

# LET’S PLAY LITTLE LEAGUE

SPORTS

Read more pg. 4



Play ball!—Photo by David Ziff

GLOBAL

By David Ziff

On a cold but sunny February day under skies as blue as the stripes on the American flag, Clearwater Little League Baseball ushered in its 2010 season with a combination of hoopla and enthusiasm that would make P.T. Barnum proud. Families, participants, volunteers, spectators and ballplayers all gathered on February 13 at Sid Lickton Sports Complex to make it a day to remember.

The impresario of the opening ceremonies was John Murphy, the president of the Clearwater division of District 12—an area extending from Belleair Bluffs in the south, Clearwater to the west, Oldsmar to the east and New Port Richie to the north.

John, a consummate volunteer who averaged 40 hours a week for three weeks preparing for the new season, had this to say about the game he serves:

“When the country is hurting, in times of trouble and war, America turns back to baseball. There’s something tranquil and reassuring about coming out to a ballpark to watch a game and cheer on your side.”

Little League baseball was founded nationally in 1939 and arrived in Clearwater in 1955. It is at the base of a towering pyramid that defines our national pastime, from four year olds playing T-ball to the mega-parks filled with passionate fans in our nation’s cities.

Little League baseball is where it all begins. True, it’s a breeding ground of future stars. But above all, it is a place where communities and children can come together

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## GOVERNOR CRIST LAUNCHES “WINTER’S DREAM”

CLEARWATER

by Heidi Lux

Governor Charlie Crist stopped by the Clearwater Marine Aquarium on February 8th to help launch the “Winter’s Dream” adoption campaign.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium has recently partnered with the Progress Energy Heart Gallery and Eckerd Community Alternatives, as well as the Governor’s Office of Adoption and Child Protection and the Florida Department of Children and Families, to help raise awareness for adoption. In Florida, at any given time, there are approximately 1,000 foster children waiting to be adopted. More than 120 of those children are within Pinellas and Pasco Counties.


Governor Crist has made adoption one of his top priorities, and created the Office of Adoption and Child Protection to “establish a comprehensive statewide approach for promoting adoption, supporting adoptive families and preventing child abuse, abandonment and neglect.” As a result, many children have been provided with a crucial basic need—a loving home. The state, which has been called America’s most adoption-friendly state, has also consistently broken records for the number of adoptions made.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium’s own Winter the Dolphin, who herself has been adopted by

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COMMUNITY

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Governor Crist and wife Carole meet Winter the Dolphin—Photo by David Ziff

COMMUNITY

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Photo by David Ziff

Einstein on Food and Wine

by Heidi Lux

For one night, the Museum of Science and Industry’s (MOSI) rule of “food and drink prohibited” was broken. MOSI’s Einstein on Food and Wine fundraiser ...

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ENTERTAINMENT

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Photo by StarznBarz.com

Sea Blues

by Heidi Lux

The Knology Clearwater Sea Blues Festival drew an enthusiastic combination of blues fans and seafood fans to Coachman Park this past weekend, for a three-day celebration of both. ...

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Love Tourists, Not Drilling

by Heidi Lux

Hands Across the Sand, a statewide, peaceful protest against offshore drilling, was held throughout Florida’s beaches on February 13th ...

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The Molinet Family, united through adoption  
—Photo by David Ziff

the aquarium and by her new mother, Panama, will serve as an ambassador for the adoption message.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium has long been helping animals through their animal adoption program, but they will now be helping people as well. Their animal adoption program has allowed patrons to adopt an animal from the Clearwater Marine Aquarium without having to take it home. Now, 20% of the proceeds from each “Winter adoption” will go to the Progress Energy Heart Gallery as well.

The Progress Energy Heart Gallery of Pinellas and Pasco began in 2006, and provides professionally shot portraits of children up for adoption. Since 2006, more than 40 of the 172 children featured in the Heart Gallery have found homes. Another 35+ children not featured in the Gallery have also been matched with homes because of the Heart Gallery.

To find out more information, or to adopt Winter, go to [www.seewinter.com](http://www.seewinter.com). For more information on the Progress Energy Heart Gallery, visit [www.heartgallerykids.org](http://www.heartgallerykids.org). ♦



Governor Crist entertains a child who had been benefited by adoption—Photo by David Ziff



Governor Crist with Tampa Bay Informer Director of Community Relations Heidi Lux-Gillion—Photo by David Ziff

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**Publisher**  
LeMay Associates, Inc.

**Editor**  
Angela LeMay

**Assistant Editor**  
Maggy Graham

**Staff Writer**  
Heidi Lux

**Contributing Writers**  
Sirio Balmelli  
Katie Eckelberry  
Dru Jeanis  
David Ziff

**Photographers**  
Katie Machol  
RGP Media  
www.starznbarz.com  
David Ziff

**Design & Layout**  
Darlene Swanson

**Technical Director**  
Uwe Stern

**Letters to Editor**  
editor@tampabayinformer.com

**Press Releases**  
pr@tampabayinformer.com

**Advertising**  
advertise@tampabayinformer.com  
(727) 230-9691

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MOSI's newest exhibit on DaVinci served as the VIP area—Photo by David Ziff

## EINSTEIN ON FOOD AND WINE

By Heidi Lux

For one night, the Museum of Science and Industry's (MOSI) rule of "food and drink prohibited" was broken. MOSI's Einstein on Food and Wine fundraiser offered samplings of food and wine throughout the museum from local restaurants, including Tinatapa's, Whole Foods, The Melting Pot, and The Raw Food Fairy. In addition to the food and wine tasting, a silent auction was held.

Not only was Einstein on Food and Wine a great way to support the museum, it was also a great way to see the museum, since all three floors of the museum contained food and wine, as well as a VIP

area, in MOSI's newest exhibit, DaVinci: The Genius.

DaVinci: The Genius brings Leonardo DaVinci's work to life. Full life-size and to-scale machines envisioned by DaVinci are constructed and on display, while replicas of DaVinci's Renaissance paintings and Revealed Secrets of the Mona Lisa round out the exhibit. DaVinci's original work is too delicate to move, and are either on permanent display or not displayed at all. DaVinci: The Genius and The Secrets of the Mona Lisa will be on display until May 31st.

Einstein on Food and Wine serves as a

fundraiser to raise money for MOSI's educational programs. "The money will do everything from providing summer camp scholarships for students to purchasing equipment for programs and demos, plus it allows us to offer free admission to families in need," says MOSI Media Relations Specialist Cathy Crowder. Since 1982, MOSI has been "dedicated to advancing public interest, knowledge, and understanding of science, industry and technology." The non-profit, community-based institution is the largest science center in the southeastern United States. ♦

For more information, visit [www.mosi.org](http://www.mosi.org).

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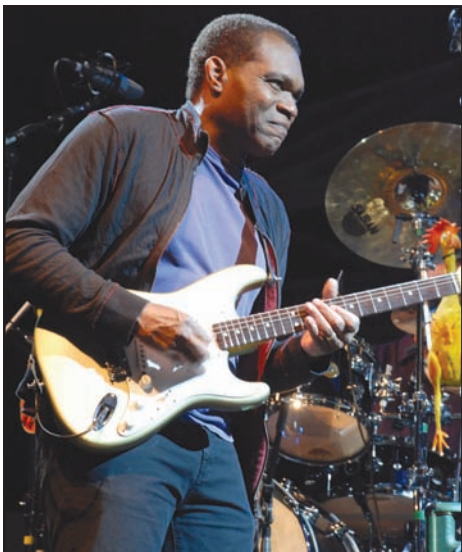
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## SEA BLUES

By Heidi Lux



The Robert Cray Band  
—Photo by [www.starznbarz.com](http://www.starznbarz.com)

The Knology Clearwater Sea Blues Festival drew an enthusiastic combination of blues fans and seafood fans to Coachman Park this past weekend, for a three-day celebration of both.

The Sea Blues Festival kicked off with the strong vocals of Tampa local Julie Black, and culminated in a rousing performance from John Mayall, the 76-year-old "godfather of blues." A diversity of blues performers entertained the crowd, including Grammy-award-nominated Tab Benoit from Louisiana; the Robert Cray Band, winners of the Best Contemporary Blues Grammy; Shawn Murphy of Little Feat; and the amazing Serbian guitarist Ana Popvic, who can be seen in the documentary "Turn It Up," aka "Tone," which explores the world's best guitars and guitar players.

Since its inception in 2006, the Clearwater Sea Blues Festival has been drawing top blues talent. Like the Clearwater Jazz Holiday, this Coachman Park concert



The Shawn Murphy Band  
—Photo by [www.starznbarz.com](http://www.starznbarz.com)

series is free, with performance fees for musicians paid through sponsorships and concessions.

For more information, go to [www.clearwaterseablues.com](http://www.clearwaterseablues.com). ♦

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City Councilman George Cretekos, John Murphy, Chief Geer, City Manager Bill Horne, City Councilwoman Carlen Peterson and the mascots look on as Pam Ryan Anderson sweeps the plate —Photo by David Ziff

# LET’S PLAY LITTLE LEAGUE

Continued from page 1

to participate in a game built on the shoulders of such giants as Babe Ruth, Hank Aaron, Mickey Mantle and Jackie Robinson.

For many who were present at the Sid Lickton facility on Saturday, opening day will leave an indelible memory: the celebration of the legacy of the beloved Lou Caprara, who passed away in 2009, having served the sport he loved for 50 years. His widow, Mrs. Caprara; son, Joe Caprara; and his many friends were present when John Murphy announced that henceforth Field Four at the complex would be known as the Lou Caprara Field.

Additional honors were accorded Lou: the front of each Little Leaguer’s uniform states, “In memory of Louis J. Caprara.” Denise Yerbic wrote and movingly recited a poetic eulogy to the passing of a man who remains in the minds and hearts of all he touched.

The ceremonies had other highlights and participants who made it possible. Local dignitaries were on hand and lent their

prestige to the day: Clearwater Council members George Cretekos and Carlen Petersen, City Manager Bill Horne, Pinellas County Commissioner Karen Seel and Chief Geer of the Clearwater Fire Department.

Opening Day also prominently featured Patsy Stills, the event’s personable master of ceremonies; Besthy Philsler, who beautifully rendered our national anthem; and the merry clowns of Clearwater Community Volunteers, Pam Ryan Anderson and Lynn Posyton. On hand as well were the larger-than-life mascots of the Philadelphia Phillies, New York Yankees, Toronto Blue Jays and the University of South Florida Bulls. An honor guard from USF’s ROTC lent their color and pageantry to the occasion.

No account of the festivities would be complete without mentioning the exuberant presence of an outstanding musical group, The Stones, led by its Mick Jagger look-alike and sound-alike, Richard Stewart. These boys were good!

But who were the real stars? Who made the event possible? The children, of course, ranging from four to seventeen years old, including the Challenger Division (for mentally and physically handicapped children), who filled the fields on opening days with their multicolored uniforms, their joy and excitement.

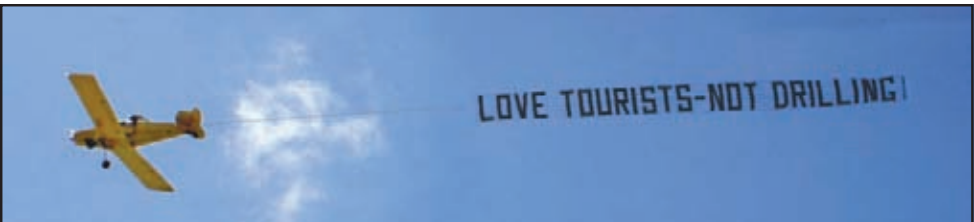
The introduction of each team and seeing the children running onto the field to take their places during the festivities was the highlight of the day. And in the end the children said it best. When asked what they liked best about playing Little League baseball, Travis Starkey and Daniel Joseph, both twelve years old, agreed: “It’s fun!” ♦



City Councilman George Cretekos and Phinley address the Little League participants —Photo by David Ziff



The Clearwater Community Volunteers with their adopted little league team—Photo by David Ziff



Love Tourists Airplane With Sign—Photo by David Ziff

# LOVE TOURISTS, NOT DRILLING

Continued from page 1

Hands Across the Sand, a statewide, peaceful protest against offshore drilling, was held throughout Florida’s beaches on February 13th. Despite the colder-than-average weather, large groups of citizens made their way out to the beaches to make their voices heard and to show their support for Florida’s beautiful landscape, with the hope that it will stay beautiful.

In response to the fact that Pinellas County beaches and tourism could be profoundly affected if oil rigs were permitted to be constructed three miles off shore, protestors linked hands in the sand and could be seen up and down the county. Protestors wore black to symbolize how the beaches would look should there be an oil spill.

Opposition to offshore drilling has become a bipartisan issue, especially among coastal communities, which have the most to lose should something go wrong. Pinellas County elected officials from both sides of the aisle showed up to a local press conference preceding the Hands Across the Sand protest. Concerned officials included Congressman Bill Young (R),

his opponent in the upcoming election State Senator Charlie Justice (D), State Representative Jim Frishe (R), and State Representative Rick Kreisman (D).

“Love Tourists, Not Drilling” was the theme of the day. Florida’s natural beauty draws a high amount of tourists and revenue to the area. Many believe the few benefits of the oil industry’s presence in the Gulf of Mexico so close to the coast is not worth the potential sacrifice of one of Florida’s top industries.

The mission of Hands Across the Sand, according to their website, is to “raise awareness about the pending Florida legislation to drill for oil in our coastal waters,” and “to convince our legislators and governor to drop any and all legislation that would allow this folly.” Hands Across the Sand was organized at a significant time: legislation allowing offshore drilling a mere three miles off the coast of Florida is expected to return to the state senate during the legislative session in March.

For more information on Hands Across the Sand, visit [www.handsacrossthesand.org](http://www.handsacrossthesand.org). ♦



Peaceful protesters join hands on St. Pete Beach to protest offshore drilling in the Gulf—Photo by Katie Machol

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Members of Artists in Action help move into the new space—Photo by RGP Media

## MISSION:BEAUTIFICATION GALLERY MOVES TO NEW SPACE

**DOWNTOWN CLEARWATER**

*By Heidi Lux*

Artists in Action International and Mission: Beautification Project is moving their art gallery to a new building located at 617 Cleveland Street in Downtown Clearwater.

Artists in Action's Mission: Beautification Gallery serves as a location for emerging artists to showcase their work, allowing the public and potential art lovers to view original paintings that might not otherwise be seen.

Gallery Manager Dawn Shannon, and Jack Potter, who is founder and president of Artists in Action International, secured the new location on February 11th. The event was celebrated with an Art Hanging Party.

Artists in Action International is an international artists' support group which helps all artists become more professional, profit-

able, and prolific. Membership current represents six states and four countries. Artists in Action has eight art-specific support groups, including Actors in Action, Dancers in Action, Poets in Action, Musicians in Action, Speakers in Action, Singers in Action, Writers in Action and Visual Artists in Action. It produces six artistic showcases, including the Mission: Beautification Gallery, Arts Alive Open Mic at Pangea Café, Poetry by Candlelight, the Joy Choir, 20-Minute Theatre, and the Member Workshops and Seminars.

The gallery will be open on Wednesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and Fridays from 6:00 to 9:30 p.m., and by special appointment.

For more information, visit [www.artistsinactionint.org](http://www.artistsinactionint.org). ♦

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 28th, Celtic Crossroads:** Ruth Eckerd Hall. 1:00 p.m. [www.rutheckerdhall.com](http://www.rutheckerdhall.com).

**March 2nd, Henry Rollins:** Spoken Word Tour. The Capitol Theatre, 8:00 p.m. [www.rutheckerdhall.com](http://www.rutheckerdhall.com).

**March 4th, The Moody Blues:** Ruth Eckerd Hall. 8:00 p.m. [www.rutheckerdhall.com](http://www.rutheckerdhall.com).

**March 5th, Gilbert and Sullivan's H.M.S. Pinafore:** Ruth Eckerd Hall. 8:00 p.m. [www.rutheckerdhall.com](http://www.rutheckerdhall.com).

**March 4th, Florida Reunion of Marion, Indiana High School:** Stacey's Buffet, 1451 N. Missouri Ave, 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Event includes a Flag Ceremony by the Veterans Liaison Council of Pinellas County and speaker Nick Hionedes, a WWII Veteran who was taken prisoner by the Japanese. For more information contact: Ed Deering, 727-391-0757.

**March 6th, "Rock and Roll into Spring" Luncheon and Fashion Show:** Fundraiser to support the Dunedin Youth Guild Scholarship Fund. The Fund awards college scholarship to area students. Last year over \$10,000 was awarded to graduating high school seniors as well as college students from continuing education. Seating is limited. Tickets are \$30.00 and can be reserved by calling 727-734-0394.

**March 7th, Connie Francis:** The legendary American pop singer performs at Progress Energy Center for the Arts—Mahaffey Theatre at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$47 to \$77, or \$102 for VIP (includes backstage access, meet and greet). Tickets can be

purchased at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com). For more information, go to [www.mahaffeytheatre.com](http://www.mahaffeytheatre.com).

**March 13th and 14th, 3rd Annual Green Frog Moon Festival:** This Arts and Crafts festival be open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. and will have hourly raffles, silent art auction, food & entertainment. Entertainment includes many local musicians, spotlighting Native-American flutist and storytellers. Festival proceeds go to Sacred Lands Preservation and Education, Inc., a non-profit organization. Admission is free, & donations are accepted. Sacred Lands, 1620 Park Street N., St. Pete. For more information, call Sandra 727-744-9978 or Dorris 727-347-0354. [www.sacredlands.info](http://www.sacredlands.info).

**March 14th, Peace Memorial Concert Series Presents Vivaldi's Four Seasons and Gloria:** This is the featured concert of the month long "Go for Baroque Festival" and the final event for the 2009-10 Peace Concert Series season. Selections will include the beloved "Four Seasons" for chamber orchestra and Vivaldi's choral masterpiece, "Gloria" performed by chorus, soloists, and chamber orchestra. Peace Memorial Presb. Church (the pink church downtown) 110 S. Ft. Harrison Ave., Clwr. (corner of Pierce and Ft. Harrison), 3:00 p.m. For more info, visit [www.peacememorial.org](http://www.peacememorial.org).

*If you would like to submit your event to our list, please email [editor@tampabayinformer.com](mailto:editor@tampabayinformer.com)*

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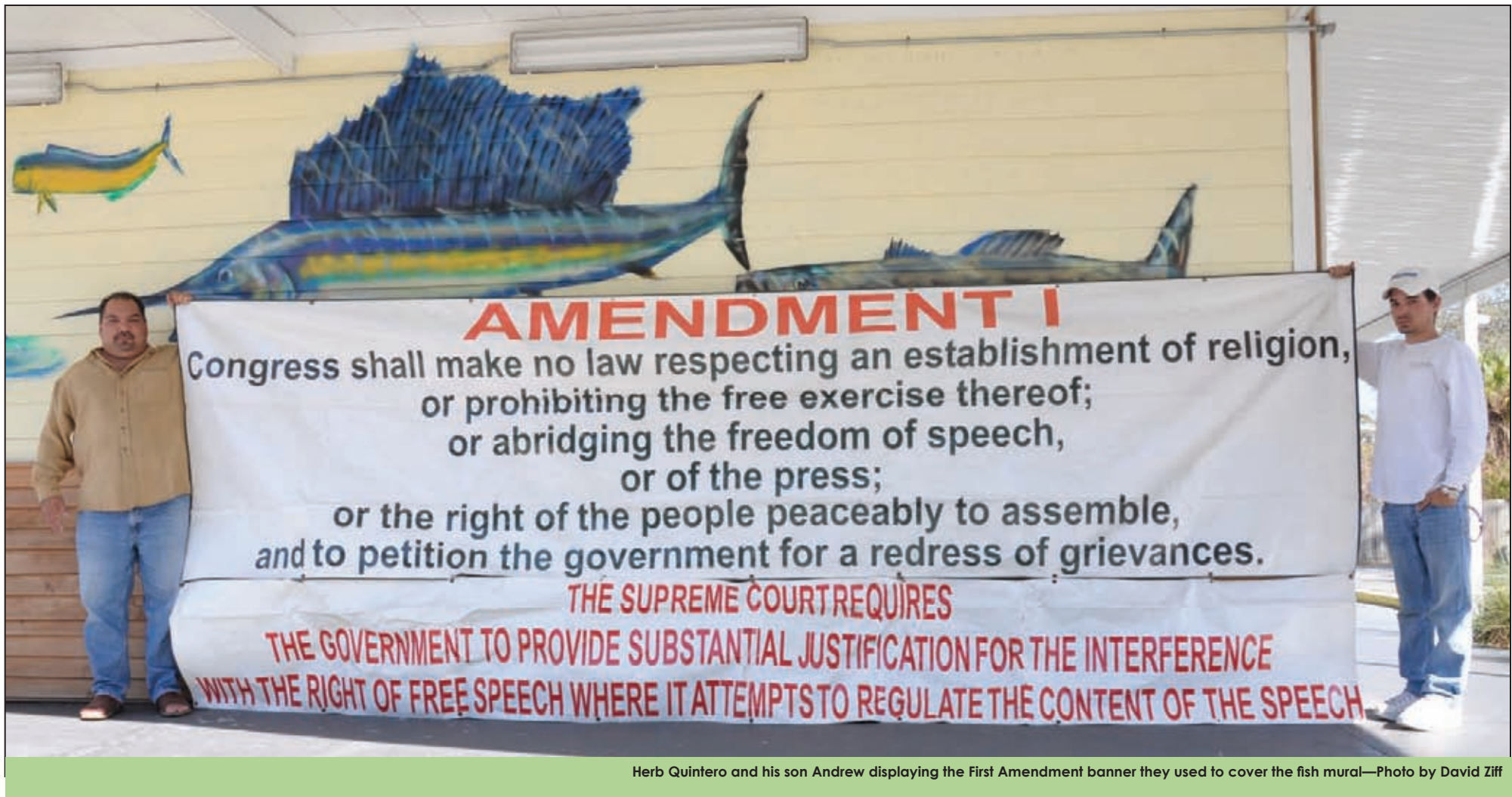
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Herb Quintero and his son Andrew displaying the First Amendment banner they used to cover the fish mural—Photo by David Ziff

## AN OPEN LETTER TO CLEARWATER'S MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL, ITS CITIZENS AND TAXPAYERS, REGARDING CLEARWATER BEING THE ONLY CITY IN THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO EVER TRY TO BAN THE DISPLAY OF THE FIRST AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

From Dru Jeanis

The federal case of *The Complete Angler versus the City of Clearwater* is now a matter of public record. The City of Clearwater lost the legal fight, miserably. It was a battle which should never have been fought.

Clearwater has many, many positive things going for it. We have an interested and involved community, outstanding police and fire services, beautiful beaches, parks, libraries and scenery, and on and on.

However, Clearwater's reputation for the way it treats businesses needs to improve. The first step in overcoming a problem is to acknowledge that it exists; only then can one begin to address causes and develop solutions. The dispute between *The Complete Angler* and the City of Clearwater provides an excellent case-study for those with a priority of making the city more business and commerce friendly.

Herb Quintero, a Clearwater resident and construction company owner, along with his wife Lori, decided to open a bait and tackle store. They bought a building in a commercial area widely considered to be "blighted" on North Fort Harrison Avenue in the city of Clearwater. They spent hundreds of thousands of dollars fixing the place up. It opened for business on February 1st, 2008 as *The Complete Angler* and they hired an artist to paint a mural on the side of the building which included some pictures of fish.

Upon noticing the pictures of fish, certain Clearwater city employees, for whatever reasons or motives, decided that the illustrations could be treated as violations of city codes—regardless of the fact that Section 3-1805 of Clearwater's Community Development Code specifically exempts "art work and/or architectural detail" from the need of government approval or regulation.

Despite the fact that Clearwater's legal department had lost a similar court case involving Egyptian-themed designs on the side of an Egyptian restaurant less than one year earlier, certain employees felt that violating the Quinteros' First Amendment rights was the proper course of action. They fined the Quinteros, immediately and irreparably damaging them. For the first time in their lives, the Quinteros had to appear in a county criminal court, where they pleaded "no contest" and paid the fines for the "violation" of city codes.

However, rather than paint over the fish pictures or otherwise capitulate to the desires of the specific city employees involved, on January 11, 2009—just before the date when they were supposed to destroy the artwork—the Quinteros covered the unfinished mural with a large banner containing the text of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America.

Clearwater's code enforcers and legal department responded to this obvious act of political protest by sending the

Quinteros a second Notice of Violation on February 12th—this time threatening fines of \$500 per day for the display of the First Amendment. The actions of those specific employees caused Clearwater to become the only city in the history of the United States of America to ever try to ban the display of the First Amendment.

The legal standard developed through federal cases for what constitutes the type of commercial speech that may be regulated without infringing upon First Amendment rights is "speech that does no more than propose a commercial transaction" (*United States versus United Foods, Inc.*). Neither the fish mural nor the posting of the First Amendment came even close to anything which could be categorized as "commercial" speech. Clearwater has no legal right to regulate any images or displays of art or political speech under the pretense of commercial signage laws.

Thousands of outraged Americans protested the actions of the Clearwater city employees responsible for this atrocity—as well as the inaction of Clearwater's mayor and city council—with phone calls, emails, and on-line form comments. Newspaper websites and blogs around the country were inundated with commentary from average citizens speaking out on behalf of the Quinteros' civil rights.

What was the response of the city manager, mayor and city council? It was

to blatantly scorn those who objected to the violation of the Quinteros' civil rights. The city manager characterized the input from citizens as "abusive, profane, insulting."

When I brought this to the attention of the city council at a meeting, not one council member would speak in defense of the content of the input coming from around the world in support of the Quinteros. The response from the entire city council dealt solely with the demeanor of the irate American citizenry.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed suit in federal court against the City of Clearwater for the violation of the First Amendment rights of the Quinteros and their business. A preliminary hearing was held in federal court on March 4th, 2009. Based upon the evidence and testimony which took place, Federal Magistrate Judge Elizabeth Jenkins issued her Report and Recommendations on March 13th. In the report, she recommended that the City of Clearwater be compelled to cease any further punitive measures against the Quinteros and allow them to leave both the banner and paintings unharmed. Federal Judge Whittemore concurred with Jenkins on all the legal points and precedents in their entirety.

If the legal case had been scored like a football game, the final tally would have been 103 to 0 against the city. Clearwater's legal team failed to make

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even one single valid claim, and could show no legal precedent whatsoever, to justify the actions of city staff against Herb and Lori Quintero and their business. I invite anyone to read the text of the federal hearing, the federal magistrate’s report, Clearwater’s legal department’s response, the ACLU’s rebuttal and Judge Whittemore’s ruling. I believe an objective opinion of such a reading would be that Clearwater city attorneys were woefully unprepared to be dealing with issues related to the Constitution of the United States.

Two earlier cases the city had lost were used as precedents in *The Complete Angler versus City of Clearwater* federal hearing. These were *Dimmitt versus City of Clearwater* (where certain individuals in the Clearwater legal department sought to limit the number of American flags a business can display) and *Duati versus City of Clearwater* (where certain individuals in the Clearwater legal department sought to treat Egyptian hieroglyphic decorations on the side of an Egyptian-themed restaurant as commercial signage).

Thus, after wasting the City of Clearwater’s money trying to defend the indefensible, to avoid a costly court fight they were destined to lose, Clearwater’s legal department convinced the city council to settle the ACLU’s lawsuit on behalf of the Quinteros out of court for around \$55,000. The Quinteros were repaid the \$690 they had paid in criminal court fines and their attorneys got the rest. The Quinteros, to this day, have never been compensated ten cents for the gas money they had to shell out driving to court, and have never been compensated at all for the violation of their First Amendment rights. The City of Clearwater is downright lucky the Quinteros did not push for a jury trial. A jury (as one did a few years back in California) might have given the Quinteros millions as compensation for the violation of their First Amendment rights.

To my knowledge, no employee of the City of Clearwater—neither any city council member nor the mayor—has

ever apologized to the Quinteros for the violation of their civil rights or called for an investigation to determine the initial causes of the harassment of the Quinteros by certain city staff.

So far as I know, no employee of the City of Clearwater has been censured, demoted or fired as a direct result of the violations of the Quinteros’ civil rights and the ensuing public relations disaster.

There has been no public disclosure that any employee or official of the city has received any training in how to avoid any future legal fiascos of this nature—by learning more about the constitutional rights of business owners. (When a businessperson has been found to have violated the rights of an employee it is quite common that they are required to undergo “sensitivity training,” or some such, as proof that they are willing to change their ways.)

In short, nothing has changed, nothing has been learned and no one has been held accountable.

And that, I believe, is the biggest problem Clearwater has: a lack of individual accountability.

I myself spent almost two months going to city offices under the Florida Public Records Act in search of accountability, and being stonewalled by city staff. I finally was able to discover the first person anyone can identify as being involved in the City’s violation of the constitutional rights of the Quinteros. It turned out to be their direct neighbor at their home on Island Estates, an employee of Clearwater’s city planning department named Scott Kurleman.

Almost immediately after I finally uncovered this information, Kurleman sent an email to the Quinteros, on the one hand denying his involvement in the attack against their company, while on the other hand admitting to communicating with Michael Delk (Clearwater’s planning and development director) to keep his involvement in the Quinteros’ case a secret from me.

I spoke at the very next council meeting with this information. Mr. Delk appeared after I spoke at that meeting to contradict me. He said, “And, just for the record, I don’t allow our employees to review permitting applications for their neighbors.”

Yet, internal city emails and communications I was finally able to access show that not only were the Quinteros “instructed” to address Kurleman for guidance in their dispute with the city, but that Kurleman had provided “extensive counseling” to the Quinteros regarding the signage issues at The Complete Angler.

There is a string to be pulled and accountability to be had. Clearwater’s elected officials have, to me, thus far shown no interest in such an investigation. But there is code which allows it.

**Article I, In General,Section 2.004 states:**  
“Investigations.

“The city commission and any committee thereof, the city manager, and any advisory board appointed by the city commission for such purpose shall have the power at any time to cause the affairs of any department or the conduct of any officer or employee of the city to be investigated.”

**Article II, Legislative Power, Section 2.06 of Clearwater’s code states:**  
“Prohibitions.

“(b) Dealing through the city manager. Except during an investigation, the council members shall deal with city officers and employees who are subject to the direction and supervision of the city manager solely through the city manager.”

The city council has the right to call for an investigation into the underlying causes of The Complete Angler case and to bypass the city manager while conducting it. Thus far, they have shown no interest in determining any individual accountability for the violation of the Quinteros’ constitutional rights.

I am asking the mayor and council members to please seek an investigation into this travesty. Find out how it started, find out how it was allowed to continue and come up with a solution so that nothing like it is ever allowed to happen in Clearwater again. Call for an investigation and ensure that those specific individuals who caused the violation of the Quinteros’ civil rights are correctly brought to justice. Censure someone or some group of people. Demote someone or some group of people. Give someone or some group of people time off without pay. Fire someone or some group of people. Do something, anything which will show that you believe in the concept of individual accountability. Or step aside and allow people who believe in individual accountability to take your place.

Herb Quintero is now running for city council, so we may some day have an elected official who is interested in finding out the full story behind the only American city to ever attempt a ban on the display of the First Amendment.

A very positive step Clearwater could take after cleaning house through an investigation would be to appoint a business “concierge,” a pro-business advocate on the city payroll who would help businesspeople who are having difficulty with city staff. Such an action would allow the city to begin an honest public relations campaign to change the public’s perception of the city. “Clearwater—Open for Business,” could be the new attitude and slogan. ♦

*Dru Jeanis is a businessman and writer who, along with his wife, Irma, owns one of the largest postcard marketing firms in the country: Pure Postcards, Inc., located in Clearwater. Their website can be found at: [www.purepostcards.com](http://www.purepostcards.com). He is also the editor of [www.keepthefish.com](http://www.keepthefish.com), a website devoted to chronicling the story of The Complete Angler versus the City of Clearwater.*



The fish mural which the City of Clearwater cited as being in violation of its sign ordinances—Photo by David Ziff

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