

TAMPA BAY INFORMER

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HUMAN RIGHTS

The Clearwater Human Rights Experience

The Clearwater Human Rights Experience is a multi-faceted event transcending the normal . . .

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COMEDY

The Dumb Show

On a cold Sunday night following New Years day, 120 people . . .

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Thrill Seeker "Sirio" Taking the Jump

A week had passed since my first visit to Zephyrhills. The sky was cloudy but the forecast promised clear skies, and both my buddy . . .

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Barnum's Funundrum begins with an engaging musical number — Photo by Chris Connell

GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

TAMPA

By Alice Roses

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey circus is in town, with a show of such grandeur it brings to mind the popular image of an awe-struck child pining to run away and join the circus. If half the kids in Tampa go missing, you will know where they went.

The 140th edition of The Greatest Show on Earth, Barnum's Funundrum celebrates the 200th anniversary of P.T. Barnum's birth, and the circus has pulled out all the stops – with everything from pirates to superheroes and mermaids to tigers – living up to the reputation of one of the greatest showmen America has ever known.

From the colorful opening number "All Aboard," Barnum's Funundrum was a high-paced evening of engaging entertainment, eliciting "oohs" and "aahs" as the audience watched the highly trained performers attempt death defying stunts no ordinary man would be capable of. Gasps could be heard as a man on one long stilt was launched somersaulting into the air, and sighs of relief were heard as

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ANTI DRUG MESSAGE DRAWS 55% MORE

CLEARWATER

by Heidi Lux

The 21st Annual Say No to Drugs Holiday Classic 5K, 10K and Children's 1 mile fun-run drew an extensive crowd on December 19th, exceeding all expectations with the number of participants running to forward the message – including myself, a first time 5K runner.

I arrived early, the crisp morning air jolting me out of my weekend sleepiness. I knew the event would be popular, but I did not expect the sea of people assembled in front of the Harborview Center. According to an event coordinator's estimate, 1,700 runners participated this year, 600 more than in previous years – an increase of nearly 55%.

With a final turn-out of nearly twice the number that early-registration figures had suggested, it was understandable that I found myself among the few runners still receiving their numbers even as Hana Li Winters sang the Star Spangled Banner and a small army of runners waited for Lt. Dimmer of the Pinellas County Sheriff's Office to blow the starting whistle. Event coordinators Chris Alexander and Sue Minkoff assure me that with this year's experience, they will be fully prepared to handle the enormous crowds next year – including the opportunity to pre-register and receive numbers the day before the race in addition to the morning of.

This being my first race, I paced myself along the course, from the starting line in Coachman Park to the steep incline of the Memorial Causeway leading

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SPORTS

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1,700 Participate in The Say No to Drugs Holiday Classic. Photo by Brad Kugler

GOVERNMENT

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Historic Post Office Saved

by Heidi Lux

Since 1933, the historic and stately Cleveland Street District (Downtown) Post Office in Clearwater has added a sense of aesthetics and charm, . . .

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GOVERNMENT

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Time for a New Chief in Town

by Heidi Lux

In February, Clearwater Police Chief Sid Klein will retire after serving 29 years as the city's Chief of Police. The daunting task of finding a replacement lies on the shoulders of ...

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COMMUNITY

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A Cool 1 Million ...

by Heidi Lux

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), a Clearwater staple since the facilities opened in the 1980's, has seen a recent expansion in their activities.. "...

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THE DUMB SHOW

ST PETE

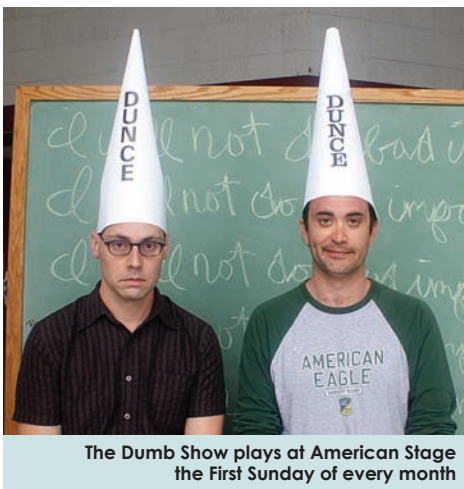
By Heidi Lux

On a cold Sunday night following New Years day, 120 people gathered in the lobby of St. Petersburg's American Stage, many of them standing in the back or sitting on the floor, to watch Gavin Hawk and Ricky Wayne perform as The Dumb Show, improvising 60 minutes of comedy from the simple audience suggestion of a dumb New Year's resolution: "loose weight."

What transpired that evening was a dreamlike unscripted show, opening with a man exercising his typing fingers at the gym, and closing with a kid suffering from typhoid going berserk over a game of Risk at his typhoid-care summer camp.

Long-form improvisation can be difficult to describe – so much is lost in translation. The humor is in the moment, and situational, making it stronger and in many ways more satisfying, but it can be nearly impossible to explain to your friends why you were laughing so hard. The style, developed in Chicago, involves an entire performance building on a single audience suggestion given at the opening of the show. What follows is a series of scenes, each one originating from some detail of the last. As it is all improvised, even the performers never know what they're going to say next; but Hawk and Wayne are so polished, you might think they had prepared it beforehand. "A lot of people, when they see our show, don't believe that a lot of scenes are not scripted," says Hawk.

While scenes in your average long-form improv show run as little as two minutes, those in The Dumb Show are much longer – only five in Sunday's hour-long show – but you hardly notice it with their remarkable ability to keep each scene fresh and engaging. Their characters come alive, with interesting shifts taking the show in unexpected directions, and even scenes within the scenes, with hilarity at every turn. In one scene Wayne, as a terrible therapist, guided Hawk, the disturbed patient, through his childhood memories. Each memory was reenacted as a mini-scene with a life of own, each stranger (and funnier) than the last, until the therapist had nothing left but to comment on how weird his patient was.



The Dumb Show plays at American Stage the first Sunday of every month

Perhaps the success of The Dumb Show is due to their ability to blend two uniquely different improv styles: Ricky Wayne spent 4 ½ years at The Groundlings in L.A., while Gavin Hawk studied at The Second City and The Annoyance Theatre in Chicago. Much could be written on the differences between the two schools, but in essence west-coast improv is rooted in character work, while Chicago improv is relationship-based, seeking the "truth in comedy." The Dumb Show brings them together beautifully.

Gavin Hawk teaches acting and directing at Eckerd College. His one man show, Circumference of a Squirrel, has received critical acclaim. He recently appeared in the NBC special T.H.E.M. Ricky Wayne teaches improv in Tampa, and is a member of Got Jokes? Improv – a popular short-form group based in Tampa. He has worked with Armand Assante, Val Kilmer, and recently finished filming a TV movie for the SciFi Channel, "House of Bones." The Dumb Show has been selected to perform at the Orlando Fringe Festival in May, and was recently submitted to the Chicago Improv Festival. Results have yet to be announced.

Don't miss the Dumb Show, first Sunday of each month at The American Stage, 8:00 p.m. You never know what you are going to see, but it is sure to leave you laughing. Tickets are pay-what-you-can at the door.

For more information on Hawk, Wayne or The Dumb Show, visit www.hawkan-dwayne.com. ♦

THRILL SEEKER "SIRIO" TAKING THE JUMP

By Sirio Balmelli

ZEPHYRHILLS

A week had passed since my first visit to Zephyrhills. The sky was cloudy but the forecast promised clear skies, and both my buddy and I were too dead set on getting this jump in.

The weather worsened as we drove, and by the time Van-Denberg Airport went passing by, the rain was pouring. This was our last week-end, and it was jump or bust. We did not turn back.

Fortunately, Florida's fickle weather was on our side by the time we turned onto Skydive Lane.

High altitude winds kept us on the ground until just after 10 a.m. I was approached by a tall man with a distinct British accent. He made sure I had signed my life away, and then zipped me into a nylon flight suit. On top of everything went a nylon contraption very similar to the safety harness construction workers hang in when working on the external face of high-rise buildings.

The interior of the rugged twin-prop plane we would dive out of was nothing more than bare metal with a thinly carpeted floor, seatbelt blocks bolted to metal struts, and two long benches facing the plane's rear. As soon as my instructor and I sat down, our harnesses were buckled together and we were tightly joined. The cargo door closed. There was no going back now.

It was a 9-minute ride up to reach approximately 14,000 feet. The cargo door opened up as we passed the 6000-foot mark. My anxiety built apace.

As the pilot leveled off and started the jump run at reduced speed, skydivers began to line up by the door. The first to jump was a group of four in matching all-black jumpsuits. One moment they were there, arms linked and poised at the edge of the door, the next moment they were gone. Since I was more than a little jumpy by this time, I don't remember who went next. The next thing I knew, I was crouching in front of my instructor.

It was my turn. Billy, the cameraman filming me, came first. As I dived for-



ward on the count of three, Billy dived backwards below me, keeping me in his sight. I plummeted into the void, and the world opened up below me.

The sensation of freefall was unlike anything I had ever experienced before. The air speeding past me at nearly 200 miles per hour and its deafening roar was the quintessential speed rush. The wide-open vistas below lent a sense of freedom and endless space. Seconds went by in what seemed like minutes, and still I had the feeling that there was so much more to be taken in.

After the monumental jerk of the parachute opening and some momentary disorientation, I suddenly found myself suspended at 5000 feet and gliding through some fleecy cloud cover as my instructor maneuvered us in line. We cruised along for another two minutes killing altitude and then made an uneventful stand-up landing close to the end of the drop zone.

I did not understand the ins and outs of skydiving technique back then, nor appreciate how smoothly my instructor had conducted the dive, but the experience changed me forever. I would go skydiving again.

To be continued in the next Tampa Bay Informer. To view a video of Sirio's Skydive, go to www.tampabayinformer.com. ♦



ST. PETE

The inverted pyramid of The Pier has been a St. Petersburg landmark since it opened its doors in 1973. On January 6th, the Pier Advisory Task Force met to discuss plans to redesign and revitalize the colorful triangular edifice, which has been seen as a burden on the city in recent times. \$50 million has been approved for future renovation of the structure, but will not become available until 2012.

The twenty-person task force met with members of the architecture firm Bermello Ajamil & Partners, to discuss such ideas as adding a Ferris wheel to The Pier. Proposals for an amphitheatre, bringing the structure closer to land, adding retail space on the walkway to the building, and creating a water park were also considered.

Currently, The Pier is home to a variety of shops and restaurants, as well as The

FIFTY MILLION APPROVED FOR PYRAMID AT THE PIER

By Heidi Lux

Pier Aquarium. Many events are held at the location throughout the year. An estimated 1.2 million people visit The Pier annually.

The first of three public hearings is scheduled to take place on January 19th at 7:00 p.m. at The Coliseum to discuss the issue and gather input from the community.

A community input survey can be found at The Pier's website, www.stpete-pier.com. ♦

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Angela LeMay

TAMPA BAY INFORMER’S PURPOSE

“To improve the community by raising awareness and responsibility and providing solutions to community issues.

We are achieving this purpose by publishing informative articles related to issues in the community which include community activities sponsored by non-profit and civic groups. Our articles invite members of the community to get involved and take action to help improve our community.

Our advertisers help fund our purpose, and in turn, our marketing department is continuously expanding our circulation and increasing the exposure of our advertisers, resulting in expansion of their businesses.”

**SHERRIFF’S OFFICE TRANSFORMS
VACANCY INTO KIDS REC CENTER**

From the Desk of Sheriff Jim Coats

CLEARWATER

Over the last two months, a vacant Pinellas County Government Highway Department vehicle maintenance and fueling facility in Lealman has been transformed into a multi-sports and activity complex for the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Police Athletic League, (PAL).

The whole complex has been refurbished. Former parking lots and driveways are now street hockey rinks, and basketball courts. There are picnic benches under the trees and tether-ball play areas. The sand is down for playing volleyball or for building sandcastles.

Even before the facility formally opened on December 12th, kids in the neighborhood were stopping by to play basketball and getting to know the staff and deputies assigned to the 46th Avenue facility.

The Lealman PAL program at 46th Avenue and 37th Street is the latest in a series of Pinellas County Sheriff’s PAL initiatives. The mission of the Pinellas Sheriff’s Police Athletic League is to offer the youth of Pinellas County alternatives to violence, gang involvement, and drugs. Sports, tutoring and mentoring programs

give youngsters of all backgrounds an opportunity to have fun, grow and learn in a safe environment. “The value of this program is that local youth who come to PAL can meet their friends, make new ones and learn a sports skill, rather than be tempted to engage in criminal activity, vandalism or substance abuse,” according to Sheriff’s PAL Director Jerry Babcock.

When schools are out, vandalism, vehicle burglaries and other youth related incidents have a tendency to increase. With the opening of the Sheriff’s PAL Sports Complex in Lealman, a special series of PAL sports camps have already begun to be provided, so kids have an option and can get involved during spring, summer and winter breaks. The sports camps are in addition to the routine activities of team sports and tutoring.

The Sheriff’s On-Track Program, which addresses the needs of at-risk kids and their parents, as well as the StepUp program will also be incorporated into the Lealman PAL curriculum. “We want to make



PCSO Staff and Kids at Lealman Sports Complex

this facility a neighborhood destination and a focal point,” Babcock says. “With the help of our partners we now have a chance to give something back to the community, help young people become good citizens and provide services to parents seeking assistance.”

The Lealman PAL project has been several years in the making, but with the cooperation and contributions of the Pinellas County Government, the Tampa Bay Rays, the Lightning and other community partners, the long awaited program is a reality.

For more information on the Pinellas County Sheriff’s PAL, call 727-582-6658 or visit the website at www.pinellas-countypal.com. ♦



The Digital Photo Gallery — Photo by Heidi Lux

**TURNING DIGITAL INTO CANVAS
AT THE DIGITAL ART GALLERY**

By Heidi Lux

Painter and photographer Leni Betes, originally from Spain, is perhaps best known for her signature collection of delicate and life-like flowers (previously on display at Downtown Clearwater’s Pangea Café in the Spring of 2009). Betes originally created one painting of each flower and reproduces multiple copies of her images through the process of giclée (a high-quality method of making fine art print replicas of paintings), and is now offering this process for hire at her Clearwater store, The Digital Art Gallery.

At the Digital Art Gallery (which Betes manages with her husband, also an artist), a variety of artistic services are provided. Betes offers fine art printing, print of photography onto canvas, portrait studio, framing services and commercial digital printing, in addition to giclée. Betes and

her husband also make both in-door and out-door artistic signs. Betes is particularly proud of one service; the print of a photograph onto canvas or other media of any size. This is perfect for “everyone who wants to preserve their legacy,” says Betes, adding that is also makes a great and unique gift.

Betes is also a fan of the giclée process, which she says makes art more affordable for people by allowing the artist to create from his original piece of art, a reproduction that maintain a high quality level. Artists are also able to sell a painting while reserving the original for themselves.

The Digital Art Gallery is located on 504 N. Fort Harrison Ave in Clearwater, and on the web at www.1canvas2photo.com. Betes can also be contacted at lenifineart@yahoo.com or (727)-623-7150



REAL ESTATE REALITY

By Pam Ryan Anderson

THE GOOD NEWS IN REAL ESTATE

As 2009 wound down, real estate wound UP! The year ended in a frenzy of real estate sales with Realtors showing and selling property like crazy, lenders too busy to get to files, Title Companies having to juggle things to get to closings – WOW! What a great way to end 2009!

The best part of that is that 2010 will continue on this trend. There could not be a better time for buyers to buy and the word is out! It took a while, but buyers are full swing back in the market and houses are selling like hotcakes!

Like the ‘good old days’ if you find a house that you like, it isn’t a good thing to go home and think about it, as it will probably be gone the next day. I called a Realtor about making an offer one morning last week, and had to wait to speak to my client before proceeding. At about 2:00 pm I heard

from my client and called the Realtor again to get more information, only to find out that the property was already under contract! It had been on the market a whopping 20 hours or so!

Interest rates remain low, and prices haven’t been this low in more than 15 years! In fact, I’m seeing deals like I’ve NEVER seen before! The opportunities are out there for almost any budget and taste.

I’ve got great lenders that are available to pre-qualify buyers, and once pre-approved, the shopping can begin! If you’ve been sitting on the fence, waiting for the right time to buy, I can guarantee you – the water is warm, jump in!

For more information, call Pam Ryan Anderson, Short Sale Specialist, Ryan Realty, 727-442-2822 or e-mail Pam at Pam@ryanrealty.org

FLORIDA SCHOOLS AWARDED FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY

By Chad Andro

TAMPA BAY, FLORIDA – JANUARY 1, 2010

The United Nations is dedicating a year to young people by proclaiming 2010 the “International Year of Youth”. But Youth for Human Rights Florida and several local schools are a step ahead of the game in youth-driven human rights advocacy. Washburn Academy, Delphi Academy Florida and Clearwater Academy International were all awarded “YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARDS” for not only teaching human rights, but also involving their students in activities to help them understand how human rights are a part of our world.

Washburn Academy was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT #29 - RESPONSIBILITY, for taking responsibility to improve their community and bring human rights closer to becoming a reality. The school places a strong emphasis on personalized education, united with being active members of society. They have been involved with activities such as promoting peace on the International Day of Non-Violence, cleaning up local parks, and walking in support of Africa’s and Asia’s less fortunate.

Delphi Academy of Florida was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT #26 - THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION. The Delphi program is designed to stretch the student, while also appealing to and strengthening his natural thirst for

knowledge. It is this understanding of the child’s thirst for knowledge, this innate desire to understand and challenge the world around one, which is emphasized and embodied in the Delphi program.

Clearwater Academy International was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT # 24 - THE RIGHT TO PLAY. Clearwater Academy International delivers a dynamic combination of education and extracurricular activities involving the spirit of play. The school not only has high academic standards, but its students are also encouraged to volunteer, helping others in the community. Even with this busy schedule, the students created the utmost spirit of play in an undefeated season and a 6A Football State Championship.

“The next generation brings about the possibility of change, and that change can be achieved by knowing and understanding human rights,” said Dustin McGahee, President of Youth for Human Rights Florida. McGahee became involved in educating others about their human rights with an inspiration to action from the words of humanitarian L. Ron Hubbard, “Human rights must be made a fact, not an idealistic dream.” ♦

For more information about the Youth for Human Rights and free video downloads covering the 30 Human Rights, visit: www.youthforhumanrights.org



Washburn Academy was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT #29 - RESPONSIBILITY



Clearwater Academy International was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT # 24 - THE RIGHT TO PLAY



Delphi Academy of Florida was awarded the YOUTH FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AWARD based on HUMAN RIGHT #26 - THE RIGHT TO EDUCATION



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The Downtown Clearwater Post Office was recently saved by USPS officials - Photo by Heidi Lux

HISTORIC POST OFFICE SAVED

By Heidi Lux

CLEARWATER

Since 1933, the historic and stately Cleveland Street District (Downtown) Post Office in Clearwater has added a sense of aesthetics and charm to an already picturesque neighborhood, but recently the adorable location was in danger of being closed.

The postal service, like many government institutions, is struggling financially. As a cost-cutting measure, several post office branches were being considered for closure, including three locations in the City of Clearwater: a branch on Clearwater Beach, the Countryside location, and the Downtown Clearwater branch in the beautiful building on the corner of Cleveland Street and East Avenue.

The Downtown Clearwater Post Office was opened on October 9th, 1933 as the city's first government run post office, with Postmaster General James A. Farley officiating the opening. The building, an

example of the Mediterranean-Revel style, captures the unique flair of Florida, and is authentically Floridian: designed by Clearwater architect Theodore Skinner and built by the Palm Beach construction firm Walt and Sinclair of Florida, using oolitic limestone from the Florida Keys. In 1981 the building was listed in the National Registry of Historic Places. More recently, Congressman Bill Young lobbied to keep the branch open.

On December 15th, when the vacancy of the building seemed nigh, U.S. postal officials announced that the Downtown Clearwater Post Office, along with both of the other Clearwater post office locations under consideration, would live to write another page in the region's history.

The Downtown Clearwater Post Office is located at 650 Cleveland Street and is open Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. For more information, visit www.usps.com. ♦

TIME FOR A NEW CHIEF IN TOWN

CLEARWATER

by Heidi Lux

In February, Clearwater Police Chief Sid Klein will retire after serving 29 years as the city's Chief of Police. The daunting task of finding a replacement lies on the shoulders of City Manager Bill Horne, aided by input from citizens and city officials. Horne has whittled down the list of applicants to two qualified candidates.

Both finalists have strong foundations in community policing. According to the website of the U.S. Department of Justice, community policing is: "a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies, which support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques, to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues."

order to determine what resources are needed for each area. He wants citizens to be able to "move toward the badge, not away from the badge," meaning that officers and citizens can work together, since both share the same goal – the eradication of crime.



John A. Jackson — Chief of Police
Alamosa, Colorado

John A. Jackson – Chief of Police, Alamosa, CO

"I am absolutely thrilled to be considered and honored to be one of two candidates to lead the department," says Chief John Jackson. "Clearwater has a leading and very impressive police department," he adds, noting Clearwater's institution of community policing 20 years ago, an innovation at the time. He humorously adds Florida's climate as a factor in his desire to move as well.

Jackson currently institutes community policing in Alamosa, and would continue in Clearwater. "The focus and emphasis is community based involvement," he explains, stressing an address to root causes before they become problems. "You have to nurture relationships," he says. Just putting people behind bars doesn't work that well; however, "That doesn't mean if someone does something horrific, you don't put them in jail," says Jackson.

Jackson has served as Police Chief for Overland Park, KS, a city larger than Clearwater, and in Alamosa, a tourist town smaller than Clearwater. He also teaches at Ft. Hayes State University, and says the students keep him fresh and ensure he does his research and stays current.

Jackson worked with judges in Alamosa to develop a graffiti abatement partnership in the form of restorative justice: those caught in the act are sentenced to clean up graffiti in the city. Since the program's implementation, graffiti in Alamosa has disappeared, and hasn't returned. "It's wonderful to watch the kids, they don't like it so much," Jackson says, "but then come back and say how it's helped them. It's worth it in the long run if a kid says, 'you've really helped me out.'"

City Manager Bill Horne will announce his decision in mid-January. ♦



Anthony Holloway — Chief of Police
Somerville, Massachusetts

Anthony Holloway – Chief of Police, Somerville, MA

Chief Anthony Holloway, a Tampa Bay area native, served 22 years in the Clearwater Police Department, where he worked in nearly every division, excepting only the Office of Professional Standards. He has about 19 years experience in community policing, and has worked as a narcotics detective. For the past two years, Holloway has been the Chief of Police in Somerville, Massachusetts, a town comparable in size to the City of Belleair. Crime rates in Somerville have been reduced under Holloway, and according to recent reports, crime is down by 16%, to its lowest rate since 2005.

"When I heard the chance to go back to where I started from I looked at it and thought this would be a good fit," Holloway said, commenting on his desire to return to Clearwater. Holloway has roots in this area, and experience in this community.

Holloway has applied his experience in community policing to the City of Somerville, working with the community to learn what their core values are, and the specific problems they are facing, in



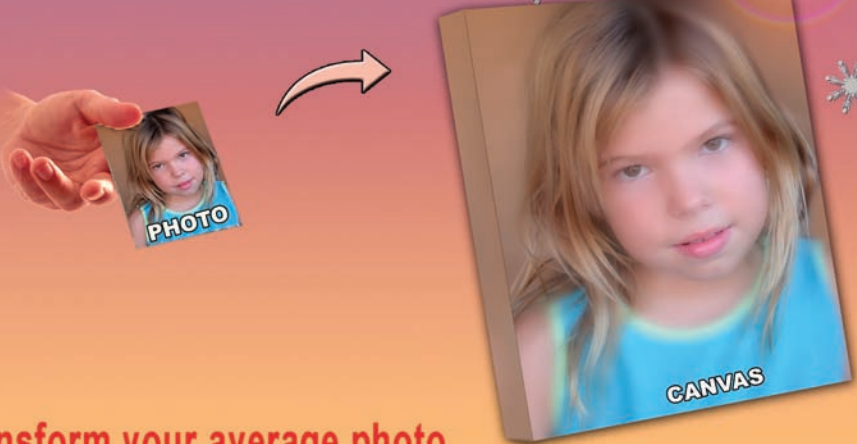
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All Aboard! - Photo by Chris Connell

GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

Continued from page 1

he landed safely on his feet – or rather, one stilt.

Barnum’s Funundrum also marks the return of Jonathan Lee Iverson, the first African American ringmaster, after a five year hiatus. Iverson’s booming operatic voice and enthusiastic showmanship conjured an atmosphere of excitement and wonder, captivating the audience and enhancing the show’s many spectacles. Barnum’s Funundrum is produced by sisters Nicole and Alana Feld of Feld Entertainment, the producers of Disney on Ice. The third generation of Felds, and the first two women to produce the show, they have gathered some of the best talent from around the world, creating a show that lives up to its billing as the Greatest Show on Earth.

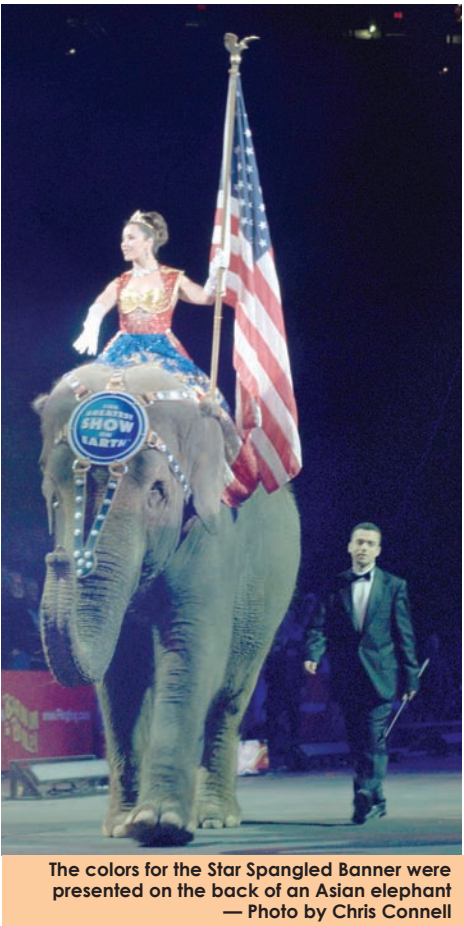
A new attraction at the circus this year is a pre-show animal open house. This attraction was not available opening night, however, due to cold weather and concern for the animals’ well-being.

There is also an all-access pre-show held on the arena floor, hosted by animal trainer Andre McClain, “America’s favorite cowboy.” There, ticket-holders are invited to get up close and personal with the circus by trying on costumes, playing tug of war with the strongest man on earth, and watching the elephant Kelly Ann paint a picture, while learning facts about her species.

“Because people and animals are an essential part of everything we do at Ringling Bros., we are committed to programs that invest in the health and well-being of families, kids and animals,” says Kenneth Feld, Chairman and CEO of Feld Entertainment. Ringling Bros. does this through two programs: CircusFit, a national youth fitness program designed

to encourage children to “lead healthy, active and balanced lifestyles,” and the Center for Elephant Conservation, established to protect the endangered Asian elephant. A \$5 million, 200 acre facility in Central Florida is “dedicated to the conservation, breeding and understanding of these amazing animals” as part of the program.

The Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey’s Greatest Show on Earth presents Barnum’s Funundrum at the St. Pete Times Forum until January 15th. For more information, visit www.ringling.com. ♦



The colors for the Star Spangled Banner were presented on the back of an Asian elephant — Photo by Chris Connell



Clowns warmed up the audience during the pre-show — Photo by Chris Connell



MAKING YOUR RESOLUTIONS STICK

by Shelley Jaffe

CLEARWATER

So it’s the New Year again and resolutions about eating better, getting into better shape and being more active abound. Year in and year out we make ourselves these promises, many to be broken leaving us feeling like we have failed. But what if there was a way to succeed? What if a workable technology existed to help you reach those goals? Well, it does and it is within your grasp. It is NOT some magic supplement or a multilevel marketing product. It IS invaluable information which will put you in the driver’s seat to reaching your goal of a healthy body.

Come to Peter Gillham’s on the 23rd of January at 6:30 p.m. for a free seminar that will help answer your questions about how to achieve the health and well being you desire. The seminar will be delivered by three experts in the fields

of nutrition, diet and exercise with combined experience of over 70 years in their fields. You will learn why past programs have failed to help you, how taking too many supplements may be making things worse and how the “no pain, no gain” approach to working out is causing your body long term damage. There is so much information and so many products out there selling themselves as miracles to weight loss and health. At this seminar we will debunk the myths and you will learn the actual scientific barriers to having a healthy body and the technology to overcome them. If you are ready to take control of your health and become totally causative over your body and its well being, you don’t want to miss this! Seating is limited and filling fast, so call (727) 462-5770 to confirm today! ♦



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Continued from page 1

to Clearwater Beach. Pushing myself up the arch of the Causeway was a challenge; it is no surprise that it features in many other races throughout the year, including both Ironman and Iron Girl. The course doubled back just after the bridge for the 5K runners, while the 10K continued out to the beach.

Participants represented all levels of the running scene: From the professional competitors leading the pack, to amateurs like myself who enjoy running for fun and fitness, to those who chose to walk the course, many coming out just to support the Say No to Drugs theme of the event. I found it to be an excellent race for a first-timer like myself, with a friendly and very supportive field. As the first of the 10K runners overtook some of us just rounding the bend on the 5K, words of encouragement met the athlete: "Finish it man! Finish it!"

Crossing the finish line, we were greeted with an all-you-can-eat breakfast of homemade organic spelt pancakes courtesy of volunteers led by Kitty Magness, and complimentary massages from Sun State Massage Academy and adjustments by Family Life Chiropractic – welcome rewards after the morning's exertion. As the name implies, the Say No to Drugs

Holiday Classic aims to raise awareness and spread a drug-free message. At the post-race breakfast in the Harborview Center, children pledged to live their lives drug-free and were sworn in as Drug-Free Marshals by the Youth for a Drug Free Florida, while runners viewed the DVD "The Truth About Drugs" or read the accompanying educational pamphlets.

Nathan Holden from Jacksonville and Melissa Todd from Kansas City won the men's and women's 10K, respectively. Daniel Geilman and Christa Benton of St. Petersburg took the men and women's 5K races. Awards were also presented to top finishers in a range of age groups; including 90 year old Jane Bussman of Clearwater, in the 5K.

The Say No to Drugs Holiday Classic was started 21 years ago by world class runner and local resident Sandra Johnson, member of the Dianetics Athletics Association of the Church of Scientology. The idea was to promote an anti-drug message by raising awareness through a road race. From there it has become one of the premier races in the Tampa Bay area. ♦

For more information, including race-times and results, visit www.saynotodrugs.com.



Children take the Drug-Free Marshals pledge to Say No to Drugs as race coordinator Chris Alexander looks on - Photo by Chris Connell



A complimentary pancake breakfast was served to race participants — Photo by Chris Connell



Race participants were treated to complimentary massages courtesy of Sun State Massage Academy —Photo by Chris Connell



Larry Jaffe with Mayor Frank V. Hibbard — Photo by David Ziff

THE CLEARWATER HUMAN RIGHTS EXPERIENCE

by Bo Walker

The Clearwater Human Rights Experience is a multi-faceted event transcending the normal boundaries of our society. The program, put on by Poets for Human Rights, has grown well beyond the reading of human rights-related poetry. The annual event includes a special group reading of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a showing of the award-winning documentary The Story of Human Rights, and the presentation of the Clearwater Humanitarian awards. The Human Rights Experience touches nerves with joy and dismay, and so it was at the Poets for Human Rights Annual Awards at Clearwater Main Library on Saturday, December 12. The event was hosted by Poets for Human Rights co-founder Larry Jaffe, with special presentations made by fellow co-founder Stazja McFadyen and event producer Shelly Jaffe. The purpose of the annual awards event is to enlighten, educate and validate those members of our community who, through selfless effort, improve our world.

In the words of Eleanor Roosevelt, one of the prime movers of the Declaration: "Where, after all, do Universal Rights begin? In small places, close to home – so close and so small that they cannot be seen on any maps of the world. Yet they are the world of the individual person; the farm or office where he works. Such are the places where every man, woman, and child seeks justice, equal opportunity, equal dignity without discrimination. Unless these rights have meaning there, they have little meaning anywhere."

The event opened with a short welcome by Mr. Jaffe, followed by a moving invocation by Maurice Mickens, Deacon of the Mount Carmel Baptist Church. Jaffe then read a proclamation from Clearwater Mayor Frank Hibbard designating

December 5 – 12 as Clearwater Human Rights Week.

Gracia Bennish, President of United for Human Rights, informed everyone about the organization and its purpose of bringing groups together for greater strength. Ms. Bennish then made the official announcement appointing Larry Jaffe as the Poet Laureate and voice of United for Human Rights.

Shelley Jaffe then presented the 2009 Clearwater Humanitarian Awards. This year's winners are an incredible group that makes our city proud. Awardees included Maurice Mickens for his tireless work with youth in the North Greenwood community, Community Tampa Bay's Executive Director Stacie Blake, Tampa Bay Academy of Hope Founder James M. Evans, Ida Lopez of World Relief and the Community Learning Center. Each of these individuals received standing ovations for their accomplishments.

Stazja McFadyen hosted the poetry segment of the program, presenting the winners of the 2009 Anita McAndrews Award and Alexander Popoff Award poetry contests. Special guest Venus Jones led the audience with a responsive poem and a truly wonderful poem in response to the movie Precious. The Anita McAndrews Award winning poem by Seattle Poet Sarah Zale received a dramatic reading by Lisa Mansell. Other guest poets included L.D. Sledge, 2008 Anita McAndrews Award winner, Dustin McGahee, President of Youth for Human Rights, Malcolm Johnson and Barbara Sorey.

The event ended with Mr. Jaffe reading a poem called I Never Saw Another Butterfly by Pavel Friedmann, from a collection of the same name with works of art and poetry by Jewish children who lived in the Theresienstadt concentration camp. ♦



Who Reads Good News? - Panama the Dolphin from the Clearwater Marine Aquarium

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UPCOMING EVENTS

January 9th – 24th, Gulfport The Musical: Playwright Gil Perlroth and historian Lynne Browne have created an original work celebrating Gulfport’s centennial, presented at the Catherine A. Hickman Theatre. Tickets are \$15. For information, call the Gulfport Community Players, (727) 322-0316.

January 10th, Bob Newhart: The legendary comedian brings his first love, stand-up comedy, to the Ruth Eckerd Hall stage at 2:00 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhallt.com for information.

January 10th, An Evening with Ottmar Liebert and Luna Negra: Grammy® nominee Ottmar Liebert and his band Luna Negra perform two shows at the historic Capitol Theatre in Downtown Clearwater, at 6:00 & 8:30 pm. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for information.

January 10th, The Florida Orchestra: The Florida Orchestra, conducted by Stefan Sanderling, performs at Ruth Eckerd Hall, at 7:30 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for information.

January 15th, Swing Time featuring Mitch Woods & his Rocket 88’s: Group swing-dance lessons at 8:00 p.m. (no partner needed), followed by live music & dancing from 9:00 p.m. to 12:30 a.m., at the Gulfport Casino, 5500 Shore Blvd. S., Gulfport.

January 15th, Jared O’Roark Reverberated Voices: Performing at Ruth Eckerd Hall, 7:30 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for information.

January 15th, Steven Wright: Academy Award-winning, Grammy® nominated comedian, actor and writer Steven Wright brings his trademark deadpan delivery of ironic, witty, philosophical and sometimes nonsensical jokes and one-liners to the

historical Capitol Theatre in Downtown Clearwater on Friday, at 8:00 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for information.

January 15th, Foreigner with special guest Eddie Money: Classic Rock comes to Ruth Eckerd Hall, at 8:00 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for information.

January 16th, The Music of Led Zepelin – A Rock Symphony: Following the success of last season’s explosive Pink Floyd tribute from the Florida Orchestra, with a full rock band and concert lighting, comes a symphonic salute to Zeppelin’s ground-breaking fusion of rock, folk, blues, acoustic and eastern modalities, at Ruth Eckerd hall, 8:00 p.m. For information, visit www.rutheckerdhall.com.

January 16th – 17th, Safety Harbor Craft Festival: Marina Park becomes a first-class outdoor art gallery, making the arts more accessible to the community in a casual, fun and family friendly setting. Visit www.artfestival.com for more information.

January 22nd, Changing Seasons Guided Hikes: Experience the subtleties of Florida’s changing seasons; visit the Brooker Creek Preserve Environment Education Center for a walk along the trail from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Sturdy, closed-toed shoes are required, water and hat are recommended. Admission is free, with required pre-registration. For reservations or information, call (727) 453-6800.

For complete listings, visit www.tampabayinformer.com. To submit your event for review, email pr@tampabayinformer.com with “Tampa Bay Events” in the subject line.

If you would like to submit your event email editor@tampabayinformer.com. ♦



Peter Gillham’s at 533 Cleveland Street.

COFFEE AND ENERGY DRINKS MAY BE ROBBING YOU OF YOUR SEX DRIVE AND MAKING YOU FAT

by Shelley Jaffe

NATURAL HEALTH

So, you think you know where your sexual hormones are produced? If you think it’s your ovaries and testicles doing all of the work, you’re wrong. Your adrenal glands are doing a lot of the work. That’s right; those glands that help give you your energy are also the ones responsible for sex drive. And that’s not all they are responsible for.

The adrenal glands release hormones like adrenaline, the hormone used to help give us short bursts of energy and to help us deal with stressful situations; hydrocortisone, also known as cortisol, controls the body’s use of fats, proteins, and carbohydrates; and aldosterone which inhibits the level of sodium excreted into the urine, maintaining blood volume and blood pressure. The hormones the adrenal glands produce also help prevent severe allergic reactions and asthma attacks.

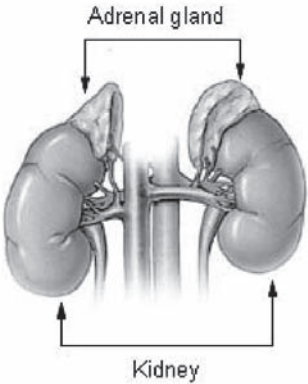
When you consume products containing caffeine and other stimulants like guarana (both found in many energy drinks), you are artificially stimulating your adrenal glands, causing them to become over-worked and eventually causing adrenal exhaustion. And to make matters worse, caffeine not only artificially stimulates the adrenal glands, but it also depletes the body of the nutrients it needs for proper adrenal function.

By consuming caffeine and other stimulants you

are increasing your chances of a heart attack. Just two cans a day is enough to raise your blood pressure and heart rate. The thing is, if you are lacking energy there is an underlying cause. And coffee, energy drinks and other stimulants are actually making it worse. The key is knowing what feeds your adrenal glands and helps them to function properly so that you will have a higher energy level without artificial stimulation. You just need give your adrenal glands the nutrients they need to function properly so you don’t have low energy.

The nutrients your adrenals need for proper function are Potassium, pantothenic acid, vitamin C, Vitamin B 6, Zinc, and Magnesium. Trace minerals are also key in the proper function of all of the glands in your body. You can get these nutrients either through food, or by supplementing. One supplement you can take is NOW’s Green Phytofoods, the most complete green whole food supplement I have found. It feeds all of the glands of the body, helping you to obtain a high energy level and metabolism in a healthy and natural way.

If you would like to learn more about how your body works and what it needs, there will be a free seminar at the store on January 23rd at 6:30 pm. Seating is limited, so call and reserve your seat today. 727-462-5770. ♦



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GREEN CITY CERTIFICATION

By Hedi Lux

CLEARWATER

The City of Clearwater recently earned a Green City certification from the Florida Green Building Coalition (FGBC), a non-profit organization with the mission “to lead and promote sustainability with environmental, economic, and social benefits through regional education and certification programs,” according to their website.

Mayor Hibbard accepted the certification at the December 17th Clearwater City Council meeting. “We’ll proudly display it,” Mayor Hibbard remarked, as he accepted the award.

It was noted that this achievement is especially remarkable in the current economic climate, which has presented unique challenges for government. Despite facing cutbacks in budgets and personnel, Clearwater has been able to meet the requirements for Green City certification, with the attendant long-term benefits resulting from such distinction. The FGBC reserves this certification for


governments that “function in a more efficient manner through better internal communication, cost reductions, and effective risk and asset management.” Not only will Clearwater receive the environmental benefits of going green, but economic benefits as well, while experiencing a more efficiently run city.

“This is a great accomplishment for the City of Clearwater and its residents, and I am proud of the hard work that our residents, volunteers, and staff do on a continual basis to preserve Clearwater’s sustainability,” said Mayor Hibbard.

The FGBC was “founded in the belief that green building programs will be most successful if there are clear and meaningful principles on which ‘green’ qualification and marketing are based.”

To learn more about Clearwater’s sustainability, programs, and environmental initiatives, visit www.myclearwater.com/green. ♦

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WHY DESIGN IS IMPORTANT

TAMPA BAY

By MrWebWiz.com

Design is arguably the most important part of a website, a flier, a logo or any promotional piece for that matter. But what makes "design" so important? What makes design "good" and what makes it "bad"?

If you can read text, see a phone number, or use an online shopping cart, who cares about the rest, right? This might be a common viewpoint to many people on either side of the business fence, whether they are the buyer or the seller, the promoter or the promote-ee. Nevertheless, design is essential if you want to sell anything – and here is why.

The Split-Second Impression

Think about it. How long does it take for you to throw away a piece of junk mail? Two seconds? One? A half? That is precisely how fast your promotional piece or website has to convince your customer that this IS a product they want. If what you are presenting is confusing, convoluted or non sequitur to what you are offering, then your split-second impression will fail. Your flier won't reach anything but the trash bin and your website won't elicit a reaction, except perhaps an urge to hit the "Back" button on your web browser.

Adding an aesthetic sense and inspiration to a website can work wonders on your traffic and how long each viewer stays on your site, which are equally important.

Workability vs. Art

Some designers think that if they add all things pretty - ranging from the cave man etchings to Michelangelo - people will buy the product they are trying to sell. Depending on the context, sometimes less is better. Sometimes you should lose a bit of flair for a bit more workability.

By "workability" I mean readability. Have you ever read a postcard or a website page that made you feel like visiting your optometrist? Most likely, the text was too small or badly arranged, making it hard to digest. Most people do not know how important the layout and spacing of text

is to getting a message across. By having decently-sized text which has enough variety to make it not monotonous, but not so much variety that it looks like a ransom note, will go a long way toward making a promotional piece or website attractive and inviting.

State of the Art Design

Maybe around the dawn of the internet, one could get away with having a single logo image and black text on a white backdrop and be successful. But this isn't 1994, and what was once accepted back then is not the state of the art now.

The computer is the fastest improving device in the world today. Computers fifteen years ago that weighed 40 pounds and were worth \$1,500 are now dwarfed in power by music playing devices that you can now purchase for \$200 and fit in your pocket.

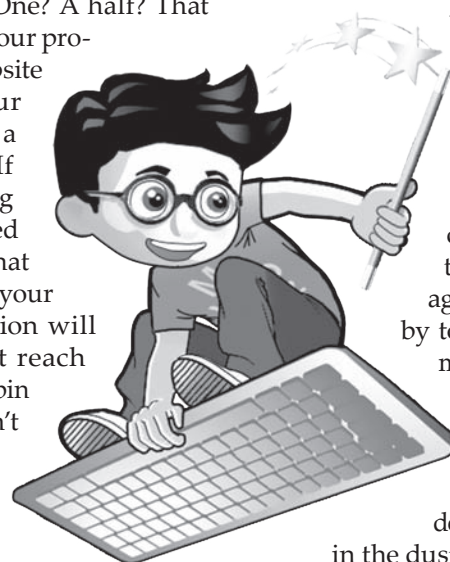
Graphics have improved tremendously, and the internet is no exception. Website designs that were awed a decade ago would be laughed at by today's standards. With modern websites sporting slick designs, flashy visuals and multimedia content, the lack of professional design will leave a website in the dust and unvisited.

So what is the solution?

Good design.

- Easy-to-read text with enough variation to make it attractive.
- Inspired graphics that communicate your message.
- A logo that looks sharp and smart.
- An integrated design in which each page looks like it belongs with the rest.
- ...And dozens of other tricks which will make your website shine and become populated!

Find out how to get a professional website today! Call Mr. Web Wiz at (727)-230-9691 for a free one hour web consultation, or visit www.mrwebwiz.com. ♦



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A COOL 1 MILLION MEANS A NEW HOME FOR “WINTER”

By Heidi Lux

CLEARWATER

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA), a Clearwater staple since the facilities opened in the 1980's, has seen a recent expansion in their activities. In the past year, the aquarium has released nine rehabilitated sea turtles, experienced a 31% attendance growth, and the phenomenon of Winter the Dolphin has exposed the CMA (and beautiful Clearwater) to millions of children all over the country. However, according to the CMA website, “in spite of tremendous growth and a global presence, we also remain a ‘neighborhood’ aquarium.”

On December 17th, the CMA announced it was expanding yet again, thanks to the Richard O. Jacobson Foundation. The Foundation recently made CMA history with the largest single donation the aquarium has ever received: a cool \$1 million. “It’s a pleasure to be involved with an organization such as this,” says 73 year old Richard “Dick” Jacobson, a Clearwater resident seven months out of the year.

The Foundation will give the CMA \$250,000 in two installments, which will be used to provide a new home for Winter, to make capitol improvements, and to expand animal care. Winter’s new home will include a 145,000 gallon dolphin pool for Winter and her adopted mother Panama. When necessary, the new pool will also double as a quarantine area for stranded mammals.

The remaining \$750,000 of the donation will go toward the purchase of an ad-

joining property, for further expansion of the CMA. Plans for this purchase are already underway.

“If you talk about things and believe in things, you can make things happen,” says CMA board member Frank Chivas of the aquarium’s remarkable expansion, which has been in the works for over 5 years.

“We are very grateful to the Jacobson Foundation for supporting our cause and believing wholeheartedly in our work,” said CMA CEO David Yates. “This will allow us to continue to grow our important mission of helping sick or injured marine life.”

The Jacobson Foundation is making this donation on the basis of matching the CMA’s other fund-raising efforts dollar-for-dollar – stressing community involvement in the aquarium’s expansion. “I want the people to get involved with it,” says Jacobson. “I know we’ve got a great community here and we’ll get the job done. This is just how we do it in Clearwater.”

The aquarium has already raised over \$95,000 toward matching the first \$125,000 installment. Construction on Winter’s new home is already underway and is targeted for completion on February 15th.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium is a non-profit working animal hospital committed to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of sick or injured marine life. For more information or to find out how you can help, visit www.seewinter.com. ♦



CMA CEO David Yates (Left) with CMA Board Members (center) receives a million dollar donation from Richard O. Jacobson (right)



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