



The new train ready to ride at Winter Wonderland

Ding–Ding–Ding! Choo-Choo! All Aboard!!!

“The Winter Wonderland Express”
by Angela LeMay

CLEARWATER

Come one, come all to the magical holiday festivities once again created by the Clearwater Community Volunteers, dubbed “Elves” by Santa himself.

If you’re already a faithful fan of “Winter Wonderland” I assure you, that this year has more surprises than ever!

However, while the Elves were busily working on “Winter Wonderland”, Pam Ryan Anderson (the Head Elf) received an urgent text from Santa. The text said, “Ho, Ho, Ho, there are still a few in the community that are not aware that the festivities are open to everyone and, admission is FREE!” and his text continued, “Ho, Ho, Ho, some ‘naughty overgrown children’ otherwise known as ‘adults’ may have never even noticed ‘Winter Wonderland’ when driving up and down Ft. Harrison.”

Now, I find that a bit hard to swallow. I mean how could you miss an entire block that is

lit up like a Christmas tree? If you are one of the few naughty ones, don’t despair. You still have time to redeem yourself. Remember, Santa is very generous and forgiving.

Here’s what you do: next time you are traveling south on Fort Harrison Ave, look directly across the street from Checkers and just as you are about to cross Drew Street, you will come upon a sight unusual to sunny Florida. Lo and behold! A quaint winter village that has seemingly appeared out of nowhere in downtown Clearwater and, no, it is not the new “Urban Elf Townhouses” – that is a special future project given to the newly appointed “Honorary Elves” at the Opus South Corporation for the “North Pole Edge 1”.

If you take a closer look, you will see that the snow has arrived with tens of dozens of Christmas trees, thousands and thousands of lights, and then, before you know it – you’ll see children sitting on

Continued on page 6

Miracle on Cleveland Street

By Angela LeMay



DOWNTOWN CLEARWATER

Remember, Remember the 5th of December.

Urgent weather alert!

Doppler weather radar at the Clearwater Downtown Partnership has just confirmed a 100% chance of an unprecedented blanketing of snow during the City of Clearwater’s annual Holiday Light Up on the 500 block of Cleveland Street.

Expect complete road closures due to strolling carolers, gift vendors and merriment of the sort on Cleveland Street from 5pm – 8pm between Garden and Fort Harrison Avenues.

Continued on page 7



Sam Karamountzos (owner), Mayor Frank Hibbard, Vice Mayor George Cretekos
Photo by Simaen Skolfield

Greektown Grill

Grand opening & ribbon cutting big success!

DOWNTOWN CLEARWATER

The Greek Town Grill, located at 1230 Cleveland St. near downtown Clearwater, FL 33750 is one of the newest and finest restaurants in the area.

The Greek Town Grill specializes in original Greek Recipes and continually attempts to capture the warmth and vitality of Greece. They take the time to carefully select all their ingredients and prepare food daily with an emphasis on quality.

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See page 11 for a special discount coupon.

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Cary Goulston giving seminars to Haitian youth
Photo by Brad Kugler



Brad Kugler photographing the Volunteer Minister relief efforts in Haiti

Haiti, the Forgotten Country

Three Clearwater Businessmen Help!

By Angela LeMay

HAITI

Often we get caught up in our own busy lives and spheres of influence and forget that there is a whole other world out there, consisting of others that may not be as fortunate as us. The economic situation in Haiti would make most of us long for home in appreciation for the opportunities we have in this country.

Haiti, with its 75% unemployment rate, \$15-\$20.00 average income per week, 70% illiteracy, 10,000+ homeless in the capital and thousands of children living on the streets; is visibly a country less blessed than our own.

Taking matters into their own hands, three of Clearwater's Scientology Volunteer Ministers, Cary Goulston, Mike Campbell and Brad Kugler—all who have businesses and families to care for—decided to reach outside their comfort zone and give relief to Haiti. After months of fundraising and preparation, they traveled to Haiti last month to deliver enough Kenaf seeds (a fast growing plant that is an ideal food and building source) to feed thousands of Haitians. Equally important are the educational tools the three provided to the people of Haiti. These tools were developed by L. Ron Hubbard (the founder of Scientology) to further assist them in reversing their unprecedented rate of economic decline.

Cary Goulston was so inspired by the technology developed by Mr. Hubbard that he has been studying them intently over the last year. In his own words, he said, "I had to DO something. I had to get it out there. I had to disseminate. I have to help people. After discovering this technology, I got so super-charged, it was more difficult to go back to my 'real life' and what I had been doing before.

Once you know what you learn from the L. Ron Hubbard books and tapes, there is no other choice than to bring it to the people and bring it large and loud." Cary continued to describe the conditions in Haiti, "When we arrived in Haiti, it was as if we had walked into a different dimension, a time warp, another universe. Here is a country that time and life and the world not only seemed to forget, but maybe was ignoring. With what we saw, I think those words are too kind. It might be more appropriate to say that it is an oppressed country to the max. The utter contempt for human life and the complete lack of basic survival needs were omnipresent. Traveling but an hour south of Florida to the country of Haiti was a wake-up call and a culture shock."



Cary Goulston shooting some hoops with the locals
Photo by Brad Kugler

Yet, with their ever-present daily challenges, the people of Haiti were surprisingly bright and willing to learn, work and improve their state of living, Cary reported. The Volunteer Minister's first stop was a local Catholic School, where they delivered a Dianetics seminar to students. While at the school, Cary noticed high school students playing basketball in the courtyard. "I jumped in and got their okay to play and I played for 5-10 minutes, making several excellent moves on a teenager, beating him to the basket for a couple scores. Mike saw this, got jealous and took a long distance shot from the sidelines where all the teachers were and made the shot—swish! I think we impressed a few people. 'White man can still jump'. Everyone laughed and it brought some levity and reality to the

scene. 'We were one of them!' became my new war cry. Unfortunately, now I was sweating profusely while everyone around me didn't even show a bead of sweat." "I decided to get involved because it is healthier for the soul to take more responsibility for people that just oneself or immediate friends and family. The idea that "someone else will take care of it" just doesn't work and the responsibility falls on those who are aware of the situation. The opportunity was there and I felt I could do something to help the Haitians help themselves with Hubbard Study Technology and Dianetics Self-Improvement Technology. It was an adventure that has since quickly taken on a grass roots life of its own in Haiti."

- Mike Campbell

Brad Kugler, who was no stranger to Haiti said, "When I was asked to go back to Haiti to document the latest efforts to help with my photography, I remembered the need of these people and how open they were to being helped. The country is so beautiful, and the people so precious, that I was ready to go and help out again. It is not the easiest place to get along, but I knew I was needed and the experience was one I will never forget."

Clearwater can be proud of these three Volunteer Ministers who rose to the occasion when asked to take responsibility and help Mankind in our neighboring country of Haiti. For more information on how you can help continue the Haiti relief project, visit www.haitidianeticscenter.org.



Photo by Brad Kugler

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Editor
Angela LeMay



From the Desk of Sheriff Jim Coats



With the winter holiday season quickly approaching I am once again compelled to encourage everyone to prevent crime by eliminating opportunity. There are many steps that you can take to protect yourself and your valuables from a holiday thief.

One of the most effective ways to protect yourself is to remain aware of your

surroundings. This means taking the extra time to park in well lit areas, and to look for suspicious people loitering nearby before getting out of your car. If you see something or someone that makes you feel uncomfortable, move to another parking area and/or report your suspicions to security guards, or a law enforcement officer. We would much rather investigate a suspicious person report than a violent crime. Other suggestions include limiting the amount of cash and credit cards you carry while shopping, and when possible, avoid shopping alone.

The most effective way to protect your valuables is to

properly secure them. One of the most common points of entry for car burglars is through an unlocked door or an open window. You would be surprised how many vehicle burglaries we investigate because owners simply did not lock their cars. By locking your car doors, and closing windows completely, this is arguably one of the most preventable crimes. For this reason, locking your car doors and windows is especially important during the holiday season when many people travel from one location to another while shopping.

It is also recommended that you place gifts, packages, and other valuables in the

trunk of your car or at least move them out of plain view. Purses, wallets, gift cards, portable electronics, and cash are all an open invitation for a criminal to break into your car.

By taking a few minutes to protect yourself and your belongings you may prevent a crime. By doing so you are once again helping us in “Leading The Way For A Safer Pinellas.”

If you would like other suggestions regarding holiday safety please contact the Sheriff’s Office Crime Prevention Unit at (727) 582-5611.

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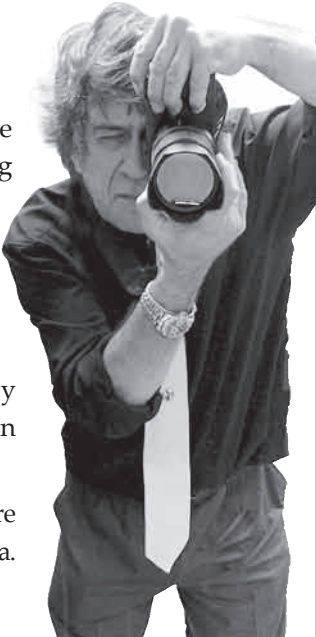


Simaen Skolfield
Staff Photographer

With a passion for the arts, Simaen Skolfield has won the prestigious Grammy Award with his keen ears for capturing the realism of music and sound. In photography, he brings his uncanny skills to the visual world by framing life in its fullest senses. In photographic moments of all kinds; weddings to family, to portraits, Simaen possesses certain, rare abilities with which to capture our private world. As Simaen puts it, “I want to capture the full beauty of every special moment so our lives will be cherished again and again, the world over.”

Mr. Skolfield is an independent professional digital-image-capture photographer, ‘writing with light’, at home here in Clearwater, Florida.

You can contact him at 727-557-6407



JOKE OF THE MONTH:

The Angel on the Tree

One particular Christmas season a long time ago, Santa was getting ready for his annual trip ... but there were problems everywhere.

Four of his elves got sick, and the trainee elves did not produce the toys as fast as the regular ones so Santa was beginning to feel the pressure of being behind schedule.

Then Mrs. Claus told Santa that her mother was coming to visit.

This stressed Santa even more. When he went to harness the reindeer, he found that three of them were about to give birth and two had jumped the fence and were out, heaven knows where. More stress.

Then when he began to load the sleigh one of the boards cracked and the toy bag fell to the ground and scattered the toys. Needless to say Santa wasn’t in the best mood..

Just then the doorbell rang and Santa went to the door expecting another problem. He opened the door and there was a little angel with a great big Christmas tree there just to cheer Santa up.

The angel said, very cheerfully, “Merry Christmas Santa. Isn’t it just a lovely day? I have a beautiful tree for you. Isn’t it just a lovely tree? Where would you like me to stick it?”

Thus began the tradition of the little angel on top of the Christmas tree.



Depression: One Woman's Revelation

by Laurie Anspach and Laura Mello

“Depression” is an over-used term to describe many symptoms, some of which are normal life stresses. When hearing the word, we simply put it into a category, in our minds of, “Well! Who hasn’t been depressed?” and, “Oh, they have pills for that kind of thing.”

In fact, the use of this term has been promoted by the psychiatric industry since 1952, at which time the first edition of psychiatry’s “Billing Bible”, The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, was published. This diagnosis has resulted in millions of people on psychiatric medication and billions of dollars lining the pockets of the pharmaceutical industry and psychiatry.

A study done at the University of Massachusetts and Tufts University concluded that, “There are strong financial ties between the (pharmaceutical) industry and those who are responsible for developing and modifying the diagnostic criteria for mental illness. The connections are especially strong in those diagnostic areas where drugs are the first line of treatment for mental disorders.”

In April of 2007, the Archives of General Psychiatry published a study that stated, “One in four people who are diagnosed as being depressed are simply reacting normally to stressful events such as divorce or job loss...” In an article by Jack McGoughey reporting on this study, he states that, “The Study indicates that the standard definition of depression should be redrawn to exclude the reaction to normally stressful events, so that unnecessary stigma and misdiagnoses can be avoided.”

McGoughey continues by pointing out that the American Psychiatric Association’s Diagnostic and Statistical Manual does, in fact, not exclude people who are experiencing “deep but normal feelings of sadness, unless they result from the death of a loved one.”

The study’s lead author, Jerome C. Wakefield, says that, “Larger and larger numbers of people are reporting symptoms on these checklists and there’s no way to know whether we’re finding normal sadness responses...”

With all these doctors clarifying that depression can be due to normal feelings of sadness, why are psychiatrists prescribing mind-altering, highly addictive and sometimes fatal drugs?

Laura Bello is one American who was feeling depressed, did seek the “help” of a psychiatrist and ended up in the Intensive Care Unit, near death! Laura was not fully informed about the side effects of psychiatric drugs. This is her story. Like so many others.

“I started seeing a psychiatrist last year after my therapist had suggested that I had “Major Depressive Disorder” and needed an anti-depressant. After the initial 30-minute visit, I walked out

of his office with three prescriptions: Lexapro for depression; Xanax for anxiety; and Ambien for sleep. I wasn’t warned about any potential side effects or dangers of taking these drugs. I explained to my psychiatrist that I only wanted to be on these medications to get through the tough time I was experiencing. He explained his opinion that I had a chemical imbalance, my serotonin activity was abnormal and that I would likely have to be on these medications for the rest of my life in order to be normal.

It became extremely difficult to function and focus on work because of these side effects and not being able to sleep.

I became more depressed while on these drugs and one night I overdosed and ended up in ICU. After spending a few days there, I slowly gained my consciousness back and was asked if I wanted to go to the psychiatric ward of the hospital. I learned that if I didn’t agree to sign the paper to be voluntarily committed, I would be involuntarily committed and they could keep me as long as they saw fit, by law. I gained no additional help from being in the psychiatric ward for the mandatory 48 hours and instead the traumatic experience only added to my depression.

“After doing further research, I learned of the increased risk of suicide attempts and suicide on Lexapro and I knew that this was the sole reason for my attempt. I am happy to say that I successfully tapered off of psychiatric medications (with the help of a medical doctor) and now live a happier, healthier life without psychiatry.”

Like Laura Mello, there are large numbers of people throughout the U.S. who have real feelings of sadness and suffering.

It is everyone’s basic human right to be fully informed! Psychiatrists at the last American Psychiatric Association Convention admitted that there are “NO” medical tests (including no chemical imbalance test) that can prove that any mental health disorder exists and that there are “NO” cures in psychiatry!

Ronald J. Diamond, M.D., at the University of Wisconsin Psychiatry Department, states that, “It should be noted that some studies have shown that, when extensive testing is done, medical causes may account for substantially more than 10% of patients with mental health symptoms.”

For more information about this subject, Call Citizens Commission on Human Rights of Florida at 800-782-2878





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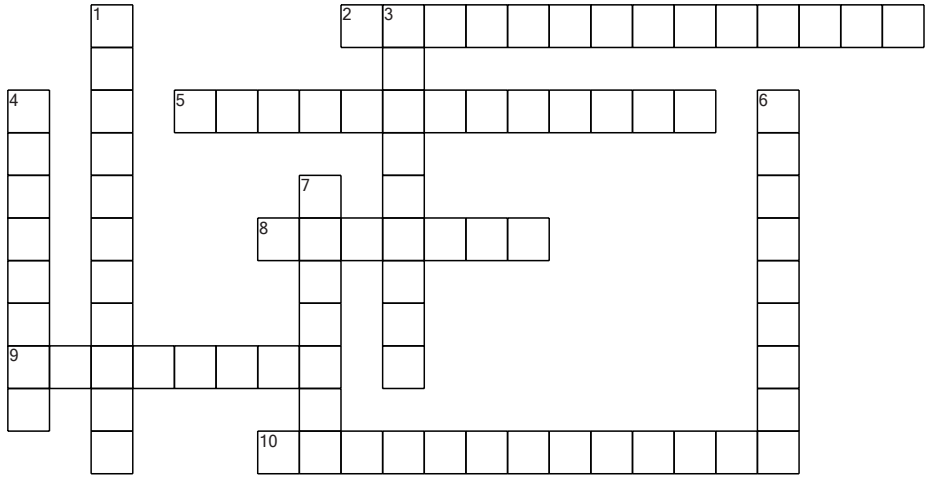
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE OF THE MONTH: FLORIDA TRIVIA



ACROSS

2. A freshwater fish that is mostly grayish black with a dark stripe on each side and a large upper jaw extending past the eye
5. A black and yellow butterfly whose wing camouflage makes it hard to catch
8. Also called a sea cow
9. A large marine fish with a large saillike dorsal fin and an elongated upper jaw
10. One of the most fragrant flowers in Florida

DOWN

1. A long-tailed gray-and-white songbird able to mimic songs of other birds
3. Amphibious reptile related to the crocodile but with a shorter, broader snout
4. A true dolphin
6. Has many uses, including food, medicine and landscaping
7. A subspecies of the cougar

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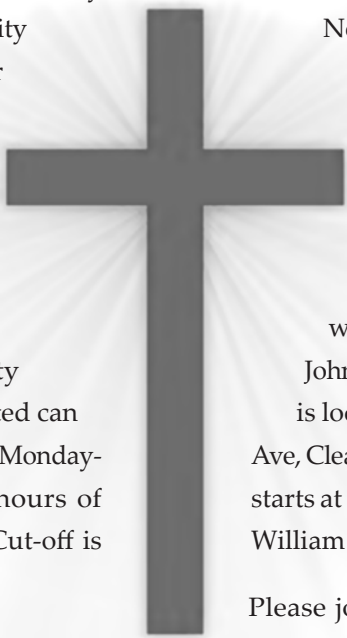
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“Merry Christmas”

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For the Christmas Holidays our church has traditionally given out baskets of food to needy parishioners and community families who come by our church office and can show they have a need. This year we will give out baskets on Monday, December 22, 2008 at 6:00 PM at the KD Mercer Hall. Community residents who are interested can register at the church office Monday-Thursday between the hours of 10:00 AM and 2:00 PM. Cut-off is December 18.

Sunday December 21, we will have our children’s Christmas program at 10:45 AM during the morning worship service.



On Christmas Eve, December 24th at 6:00 PM we will have a beautiful candlelight Service in the main sanctuary. On New Years Eve we will join with other churches in the area that belong to the Upper Pinellas County Ministerial Alliance in having a combined Watch night Service. The service will be conducted at the St. John Missionary Baptist Church is located at 1500 Pennsylvania Ave, Clearwater, 33755. The program starts at 9:00 PM. Our Pastor is Rev. William F. Sherman

Please join us, we would love to have you.

- Deacon Maurice E. Mickens

“Eid Mubarak Said”

Eid Al-Adha or the “Festival of Sacrifice” is a religious festival celebrated by Muslims worldwide in commemoration of the willingness of Ibrahim al Khalil (Abraham) to sacrifice his son Ismail as an act of obedience to Allah.

The Devil tempted Ibrahim by saying he should disobey Allah and spare his son. As Ibrahim was about to kill his son, Allah intervened: instead Allah provided a lamb as the sacrifice. This is why today all over the world Muslims who have the means to sacrifice an animal, as a reminder of Ibrahim’s obedience to Allah. The meat is then shared with family and friends, as well as the poorer members of the community.

Eid Al-Adha is one of the two Eid festivals celebrated by Muslims, whose basis comes from the Quran. Eid Al-Adha annually falls on the 10th of the month of Dhul Hijja (12 month of the Lunar Islamic Calendar). The festivities last for two to three days



or more depending on the country. Eid Al-Adha occurs the day after the pilgrims conducting Hajj—the annual pilgrimage to Mecca in Saudi Arabia by Muslims worldwide - descend from Mount Arafat. It happens to be approximately 70 days after the end of the month of Ramadan.

This year Eid Al-Adha falls on the 8th of December. Next year it will be the 24th of November.

On Eid Al-Adha, Muslims also go to the Mosque (Church) for Eid prayer at 8:00 in the morning. Then afterward the celebration of Eid Al-Adha begins.

Eid Mubarak Said is the traditional Muslim greeting reserved for use on the festivals of Eid Al-Adha; translated to mean Happy Holidays.

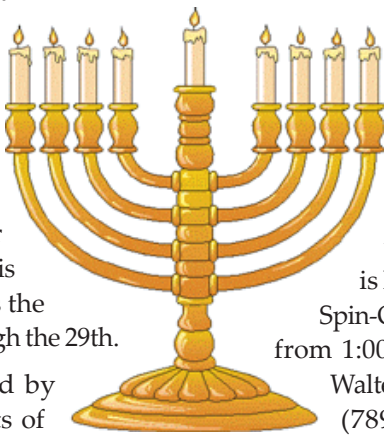
- Ali Seghrouchni
Albanian Islamic Cultural Center
225 N. Ft. Harrison Ave.,
Clearwater, FL 33765, USA

Al Hamza Mosque
560 Clearwater Largo Road,
Clearwater, FL 33770

“Happy Chanukah”

Chanukah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a Jewish holiday commemorating the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem at the time of the Maccabean Revolt of the 2nd Century BCE. Chanukah is observed for eight nights, starting on the 25th day of Kislev in the Hebrew calendar, and may occur from late November to late December on the secular calendar. This year’s celebration begins the evening of Dec 21st through the 29th.

The festival is observed by the kindling of the lights of a special candelabrum, the Menorah or Chanukiah, one light on each night of the holiday, progressing to eight on the final night. An extra light called a shamesh (Hebrew: “guard” or “servant”) is also lit each night, and is given a distinct location, usually higher or lower than the others and is used to light the other candles. Traditional foods eaten during Chanukah include latkes (potato pancakes) and donuts. Why? These foods are cooked in oil and oil was used to light the Menorah during the



rededication of the Second Temple.

One of the most recognized traditions of Chanukah is playing the dreidel game. A dreidel is a four-sided top with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet on each side: Nun, Gimel, Hay and Shin. When put together, they form the acronym “A great miracle happened there.” In celebration of Chanukah, the JCC of Pinellas County is hosting the Great Dreidel Spin-Off! On December 21, 2008, from 1:00-3:00 PM, join us at the Walter Fuller Recreation Center (7891 26th Avenue North, St. Petersburg) for games and prizes galore! Children between the ages of 5 and 15 are invited to participate in the Great Dreidel Spin-Off, playing until we have four winners: two boys and two girls. Other games include a donut-on-a-string eating contest, a donut-hole toss and much, much more! This family-friendly event is FREE for all!

- Jennifer Burnett
Executive Director JCC of Pinellas County

“Happy Holidays”

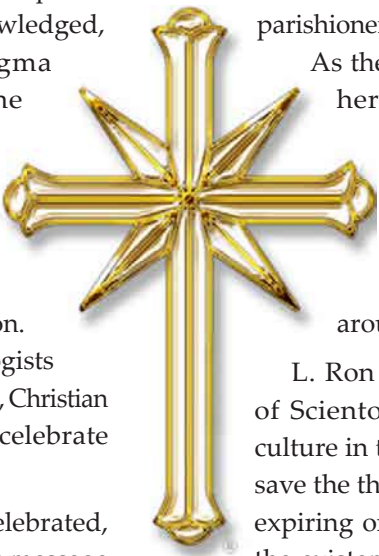
From the Church of Scientology

Scientists are of all different faiths and cultures and they celebrate the holidays accordingly.

As Scientology is a non-denominational religion - (the existence of a Supreme Being is definitely acknowledged, but there is no set dogma concerning God and the person’s relationship to Him) - Scientologists are encouraged to celebrate the holiday season in keeping with their own religious tradition. There are Jewish Scientologists who will celebrate Hanukah, Christian Scientologists who will celebrate Christmas and so on.

But no matter how it is celebrated, Scientologists embrace the message of the season – peace, kindness and respect for one’s fellow man.

Events such as Winter Wonderland, the Say No to Drugs Holiday Classic and annual presentation of gifts to the foster children of Pinellas County annual involve more than 1,000 volunteers and countless hours of work, AND benefit people of all



faiths throughout the community.

In the Church of Scientology, Christmas is a time to give back to the community and share time with friends and family. Some Churches have special events for their parishioners to celebrate the season.

As the Church of Scientology here in Clearwater is the international hub for the Church, the annual Christmas Banquet is a multiethnic event with entertainers from around the world.

L. Ron Hubbard, the founder of Scientology, once wrote “No culture in the history of the world, save the thoroughly depraved and expiring ones, has failed to affirm the existence of a Supreme Being. It is an empirical observation that men without a strong and lasting faith in a Supreme Being are less capable, less ethical and less valuable to themselves and society.”

- Lisa Mansell,
Community Affairs Director
for the Church of Scientology





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Ding – Ding – Ding!
Choo-Choo! All Aboard!!!
Continued from front page

Santa’s knee and decorating cookies with Mrs. Claus. There is a playground with swings and a fort to explore. A bouncy house and giant slide are always filled with children. Pony rides and a petting zoo create an even more delightful experience. On the large and decorated stage, there is also constant entertainment with ballet and circus acts, singers, dancers, animal shows, school performances and karaoke. Visitors of all ages wander around this special Christmas village in awe of the decorations and all the wintry details.

This year the Grand Opening of Winter Wonderland will be on Friday Dec. 5, 2008 at 6:30 pm. Santa makes his grand entrance at about 6:30 pm, and as always we never know how Santa will choose to arrive!

Each year visitors of all ages wander around wide-eyed and in awe of the decorations and details that are so lovingly looked after at this special Christmas village.

In addition to being a joyous adventure, it should be well noted that Winter Wonderland is a major fundraiser for needy families. Each year, hundreds of families are given food and toys, providing Christmas to families that would normally go without.

Admission to Winter Wonderland is free to all, but it is requested that everyone that attends bring a new, unwrapped toy or gift, canned or boxed food, or make a donation in one of the donation boxes that are set up on the Winter Wonderland site. Fifty percent of cash donations will go to Make-A-Wish Foundation of Central & Northern Florida this year. This very worthy group grants wishes to children with life threatening illnesses.



Clearwater Community Volunteers Melissa Ryan and Joel Anderson
Photo by Angela LeMay

Pony rides are only \$2.00 and Bouncy and the Giant Slide are each \$1.00. Pictures with Santa are also \$2.00. And, of course let’s not forget “Winter Wonderland Express” only \$2.00 a ticket.

Winter Wonderland is funded, planned, built, and manned by volunteers from the Clearwater Community Volunteers. Each year the event is sponsored by the Church of Scientology as well as other individuals, businesses and groups in the community.

It is an opportunity for all members of the community to join in for a common purpose of helping needy families and other charities. This joint involvement and contribution makes for a stronger community.



A Clearwater Community Volunteer
Photo by Angela LeMay

The founder of Scientology,
L. Ron Hubbard once wrote:

*“On the day when we can fully trust
each other, there will be Peace on Earth.”*

Please be sure to check out their sponsor board to see which wonderful, local companies also sponsor Winter Wonderland by donating at least \$1,000.

This year, Santa and the Clearwater Community Volunteers are extremely happy to announce the new partnership with Opus South Corporation and Water’s Edge 1, LLC. This partnership has helped Clearwater Community Volunteers add a new attraction to Winter Wonderland that is sure to bring joy to all the children that attend Winter Wonderland. Look out for the new train, and get in line at the Train Station so you don’t miss riding on the “Winter Wonderland Express”! Rides on the train are only \$2.00.

There is constant entertainment with ballet and circus acts, singers, dancers, animal shows, school performances, and karaoke, too. You just might see someone you know performing up on our beautiful stage.

Winter Wonderland is open weekdays from 6:00pm – 10:00pm, and on weekends from 4:00pm – 9:00pm.

Elf Trivia:

Winter Wonderland takes 5 weeks to set up with 5,500 Elf hours. Each year it cost between \$40,000 - \$50,000 to

set up and run. It is all made possible by partnerships and contributions from the fundraising done each year by the Clearwater Community Volunteers at other events such as: The Annual Easter Egg Hunt in Coachman Park, Fashion with Flair and more.

Grateful Acknowledgements go out to: All the Volunteers of CCV, Delphi, Clearwater Academy, Washburn Academy, TODL, Postcard Mania, Consumer Energy Solutions, The Cadet Organization, The Boy Scouts, The Cub Scouts, Youth for a Drug Free World of America, Mobile Mini Storage, Clearwater Towing, Neff Rental, Opus South Corporation and Water’s Edge 1, LLC and all contributors past, present and future!

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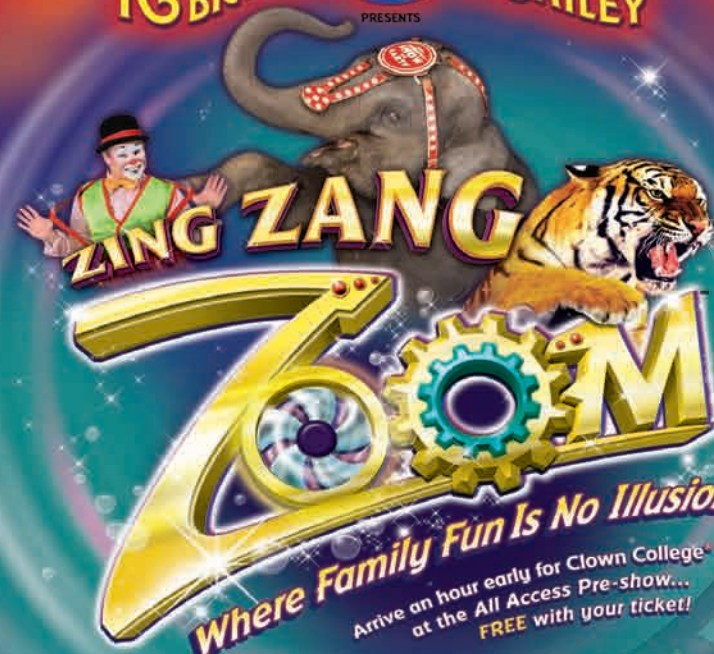
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Miracle on Cleveland Street
Continued from front page

When Chairman Bill Sturtevant of the Clearwater Downtown Partnership was asked what he attributed the unusual weather pattern to he said Santa ordered it, towards the goal of strengthening our merchants by bringing more people to downtown. Bill further remarked that the board acted fast and decided to seize the opportunity in Downtown and established this event as our annual: "Miracle on Cleveland Street."

One of Bill's colleagues Eleanor Lyda also stated since schools will be closed at that time a giant 10 foot snow slide is being brought in for children to toboggan down and play in the snow flurries.

Evidently, when Ruth Eckerd Hall caught wind of the opportunity they partnered up with the Clearwater Downtown Partnership. Then an avalanche of interest was started and Opus South Corporation and Water's Edge 1, LLC chimed in with their generous contribution. Another source, reported that the elves from the nearby Winter Wonderland are bringing their train to crash the party.

The Clearwater Downtown Partnership is going all out for this event by bringing in a stage with live performances, excerpts from the Nutcracker Suite, actors from Francis Wilson Playhouse in Dickens's

characters, Ruth Eckerd Hall's Tap Dancing Troop, BB's Dance Factories "The Snow Princess" and much more...

The event will be family friendly, with enough for adults to also enjoy.

Premier Beverage will be providing adult beverages and Monster Energy Drinks will be providing non-alcoholic beverages.

The heaviest center for snow and action will be at the 500 block of Cleveland Street. Dress warm and prepared to be jolly.

The Clearwater Downtown Partnership is an independent voice of citizens, business, and property owners who are interested in supporting the economic vitality of Downtown Clearwater. It brings stakeholders together to develop, advocate and implement policies that build an exciting, vibrant and diverse downtown, and plays an essential role in keeping the business and residential community educated, informed and involved in the continued success of the downtown. Membership donations will go directly towards projects that will create tangible result in downtown. For more information or to become a member, visit www.clwdp.org



Photo by Simaen Skolfield



Actual view from the 7th floor Alexander North Residence

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How the Grinch Steals Prosperity

"Recession," WHO creates it?

By Mark Hale

You may have noticed that the news media "Grinch" have been spreading fear regarding the economy. Most news reports, talk shows, and newspapers spew numerous reports about how bad things are, or how bad they will be.

According to the "Grinch of Doom" our country is going down the tubes. Unemployment is up, retail sales are down all are touted as major indicators of the economy and how hopeless your future is. The fact is that you and I have very little immediate control over any of these things.

However, we do have control over our businesses, the quantity and quality of the product or services we produce, the speed we produce that product and the price we charge for it.

The effect of the negative news coverage is that everyone gets nervous about the things they have no control over and take their eyes off the things they do have control over; things which really do affect their personal prosperity. Businesses get nervous about surviving, making payroll

and paying the bank note. Employees get worried about keeping their jobs and staying ahead of their bills. The result: everyone and everything stops moving and production slows down. Things do get slow not because of anything else but scared people pull back.

The negativism of the news media is one of the major causes of a recession because the fear and uncertainty they instill. Having said this—WHAT CAN YOU, me and Cindy Lou... DO ABOUT IT?

There are two things you can do:
(1) Go into agreement with the news media, hunker down, pull back and conserve your pennies.
OR, (2) Take

control of your future, disagree with "The Grinch of Doom", kick up your promotion and advertising. Let people know you are there and invite as many people (from Whoville) as you can to do business with you. Improve the quality of the service you deliver. All are proactive things you have control over that really do affect your success.

The attitude of number one above is that of a victim (i.e. The Grinch). You are not reaching out and are in a defensive posture.

Football games may be won with defense but in the game of business if you switch to a defensive mind set you will lose. The reason is that no matter how slow things may

get if you don't promote things will get a lot slower. Fact is that no matter what you sell there are always people out there who want to buy it. If you are inviting them to do business with you on a regular basis they will call you. You may have to work a little harder to get the business, but if you don't, one thing is for sure: your competitors will work very hard to get your business out from under you.

I have been in marketing and advertising my entire professional life—some 25 years. I have been through several recessions and down turns in the economy. The hard and fast rule is that businesses that increase their promotion and advertise always increase their market share, usually significantly. On the other hand, businesses that go into survival/cutback mode shrink and die.

The fact of the matter is, you control your future. The times we are in now present a great opportunity for you and me to grow. I know that the majority of my competition is doing number one above. They are cutting their marketing

Continued on next page

How the Grinch Steals Prosperity
Continued from page 8

budgets and cutting personnel. With fewer competitors advertising this leaves the market uncluttered so my message has a greater impact. When the competition cuts personnel this affects their ability to deliver service to their customers quickly and efficiently. This causes customer dissatisfaction and upsets. This is doubly good for me because not only are they not inviting people to do business with them but they are making it possible for me to pick up the customers they upset with poor service.

There are some things to remember when advertising in a downturned economy. One is to hone your message. You want to make sure that your message is focused on the needs of the customer. People always

buy for emotional reasons and they buy benefits and solutions for the problems they have. Let me put it to you this way, last year Lowe's sold one million ¼ inch drill bits. The people who bought these drill bits did not want ¼ inch drill bits, they wanted ¼ inch holes. Customers buy for their reason not yours and they buy benefits and solutions to their problems. Make sure your advertising is directed at solving the customer's problems. The help you offer is one of the most powerful services you have in your marketing arsenal.

The second thing to do is get back to the basics of your business. Do the things you do best and are known for. Seldom is the road to financial success found at the end of a new road. It is usually the old road that is well known and worn from experience that gets you to your destination. New

programs and projects can be expensive. They divert attention from the successful things you have done, take up resources and take time and money to get the bugs worked out. I am not saying you should not add new programs and services to what you sell. But, make sure if you are adding something new that is a natural adjunct to what you and your customers need, want and will buy before you commit yourself to it. During an economic slow down is not usually the best time to add something totally new and different.

The third thing for you to know is the law of frequency. The law of frequency simply stated is, the size of the database X the number of times the database is advertised to (or called on) = RESULTS.

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help you design a message that is targeted correctly and looks professional, print it professionally for you and mail it.

The Grinchs in news media will always make the news worse than it is, that is how they keep your attention and make their money. If you turned the TV off and didn't read "the bad news" newspapers for a week I promise you, you'd be in a more proactive frame of mind. Whether you fail in business or succeed in business will be because of what you do or do not do. You may have to work harder to out produce it. You can out produce it. Not out producing it is not really an option, is it?

"If you would like to find out how to maximize your promotion call me for a free consultation."

– Mark Hale, CEO, Wilson Printing
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Who Reads Good News?



Corporal Demetrios M. Antoniadis from the Hillsborough Sheriff's Office helping out at the recent Iron Man event.
Photo by Simaen Skolfield



Athletes at the recent Iron Man triathlon
Photo by Angela LeMay

It's Time for Good News!



Athletes at the recent Iron Man triathlon
Photo by Angela LeMay

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What's New in Town?

Urban Dining and Entertainment News by Ali Seghrouchni

Time to Make the Doughnuts



Win **FREE** DUNKIN' DOUGHNUTS FOR A YEAR!

A brand new Dunkin' Donuts is now open in Downtown Clearwater, located in the Historic Red Brick Telephone Building, 534 Cleveland Street.

Their Grand Opening Event – Friday, December 5.

First 50 customers in the doors beginning at 5 a.m. will win FREE Dunkin' Treats for a year (including products such as coffee, sandwiches, etc.)

Anyone making a purchase on Friday, December 5, will have their receipt entered in the store's raffle drawing for 1pm on Saturday, December 6 (must be present to win.)

Mayor Frank Hibbard will be visiting the location at 10am for the restaurant's official ribbon cutting.

More prizes at the Grand Opening Event – Saturday, December 6

For the 1pm raffle drawing (for which people are entered if they made a purchase on 12/5 and are present for the drawing), 1st prize is a Flat Screen TV, 2nd prize is a digital camera, 3rd prize is three iPod Nanos (3 winners), and 10 runner-up prizes of \$50 gift cards (10 winners) will be given away.

Visitors between 6pm – 11pm will receive a free cup or cone of Baskin Robbins Soft Serve Ice Cream for 25 cents.



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*Ruth Eckerd Hall to Close on Royalty/
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The Royalty Theater, built in 1896, opened as the Capitol Theatre and enjoyed enormous popularity first as a vaudeville & opera house. For decades, many of the country's biggest stars graced the stage of the theatre, including Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, and Clark Gable. In the 40's, the theatre hosted Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Bob Hope and Sammy Davis Jr. as they performed for U.S. military troops. By the 1950's the beautiful theatre had become one of America's premier movie palaces, but continued to be a favorite venue for many world-renowned performers. In the 60's and 70's, concerts by Elvis Presley, and Liza Minelli helped further the Royalty Theatre's reputation as a great "little opera house". That musical heritage

continued as dozens of classic theatrical productions were presented over the next two decades.

For some months the City of Clearwater and Ruth Eckerd Hall have been negotiating over the purchase of the theater making plans to rehab the historic building and turn it into a small but modern hub for the performing arts.

"The theater would be a performing arts venue where we would do film, live performances, jazz, classical artists, pop entertainment — a similar type of schedule that we do for Ruth Eckerd Hall, but for artists that won't necessarily fill the hall," said Robert Freedman, president and chief executive officer of Ruth Eckerd.

The final closing of the property will take place early December. According to Kevin Carlon, Chief Operating Officer of Ruth Eckerd, they will get their crews in right away and should be open for business as soon as February – March.

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401 S Ft Harrison Ave
Clearwater, FL 33756

Located at the Corner of Ft. Harrison Ave and Court Street

(727) 724-4190



A creative holiday shopping experience like no other...

More than just a great place to shop for unique gifts created by local artists and purchase holiday accessories – The Happy Holiday Market is an interactive creative celebration of the season.

Located in the big white tent off Court Street, between East Street and Garden Avenue, we are open 7 days a week for your convenience.

What: Seasonal merchandise: Local artists provide a wide variety of items for unique and creative holiday gifts... Merchandise changes weekly.

But wait there's more... we said interactive and fun for the whole family.

- ✳ Every Saturday: 1pm to 2pm – Free acting classes! 2pm to 3pm – Free dance classes!
- ✳ All classes taught by professionals in their field.
- ✳ Bring the kids each week for the classes, stay for the unbelievable entertainment afterwards.
- ✳ Live Entertainment from 3pm to 4pm – Suggested donation of \$10.00 for the show.
- ✳ December 6th: Badway on Broadway – Professional Broadway performer.
- ✳ December 13th: Holiday Medley – Dancing, Singing and Trapeze Dance performance.

Proceeds from and entertainment benefit several local charities providing free tutoring and after school activities for children in Pinellas County.

Happy Holiday Market

A new Holiday Tradition in Downtown Clearwater

When:

Monday through Friday.....4pm until 7pm
 Saturday.....11am until 4pm
 Sunday.....12pm until 4pm



Terry & Randy Meyers

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Essential Oils prevent infection and replace toxic chemical hygiene products with natural safe ingredients.

Now available in Hand Sanitizers, Soaps, toothpaste and more.

To order these products, contact Marlene Hudson at (727) 596-5203.

For great gift ideas and gift baskets, visit our booth at the Happy Holidays Market. It's the big white pavilion located in Downtown Clearwater on Franklin Street.

20% of Happy Holidays Market sales benefit local charities!



WAREHOUSE SALE

Sat & Sunday only Dec 6 & 7th

\$1.00 & up!

DVDs, CDs, Games, Books, Toys and More

\$1.00 off any purchase \$10.00 or more

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located at Tampa Road & Pinellas Trail in Palm Harbor