



Volume 4, Number 4

A Newsletter Covering Life In The Lakes

April, 2026



Connecting Communities

By Elise Ross

April 19-25 is National Volunteer Week in the USA providing the opportunity to honor volunteers' impact on communities. Our community is fortunate that so many neighbors step up and contribute their time, energy and efforts to build a strong and inclusive community (see page 3). Many neighbors also volunteer at the various not-for-profit organizations along The Treasure Coast. Volunteering gives you a mental health boost, increases ability to socialize, helps reduce risk of cognitive decline and may even include physical benefits.

Over the last year *The Lakes Life* highlighted the following Treasure Coast volunteer opportunities:

- Blind Dog Rescue Alliance-May 2025
- St. Lucie County Library Assn.-June/July 2025
- Manatee Center-October 2025
- Treasure Coast Food Bank-November 2025
- PSL Museum & Education Center-January 2026
- PSL Police Community Patrol-February 2026
- Florida Oceanographic Center-April 2026

If you volunteer with an organization that you would like to see showcased in a future edition of *The Lakes Life*, please send an email to newseditorlathoa@gmail.com. If you would like to volunteer within The Lakes community, please see our Property Manager, Ingrid Sarmiento.



By Chris Donaghy
President



The Annual Members Meeting was held on Wednesday, March 18th at 7:00 pm at The Lakes clubhouse. There were three (3) Board of Director positions to be filled, and five (5) candidates were running to fill those spots. The results of the election were:

Thom Epsky	163
Stan Briggs	154
Neil Kirby	138
Carolyn Snider	119
Eddie Viera	44

Immediately after the election results were announced, the Board met and determined that we will all keep our current positions, and Neil Kirby will take over Ken Perlman's role as Secretary. Thank you to Carolyn Snider and Eddie Viera for stepping up to run for a Board position. It's not an easy thing to do, and we appreciate your commitment to our community.

Many thanks to Tom Klein for leading the election committee, and to the election committee members: Margaret Borock, Toni Cunningham, Marilyn Findley, Toni Grassi, Helen Jackman, Cheryl Lally, Ellen Leyden, Jack Parker, Lu Parker, Rob Potorski, Elise Ross, Winnie Tompkins, and Gene Wesnofske. They did a great job working like a well-oiled machine.

Spring is here, daylight savings time is back and we are all ready for summer to return! The contracts for the courts have been signed, deposits have been made, and now we are in the process of pre-construction preparations. Some of those preparations include moving trees, getting approval to relocate utilities, and identifying sprinklers that need to be shut down before any construction can begin. We are still aiming to begin shortly after April 6th. Keep your fingers crossed, enjoy the lovely Spring weather and stay positive!

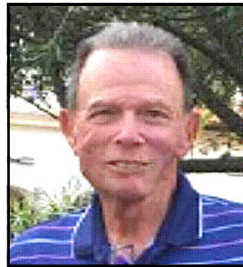


A Heartfelt Thank You To Ken Perlman

By Thom Epsky

After eight years of dedicated service, Ken Perlman decided not to seek reelection to The Lakes at Tradition Board of Directors. Ken's journey began in 2017 as the inaugural chair of the Facilities Committee. Since then, he has served as a Director, Vice President, and Secretary, providing steady leadership and a keen eye for detail.

Ken's impact on our community is visible everywhere - from his vital work with the Paint Task Force to his leadership in modernizing our Common Area rules. His efforts have been instrumental in protecting our property values while ensuring our active residents truly enjoy their surroundings. Whether acting as the Landscape Committee liaison or managing board duties, Ken's commitment has been unwavering.



We wish Ken and his wife, Marie, wonderful adventures as they take this well-deserved time to travel and visit family. Thank you, Ken, for your tireless service!



Thank You Gabriella!

By Carolyn Hammer

The Lakes says goodbye to Gabriella Fajardo, as she leaves her part-time position here in the HOA office to assume a full-time position with the Ocean Villas HOA on Hutchinson Island.

Gaby has served our residents since 2019. Over nearly seven years, Gaby has supported daily operations, worked after hours behind the scenes, come in on weekends to assist new residents, and even stayed beyond her scheduled time to accommodate homeowners who could not visit the office during regular business hours.

We will miss Gaby and wish her every success in her new position, and in working towards her CAM license.



One Liners I'm confused; if my son becomes a priest, should I call him son or father?



Treasurer

Suzanne Killean



Our 2025 year-end financial reports were prepared by Rene and Associates, P.A. and all of the 2025 monthly financial reports can be found on the Lakes Website at: lathoa.org

Mark Barnes, CPA, has been engaged by the Board to audit our 2025 financial statements. The audit is underway and is expected to be finished by the end of May.

A valuable member of our Finance Committee, Bernadette Grogan, has stepped back from full-time membership but consented to continue serving our community as the committee's first alternate member.



We provided notice to the community of a vacancy on the Finance Committee and received applications from five very qualified candidates. At the January meeting of the Board of Directors Carolina Coria-Castro was approved for membership on our Finance Committee.



I have been asked by the Board to create a task force to devise a proposed plan for electronic (online) voting by members of The Lakes. Online voting in Florida must be done in strict compliance with Florida Statutes 720.317. The process of creating a proposed electronic voting plan would be carried out by the task force under the advice of the HOA's legal counsel.

HOA's are discovering many advantages by implementing electronic voting for their members. Owners would have to consent to online voting and, alternately, would also be afforded the opportunity of opting out and instead vote using the paper ballot. Please consider submitting an application for membership on this Electronic Voting Task Force. The recruitment notice shall be coming out soon.



The Lakes Life

Editor: Elise Ross
Layout and Design: Thomas Klein
Staff Writer: Carolyn Hammer

A Special Thank You To Our Many Lakes Volunteers

By Elise Ross

The Lakes Life is pleased to recognize our neighbors who over the course of a given year contribute hundreds of hours of their personal time volunteering for the greater good of The Lakes. These men and women use their talents to ensure we have numerous activities to choose from and that the facilities are safe for all to use. The names listed below are those known at the time of release of this edition. Thank you all!

Board of Directors - Stan Briggs, Chris Donaghy, Thom Epsky, Suzanne Killeen, Neil Kirby.

Outgoing Board Member - Ken Perlman.

ACC Committee - Lucille Wesnofske, Thom Epsky, Jim Godino, Carolyn Snider, Barbra Rubin-Perry, Mark McNall, Marge Forrest, Randy Hank.

Aqua Fitness - Winnie Tompkins.

Bingo - Dianne Corwin, Kevin Stapf.

Bunco - Vicky Smith, Cheryl Robinson, Carolyn Hammer, Nancy Haughton, Chris Bornstein.

Book Club - Lois Rosen.

Circle of Friends Group - Chris & Claire Counos, Paulie Briggs, Judy Slason.

Citizens On Patrol - Tom Kinirons, Gary Banks, Phil Corwin, Larry DiGiorno, Mark McNall, Nancy Oldham, Tony O'Reilly, Jack & Louise Parker, Terry Piehl, Lois Rosen, Justin & Kathy Sills, Jim Trott, Frank & Louis Tuzzolino, Tom Crocitto.

Communications Committee - Elise Ross, Tom Klein, Carolyn Hammer.

Community Development District 3 - Representatives: Isie Steinberg, Roy Perconte, Stan Briggs, Suzanne Killeen.

Election Committee - Tom Klein, Cheryl Lally, Elise Ross, Helen Jackman, Toni Cunningham, Winnie Tompkins, Gene Wesnofske, Rob Potorski, Toni Grassi, Ellen Leyden, Lu Parker, Marilyn Findley, Margaret Borock, Jack Parker.

Finance Committee - Suzanne Killeen, Eugene Wesnofske, Margaret Borock, Leasa Goetchius, Carolina Coria-Castro, Bernadette Grogan-Lavin.

Fine Appeals Committee - TJ Carvalho, Carolina Castro, Lisa Castronovo, Carolyn Hammer, Mark Johnson, Bill Slade.

Gym Task Force - Rene Smit, Chris Apple, Stacy Comer, Randy Hank, Michael Scanion.

Landscape Committee - Jim Godino, Tom Klein, Carolyn Snider, Phil Corwin, Nancy Oldham, Lucille Wesnofske, Frank Camardella, Kathy Whilden.

Painting Task Force - Greg Snider, Ken Perlman, Renee Normandy-Shane, Sally Greco, Akua Prout, Barbra Tait, Debra Vallely, Randy Hank.

Ladies Bocce - Toni Cunningham.

Men's Bocce - Tom Kinirons.

Circle Of Friends Bocce - Paulie Briggs.

Musical Bingo - Carolyn Hammer, Toni Cunningham, Cheryl Lally.

Pickleball Club - Rick Shea.

Technology Task Force - Stan Briggs, Craig David, Neil Kirby.

Trivia - Thom Epsky, Carolyn Hammer, Meryl Cinnamon, Toni Cunningham, Cheryl Lally.

Your Neighbors Social Group - Helen Jackman, Carolyn Hammer, Chris Bornstein, Bill Bornstein, Nancy Haughton, Bob Hopkins, Barbie Hopkins, Akua Prout, Cheryl Robinson, Marilyn Findlay, Winnie Tompkins, Cathy Gaetani, Joanne Mo Manchisi, Grant Robinson.



VOLUNTEERS!



Slow Down!

Springtime mating season is underway. These Sandhill Cranes and their babies were recently seen feeding here in The Lakes. Please slow down & watch out for them. Thanks.

The Lakes at Tradition HOA

Managed by: FirstService Residential

HOA onsite office located on the west side of the clubhouse

Best time to visit for a vehicle decal: 1pm to 4pm

Email: Ingrid.sarmiento@fsresidential.com

Hours: Mon. thru Fri. 9am to 4pm

Phone: (772) 345-0690

Our website is: Lathoa.org





Community Events



Crazy Mah Jongg Party April 26th

By Elise Ross

National Mah Jongg Day is celebrated annually on April 30th. All Lakes Mah Jongg players are invited to an early celebration from 1pm-4pm on Sunday, April 26th at the Lakes Clubhouse.



Lunch will be catered by Fresh Market. Door prizes will be drawn and a bit of "crazy" will be enjoyed by all!! Cost is \$20 per person. Seats are limited. RSVP by April 17th at:

mahjongglat@gmail.com



Soup & Sociability Was A Cozy, Fun Afternoon

By Carolyn Hammer



On a chilly rain drizzled afternoon in February, more than 50 residents gathered in the clubhouse to enjoy homemade soup and socialization, while listening to the tunes spun by DJ Bob.

Attendees tried seven soups: Winter Minestrone, Chicken Curry, Butternut Squash, New England Clam Chowder, Pennsylvania Dutch Chicken Soup with Rivelis, Tomato Basil, and Lasagna Soup, as well as a hearty Chili. Accompanying the soups were grilled cheese sandwiches, dinner rolls, homemade cornbread, French bread, and homemade croustons. Many attendees brought desserts to share.

Kentucky Derby Party Coming May 2nd

By Carolyn Hammer

Join Your Neighbors to experience the excitement of the 152nd Run for the Roses! Our Annual Kentucky Derby watch party, held at the Lakes clubhouse on Saturday, May 2nd, 2026 begins at 5:30pm. The post time for the race is slated for 6:57pm.



Kentucky Derby Party

Enjoy a complimentary Derby drink. Ladies, wear your Derby hats, there will be a Best Hat Contest with prizes.

Admission is free! Please bring a main dish or heavy hors d'oeuvres to share. Dessert will be provided.

For more information, please contact Carolyn at: (201) 805-6153 or Helen at: (603) 325-0758.



It was a warm, cozy, fun late afternoon, and all the food was pronounced delicious! There were many games for attendees to play, like Rummikub, Skip-Bo, Taboo, Balderdash, Cribbage, and others. The afternoon ended with two tables playing rousing games of Skip-Bo. This fun and popular event is sure to be repeated next year.



TRIVIA is scheduled for April 17th at 7:00pm
Doors Open at 6:30pm. Tickets are \$5.00
For tickets, call or text:

April 8th & 22nd at 7pm in the Clubhouse
Doors open at 6:30pm - Cost is \$10
BYOB and your favorite snack - Age 18 and older

BINGO

All residents and their guests welcome

End Of Season Pickleball Event

By Ellen Leyden

On Saturday, March 14th, Pickleball Club members gathered to get an update on court construction and bid farewell to the snowbirds. After a busy two hours of morning pickleball play, approximately 35 members gathered at the clubhouse. Rick Shea, club commissioner, led the meeting by introducing new members and thanking the technology committee. Mike Roach gave an update on membership and financials. There are currently 66 members of the Pickleball Club and all of them are looking forward to the reconstruction of the courts which will be happening soon!

Chris Donaghy, HOA President, gave an update on the proposed construction project. All courts at The Lakes - basketball, tennis and pickleball - will get new surfaces with the project scheduled to begin April 6th.

The pickleball court enclosure will get a new layout to allow for 6 courts and an enlarged shaded sitting area. Members are excited to be getting new courts as the current courts are cracking which makes play challenging at times. Courts will be closed for approximately 3 months, depending on weather. In the meantime, Del Webb has been gracious enough to try to work out some available play times for Lakes members at their courts and members will be looking for other places to play.

There was great excitement in the air as permanent members wished their snowbird friends safe travels, noting that they should be returning in the fall to 6 brand new courts! Light refreshments were then served as members enjoyed some time to socialize.



Clubs & Classes

Book Club - meets Monday, April 20th in the veranda room of the Clubhouse at 7pm. This month they will be discussing: *"Faithful Place"* by Tana French. Contact Lois Rosen at: loro781@aol.com

Bridge - plays every Monday afternoon in the veranda room of the Clubhouse at 1pm.

Canasta - plays every Tuesday in the main room of the Clubhouse at 12pm.

Cards & Games - Various different cards and games are played every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 1pm in the main room of the Clubhouse.

Cribbage - plays every Tuesday afternoon at 12:30pm in the main room of the Clubhouse.

Dancercise - meets every Monday & Tuesday morning in the main room of the Clubhouse at 10am.

Senior Exercise - meets every Tuesday morning in the main room of the Clubhouse at 9am.

Mah Jongg - plays every Thursday evening at 6:30pm in the main room of the Clubhouse.

Yoga - meets every morning (except Tuesdays) in the main room of the Clubhouse at 9am.



Outdoor Groups

Aqua Fitness - class every Tuesday & Thursday morning at the Resort pool at 11am. To join them contact Winnie Tompkins: wtopkins@ymail.com

Circle Of Friends Bocce - play Mondays at 5:30pm. Beginners welcome. To join them, just show up at the Bocce courts behind the Clubhouse.

Men's Bocce - play every Wednesday at 3pm at the Bocce courts behind the Clubhouse. To join them, contact Tom Kinirons at: tcksr@hotmail.com

Women's Bocce - play every Tuesday at 4pm at the Bocce courts behind the Clubhouse. To join them, contact Toni Cunningham at: teecee615@hotmail.com





Visit (Or Volunteer) At The Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center

By Carolyn Hammer

The Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center is a marine life nature center offering educational programs that teach the importance of environmental stewardship. It's located on 57-acres between the Indian River and the Atlantic Ocean on Hutchinson Island in Stuart.

Guests can interact with stingrays and local invertebrate species. They can attend programs that teach about local gamefish, sharks, and sea turtles. The center has a 750,000-gallon Gamefish Lagoon, which is home to sea turtles, sharks, and gamefish. There is also the Ocean EcoCenter, a 5,000-sq. ft. space with 2,000 gallons of aquariums highlighting local fish and invertebrates. The EcoCenter features educational interactive exhibits that aim to educate and inspire. They also have nature trails that wind through a mangrove forest.



Just over the Stuart Causeway bridge to Hutchinson Island, The Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center is located at 890 NE Ocean Blvd. in Stuart. General admission is \$18, ages 3-12 only \$9. Retired military, \$16. The Coastal Center is open 7 days a week, 10am to 4pm.

If you are interested in volunteering at the Florida Oceanographic Coastal Center, there are a variety of ways that you can become involved. There is a Beach Clean Up Program that allows individuals, families, or groups to participate in beach clean ups, in Martin County. You can also get involved with Seagrass restoration, or water quality monitoring. Individuals 15 years or older may be interested in working with the public as an exhibit guide.

To learn more about the many ways you can take part in volunteering, go to:

<https://www.floridaocean.org/volunteer>



Our Favorite Recipes

Bob Hopkins's

Pensylvania Dutch Chicken Corn Soup w/Rivels

Ingredients:

4-5 lb. roaster chicken
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/2 cup chopped celery
1-2 carrots, grated
4 qts. Water (3 qts. Water & 1 qt. chicken stock)
6 cups fresh corn (may substitute frozen/canned)*
4-5 hard cooked eggs, chopped
1-2 tablespoon parsley (fresh chopped is best)
Salt & pepper to taste

For Rivels:

2 cups flour**
1 teaspoon salt (to taste)
2 large eggs
Water



1. Place roaster chicken, onion, carrot and celery*** in a stock pot and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cook for about an hour or until chicken is cooked thoroughly.

2. Remove chicken from the broth. Allow to cool to touch and cut into desired size pieces.

3. With heat on medium, add corn and cook for about 4-5 minutes until corn is tender.

4. Meanwhile, combine flour, salt and raw egg to make Rivels. Mix by hand and add water until the consistency is like thick pancake batter. Add extra flour if mix is too thin. Slowly add Rivels to boiling soup by running through cooking spoon with round holes while stirring constantly (Rivels will be pea size or slightly smaller). Cook about five minutes. Stir in chicken pieces and chopped hard-boiled eggs. Sprinkle parsley on top. Ladle into bowls and enjoy. Goes great with buttered saltines.

* I use 2 cans Del Monte Corn and 2 cans Del Monte Creamed White Corn (15 oz. cans).

** I use 3 cups of flour and 3 eggs because I like a lot of Rivels.

*** I add 1-2 teaspoons chopped garlic to taste (optional). I also add salt and pepper.



Tradition CDD

Managed by: SDSinc.
Office Phone: (772) 345-5119
jjgallagher@sdsinc.org

My Hometown Remembered

By Helen Jackman

Walking home from elementary school in the 1950s through the village of Ashland, New Hampshire, remains vivid in my memory. As I walked down School Street onto Cottage Street, then to Main Street, it seemed that every house and store needed a coat of paint. At the corner of Cottage and Main Streets was Chummy's Market, one of the two grocery stores in town. Chummy was an uncle to one of my classmates and future husband, Ronald Jackman.

I continued past the post office, Nielsen's Furniture Store, and Bailey's Five and Dime. Before it was Bailey's Five and Dime, it was Brown's Department Store. Walter Brown's store was a popular general store that sold clothing and shoes, as well as harnesses for horses. I loved buying penny candy there.

Above Bailey's Five and Dime was the telephone office, where Clara Hinds was the switchboard operator. For those who could afford telephones, they simply picked up the phone, turned the crank once and were connected to Clara, who placed their calls for them. Clara knew everyone's business in town. Then again, everyone in a small town knows everyone else's business. Just down from the Five and Dime was Red's Barbershop. In the back room was a pool table, where some of the townies hung out, for lack of anything better to do.

Across the street from the barber shop was Ashland's only gas station. Milan Lavoie was the owner. When my father went for his first haircut at Red's Barbershop after moving to Ashland, Red pointed across the street to the gas station and said to my father, "Do you see that man across the street?" My dad said, "Yes," and Red said to my dad, "He's a foreigner." "Really?" my father replied. "Yup," said Red, "he's from Plymouth." Plymouth is only six miles north of Ashland. As a young man, my dad summered in Ashland for several years and played on the men's baseball town team. For that reason, I guess, Red didn't consider him a foreigner.

At about the time school let out, the first-shift workers punched out and began filing out of the L.W. Packard Woolen Mill. Traveling down Main Street, I walked past people heading home, carrying their black

lunch pails. I particularly remember the kind face and smile of one of those workers. That man, many years later, became my father-in-law - Richard Jackman. He always greeted me with a smile and a hello as our paths crossed each day. I remember thinking to myself, "What a handsome man he is and what a nice smile he has."

As I continued my walk, I crossed the bridge and looked through its wrought iron rails, as the waters of the Squam River roared towards the mill. The sound of the rushing water was deafening. Farther down the street, I'd see more woolen mill employees exiting the mill, leaving behind the clatter and vibration of the machines they had endured for their eight-hour shift.



Parked near the entrance to the mill's administrative office at about the time I passed by, I would invariably see Bud Dame. He always gave me a big smile and a wave from his big truck that boldly displayed his employer's name: L.W. Packard Woolen Mill, Ashland, New Hampshire. Bud was a jovial fellow who loved to share a story with everyone he met. One of my favorite stories about Bud was whenever someone kidded him, and he had no ready comeback, he simply said with a grin, "I once knew a man who made a million dollars minding his own business."

My dad worked the third shift in the card room at the mill. He came home each morning covered with bits of fluffy wool in his hair and on his clothing. Before he went to bed to catch some needed shuteye, he'd go to the chicken coop to feed his chickens and gather the day's eggs for our breakfast before we went off to school.

The Ashland Paper Mill was the only other mill in town. The two mills employed the majority of the 1,200 people who lived in town. The owner of the woolen mill, Mr. Packard, was admired as a benevolent employer. He and his nephew, Lawson Glidden did a great deal for the townspeople. The Gliddens had a ski tow on their property and allowed everyone to ski there free of charge. Their ski lodge was not only a place for skiers to warm themselves between runs but housed an ample supply of skis, boots...

**"My Hometown Remembered"
concludes on next page**

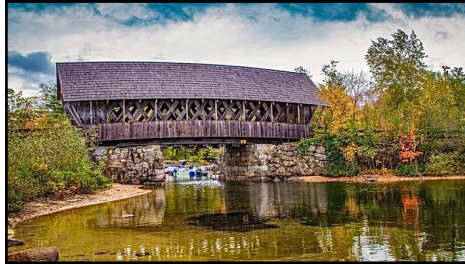
My Hometown Remembered

(continued from page 7)

By Helen Jackman

...and ski poles for use by town folk on a first-come, first-serve basis, all free of charge.

The waters of the Squam River still rush under the bridge toward the woolen mill, but the mill no longer hums with activities that produce woolen goods. Over time the only wool processed at the Ashland plant was cashmere. When the woolen mill operations moved to China, Ashland's mill closed. The mill buildings are now home to several small businesses that lease space. There's an income tax office, a company that sells woodstoves and fireplaces, and a print



shop, to name a few. The store fronts of Ashland are different now, too. They've all had a facelift. New businesses have moved in. The Common Man Restaurant and Company Store is a huge draw. Ashland's year-round population hasn't changed much. According to the 2020 census, it's now 1,938. With its proximity to the Squam Lakes, where the film *On Golden Pond* was filmed in 1981, Ashland, New Hampshire teems with tourists during the summer & fall seasons.

Now when I walk down Main Street, Ashland, although I no longer greet Chummy, Mr. Nielsen, Mr. Bailey, Clara Hinds, Red the Barber, Richard Jackman, Bud Dame, Mr. Packard or Lawson Glidden, in my mind, I can still see them all...plain as day.



Del Toro's Townhall Meeting Was Informative

By Carolyn Hammer

On Tuesday, February 24th, Sheriff Richard Del Toro, Jr. came to The Lakes at Tradition to update our residents about the progress that has been made in the Sheriff's Department since he took office a little more than one year ago.

Before being elected Sheriff in November of 2024, Del Toro had served over 25 years of distinguished service with the PSLPD, retiring as the Chief of Police, having commanded more than 400 sworn and civil personnel, 200 volunteers, and a budget of \$66 million. During his career, the City of PSL was consistently ranked as one of the safest cities in Florida, with the lowest crime rate among cities with populations over 100,000. Sheriff Del Toro's goal is to achieve that same result for the whole of St Lucie County.

Some of the changes he has instituted is that he's hired professionals to develop strategic planning for the department to allow it to better serve the people. He also reconfigured the Department's logo so that it no longer included the name of the sitting Sheriff, as it did in the past. He believes that the department belongs to the people, and there is no place for



individual ego.

He discovered budgetary procedures and processes that could have possibly permitted lack of transparency or even corruption, and tightened those processes up so that any monies allotted must be spent as allocated per line item, with transparency and accountability.

He is also determined to end "silo thinking," a mindset that results in teams not sharing knowledge, tools, or information with other teams. He's determined to have the Sheriff's Department, and the cities of PSL & Fort Pierce Law Enforcement work collaboratively in order to make St Lucie County the safest county to live in. To that end, he has already met with the new Chief of Police in Ft Pierce, David Smith, who was sworn in early in February. Del Toro has maintained an excellent relationship with the PSLPD, and will continue to partner with both organizations.

These are just some of the topics that Sheriff Richard Del Toro, Jr. discussed. He stressed that although he doesn't make the laws, he is sworn to uphold them, but not exceed them.

He recently founded the Sheriff's Foundation to help the Department give back to the people. In the next edition, we'll highlight the Foundation and the many ways it serves residents of St Lucie County.



Glenn's Harrowing Adventure

By Jeanne Rathke

(Roatan part three)

This past January marks the one year anniversary of our move from the island of Roatan, Honduras to "The Lakes" at Tradition. Our move was rather 'easy peasy'...except for getting our two dogs back to the US.

Previously, we managed to get them to Roatan via airplane which is not allowed for returning them. How to get our precious family members back home with us?? Thankfully we found a van transport company consisting of the driver, "Moises" who drives a route through Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico, and finally to Brownsville, TX. One of our dogs is very skittish and we knew that she would not travel well with a stranger so Glenn requested to ride back with them. And so his adventure began!

About 200 miles into the 3,000+ mile journey across gravel and large pot hole roads, the van engine began dying and needed constant restarting, and then it finally quit. It was night in Guatemala and the van was now coasting downhill in a small town where (to their amazement!) they spotted a gas station and slowly rolled to a stop. A supposed "mechanic" there worked for two days while the guys and dogs stayed at a nearby 2 star-hotel. Unfortunately, it seemed the van could not be fixed in a timely manner.

Moises then talked to several locals and was able to hire someone to drive them to the border of Mexico.

The driver's cousin met them at the border after driving four hours from his home to pick them up, and take them back to his home in a very small car (imagine a VW Beetle with 3 riders and 2 dogs). Next, Glenn offered to use his credit card (eek!!) to rent a car so that Moises could take them through the rest of Mexico and to the US border. It was at that point that Moises told Glenn, "don't worry if we get stopped by the Drug Cartels, I paid a ransom during a previous trip and have a card of proof to show them, so we will be fine!"

Finally, they arrived at the US/Mexico border... (each border required very specific veterinary paperwork so fingers crossed and prayers said at each one). After passing through, Glenn felt pretty much home

free, except that he had to trust that Moises would return the rental car in Mexico, and soon realized that in Brownsville, all of the rental cars were rented to numerous rocket engineers awaiting a delayed launch. A day later, a car became available!! Glenn and the dogs were now on the last leg of their journey and just missed the 9" snowstorm in the FL panhandle! The 'exciting' journey lasted 7 days and 3,100 miles! Bonus - The rental car was returned in Mexico, and Glenn and Moises developed a nice friendship which has continued with occasional calls and texts.



Follow-up - A week later, Moises' cousin drove him back to Guatemala, and since the van was not able to be fixed there, they had it towed to Mexico, got it repaired, and he was able to resume his pet transport business.



Earth Day Word Puzzle

Find each word from the list below in the puzzle. They can share letters as they cross over each other & can go in any direction. Answer is on page 10.

R	E	N	E	W	A	B	L	E	Q	A	W	S	E	B
C	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	C	A	C	S	U	D	I
F	O	G	H	J	K	L	A	O	Z	T	X	S	C	O
V	B	N	N	M	Q	W	E	L	R	I	T	T	Y	D
U	I	O	S	P	A	S	D	O	F	V	G	A	H	I
J	K	L	Z	E	X	C	V	G	B	I	N	I	M	V
Q	W	E	R	T	R	Y	U	Y	I	S	O	N	P	E
A	S	D	F	G	H	V	J	K	L	T	Z	A	X	R
C	V	B	C	L	I	M	A	T	E	N	M	B	Q	S
W	E	R	P	O	L	L	U	T	I	O	N	L	T	I
Y	U	I	O	P	A	S	D	F	I	G	H	E	J	T
J	K	L	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	O	Q	W	E	Y
R	W	I	L	D	E	R	N	E	S	S	N	T	Y	U

- RENEWABLE CONSERVATION ECOLOGY POLLUTION
- BIODIVERSITY CLIMATE SUSTAINABLE
- ACTIVIST WILDERNESS



TRADITION EVENTS

Food Trucks and Tributes - This month, get ready for some "Uptown Funk". Head on down to Tradition Square on Friday April 3rd 5-9pm for a live tribute concert to Lady Gaga & Bruno Mars and enjoy their timeless classics under the stars!



Uniquely Autism 5K Race - Held on Saturday, April 4th, 8am at Tradition Square, this 5K Run/Walk is being held to benefit Surfers for Autism. This is a family friendly event about awareness, education, and fun. Pre-registration is required. Open the April Events Calendar at traditionfl.com and click on "Uniquely Autism 5K Race."

IL Mercato Friday Night Market - The streets light up at Tradition Square on Friday night April 17th from 5-9pm for a laid-back night of street food, DJ music & local flavor. There will also be kid-friendly fun with activities for the little ones, too.



Blood Drive with One-Blood - On Monday, April 20th in Tradition Square, sign up for an appointment to donate blood and help save a life. Please open the April Events Calendar at traditionfl.com and click on "Blood Drive." Donors will each receive a \$20 eGift card.

Neighborhood Farmer's Market - There can't be a better way to spend your Sunday than strolling the square and supporting local businesses. Grab a cup of coffee or a bite to eat and shop around every Sunday from 9am-2pm at Tradition Square.




Grow a greener world at the 22nd Annual St. Lucie Earth Day Festival being held on Saturday April 18th, 2026 from 10am to 4pm at the Oxbow Eco-Center at 5400 NE St. James Drive in Port St. Lucie. Admission is free!

As the Treasure Coast's premier Earth Day event, the festival showcases unique eco-art, outdoor recreation, sustainable living ideas, and community resources. Local organizations and businesses will share hands-on activities throughout the gardens and trails of the preserve. Meet environmental groups, health professionals, law enforcement, foresters, gardeners, beekeepers and more.

Celebrate Earth Day through interactive experiences in a fun, festival atmosphere! There will be live music, food & dessert trucks, wild-life encounters, sustainable living vendors, and for the little ones, a nature Play Zone and a Kid's Eco-Challenge!



Free parking is available just north of the festival at the Southern Oaks Middle School with free shuttles to the event.

For more information, go to stlucieco.gov In the search box, type "Earth Day Festival." 



Celebrating Success!!



By Elise Ross

Gary and Dottie Banks celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary on March 12th, 2026. Congratulations to you both!

* * * *

The newsletter team would like to recognize resident success. So, if you have made a hole-in-one, bowled a 300 game, celebrated a milestone birthday or wedding anniversary, please let us know by sending an email to: newseditorlathoa@gmail.com

Tradition Community Association

Managed by Castle Group



Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30am - 4:30pm

Office Phone: (772) 345-5101

Email: ashepherd@castlegroup.com



The only place where success comes before work is in the dictionary.

- Vince Lombardi

