tropical storm, hurricane and later a tornado heading our way, so the Board erred on the side of caution by moving the outside pool chairs and tables with umbrellas and golf carts into the clubhouse. Also, we took off the windscreens on the tennis and pickle ball courts and secured the seating, to mention a few more of our safety measures. Since we were facing a holiday weekend, the help we needed was available only on Friday (provided by our landscape company at no charge) before the long weekend. Remember, one of our jobs is to protect community assets.

We replaced two members of the Board who resigned for personal reasons. To finish their terms of office we now have Suzanne Skinner and Ellen Nelson who have already shown their dedication to the community and are proving to be outstanding Board members.

Wishing everyone a safe and enjoyable summer. See you in September!!!



## 2021 MAJESTIC ISLES BOARD OF DIRECTORS

<u>NAME</u>	<u>POSITION</u>
Bob Edinger <a href="mailto:edingerhoa@gmail.com">edingerhoa@gmail.com</a>	President
Mark Jaffie <a href="mailto:snailsny@aol.com">snailsny@aol.com</a>	1 <sup>st</sup> V.P.
Suzanne Skinner <a href="mailto:Garsuz89@hotmail.com">Garsuz89@hotmail.com</a>	Treasurer
Jerry Ehrlich <a href="mailto:bronxguy1695@gmail.com">bronxguy1695@gmail.com</a>	2 <sup>nd</sup> V.P.
Alan Stevens <a href="mailto:adstevens.ta@aol.com">adstevens.ta@aol.com</a>	Secretary
Ellen Nelson <a href="mailto:ellenelson@aol.com">ellenelson@aol.com</a>	Member-at-large
Joel Cohen <a href="mailto:jocoh11@aol.com">jocoh11@aol.com</a>	Member-at-large

## COMMITTEES

<u>NAME</u>	<u>CHAIR</u>
ARC	Ken Keller
Calendar	Ellen Nelson
Documents	Sally Galan
Clubhouse	Mark Jaffie
COBWRA	Barbara Goodman
Comcast	Bob Edinger, Mark Jaffie, Alan Stevens
Compliance	Harvey Galan
Finance	Barbara Wasserman
Grounds	Bob Freiburger, Sally Galan
Insurance	Ken Keller
New Neighbors	Maddy Rosen

*(If you wish to serve on a committee, call the committee chair. – Ed.)*

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2nd Air Conditioner Replacement (each additional - up to 5 tons)	\$45.00
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Water Heater Replacement (each - up to 50 gal.)	\$35.00
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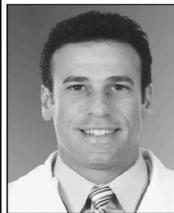
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• American Board of Podiatric Surgery

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**WELCOME NEW NEIGHBORS**

**By Maddy Rosen**

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Iza Gonzalez and Juan Artavia  
10576 Royal Caribbean Circle

Sheryl and Mel Gross  
5720 Emerald Cay Terrace

Howard Weinstein  
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**SYMPATHY**

To the family of Betty Wachtel on the loss of her husband Jim.

To the family of Carole Shulman on the loss of her sister.

To the family of Joyce Stoudermire on the loss of her sister.

**THANK YOU**

Dear Majestic friends,  
Thanks so much for your many calls, notes, emails and charitable donations. I appreciate your thoughtfulness at this difficult time.

Ruth Oppler

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## AMENDMENTS TO DOCUMENTS

By Alene Kristal

(Note: These are unofficial results.)

The results of the voting on the 17 proposed amendments to our bylaws and documents were announced at a Zoom meeting of the HOA on July 13. 205 votes were cast by members of the community. Ten amendments were approved and seven were not. For the sake of brevity, I've only listed the amendments which were NOT approved. All residents should be receiving a copy of the amended documents in the mail. In answer to a question from the audience, the attorney explained that *neither Florida statute nor the MI documents requires that the votes be anonymous. The only requirement for a secret ballot is for the Board elections. (He acknowledged there was "probably" no reason it couldn't have been done.)*

**No. 3:** Special assessment \$100/year – Not approved. Had this passed, the Board would have been permitted to assess each housing unit \$100 a year without going to the community for a vote – a total of \$45,000.

**No. 5:** Special assessment \$100/year for capital improvements – Not approved. Had this passed, the Board would have been permitted to assess residence \$100 a year without going to the community for a vote - a total of \$45,000.

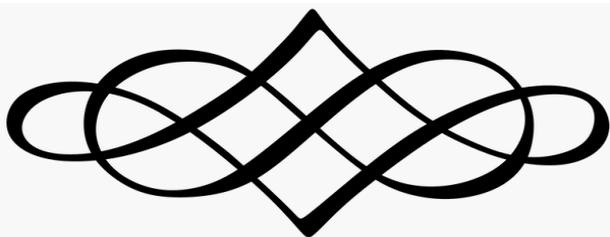
**No. 7:** Hardship exceptions to the under 55 years of age requirement – Not Approved.

**No. 11:** Clarification of landscape maintenance responsibility – Not Approved.

**No. 12:** Amount of fines for violations and method of enforcement against residents – Not Approved.

**No. 13:** Regarding lease approval provisions – Not Approved.

**No 14:** New process for sales and transfers of property – Not Approved.



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## ELECTED OFFICIALS

**Submitted by Claire Deveney**

Contacting elected and appointed public officials and voting are important parts of participating in a democracy. Put it on your to do list often. This listing, printed as a public service, is compiled from the "Directory of Elected Officials PBC 2021-2022" by the League of Women Voters of Palm Beach County and edited and verified by Claire Deveney as of July 12, 2021.

As a resident of Majestic Isles and a registered voter you are in **Precinct 5028**

For U.S. House – **District 21**

State Senate – **District 31**

State House – **District 91**

County Commission - **District 5**

School Board - **District 3**

**President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. (D)**

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

202-456-1414

Comment line 202-456-1111

[www.whitehouse.gov/contact/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/)

[www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president-biden](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/president-biden)

**Vice President Kamala Devi Harris (D)**

The White House

Office of the Vice President

1600 Pennsylvania Ave., NW

Washington, D.C. 20500

202-456-1414

Comment line 202-456-1111

[www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-harris](http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/vice-president-harris)

**U.S. Senators (6 Yr. Term\*)**

**Rick Scott (R)**

Hart Senate Office Bldg.

Room 716

Washington, D.C. 20510

202-224-5274

[www.rickscott.senate.gov](http://www.rickscott.senate.gov)

[help@rickscott.senate.gov](mailto:help@rickscott.senate.gov)

\*next election Nov. 2024

**Marco Rubio (R)**

284 Russell Senate Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20510

202-224-3041

Local office

4580 PGA Bldg. Suite 201

Palm Beach Gardens, FL 33418

561-775-3360

[www.rubio.senate.gov](http://www.rubio.senate.gov)

\*next election Nov. 2022

**U.S. Representative (2 Yr. Term)**

**District 21 Lois Frankel (D)**

2305 Rayburn House Office Bldg.

Washington, D.C. 20515

202-225-9890

Local office

2500 North Military Trail, Suite 490

Boca Raton, FL 33431

561-998-9045

[www.frankel.house.gov](http://www.frankel.house.gov)

## STATE

**Governor Ron DeSantis (R)**

400 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

850-488-7146

850-717-9337

[GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:GovernorRon.DeSantis@eog.myflorida.com)

\*next election 2022

**Lieutenant Governor Jeanette Nunez (R)**

400 South Monroe Street

Tallahassee, FL 32399

850-717-9331

[LtGovernorJeanette.Nunez@eog.myflorida.com](mailto:LtGovernorJeanette.Nunez@eog.myflorida.com)

**Attorney General**

**Ashley Moody (R)**

The Capitol PL-01

Tallahassee, FL32399

850-414-3300

Fraud hotline: 866-966-7226

[CitizenServices@MyFloridaLegal.com](mailto:CitizenServices@MyFloridaLegal.com)

**(Continued on Page 10)**

**Elected Officials (Continued from Page 9)****Chief Financial Officer****Jimmy Patronis (R)**

200 East Gaines Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
850-413-3100

[CFO.Patronis@MyFloridaCFO.com](mailto:CFO.Patronis@MyFloridaCFO.com)

**Commissioner of Agriculture & Consumer Services****Nicole "Nikki" Fried (D)**

400 S. Monroe Street PL-10  
Tallahassee, FL 32399  
850-617-7700

[Nikki.Fried@FDACS.gov](mailto:Nikki.Fried@FDACS.gov)

Consumer Services hotline 800-435-7352

**State Senator (4 yr. Term)****District 31****Lori Berman (D)**

2300 High Ridge Rd., Suite 161  
Boynton Beach, FL 33426  
561-292-6014

[berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov](mailto:berman.lori.web@flsenate.gov)

**State Representative (2 yr. term)****District 91****Emily Slosberg (D)**

7499 West Atlantic Avenue, Suite 200  
Delray Beach FL 33446  
561-496-5940

[emily.slosberg@MyFloridahouse.gov](mailto:emily.slosberg@MyFloridahouse.gov)

**COUNTY****County Commissioner (4 yr. term)****District 5****Maria Sachs (D)**

301 N. Olive Avenue  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-355-2205

[msachs@pbcgov.org](mailto:msachs@pbcgov.org)

**CONSTITUTIONAL OFFICERS****Supervisor of Elections****Wendy Sartory Link (D)**

240 South Military Trail  
West Palm Beach, FL 33415  
561-656-6200

South County (Delray Beach)

561-276-1226

[wendylink@pbcelections.org](mailto:wendylink@pbcelections.org)

[www.pbcelections.org](http://www.pbcelections.org)

**Joseph Abruzzo (D)****Clerk and Comptroller**

Palm Beach County  
301 N. Olive Ave., 9<sup>th</sup> floor  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-355-2996

[www.mypalmbeachclerk.com](http://www.mypalmbeachclerk.com)

[clerkweb@mypalmbeachclerk.com](mailto:clerkweb@mypalmbeachclerk.com)

**Carey Haughwout (D)****Public Defender**

421 Third Street  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-355-7500

[www.pd15.state.fl.us](http://www.pd15.state.fl.us)

[careypd@pd15.org](mailto:careypd@pd15.org)

**David Aronberg (D)****State Attorney**

401 N. Dixie Highway  
West Palm Beach FL 33401  
561-355-7100

[www.sal5.org](http://www.sal5.org)

**Dorothy Jacks (NP)****Property Appraiser**

301 North Olive Ave., 5<sup>th</sup> floor  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-355-3230

Homestead Exemption 561-355-2866

[www.pbcgov.org/papa](http://www.pbcgov.org/papa)

**Anne Gannon (D)****Tax Collector**

301 North Olive Ave., 3<sup>rd</sup> floor  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401  
561-355-2264

[www.pbctax.com](http://www.pbctax.com)

**Ric Bradshaw (NP)****Sheriff**

3228 Gun Club Road  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406  
561-688-3000

[bradshawr@pbso.org](mailto:bradshawr@pbso.org)

**(Continued on Page 11)**

## CITIZEN OBSERVER PATROL

By Ken Keller

The Citizen Observer Patrol has always been a part of the security of the Majestic Isles community. We had our own unit for many years, but we are now composed of residents of four communities, all on El Clair Ranch Road. This group of men and women, under the auspices of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Department, volunteer to patrol each community and the surrounding area in a sheriff's vehicle. Our job is to observe and report any actions we see that are outside the law. The addition of a police vehicle with flashing lights acts as a deterrent for anyone planning a dishonest act within our communities.

We are trained and uniformed when we patrol and are in instant contact with the Sheriff's Department. We welcome new members to our ranks. I will be happy to discuss any questions you have and provide as much information as possible. Thank you. Ken Keller - 561-738-9401.



### Elected Officials ( Continued from page 10)

**Karen M. Brill**

**School Board District 3**

School Board (4 yr. term)

561-434-8139

[karen.brill@palmbeachschools.org](mailto:karen.brill@palmbeachschools.org)

Reliable web sites for information and links to your elected officials are:

[www.pbc.gov](http://www.pbc.gov) and [www.flgov.com](http://www.flgov.com)

U.S. Senate: [www.senate.gov/](http://www.senate.gov/)

U.S. House: [www.house.gov/](http://www.house.gov/)

State Exec. Branch: [www.myflorida.com](http://www.myflorida.com)

State Senate: [www.flsenate.gov/](http://www.flsenate.gov/)

State House: [www.myfloridahouse.gov/](http://www.myfloridahouse.gov/)

This directory is regularly updated on the League of Women Voters PBC website, [www.lwvpbc.org](http://www.lwvpbc.org)

If you have any questions, feel free to call Claire Deveney, our local precinct captain, at 742-7869.

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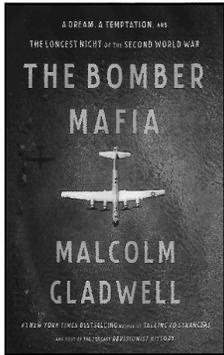
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## “THE BOMBER MAFIA” BY MALCOLM GLADWELL

By Stan Kaish



I think “The Bomber Mafia” will be of particular interest to veterans of World War II. I include in that group, in addition to those fighting the war, anyone who was alive at the time, reading the newspaper, saving tin foil or buying War Bonds. It seems that the military minds were divided, as hostilities approached, over what role the airplane should play. The first World War had seen planes made of plywood and fabric, with a lone pilot, deployed primarily in fighter and observation roles in support of ground forces. There were no hundred plane armadas pulverizing cities. The technology for that didn’t yet exist. The passing years, however, brought advances in aircraft that allow them to carry dozens of people and thousands of pounds of cargo. The prospects of a strategic air force emerged, in which planes would not just support ground forces, but provide independent bombing of the cities and factories of the enemy. Gladwell introduces us to the men contemplating this new element of warfare, how their thoughts on strategic bombing differed, where and when trials of those differing strategies took place, and how things turned out in the end. There is more involved here than you probably suspect.

The title group, “The Bomber Mafia,” was a relatively small number, a dozen or so, of air minded military who comprised the faculty of The Air Corps Tactical School located on Maxwell Field in Montgomery, Alabama. They espoused the revolutionary ideas of, first becoming a separate branch, and then, employing high altitude, daylight, precision bombing. It wasn’t Gladwell who first called them the Bomber Mafia. Most other higher-ups of the armed forces, land and sea, could only see the air force as a supplement to their efforts and named this crazy group with that crazy idea, “The Bomber Mafia.”

A major advocate for the precision bombing approach was General Haywood Hansel. His thinking was based on the notion that it would

provide a more *humane* war than World War I, that saw 347 million people killed or wounded. There was no reason for such slaughter. Precision bombing could knock out critical resources such as ball bearings factories, steel mills, munitions factories, communications centers. He envisioned this more civilized war made possible by planes such as the B-17 and later, the B-29 and a new bombsight that a Dutch inventor, Carl Norden, had perfected. The Norden bombsight, it was said, could drop a bomb into a pickle barrel from 30,000 feet.

Opposing views pointed out that precision bombing required it be done in daylight when the bombardier could see his target, while the plane flew a straight line, non-evasive course, making it vulnerable to enemy fire. Better, they argued, to fly at night, and employ area bombing of an entire city, destroying both materiel and morale. In asserting this, General Curtis LeMay voiced the consensus opinion of the British as well as the bulk of American military.

In Europe, of course, the Germans were already employing area bombing over London and Gladwell points out that one of the assumptions, the breaking of civilian morale, had not proven out. Londoners stayed, and if anything, their will to resist the onslaught grew. On the other hand, daylight pinpoint bombing proved more difficult than anticipated. An attack on a sprawling complex of ball-bearing factories in Schwienfurt Germany is a case in point where 230 B-17 bombers dropped 2,000 bombs. Reconnaissance showed that only 80 of the 2,000 bombs hit a factory, with no significant impact on German war production. Sixty planes and 552 airmen were lost in that raid.

So, what was to be the *modus operandi* of the air war: precision or area bombing? Humane or immoral? Gladwell’s “The Bomber Mafia” offers up much food for thought on the ethical and strategic considerations at play in the European and Pacific theaters during World War II.

*(Note: this book is on the summer reading list for the Book Talks book club.)*





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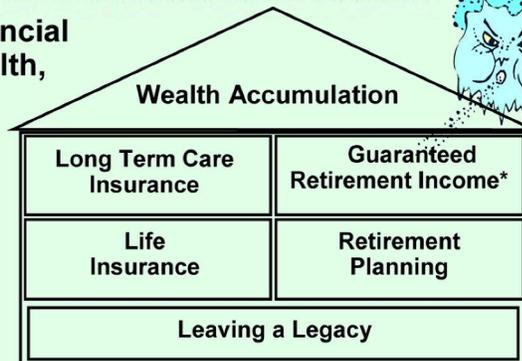
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## A DOG'S NEW LIFE IN MAJESTIC ISLE

By Mia Berry



HI everyone. I'm back for another installment of "How I Train My Parents." They continually try my patience, as they are not as trainable as the rescue people led me to believe. However, taking into account how much fun it is to see how high they'll jump, I'm barreling through. Here's

where we are today:

**Eating:** I weigh only eleven pounds so they thought feeding me would be no big deal. I may not weigh a lot, but I am a discriminating female. At first they tried giving me this dried stuff that wouldn't be fit for humans. No way am I eating that. And, they won't let me eat their food. What, am I not good enough to eat that weird looking stuff like meatloaf or chocolate cake? They also gave me a little hard lump they called a treat which got pretty boring. In order to break them in, for the first few weeks I ate the pebbles they call dog food. After a while I thought, that's enough and it was time to train them to feed me properly. So, we compromised. I'd eat the brown stuff but only if it was mixed with peanut butter, apple sauce or a nice, sweet banana. As for treats, I'm now getting a more savory selection with flavors of steak, sausage and bacon.

**Resting During The Day:** They have this leather sectional with about five spaces to rest. Great for humans. But I'm not wild about leather. It's sort of cold and uncomfortable. Somehow I got them to understand that I wanted something soft and fluffy to lie on. So, they put down a blanket on one seat of the sectional. My reaction? Discrimination! Why can they sit anywhere while I'm limited to one area? We now have blankets all over the place. I'll tell ya. It can get exhausting trying to get them to understand.

Stay tuned for the next installment.



## VIEW FROM ATOP A CAT TREE

By Lily K



I'd like to report that, despite my terrible childhood, I'm beginning to relax more and more as I live with my two brothers and Mom and Dad. I'm still rather skittish – I just can't help it. I have so many

memories of my mistreatment in my early months that I fear it would take years on the couch for a psychiatrist to unravel all my neuroses. (Of course, there will be endless years on the couch for naps!) Thankfully, I'm now in a home where I'm loved and where I know my presence brings happiness to my hoomans. So gimme some time guys, and I'll get there!

My brothers love to play wrestle with each other – that's fine – but they want to do it with me too, and that's another kettle of fish. I'm not crazy about the idea. They're bigger than me and much heavier, and I feel like I'm losing some of my independence if I just allow myself to become one of their playthings. Yes, I know, they don't have any nefarious ideas in mind; I'm just high strung and I'm not quite ready to succumb (is it ladylike?). However, I have started to allow them to groom me as I do want them to know I accept their presence in our house and their affection. I may even start reciprocating sometime soon!

Mom and Dad are very patient with me and accept me as I am – a sign of true love. And I love them back, just as unconditionally. I feel very lucky to have landed in this household. Brothers and all. They don't let on, nor do Mom and Dad, but I just know they know I'm queen of the roost.

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## EXPLORING MIAMI FOR A DAY

By Claire Deveney

I recently offered my friend Betty Wachtel's three grown grandchildren a day trip to Miami during their recent two-week trip to visit their grandparents.

When I picked them up from their El Al flight from Israel, the first thing they said to me was "please take us to Dunkin Donuts." So I took the first exit from the airport and we found a Dunkin's within a few miles. The 19-year-old grandson hadn't had a fritter donut in two years and quickly ordered and ate two. Everyone enjoyed their special coffees. They explained that in Jerusalem there had been five Dunkin's but now they are closed.

The next stop was their grandparents' home in Majestic Isles. They asked me "When you bring us back to the airport, may we go at 4 a.m. so we can see something of Miami?" I thought about this, since during their young lives they have arrived in Miami, visited their grandparents, seen some things locally, shopped – and returned to the airport.

So I offered them a day in Miami and we discussed their individual preferences. Ten days later we left at 6:30 a.m. for our all-day adventure in Miami.

Our first stop was the world-famous Fontainebleau Hotel, site of over a dozen movies, and where Frank Sinatra stayed and performed. The hotel was commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sinatra's stays, with about 40 enlarged photos of "Old Blue Eyes" himself and his famous group of friends - the rat pack - (Dean Martin, Sammy Davis, Jr., etc.) inside and in front of the hotel.

We enjoyed early morning mocha drinks, iced coffee, tea and pastries in one of the hotel's restaurants and walked around. The hotel has so many day visitors, hundreds no doubt, that it has a designated, separate circular drive for valet car pick-up.

We drove and saw parts of Collins Avenue, the beaches, the Atlantic Ocean, and viewed the Holocaust Memorial at 1933-45 Meridian Ave.

Then we were off to Miami Beach's historic Art Deco District on Ocean Drive between 5<sup>th</sup> and 125<sup>th</sup> Streets to appreciate the pastel-hued 1930s gems lining the street. The street is closed to traffic, so we parked one street over and enjoyed the sites while walking for an hour. We passed over two causeways and I showed them a map of the area we were covering.

Little Havana was next, and a priority of the oldest, who knows Spanish and hopes to return for a week to this area, and to visit Cuba one day. There was a fruit drink at a particular place that she wanted, and we saw the sidewalk of the stars. We also visited a local supermarket to explore what the locals eat.

Our final stop was a spectacular single lane road lined with mansions and magnificent 150-year-old banyan trees leading us to the Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, 10901 Old Cutler Road, Coral Gables. Fairchild is an 83-acre botanic garden with extensive collections of rare tropical plants including palms, cycads, flowering trees and vines. It also has a butterfly garden enclosure and outside cafe for lunch that we all enjoyed. I have a year's admission card for me and three guests and plan to visit every month. A senior ticket is \$17.95 and must be ordered on-line. <http://www.fairchildgarden.org>.

We arrived back 10 hours after we'd left and in one of the three thank you notes I received within two days, one wrote, "Thank you for the gift of a day!" It was a pleasure to enjoy their company in this adventure as my guests.

The AAA Tour Book of South Florida includes detailed descriptions of hundreds of places and things to see, enjoy and places to eat in Miami and Miami Beach. Go explore and enjoy.

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## FINE FEATHERED FRIENDS

By Elaine Jay



### Northern Mockingbird:

I'd like to introduce you to the official state bird of Florida, the northern mockingbird. You

undoubtedly have seen this spunky bird multiple times each day here in Majestic Isles, hopping along driveways, roof

tiles or flitting from one patio screen enclosure to another. It is found throughout Florida and most of the United States and is also the official bird of Arkansas, Texas, Tennessee and Mississippi.

The 1927 Florida legislative act establishing the northern mockingbird as a state symbol declared that "the melody of its music has delighted the hearts of residents and visitors to Florida from the days of the rugged pioneers to the present comers." I assume that all the aforementioned people were early risers.

This slender-bodied, robin-sized bird has a small head, a long, thin bill with a slight downward curve and has long legs for its size. Its body is gray-brown overall with two white wing bars on each wing. When perched on branches, the white patch on each wing is visible. However, in flight, these patches become large flashes of white.

The personality of our mockingbird is really what makes it a colorful bird. It sings almost endlessly and it will harass birds that intrude on its territory. It will fly slowly around them or prance toward them with its legs extended, flaunting its bright wing patches.

I first became aware of this spunky bird shortly after moving to Florida. In the early morning, from the branches of a nearby tree, I was often awakened by the varied, insistent and lengthy song of this master avian mimic. Not having ever encountered a mockingbird up north, I wasn't aware that I was hearing just one bird which has many ways of expressing itself.

The mockingbird's Latin name, *Mimus polyglottos*, sounds like a Monty Python bird joke. However, it

does tell you what distinguishes it from most other birds. This songster is capable of imitating the songs of at least 50 or 60 other species of southern birds. It has even been known to mimic car horns and car alarms! These birds sing almost endlessly, even sometimes at night, which is atypical of songbirds.

Both females and males sing and they can be heard any month of the year and any time of the day. They string together series of repeated phrases. A male may have several hundred phrases in his repertoire and a typical song is about equally divided between mimicked phrases and mockingbird-specific songs. It seems that males have two seasonal sets of songs, one for spring and one for fall. Earnest unpaired males often sing 24 hours a day when seeking a mate! If you would like to hear a sample of the vocal artistry of our state bird, please check this web link. [tinyurl.com/4k68uc9j](http://tinyurl.com/4k68uc9j).

In addition to vocal acrobatics, mockingbirds are fierce defenders against perceived threats. They are aggressive toward anything that they view as a threat, including cats, crows, hawks and even people. A 2009 University of Florida study discovered that these highly intelligent birds remembered the student volunteers who had been instructed to touch the birds' nest on two occasions. They ignored those students who had been instructed to merely stand next to their nest, but not touch it. Despite change of clothing, hairstyle, with or without a hat, and among a crowd of 100 people, the mockingbirds attacked only those who had touched their nest! The study's conclusion was that the birds had learned to recognize the faces of the aggressors. The results of this study should make us all question why it's an insult to be called a "birdbrain!!"

The little mockingbird has inspired American songwriters for over 150 years. Do you remember the old standard "Listen to the Mockingbird"? Or Patti Page's hit "Mockingbird Hill"? Or Carly Simon and James Taylor's version of "Mockingbird"? If so, this is your moment to hum a bit of the tune and give tribute to our remarkable, intelligent state bird!



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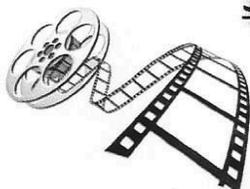
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## I'm Disappointed

By Steve Karten

On Thursday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, while sitting at my desk, fiddling about aimlessly, I received a facetime call from my eldest daughter Elysa. Behind her, yet visible, were her older daughter, Heather, and my middle daughter, Tracy's daughter, Jillian. I was happy and surprised to get a call from the three of them at once. Group calls like this were usually reserved for special occasions, such as say, Thanksgiving, and facetime calls were particularly infrequent. Normally, we all did a great deal of texting. After exchanging a few pleasantries, it was obvious to me that they were unusually excited. It seemed as if everyone was speaking at the same time. Elysa told me they wanted to surprise me by coming down to Florida (from New Jersey) as a part of a pre-Father's Day gift. Originally, they were just going to pop up without any warning. However, they worried that it might cause me to have a heart attack, so they decided to call first. (I found it hard to believe they were serious, but no matter. I had to laugh, since some years back, I did the same thing with my mother, but didn't warn her.) They were leaving for the airport soon and gave me their flight details.

We spent Friday, Saturday, and Sunday catching up; at the pool; going out to restaurants each evening; and just generally having a great time together.

As with most parents and grandparents, it's hard to put into words how much one loves one's children. It's no different for me. I love them all to bits. Yet, on this visit I was sorely disappointed with my oldest granddaughter, Heather. She's a college graduate who is now 30, has a good job, works from home (even before the pandemic) but she has turned into the quintessential millennial.

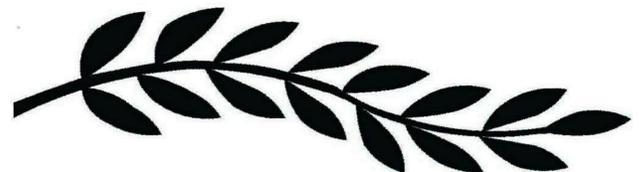
The generation known as millennials are people born between 1980, and 1996. Of course, they are all individuals, yet the particular environment for any generation affects those individuals in ways that are observable as broad tendencies. Generally, they have been told that they were special, getting awards for mere participation. Millennials tend to be confident, (it is my opinion that the word "over" should precede the word confident). While largely

a positive trait, the millennial generation's confidence can sometimes spill over into the realms of entitlement and narcissism, the latter being one of my pet peeves with this generation. Also, they often enter adulthood with unrealistic expectations that may be the result of the "helicopter parent" syndrome.

As a child, Heather was the "apple of my eye." I remember once when she came home from school, saw my car in front of her house, and she literally ran into the house towards me with open arms crying, "grandpa!" My heart melted. When she was seven, I was living in London and I took her there for three weeks. We were alone together a great deal on that trip and this created an even stronger bond between us. She is stunningly beautiful (not just my opinion. I'm told this often by others), well educated, and extremely bright and capable. I love her just as much as before.

But – and here's the big but - I'm somewhat sad and disappointed in her attitudes. On several occasions on this trip, she expressed opinions of others that were quite off base and even somewhat insulting, and her statements were made with an assurance that her interpretation was the only possible opinion. When she was told she'd misinterpreted something that had been said, she wouldn't back down and insisted that she was right, and the speaker was wrong. She seemed to have no respect for the experience of others. Moreover, her perspective on the world is that if she doesn't see how something affects her directly, she's not only disinterested she's dismissive of its importance. She also seems to have no capacity for forgiveness, another example of rigidity. Most distressing is that she expresses no interest whatsoever in what is going on in my life (there's that narcissism again). So, while I loved the visit, I can't help but wonder, where did the child I knew go to?

For a good laugh, I highly recommend:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLpE1Pa8vvl](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hLpE1Pa8vvl).

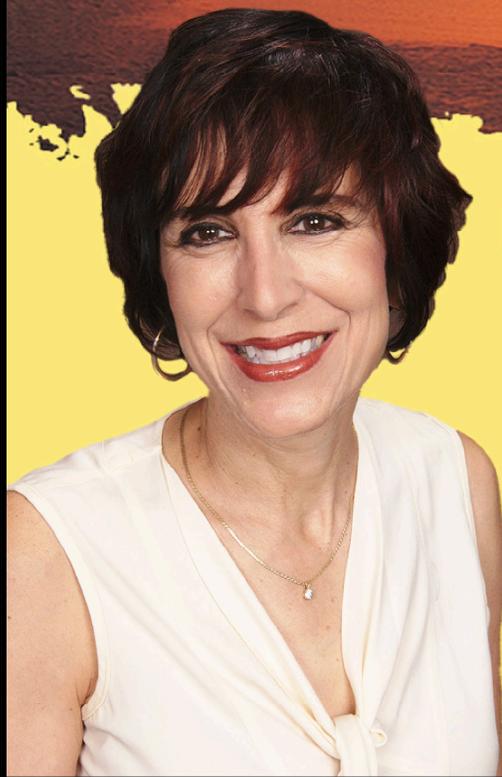




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## THIS MONTH IN SPORTS

By Steve Berry



July is the month when MLB teams try to position themselves for the playoffs. July fourth is the traditional midpoint of the season. Teams in first place in their division at that time have an average chance of 66% to be in the playoffs. The NFL will start kicking in with summer training. It's a HOT month in many ways!

**7/1/1997:** Nevada Athletic Commission suspends Mike Tyson indefinitely and withholds \$20M purse for biting Evander Holyfield's ear during their June 28<sup>th</sup> fight.

**7/2/1986:** **Boston** Red Sox pitcher Roger Clemens (14-0) suffers his first loss (4-2 vs. Toronto), one win short of AL record for consecutive wins to start a season.

**7/3/1983:** Texas Rangers explode for MLB single extra innings record 12 runs in 15th inning of 16-4 win v Oakland.

**7/4/1982:** Wimbledon Tennis: In an all-American classic final, Jimmy Connors beats John McEnroe 3-6, 6-3, 6-7, 7-6, 6-4 for his second and final Wimbledon final.

**7/5/1997:** Wimbledon Tennis: 16 year old Swiss Martina Hingis beats Jana Novotna 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 to become the youngest Wimbledon winner in 110 years.

**7/6/1957:** Wimbledon Tennis: Althea Gibson becomes the first black female to win Wimbledon, beating Darlene Hard 6-3, 6-2.

**7/7/1974:** Milwaukee's Don Money sets MLB record for consecutive errorless games at 3rd base (78) in Brewers 8-5 win v Twins.

**7/8/1889:** John L. Sullivan KO's Jake Kilrain in 75 rounds (last bare-knuckle bout).

**7/11/1988:** Mike Tyson hires Donald Trump as an advisor.

**7/13/1979:** Angels' Nolan Ryan and Red Sox Steve Renko, each lose no-hitters in ninth inning.

**7/15/2019:** Tampa Bay catcher Travis d'Arnaud

becomes first player in MLB history to hit three homers while catching and batting lead-off in the Rays' 5-4 win over the Yankees.

**7/17/1914:** Giants outfielder Red Murray is knocked unconscious by lightning after catching a fly ball, ending a 21-inning game, Giants win 3-1.

**7/18/1976:** Nadia Comăneci becomes the first gymnast in Olympic Games history to score a perfect 10 score (total 7) at Montreal Games.

**7/19/1987:** Yanks Don Mattingly sets AL record of extra base hits in 10 consecutive games.

**7/20/1976:** Hank Aaron hits his 755<sup>th</sup> and last home run off Angels' Dick Drago.

**7/22/1963:** In their second clash, Sonny Liston once again KOs Floyd Patterson in the first round in Vegas to retain the heavyweight title.

**7/23/2000:** British Open Men's Golf: Tiger Woods wins by eight shots to win his first Open title and, at 24, becomes the youngest player to win all four majors.

**7/24/1978:** Billy Martin resigns as Yanks' manager after "one is a born liar, the other a convicted one" comment about Steinbrenner and Jackson.

**7/24/1978:** "Pine Tar Game": George Brett's HR is disallowed against the Yanks (it was overturned).

**7/27/1982:** Astros begins 26-game road trip to make room for Republican National Convention.

**7/28/1989:** Cards' Vince Coleman is caught stealing and ends record streak at 50.

**7/29/1950:** Pee Wee Reese, hits the 3,000th Dodger home run.

**7/30/1960:** First AFL preseason game, Boston Patriots defeat Bills in Buffalo (28-7).

**7/31/1984:** US men's gymnastics team score an emotional upset win over world champion Chinese team in the combined event to take the gold medal at the Los Angeles Olympics.

**Check these out  
and enjoy!!**



*Over a decade ago, my late wife and I took a “Taste of Europe” tour of European landscapes, with stops in England, Belgium, Holland, Luxemburg, Germany and France; we had just enough time to “smell the roses.” With the pandemic-caused limitations on European travel, I’m repeating this previously published article for old and new residents.*

Western Europe’s moderate maritime climate provides ideal growing conditions. The temperate rainy coastal areas in England, Holland, along with the rich fertile soil in the Rhine valley and France are a horticulturist’s delight. We encountered several plants that can grow in our landscape: roses, geraniums, marigolds, dianthus, salvia, as well as birch, chestnut and poplar trees.

In London, we found that in every park and palace, the rose appears to be the most popular flower. It is evident that the cool moist maritime climate, tempered by the warm coastal currents, makes for a healthy rose, i.e., free of black spot, bud drop, leaf curl and few pests.

We crossed the English Channel with the magnificent white cliffs of Dover in the background. After the hovercraft docked in Calais, France, we took a short motor coach ride to Bruges, Belgium, which is often called the “Venice of the North” because of its many canals. Poplar and birch trees adorn the landscape and flower stands can be found in the market square.

Unfortunately, August is not the best time to visit the Dutch gardens of Amsterdam. Agriculture is very important to the Dutch economy and spring flowering bulbs are cultivated in the western part of Holland. In Amsterdam, De Plantage and the Free University have excellent botanical gardens.

The most lush and scenic part of our journey was on the oldest German steamboat, the Guenther, cruising the Rhine Valley, starting in Koblenz, Germany. The Rhine Valley is one of the most fertile on the continent and is a haven for vineyards neatly lining the valley. As one follows the lush green vineyards up the side of the valley, one can see several medieval castles with flags waving in the wind and their turrets touching the sky. Every river town, St. Goar, Boppard, Kaub and Lorely had businesses and homes with window boxes adorned with trailing red, white and pink geraniums. Geraniums can be found growing profusely in containers everywhere in Germany. They like full sun with moist soil and can tolerate a slight drying out of the root zone between watering. In South Florida one can plant them November through February.

And now for dessert, our final destination, the City of Lights, Paris, home of the Louvre, the Arc de Triomphe, the Eiffel Tower, the Bastille, Notre Dame, the Seine, the Champs-Elysees, *and* the elegant 250-acre gardens at the Palace of Versailles. Paris is noted for its chestnut trees and the Hall of Chestnut Trees is in the garden of the Palace of Versailles. A visit to the palace garden of Louis XIV included a tour of an English Garden, a Queen Grove decorated with fountains and sculptures, the Orangerie with its 2000 orange trees, the Water Mirror Pool lined with lawns, the Grove of Domes and the Water Avenue with dozens of fountains.

The tour ended with a warm welcome back to south Florida and, as they say in Dutch, *Gelukkig Tuinieren* – in French, *Joyeux Jardinage* – and of course in English, **Happy Gardening!**



# THINGS THAT GO BUMP IN THE NIGHT

Submitted by Alene Kristal

The oldest bar in the Bowery on the Lower East Side is not just haunted by the exclusionary rules that didn't allow women to drink in the bar until August 1970. It is also thought to be haunted by paranormal entities, according to staff and patrons.

The floors are covered in sawdust; an original wanted poster for John Wilkes Booth, issued five days after Abraham Lincoln was fatally shot, hangs on one wall. Lincoln visited the bar during the presidential campaign of 1860, and, as you probably guessed, the bar's staff and customers were all Yankee supporters of the Union. But it's not Lincoln's ghost that haunts this bar. It's haunted by another famous visitor.

## Harry Houdini's Challenge

The escapologist Harry Houdini visited the bar often, in the early 1900s, and on one occasion he was issued a challenge by a local policeman. The police officer scoffed at the showmanship of Houdini escaping from his own "rigged" handcuffs, and challenged him: "You can get out of your own handcuffs, but how about you try escaping from mine?"

Houdini accepted the challenge and escaped, leaving both sets of handcuffs behind. Houdini's handcuffs are hanging from the ceiling, while the policeman's handcuffs were tethered to the foot rail at the bar and they were eventually stolen by a customer and were replaced to mark the event.

After Houdini's death, in 1926, it is believed, one of the bar's cats in particular gave off a weird vibe and started staring continuously at Houdini's handcuffs on the ceiling or the cuffs at the bar rail, and if disrupted would retreat to rest at the window. This behavior spread amongst the cats, giving rise to the rumor that Houdini's dispossessed spirit was moving amongst the cats, shifting from cat to cat. From that year on, bartenders have firmly believed whenever a cat rests or sleeps in the window, that Houdini is present in the cat.

## Other Paranormal presences

Bartenders, after closing the bar at night, have often seen the bar cats purring and arching backs as if greeting and being petted by someone. But no one was present. Some staff that have lived above the bar also reported tables being moved and furniture being dragged around during the night and strange sounds coming from the bar.

## The Years of the Cats

In 1919, Bill McSorley, the second owner of the renowned McSorley's Old Ale House at 15 East Seventh Street near Third Avenue, told a reporter from the "New York Evening Telegram" that cats had been a fixture at McSorley's ever since his father, John McSorley, founded the tavern in 1854. "My father wanted me to keep cats," he told the reporter. "It has been his motto that 'it costs less to feed a cat than it does to pay a plumber.' Cats keep away rats, who gnaw through lead pipes." From 1854 to 2011, cats patrolled the bar in the middle of rat-infested New York City, keeping it rodent-free.

It's been said that Bill McSorley was gruff with his customers but displayed plenty of kindness toward his cats. He owned as many as 18 feline barflies at once, and they reportedly had the run of the saloon (although they always took their catnaps in the back room). Although it was their job to keep the mice and rats away, McSorley's cats were more likely to spend their day curled up next to the bar patrons or warming themselves near the pot-bellied stove.

In 2011, New York City passed a law forbidding bars and restaurants from keeping cats, and the resident cat at the time, Minnie, was forced out. Not surprisingly five years later, the Department of Health closed catless McSorley's for four days while they resolved a rodent problem that the cats had prevented for over a hundred years.

Back in 1929, the tradition of keeping cats to keep rodents at bay and provide company for drinkers in McSorley's was immortalized by John French Sloan in his painting "McSorley's Cats."

*From the Internet*



## AUGUST IN HISTORY

Submitted by Lois Kaish

**August 1, 1944** - Anne Frank penned her last entry into her diary. “[I] keep on trying to find a way of becoming what I would like to be, and what I could be, if...there weren't any other people living in the world.” Anne died at Bergen-Belsen concentration camp on March 15, 1945, at age 15.

**August 1, 1944** - The Warsaw Uprising began as the Polish Home Army, numbering about 40,000 Polish patriots, began shooting at German troops in the streets.

**August 2, 1776** - In Philadelphia, most of the 55 members of the Continental Congress signed the copy of the Declaration of Independence.

**August 3, 1492** - Christopher Columbus set sail from Palos, Spain with three ships, Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria. Seeking a westerly route to the Far East, he instead landed on October 12th in the Bahamas, thinking it was an outlying Japanese island.

**August 4, 1962** - South African apartheid opponent Nelson Mandela was arrested and eventually sentenced to life in prison. A worldwide campaign to free him resulted in his release on February 11, 1990, at age 71 after 27 years in prison. In 1993, Mandela shared the Nobel Peace Prize with South Africa's President F.W. de Klerk for their peaceful efforts to bring a nonracial democracy to South Africa. In April 1994, black South Africans voted for the first time in an election that brought Mandela the presidency of South Africa.

**August 4, 1964** - Three young civil rights workers, James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, were found murdered and buried in an earthen dam outside Philadelphia, Mississippi.

**August 5, 1861** - President Abraham Lincoln signed into law the first Federal income tax, a 3% tax on incomes over \$800, as an emergency wartime measure during the Civil War. However, the tax was never actually put into effect.

**August 6, 1945** - The first atomic bomb was dropped over the center of Hiroshima by the American B-29 bomber *Enola Gay*.

**August 6, 1965** - The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was signed into law by President Lyndon B.

Johnson. The Act suspended literacy, knowledge and character tests as well as poll taxes designed to keep African Americans from voting in the south. The Act was renewed by Congress in 1975, 1984 and 1991.

**August 9, 1945** - The second atomic bombing of Japan occurred as an American B-29 bomber headed for the city of Kokura, but because of poor visibility then chose a secondary target, Nagasaki.

**August 9, 1974** - Effective at noon, Richard M. Nixon resigned the presidency as a result of the Watergate scandal.

**August 11-16, 1965** - Six days of riots began in the Watts area of Los Angeles, triggered by an incident between a white member of the California Highway Patrol and an African American motorist.

**August 13, 1961** - The Berlin Wall came into existence after the East German government closed the border between east and west sectors of Berlin with barbed wire to discourage emigration to the West.

**August 14, 1941** - After three days of secret talks, the Atlantic Charter was issued by President Franklin D. Roosevelt and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill. The Charter, a foundation stone for the later establishment of the United Nations, set forth goals for the nations of the world.

**August 14, 1945** - V-J Day, commemorating President Truman's announcement that Japan had surrendered to the Allies.

**August 15, 1969** - Woodstock began in a field near Yasgur's Farm at Bethel, New York. The three-day concert featured 24 rock bands and drew a crowd of more than 300,000 young people. The event came to symbolize the counter-culture movement of the 1960's.

**August 16, 1896** - Gold was discovered in Alaska at Rabbit Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River, resulting in the Great Klondike Gold Rush.

**August 17, 1978** - The first transatlantic balloon trip was completed by three Americans; Max Anderson, Ben Abruzzo, and Larry Newman. Starting from Maine on August 11th, they traveled over 3,000 miles in 137 hours, landing about 60 miles west of Paris.

**(Continued on Page 29)**

## MOVIES AND STREAMING

By Joan Sorkin



An old movie that I missed but recently enjoyed is on *Netflix* starring a very young Nicole Kidman. Try "Malice" - I think it will keep you guessing.

An Indian movie on *Netflix* called "Skatergirl" is worth seeing.

*Masterpiece Theatre* on PBS has a short series called "Us," starring Tom Holland. It is best to go to On Demand under Masterpiece Theatre to find it; using the voice command brings up the show "Oz."

Another *Netflix* recommendation is a Korean series called "Move to Heaven." It was recommended by a grandson of the Laders.

If you are a fan of Woody Allen, "A Rainy Day in New York" is a fairly recent movie you may have missed. Again, it is on *Netflix*.

Dennis Quaid stars in a *Netflix* movie called "Blue Miracles." If you are a fan of feel good fishing movies, you will enjoy this.

"Lupin" is a French series on *Netflix* inspired by the adventures of Arsène Lupin – a fictional gentleman thief. The protagonist mimics the fictional thief in his efforts to avenge his father's death. The second season is now out and there is a promise is that season three will be out shortly.

I think these choices will keep you busy 'til my next column. If you have some favorites of your own, let me know at [poppyjoan@aol.com](mailto:poppyjoan@aol.com).

## A LITTLE GRAMMATIC HUMOR

Submitted by Jerry Fefferman

Everyone can use a little "grammar" update now and then, so here's yours for today. Is it "complete," "finished" or "completely finished?"

No English dictionary has been able to adequately explain the difference between these two words – "complete" and "finished."

In a recent linguistic competition held in London and attended by, supposedly, the best in the world, Samdar Balgobin, a Guyanese man, was the clear winner and received a standing ovation which lasted over five minutes.

The final question was: "How do you explain the difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED in a way that is easy to understand? Some people say there is no difference between COMPLETE and FINISHED."

Here is his astute answer:

*"When you marry the right woman, you are COMPLETE. When you marry the wrong woman, you are FINISHED. And when the right one catches you with the wrong one, you are COMPLETELY FINISHED!"*

He won a trip around the world and a case of 25 - year old Scotch.

### August in History (Continued from Page 28)

**August 19, 1934** - In Germany, a plebiscite was held in which 89.9 percent of German voters approved granting Adolph Hitler additional powers, including the office of president.

**August 26, 1883** - One of the most catastrophic volcanic eruptions in recorded history occurred on the Indonesian island of Krakatoa.

**August 8, 1963** – The March on Washington occurred as over 250,000 persons attended a Civil Rights rally in Washington, D.C., at which Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made his now-famous "I Have a Dream" speech.

**August 29, 1991** - Following the unsuccessful coup of August 19-21, the Soviet Communist Party was suspended, thus ending the institution that ruled Soviet Russia for nearly 75 years.

**August 31, 1997** - Britain's Princess Diana died in Paris at age 36 from massive internal injuries suffered in a high-speed car crash, reportedly after being pursued by photographers.

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## Majestic Isles Little Theatre (M.I.L.T.)

By Barbara Portnoff



After more than a year of the clubhouse being closed, we had truly missed being together with our neighbors. Ed Strauber and Ira Schneider decided that there had to be a safe way to bring people together for an evening of fun.

This is how “Music Under the Stars” began in May 2021. The main entrance to the clubhouse was the perfect place. We had overhead lighting and electric outlets for connecting sound. People were asked to wear masks and bring their own folding chairs. The ground was marked with painter's tape, so that people would know where to place their chairs in order to be socially distanced.

The recorded music included country, rock ‘n roll, doo wop and more. People seemed extremely happy just to see each other. We all talked and caught up. We hummed along with the music and we danced like nobody was watching. Since that evening, music has been happily provided every few weeks. More and more of our neighbors attended. The clubhouse was opened the following month, and we turned to Sing Along in the ballroom. It was well supported and is a joyful work in progress.

Please stay safe, as we ease out of the pandemic nightmare. We wish you and your families and friends the best of health.

### WORDS OF WISDOM

Submitted by Alene Kristal

Crowfoot, Isapo-Muxika (Issapóómahksika), Chief of the Siksika First Nation provided an incredibly poignant teaching in 1890, “What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset.”

Life is so short, seriously; always take the opportunity to express your love to those who make a positive difference in your life.

*From the Internet*

## MAJESTIC ISLES PAP CORPS

By Renee Stichel and Marilyn Chermak  
Co - Presidents



The Pap Corps is south Florida’s largest volunteer cancer fundraising organization. With 22,000 members strong, together we strive toward our collective vision - A World Without Cancer. All funds raised at our events benefit the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. There, physicians and scientists work on groundbreaking research to eradicate all forms of cancer.

Please support the following events:

A bountiful and elaborate Brunch, Card and Game Day at The Fountains Country Club, including an omelet station and goodies available during play. Join your friends for a fun filled afternoon on Thursday, August 5 at 11 a.m. Donation is \$55 pp. For further information, call Suzanne Skinner or Dolores Edinger.

Football Mania: Tickets will be sold for the 13 weeks of the football season at \$25 each. Every week there will be a winner of at least \$25 and up to \$400. For tickets, call Ed Strauber or Ed and Enid Gerard.

Our traditional opening meeting extravaganza!! Wine and hors d'oeuvres and entertainment! Wednesday, October 27 at 3 p.m. For further updates, check channel 63 and fliers in the back lobby of the clubhouse.

Tribute Cards: Harriet Strauber or Nadine Ehrlich

Donations: Fran Silling

Birthday Greetings: Myrna Bader

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## BOOK TALKS

By Alan Topolosky



Book Talks offered a summer reading list in the Majestic Isles News June issue on page 40. You may obtain this list on-line by going to [MajesticIsles.com](http://MajesticIsles.com) and clicking on the heading "Newsletter;" then search for page 40. If you try to access the list after the Summer issue is published in mid-August, you may access the June issue through the resident portal on the website.

I've compiled a brief summary of three books here for your consideration.

### "The Bomber Mafia" by Malcolm Gladwell

Malcolm Gladwell weaves together the stories of a Dutch genius and his homemade computer, a band of brothers in central Alabama, a British psychopath, and pyromaniacal chemists at Harvard to examine one of the greatest moral challenges in modern American history. (*See the review of this book in this issue.*)

Most military thinkers in the years leading up to World War II saw the airplane as an afterthought. But a small band of idealistic strategists, the "Bomber Mafia," asked: "What if precision bombing could cripple the enemy *and* make war far less lethal?"

In contrast, the bombing of Tokyo on the deadliest night of the war was the brainchild of General Curtis LeMay, whose brutal pragmatism and scorched-earth tactics in Japan cost thousands of civilian lives but may have spared even more by averting a planned U.S. invasion. In "The Bomber Mafia" Gladwell asks, "Was it worth it?"

Things might have gone differently had LeMay's predecessor, General Haywood Hansell, remained in charge. Hansell believed in precision bombing, but when he and Curtis LeMay squared off for a leadership handover in the jungles of Guam, LeMay emerged victorious, leading to the darkest night of World War II. "Bomber Mafia" is a riveting tale of persistence, innovation, and the incalculable wages of war.

### "Chasing Fireflies: A Novel of Discovery" by Charles Martin

In his fifth novel, Martin offers the same brand of sentimental southern storytelling that has endeared him to readers. Just before T-boning her Impala into a train, a woman on a suicide run kicks her horrifically abused little boy, known only as Snooter or to the state, John Doe 117 - out of the car. Chase Walker, a reporter for the Brunswick Daily in Glen County, GA is assigned to follow up on the boy, whose abandonment mirrors Chase's own haunted past. The little boy, apparently mute, is an autistic prodigy who excels at chess and quickly works his way into Chase's heart. Martin's strength is in his memorable characters, especially Uncle Willie, whose fresh quips ("as out of place in South Georgia as a long-tailed cat in a room full of rocking chairs"), a penchant for Krispy Kreme doughnuts and a mysterious past keep readers engrossed. Here, as in some of his other novels, Martin can't resist piling on unnecessary tragedies; his characters and their issues are enough to keep the pages turning. Although the plot needs fine-tuning, Martin's prose is lovely, and the flashback parallel stories of a grown man abandoned as a child and the neglected boy will ensure readers keep the Kleenex handy.

### "A Case of Need" by Michael Crichton

In the tightly knit world of Boston medicine, the Randall family reigns supreme. When heart surgeon J. D. Randall's teenage daughter dies during a botched abortion, the medical community threatens to explode. Was it malpractice? A violation of the Hippocratic Oath? Or was Karen Randall murdered in cold blood?

The natural suspect is Arthur Lee, a brilliant surgeon and known abortionist, who has been carrying out the illegal procedure with the help of pathologist John Berry. After Karen dies, Lee is thrown in jail on a murder charge, and only Berry can prove his friend wasn't the one who wielded the scalpel. Behind this gruesome death, Berry will uncover a secret that would shock even the most hardened pathologist.

**(Continued on Page 34)**

## News and Views

by **Bobbie Rosenfeld**



There is no way I can cover all the subjects we News and Viewers have talked about over the last eight weeks, so I will focus on one topic we devoted an entire meeting to, with only a brief review of everything else.

The topic we spent most of an entire meeting on was Israel and the recent bombings that had the world poised for a new Middle East War. The fact that all of the over 60 children killed were on the Palestinian side had the world taking sides. The lopsided casualty numbers did not look good for Israel. Our moderator, Irene Solomon, began by presenting a review of the issues, past and present, legal and moral, leading up to the Balfour Declaration and the vote for Israeli statehood in 1948. She discussed the legal boundaries of the land after the Six-Day War and the international rules governing the expansion of Israel. She also spoke of the army having been created for the defense of Israel as a country as well as the expansion of housing into Israel's legal territory. We talked about how Israel defends its land and people, while Hamas places its bombs in schools and hospitals, putting its people in harm's way.

Some who attended didn't speak at all and those who did speak were of one mind. We wondered why some regular members chose not to attend the discussion as we do need more diversity of opinion. As a group, we support Israel, but we only looked at the reasons for that support and never examined what Israel might be doing to hurt itself. The usual anti-Semitism issues came up in regard to the negativity toward Israel and I hope this can be revisited as a discussion for a future meeting at which more than one viewpoint can be aired. A discussion requires balance if we are to fully understand and learn from it.

We did discuss some less controversial topics, including the awful collapse of the Champlain tower with its horrific loss of life. This was an avoidable tragedy and we all hoped it was over quickly for all those poor souls. We also talked of

Alzheimer's disease, the Delta strain of COVID-19 and global warming.

Another topic was critical race theory. Several in the group shared memories of talking to people and being aware they were taught different facts in school than we did, and how divisive and separate our experiences are. This raised the question of what the future will bring if different information is taught in different states. This will not bring us together as a united people.

We talked of the G7 in England, cyber breakdowns in the business world, and the lack of "chips" for new cars, refrigerators and other appliances, and the deals these shortages are creating.

I haven't mentioned everything we talked about and hope you will join us Mondays at 3 p.m. – in the clubhouse! We want to hear your opinions.

### TENNIS

By **Marshall Deutsch**



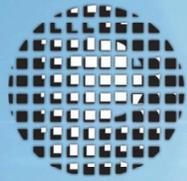
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### Book Talks (Continued from Page 33)

Book Talks meetings will resume on Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 2 p.m. in the clubhouse. The title of the next book selection to be discussed will be sent to members in August. Contacts for Book Talks are Claire Deveney, 742-7869, and Allan Topolosky, 301-335-2288.

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