

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Fort Myers Beach

May 2024

# FORT MYERS BEACH



## JOANNE SEMMER

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# SUDOKU

- By Gary Mooney -

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Answers on page 14



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# Hello Friends & Neighbors!

We made it through another season! Well done! Certainly felt much different than before but it is the wave of the future. Many notable changes but one of my favorites was how people enjoyed the beach all along the island. While daydreaming the time away in traffic, the Gulf is still a beautiful blue matching the sky, while the many many colorful beach umbrellas always just makes me feel happy; how I wish I was there and not in my car!!

This month's Cover Feature is someone whose love for the area and its marine life influenced me on my first visit to FMB in January of 2009. I read in the late great "Island Sand Paper" about this Marine Science Center just over and under the Matanzas Pass Bridge with a funny name. This farm girl from Missouri was very intrigued with all things Gulf and Back Bay and WOW did I learn a lot at the Ostego Bay Foundation Marine Science Center as well as meeting Joanne Semmer for the first time! It's been one of my go to places to take family and friends when they visit and then of course pick up some Pink Shrimp to take home!!!

Sadly like everything else the OBFMSC - Ostego Bay Foundation Marine Science Center was left in ruins but they fortunately salvaged and safely stored some items that will now be put back on display at their new location in the annex cottage next to the Estero Island Historical Society's building at the entrance to Matanzas Pass Preserve. I foresee many good things with this new location: Two significant

educational groups on the history & life of FMB in one place, at the entrance to Matanzas Pass Preserve, right behind the Beach Elementary School and the FMB Public Library!

If anyone wants to learn about or be a part of the Ostego Bay Foundation Marine Science Center, please reach out to me at [ssandness@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:ssandness@bestversionmedia.com). The marine life that we share space with is another important part of our foundation so we must preserve this history and make it available in modern ways for all to learn and enjoy!

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*Sandy Sandness*

**Publisher**

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*"From the first time I saw San Carlos Island through today, I love it!"*



# A TRUE PIONEER!

## Joanne Semmer Loves San Carlos Island

- By Gary Mooney -

"I am originally from Daytona Beach," says longtime island icon Joanne Semmer. "I was born in 1951 so I am 72-years-young; not everyone may want you to know how old they are but I worked hard to attain this age! My Dad was a civil engineer who traveled all over the state and he eventually made home bases in St. Petersburg then Orlando before we came to Southwest Florida in 1964. I am the fourth of five siblings, with Carlene Brennan who is an acclaimed author being the oldest. Our only brother, Bill, who everyone knew from his business ventures like Semmer Electric and Bonita Bill's Waterfront Café, was next but he sadly passed away in early 2023. Our sister Lorraine unfortunately passed on as well as few years ago, with Betty Semmer being the youngest."

As for Joanne's own family, she is the mother of three: Matthew Gray who everyone calls Matt, former FMB May-

or Tracey Gore, and Pamala Yates, with six grandkids – from the oldest to youngest – Adam Rosemond, better known as Joey, along with Jordon Gray, Lexi Gore, Brandon Yates, Ashley Yates and Carley Yates.

Joanne has the distinct memory of her family relocating here. "Dad built this huge community in Orlando and we had the biggest house, but Mom grew tired of his constant traveling so one day they told us they sold the house and we were moving into a mobile home on San Carlos Island (SCI); when we first saw it, it was no bigger than the Florida Room in our old home but I immediately fell in love with the area. Mom and Dad ended up staying in that mobile home until they died."

As her kids grew up, Joanne lived on FMB on Hibiscus Drive for 17 years, then she relocated back to SCI. "From the first time I saw SCI through today,

I love it! Once I took a big vacation to North Carolina, but all I wanted to do was to come home!"

### Truly A Miracle

Like everyone on the islands, Ian struck Joanne's home with a fury. "Fortunately, I stayed at Bill's house, on the top floor of Semmer Electric, so we were 15 feet high and avoided the 12-foot storm surge. As for my house, its foundation is old Florida pine so the structure held up fine, as the older that tar Pine is, the harder it becomes, but the flooding caused me to replace the dry wall, laminate flooring and all the furniture and appliances. When we were clearing everything out, two local fishermen helped me and one came out with a perfectly-dry cardboard box containing my ancient 1890s Bible and that was truly a miracle – we all asked, 'how could this happen?'"

Soon after Ian, friends rushed to help.



*Daughter Tracey is a former FMB Mayor & Councilmember!*



*Joanne with her two daughters, Pammy & Tracey!*

“My friend Mike Calow was an engineer for Disney and he came with a truck, RV and all kinds of equipment, staying for ten days. Mike, my family and a group of local fishermen gutted the house. While this work crew was here, my friends from Erickson & Jensen Seafood, who lost everything, cooked us delicious hot meals!”

Before she could remodel her home, cancer struck her beloved brother Bill. “He was my first priority but cancer took him quick, in January 2023. Before he passed, however, he took care of all my home’s electricity, with everything done by the book. I hooked up a washer and dryer that I made available to my neighbors and that was a great convenience,

especially to one with a small son. I finally moved home in April of 2023.”

Joanne’s neighborhood is now firmly back in place. “There are people again in every house. After Ian, when neighbors first saw one-another, there were hugs all around, and then we immediately helped each other out. Then came the strangers: I had two refrigerators no one could move because they were wet and heavy and this church group from Kentucky said ‘no problem!’ While some prayed with me on the porch, the guys got the refrigerators upright. Another Midwestern church group passed out water. I cut my hand badly and my doctor, Beth Ulman, who lost her practice saw me, cleaned it out and took me

for a tetanus shot – that is a real doctor! There was so much goodwill and a real outpouring of love, with people just being kind to each other; someone should write a book about all the miracles that occurred on FMB and SCI following Ian!”

**What Community is All About**

Joanne and the Semmer Family are well-known for their island generosity. “We hosted the FMB fireworks shows for 23 years,” she explains. “We support the FMB Little League, host the Kids Fishing Derby at Bonita Bill’s, and are big supporters of the annual Shrimp Festival with the FMB Lions Club. Tracey was FMB Mayor while Pamala was the Orange County PTA

*continued on page 13*



*“Our parents taught us to give back, as that is what community is all about.” Here, Joanne is instructing a Beach Elementary School class.*

# “IT’S ALL ABOUT THE BEACH KIDS!”

## Beach Kids Foundation Remains Vibrant After Ian

- By Gary Mooney -

Fort Myers Beach is fortunate to have several island organizations that serve our community, like the FMB Community Foundation, FMB Woman’s Club and The Alex King Foundation, as well as more “Friends” groups than you can shake a palm frond at, but only one devotes itself solely to our children – the Beach Kids Foundation!

The BKF traces its inception to May 1985, when John Albion, Fran Myers and her late husband Tom, and Roxy Smith founded the FMB Chamber Foundation. In November 2014, John and Fran transitioned it into the Beach Kids Foundation, with its sole focus to provide financial assistance for qualifying FMB children and students through scholarships, educational supplies and related needs. The moniker “Beach Kids Foundation” came about from the long-standing tradition of all island children, no matter how many years or decades since the days of their youth, always calling themselves “Beach Kids!” “The BKF has no Executive Director, with unpaid officers and Board members,” explains Deborah Groll, BKF Board Vice President, “so 100% of every dollar goes back to the Beach Kids. Our mantra is simple – it is all about the Beach Kids!”

### BKF Scholarships

From now through June, the BKF is accepting applications for its annual Scholarships Award program, allocating a scholarship to each recipient so they can start or continue their education at various universities, trade schools and even graduate degrees and medical schools. “All a student must do to qualify is to either live on FMB with an immediate family member or have a parent or grandparent live on FMB or work at an island business,” says Deborah.

The BKF offers scholarships to trade schools, “as a traditional college education is not for everyone,” Deborah explains, “as paramedics, firefighters, hairstylists and like-minded occupations are essential. We can allocate scholarships each academic year as long as you remain a student in good standing; we have one BKF Scholarship recipient for ten straight years, from undergraduate through dental school!”

Deborah stresses the importance of the FMB community knowing about the BKF scholarships. “Up to a few years ago, before COVID then Ian, we set a new record for awards almost every year, reaching the mid-twenties in recipients, but last year we provided just 11 so we want to increase that number again. With the Beach Elementary School (BES) reopened, more residents coming onto the island and more of our essential bartenders, waiters, waitresses and support staff returning, they need to know that their children are eligible. This not only benefits island children, families



*The 2023 Christmas Dream Team making wishes come true!*

and workers, but will help increase the BES enrollment to ensure that we retain this invaluable community resource.”

She hopes that a BKF Scholarship tradition returns in 2024. “We held the annual Scholarship Awards Banquet at the Lani Kai Island Resort until three years ago, with the onset of COVID then Ian. In the intervening years, we deposited the scholarships directly into the students’ university accounts. This year, however, we are in discussions with Bonita Bill’s Waterfront Café to host the Awards Banquet so we can make the presentations in person, allowing families to share in their achievement. We strongly encourage all eligible students to fill out an application soon; you can obtain one through the BKF Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/Beach-KidsFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/Beach-KidsFoundation) or email me directly at [summerinoh@aol.com](mailto:summerinoh@aol.com).”

### Holidays & Coconuts!

In addition to its scholarships program, the BKF traditionally hosts the “Spirit of the Holidays” gala each December to ensure that all FMB kids enjoy a Merry Christmas complete with gifts; presents the “Golden Coconut” Award to the BES Teacher of the Year; originated the “Spirit of The Holidays Pancake Breakfast,” helps stocks “Renee’s Closet” created by beloved Ms. Renee, the recently-retired BES secretary who filled it with school supplies and comfort teddy bears; and several other activities to benefit the FMB community.

“The BKF purchased all new desks for the BES five years ago and new books and computers for the kids over the years,” continues Deborah. “When we learn of a family in need, we purchase things like bunk beds and mattresses. Once the BES informed us that





Fran & Bridgette Myers at a "Christmas Present Wrapping Party!"

someone stole a student's bicycle that was their sole transportation to and from school so we replaced it the next day! Our teachers dip into their own pockets for supplies, so we often provide them with gift cards. We stay in constant contact with the BES as the benefit of our kids is our sole focus!"

Unfortunately, COVID and Ian changed the way the BKF functions, like everything else on FMB. "We did not host our 'Spirit of the Holidays' gala for the past three years," relates Deborah. "The 'Spirit of the Holidays' Pancake Breakfast was formerly at the Red Coconut RV Park clubhouse but Ian washed that location away. We formerly delivered the children's Christmas presents to the kids' homes with FMB firetrucks but now families come to a central location to pick those up. While we miss those traditions, we continue to fulfill the missions of those programs and events."

**Join Our Noble Cause!**

The BKF finds new ways to successfully raise funds to achieve its goals, Deborah reports. "Last September, the Beach Pub hosted a hugely successful Cornhole Tournament for us. At the FMB Woman's Club's annual 'Christmas Tree Auction,' we provided one of the trees. We now have our Board meetings at the Century 21 office and the Liki Tiki on San Carlos Boulevard is an outstanding partner

that hosts events like our 'Back to School' backpack, lunch boxes and supplies event. We do more advertising, outreach and emailing for donations than ever before and are grateful that so many wonderful people continue to send us so many checks. COVID and Ian forced us to change the way we do business but sometimes you discover that change is for the best."

Deborah began volunteering with the BKF about a dozen years ago. "Both my daughters are BES graduates and I was active in the Parent-Teacher Organization and attended BKF events like the annual Christmas Present Wrapping Party when Fran Myers suggested I increase my involvement so I became a Board member nine years ago. We have eleven Board members and you would think that would change fairly often but we all become so passionate about the BKF that we rarely have an open Board seat!"

What is evolving however is that the BKF is in the initial stages of implementing a Membership Program! "The BKF has been a relatively passive over the decades, but we recently decided that we must get with the times and recruit members, so to join our team, see our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/BeachKidsFoundation](http://www.facebook.com/BeachKidsFoundation). Once you become part of the BKF, you will quickly discover what I did – that it is so fulfilling to help our Beach Kids. FMB is such an outstanding community and our kids are our future, so please join our noble cause!" ■

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# Spicy Shrimp & Tangelo Salad

by Nancy Bouchard



## HONEY CITRUS DRESSING

### INGREDIENTS

- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- Juice of ½ tangelo
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 tbsp honey mustard
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp grated tangelo zest
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- Combine all ingredients & mix well

## SPICY SHRIMP AND TANGELO

### INGREDIENTS

- 16 large shrimp peeled & deveined, and remove tails
- 2 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp spicy steak seasoning
- 1 package baby spinach
- ½ cup thinly sliced red onion
- Sections of 1 tangelo
- ¼ cup almonds, sliced and toasted basil

## INSTRUCTIONS

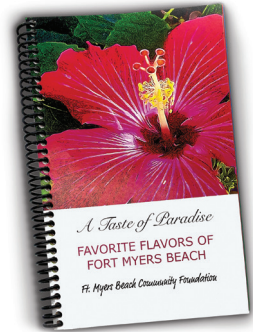
Place the shrimp in a large bowl. Drizzle with the olive oil and sprinkle with the seasoning; toss to mix well and let stand for several minutes. Combine the spinach, onion, tangelo sections and almonds in a salad bowl. Heat a large sauté pan over medium-high heat and add the shrimp. Sauté for 3 to 5 minutes or until opaque and cooked through. Add to the salad. Drizzle with the dressing and toss to coat well.

Serves about 12

This delicious recipe and many more are in the Fort Myers Beach Community Foundation's cookbook, *A Taste of Paradise: Favorite Flavors of Fort Myers Beach* that is available for purchase at [www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com).

## For other delicious shrimp recipes

check out the Fort Myers Beach Community Foundation's cookbook, *A Taste of Paradise: Favorite Flavors of Fort Myers Beach* that is available for purchase at [www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com).



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## Chamber Chatter!

### What's In The Water

When you live on an island like we do, excellent water quality is EVERYTHING – it is our health, economy, ecology, environment, and livelihood. Anyone who lived, worked or owned a business on FMB in the Summer of 2018 will never forget the water quality crisis brought on by the twin blue-green algae and Red Tide issues, made worse by Lake Okeechobee releases sent down the Caloosahatchee River into the Estero Bay and Gulf of Mexico.

To learn more about the current quality of FMB water, Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU) in conjunction with the FMB Chamber of Commerce and the historic Mound House is working to relaunch the “What’s in The Water” program that previously ran from 2019 to 2020. This program will examine non-point source nutrient pollution, primarily for nitrogen and phosphorus, that originates on the island. FGCU

researchers are leading a group of FMB citizen-scientist volunteers who, on Earth Day, collected two water samples at 46 different FMB locations, all at the same time, testing for CDOM, turbidity, chlorophyll, and salinity. Since everybody collected their samples at once, this is providing an island-wide real-time snapshot of FMB water quality.

The “What’s in The Water” Project is paying particular attention to nutrients that contributed to the Red Tide and harmful algae blooms that led to the Summer 2018 water quality crisis. Volunteers collected their two water quality samples at low tide during dry season, then took their samples to the Mound House, where FGCU researchers immediately tested one for CDOM, turbidity, chlorophyll, and salinity and recorded the data. They froze the other sample and sent it to their FGCU laboratory where they tested for orthophosphate, nitrate/nitrite, and ammonium analysis. Volunteers and FGCU will repeat this exercise from the same 46 island locations this Fall, during the wet season, then again in 2025, building upon the initial Spring baseline results.

As “What’s in The Water” continues, FGCU will analyze the results to identify the highest nutrient level “hot spots” and make recommendations to lower non-point

*continued on page 12*

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*continued from page 11*

source nutrient pollution, such as reducing or eliminating fertilizer or planting native groundcover and plants. These “hot spots” will require additional testing to determine if there is any nutrient level reduction, to better determine long-range answers and solutions. Depending on where we find these ‘hot spots,’ we will consult business owners, condominium associations, private property owners, and the Town of Fort Myers Beach to develop an appropriate plan of action.

The FMB Chamber of Commerce’s Water Foundation, in conjunction with FGCU, will fund “What’s in The Water” through its ROSE Grant program. The Chamber’s Water Foundation’s ROSE Grant program awards projects that concentrate on the water on and around Estero Island and will cover the expense for this two-year wet and dry seasons timeframe. As Lake Okeechobee releases periodically continue down the Caloosahatchee River to FMB, it is more important than ever that we learn what type of wet season water runoff our island produces, especially since we lost so much natural vegetation to Hurricane Ian from the initial study.

It is essential that we know our current water quality situation and what we can do to improve it because, as we all know, Water is EVERYTHING!

**Ask Them to Return Again Soon**

Now that we are in May, a wonderfully busy tourism season is winding down. We are so grateful that we posted such strong numbers so soon after Ian, especially when you consider how many FMB hotel rooms and condominiums have yet to reopen. Now is a nice time for island residents, business owners and employees to slow down a bit and get our feet back underneath us! We are so grateful to all the tourists, locals and Southwest Floridians who visited us and spent their hard-earned dollars on FMB.


Thank you from the bottom of our hearts and cash registers! As we continue to serve our island visitors throughout the year, please thank our guests for their continued support and ask them to return again soon, to check on our progress. Their continued patronage will keep our island business community humming!

Remember that the FMB Chamber Office is open on the 3rd floor of 100 Lovers Lane, Mondays through Fridays, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. In addition to our Lovers Lane location, the Chamber operates our Times Square visitor information satellite office from our cute-as-a-button mobile trailer, “The Roxie!” We always need volunteers to man “Roxie,” so sign up for a shift at “Volunteer at Roxie!”

Roxie’s “Power Hour” is each Friday from 9 to 10 a.m.! This is the perfect networking opportunity to stop by and interact with businesses, residents and guests while enjoying complimentary coffee and light refreshments. All community members are welcome at “Power Hour,” to mix, mingle and learn what the FMB Chamber can do to assist you and/or your company. Remember that “Roxie” hours are Tuesdays from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays from Noon to sunset; Fridays including “Power Hour” from 9 a.m. to sunset and Weekends 11 a.m. to sunset.

On behalf of our 400-plus FMB Chamber of Commerce members, please honor our military members on Memorial Day and remember . . . “Island Life; It’s *Our* Business!” ■

*Jacki Liszak, President  
Fort Myers Beach Chamber of Commerce!*



**MOUND HOUSE**

**Museum open Wednesday to Saturday, 9:00am to 4:00pm**  
**Closed Sunday to Tuesday**

Grounds are open daily from 7:30am to 6:30pm  
Parking & Grounds are Free  
Museum admission \$15 per adult

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- View ancient, Calusa-made objects that have been discovered by Archaeologists
- Take a hands-on archaeology tour
- Guided Kayak Eco-Tours — Public Kayak Launch
- Observation/Fishing Pier

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O (239)463-5200

continued from page 7



Joanne and the Semmer Family are well-known for their island generosity.



Joanne's family are big supporters of the annual Shrimp Festival with the FMB Lions Club, including Joanne being a Shrimp Festival Princess!

Volunteer of the Year. My Dad helped build the American Legion building that withstood Ian. Our parents taught us to give back, as that is what community is all about."

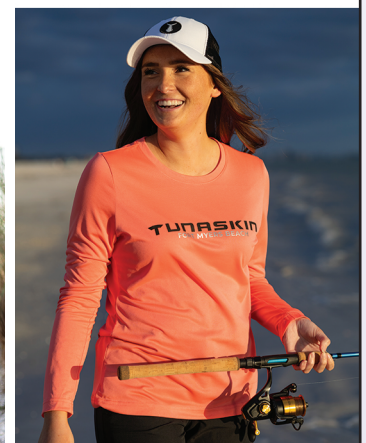
For Joanne, the Ostego Bay Foundation Marine Science Center is near-&-dear to her heart. "Unfortunately, Ian devastated our building across from Bonita Bill's but the Estero Island Historical Society offered us their annex cottage near the Matanzas Pass Preserve and we opened it on Earth Day! It is much smaller than our former location but we have exhibits, aquariums, and a small laboratory so we are making it work. Fortunately, Bonita Bill's is making its meeting room available to us for our Summer Camps so register your children now at [www.ostegobay.org](http://www.ostegobay.org). We will continue to host oil spill training classes and the Florida Master Naturalist Program, while accumulating a new library, so everything is coming together."

**A True Pioneer Spirit**

Joanne contemplates what the island communities will look like in five years. "I am afraid we will not recognize FMB as it will rebuild everything bigger. On SCI, on the other hand, we are working hard to keep it the small community we all love. We want SCI to remain an island that the middle class and working class can afford. We have wonderful people on SCI, like retired public service professionals, executives and firefighters who prefer a simpler way of life, and too often our elected public officials either forget that or do not appreciate it."

It is those island residents who make SCI and FMB the unique places they are, offers Joanne. "It takes a special kind of person to live here, with independent personalities. I certainly appreciate those who chose to move after the hurricane, as we all had to do what is best for ourselves and our families, but I never for one second considered living

anywhere else. The people who originally settled San Carlos Island had a true pioneer spirit and those who continue to live here have their own brand of pioneer spirit. It is that pioneer spirit that will make us a better and stronger community!" ■



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# May

**Every Thursday, Starting May 2  
WASTE MANAGEMENT PICKUP**

@FMB Neighborhoods  
Lee County will now collect FMB garbage, recycling and yard waste all on the same day, on each Thursday beginning on May 2; for questions telephone Waste Management at 239-334-1224 or see [www.southwest-wastefl.com](http://www.southwest-wastefl.com).

**EVERY DAY  
FREE LeeTran Beach Tram**

@FMB Public Library to Bowditch Point Park  
The FREE LeeTran Beach Tram runs every 35 minutes 7 days a week from the FMB Public Library to Bowditch Point Park and back, with the first tram leaving from the FMB Library at 9:30am and the last departing Bowditch Point at 10:35pm.; this may be the final month for the Beach Tram so see [www.lee.gov](http://www.lee.gov).

**Monday Through Friday  
Bay Oaks Recreational Center**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
The Bay Oaks Recreational Center is open and back to full operation! Attend fitness classes, indoor pickleball, open gym, after-school care, weight room & more. Monday through Thursday 7am to 7pm; Friday 7am to 8 pm.; CLOSED ON MEMORIAL DAY, May 27. See [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Wed., May 1  
AND EVERY WEDNESDAY  
Moss Marina Market**

@Moss Marina  
Enjoy fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more each Wednesday from 9am to 1pm; see [www.41markets.com](http://www.41markets.com).

**Wed., May 1  
General Resistance Yoga with Anne Neaf**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Get tone and stay fit with Anne every Wednesday at 9am. No reservations necessary; classes cost \$15 with

discounts available if you pre-pay for ten. For information see [www.FMBGOV.com](http://www.FMBGOV.com).

**Wed., May 1  
Mound House Museum,  
Grounds & Store**

@The Historic Mound House  
Built in 1921, the Mound House is the oldest standing structure on FMB. It is a multi-level museum that displays Calusa artifacts, interactive exhibits and the one-of-a-kind 1,600-year-old underground shell mound attraction. Wednesdays through Saturdays 9am to 4pm with Grounds 7:30am to 6pm. Adults \$15, Students \$8, Kids 6 to 12 \$5, & 5 & under free; Grounds free. See [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Wed., May 1  
FMB Woman's Club  
Monthly Meeting**

@The Historic Mound House  
Join the best club on the entire island; bring a dish to share and all are welcome! The meeting starts at 6:30pm; see [www.fmb-wc.org](http://www.fmb-wc.org).

**Thurs., May 2  
Senior Pump & Tone  
with Sue Anderson**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Sculpt & define all muscle groups with barbells and hand weights in this 60-minute class set to music to increase your metabolism, boost your energy and make you feel great! "Senior Pump & Tone" is every Tuesday & Thursday from 8 to 9am. No reservations necessary; \$15-per-class with discounts available if you pre-pay for ten. For information see [www.FMBGOV.com](http://www.FMBGOV.com).

**Thurs., May 2  
FMB Chamber "Coffee Connection"**

@TBD  
Start your day with your FMB Chamber friends for networking with complimentary coffee and tasty breakfast items. The FREE "Coffee Connection" is 8 to 9:30am; for the location see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Friday & Saturday, May 3 & 4  
AND EVERY FRIDAY & SATURDAY  
Fort Myers Beach Market**

@Times Square  
This Downtown FMB Market offers fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more every Friday & Saturday from 9am to 1pm; see [www.41markets.com](http://www.41markets.com).

**Friday, May 3  
Iyengar Yoga with Susan Carter**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Get tone and stay fit with Susan every Friday at 9:15am. No reservations necessary; classes cost \$15 with discounts available if you pre-pay for ten. For information see [www.FMBGOV.com](http://www.FMBGOV.com).

**Friday, May 3  
Welcome & Discovery Center**

@Lovers Key State Park  
The Welcome & Discovery Center educates and informs visitors about Lovers Key habitats through interactive displays Wednesdays through Fridays from 10am to 1pm. The W&DC is FREE with the park entry fee; see [www.friendsofloversonkey.org](http://www.friendsofloversonkey.org).

**Friday, May 3  
Shell Mound Tour**

@The Historic Mound House  
Discover the archaeology and history of the Mound House and learn clues uncovered about this 1,600-year-old shell mound on this 30-minute tour every Wednesday through Saturday at 10am & 2pm. \$5-per-person plus MH admission; see [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Saturdays, May 4 & 11  
"American Boating Course"**

@San Carlos Bay Squadron Classroom  
This 2-day, 8-hour basic boating class includes Florida navigation rules and how to deal with water emergencies. \$65-per-person & \$20 each additional person from 8:15am to Noon; see [www.scbps.com](http://www.scbps.com).

**Sunday, May 5  
AND EVERY SUNDAY  
Bayside Park Concert Series**

@Bayside Park  
Relax while listening to fantastic tunes from local musicians at these FREE weekly outdoor concerts from 4 to 7pm! For details see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Mondays, May 6 & 20  
FMB Town Council Meeting**

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
The FMB Town Council continues its work to rebuild FMB at 9am; see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Mon., May 6  
Zumba Class**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Get tone and stay fit with Zumba classes every Monday & Wednesday at 10:15am. No reservations necessary; classes cost \$15 or ten for \$100. For information see [www.FMBGOV.com](http://www.FMBGOV.com).

**Tuesday, May 7  
Senior Spin & Tone with Sue Anderson**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Get tone and stay fit with Sue every Tuesday & Thursday at 9:30am. No reservations necessary; classes cost \$15 with discounts available if you pre-pay for ten. For information see [www.FMBGOV.com](http://www.FMBGOV.com).

**Tuesday, May 7  
FMB Community Foundation  
Check Presentations**

@TBD  
The FMB Community Foundation, the island's

SUDOKU

Answers from page 3

6	7	9	3	5	2	1	8	4
3	5	1	6	8	4	7	2	9
2	8	4	9	1	7	6	3	5
9	1	8	5	6	3	2	4	7
4	3	7	1	2	9	8	5	6
5	2	6	7	4	8	3	9	1
7	4	5	2	3	6	9	1	8
1	9	3	8	7	5	4	6	2
8	6	2	4	9	1	5	7	3

leading philanthropic organization, makes its annual check presentations from 5 to 7pm; for the location see [www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com).

**Wed., May 8**  
**Mound House Eco-Kayak Tour**

@The Historic Mound House  
Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden backwaters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve on this 2-hour tour. The MH provides all equipment; ages 12 & up, weather permitting and participants must wear shoes and bring water. The Eco-Kayak Tour is every Wednesday through Saturday from 9 to 11am. \$50-per-person including MH admission with reservations necessary at [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Wed., May 8**  
**CROW Campus Tours**

@Center for the Rehabilitation Of Wildlife  
An in-depth look at what the animal patients experience, from intake to release, including the hospital and treatment process. The 45-minute tour is Wednesdays through Fridays at Noon; \$25-per-person with advance registration and payment necessary at 239-472-3644 or [reservations@crowclinic.org](mailto:reservations@crowclinic.org).

**Thurs., May 9**  
**FMB Town Council Management & Planning Session**

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
The FMB Town Council continues its work to rebuild FMB at 9am; see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Thurs., May 9**  
**FMB Chamber Membership Luncheon**

@TBD  
Join your FMB Chamber friends to savor a scrumptious luncheon and enjoy an informative speaker from 11:30am to 1 pm. \$30 members & \$40 prospective members; For the May location, see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Friday, May 10**  
**Fort Myers Mighty Mussels V. Dunedin Blue Jays**

@Hammond Stadium, Lee Health Sports Complex  
The Mighty Mussels, the Low A affiliate of the Minnesota Twins, take on the Dunedin Blue Jays of the Toronto organization at 7:05pm! Enjoy fantastic fireworks following the game, so Play Ball! The Mussels & Blue Jays play on Saturday, May 11 at 6:05pm & Sunday, May 12 at Noon; tickets \$10 to \$15. For details see [www.mightymussels.com](http://www.mightymussels.com).

**Tuesday, May 14**  
**FMB Local Planning Agency Meeting**

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
The FMB LPA, appointed by Town Council, continues its work to rebuild FMB at 9am; see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Thurs., May 16**  
**FMB Chamber "Business After Hours"**

@Topsy Tiki FMB  
Join your FMB Chamber friends for a fun time while enjoying delicious appetizers and a cash bar from 5:30 to 7pm. The Topsy Tiki day boat charter has a 28-person capacity so this is a first-come, first-serve event. Members FREE & \$15 perspective members; see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Wed., May 22**  
**FMB Community Foundation Happy Hour**

@Snug Harbor  
The FMB Community Foundation is the island's leading philanthropic organization, so join in on the fun from 5:30 to 7pm; see [www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com).

**Wed., May 22**  
**FMB Woman's Club Monthly Social**

@License to Chill, Margaritaville FMB  
Join the best club on the entire island at the magnificent Margaritaville at 6pm; see [www.fmb-wc.org](http://www.fmb-wc.org).



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# FMB KIWANIS CLUB & THRIFT SHOP

## Serving the FMB Community for 56 Years!

- By Gary Mooney -

*Kiwanis members contribute 500 to 600 volunteer hours per month at the Thrift Shop.*

“The Fort Myers Beach Kiwanis Club is now 56-years-young, as we formed in 1968,” says Doug Bidgood, FMB Kiwanis Club President. “Kiwanis is a Global Organization of volunteers dedicated to changing the world one child and one community at a time, with our local fundraising focus on FMB and our surrounding area. We are currently 27 members strong, as sadly we lost membership due to Hurricane Ian.”

The prominently-located FMB Kiwanis Club Thrift Shop is at the Pine Ridge and Summerlin Roads intersection, at 11050 Summerlin Square Drive. “We previously rented another location,” explains Doug, “but paid so much in rent that we did not have the funds we wanted for the kids, so in 2008 we bought the former Century 21 office. It underwent a major renovation to make it shopper-friendly, complete with individual depart-

ments like glassware, medical supplies, a ‘Man Cave’ full of tools and equipment, a children’s room, and surf shop, so we have an incredible store!” The FMB Kiwanis Club Thrift Shop is open Mondays through Saturdays from 9am to 5pm, with donations from 9am to 3pm; closed Sundays.

A combination of paid employees and FMB Kiwanis volunteers run the Thrift Shop. “We cannot get by in the Thrift Shop without our FMB Kiwanis volunteers,” Doug states. “We contribute 500 to 600 volunteer hours monthly, performing duties like testing our electrical equipment to pricing our various items to steaming and sanitizing donated clothes to racking and stacking our merchandise and a whole lot more!”

The FMB Kiwanis Thrift Shop will pick up your donations free of charge and deliver purchased merchandise for a nominal fee, relates Doug. “While we are grateful for your donations, we most definitely do not accept anything; our professional staff determines what we will and will not take because, quite frankly, we will not take nor sell junk and that is how we maintain our reputation. This is especially true after Hurricane Ian, to ensure our items do not have an exposure to mold or other possible factors.”

An example of the excellent donations the Thrift Shop offers is a recent shipment from the Surf Style Surf, Swimwear & Sporting Goods stores, says Doug. “They sent us roughly 340 cases of clothing, with the factory tags still on, along with items like sunhats and brand-new flip flops, with a lot of SPF-rated clothes so at our prices these are all wonderful







*\$1000 check presented to the Beach Elementary School PTO Mom's for school supplies.*



*In season, the FMB Kiwanis Thrift Shop draws 200 to 250 customers per day, exceeding their numbers from before Ian.*

values. We are indebted to Surf Style and all our tremendous partners for their generous contributions.”

**“The Nation Rallied to Us”**

Like much of FMB, Hurricane Ian inflicted considerable damage to the Thrift Shop. “Water damage forced us to close from September 28, 2022, through February 15, 2023, as well as losing our delivery truck, but that was exactly when the community most needed the FMB Kiwanis,” Doug emphasized. “We immediately set up super large tents in the parking lot while receiving generous donations from all over the country so we supported children and families in need right away, eventually serving over 5,000 families. What goes around comes around – we helped other communities for decades and when ours needed the help this time, groups and people from all over the nation rallied to us.”

With the Thrift Shop reopen, along with a new delivery truck, business is booming! “The community support is overwhelming,” adds Doug; “so much so that we enjoyed our best business month ever in early 2024! In season, we drew 200 to 250 customers per day, exceeding our numbers from before Ian.”

Among the local and area organizations that receive FMB Kiwanis Club financial support is the “Every Child A Swimmer” program at the Bay Oaks Recreation Center on Fort Myers Beach, as well as the FMB Kiwanis Scholarship Program, assistance to the Beach Elementary School and Bay Oaks, and donations to LARC, the Golisano Children’s Hospital and the “Kimmie’s Kids” program to assist those battling mental health and drug issues. “We help roughly 150 children learn to swim every year through ‘Every Child A Swimmer,’” Doug says. “We provide \$2,000 scholarships for up to four years to eligible students in our area zip code as well as expense money to Beach Elementary School teachers to pay for supplies. We sponsor clubs at Beach Elementary and Fort Myers High School to help teach young people how to be responsible, sharpen their leadership skills, and learn to give back to their community at a young age. The best part is that we make a positive difference all while having great fun doing it!”

**“The Story Full-Circle!”**

To join in on the FMB Kiwanis Club fun, Doug advises to “simply go to our website at [www.fortmyersbeachkiwanis.org](http://www.fortmyersbeachkiwanis.org) and download the application, stop off at the Thrift Shop, or come to one of our monthly breakfast meetings the third Friday of each month at Bonita Bill’s Waterfront Café, with breakfast at 7:30am and the meeting and speaker at 8am. We are proud of our FMB Kiwanis Club and are happy to talk about who we are and what we do to prospective members. Remember that we occasionally do not meet in the summer, as many of our members head north.”

As for why Doug joined the FMB Kiwanis Club, “I retired in 2009 and attended Chapel By The Sea. We sat next to another couple we knew and they asked me what I intended to do now with my free time and I said I wanted to get involved with a local group. They spoke so highly of FMB Kiwanis and invited me to one of their social gatherings and I met so many great people that I joined the Club! Since then, I served on the Executive Board for many years and last year stepped up to take the Presidency. It’s been 15 years now, and my drive to give back to the community is just as strong today as back then.”

In Doug’s opinion, the best part of the FMB Kiwanis Club is “the sense of giving back and most definitely the fellowship! Sometimes that good feeling comes from fundraising and at other times, it is from individual interactions. I was at the Thrift Shop one day when a young man came in and said he needed a nice outfit for an important job interview. I could tell he did not have much experience with the necessary clothes so I said, ‘Let’s start from the underwear and socks on up’ and at the end I even tied his tie for him, including showing him how to slide the knot up and down! He returned that day with a big smile on his face, saying he got the job, and that makes you feel good about yourself and what you do with FMB Kiwanis. He eventually volunteered at the Thrift Shop and as he moved out successfully on his own, he bought his furniture from us, bringing the story full-circle!” ■

# TOP RECENT SALES FOR FORT MYERS BEACH

## SINGLE FAMILY HOMES 2-29-2024 to 3-26-2024

Address	Beds/Baths	Sq. Ft.	Sold Price
757 SAN CARLOS DR	3 Bed/3	4,774	\$3,174,000
789 SAN CARLOS DR	4 Bed/3	2,432	\$2,250,000
360 SEMINOLE WAY	3 Bed/3	2,050	\$2,150,000
311 DELMAR AVE	3 Bed/3	1,546	\$1,850,000
8338 LAGOON RD	3 Bed/2	1,565	\$1,250,000
323 WASHINGTON CT	3 Bed/3	1,520	\$1,199,000
391 WASHINGTON CT	3 Bed/2	1,447	\$795,000

## VACANT LOT 2-29-2024 TO 3-26-2024

Address	Acres	Sold Price
1666 I ST	0.214	\$2,500,000
278 OHIO AVE	0.169	\$1,300,000
5127 ESTERO BLVD	0.353	\$1,200,000
756 ESTERO BLVD	0.1	\$860,000
121 DELMAR AVE	0.092	\$600,000
865 OAK ST	0.109	\$225,000

## CONDOS 2-29-2024 to 3-26-2024

Address	Sub/Condo	Sq. Ft.	Sold Price
6620 ESTERO BLVD #1202	3 Bed/2	1,700	\$1,150,000
150 LENELL RD #504	3 Bed/2	1,663	\$1,100,000
450 OLD SAN CARLOS BLVD #212	2 Bed/2	826	\$1,062,500
4183 BAY BEACH LN #364	3 Bed/3	1,877	\$840,000
4183 BAY BEACH LN #333	3 Bed/3	1,877	\$750,000
22628 ISLAND PINES WAY #1503	2+Den/2	1,501	\$745,000
6900 ESTERO BLVD #306	2 Bed/2	1,165	\$720,000
7700 ESTERO BLVD #PH2	2 Bed/2	1,103	\$575,000
8300 ESTERO BLVD #403	2 Bed/1	732	\$535,000
7700 ESTERO BLVD #304	2 Bed/2	1,103	\$525,000
7360 ESTERO BLVD #PH3	1 Bed/1	517	\$485,000
6665 ESTERO BLVD #121	2 Bed/2	1,108	\$480,000
7360 ESTERO BLVD #1005	1 Bed/1	517	\$450,000
7360 ESTERO BLVD #802	1 Bed/1	517	\$440,000
6645 ESTERO BLVD #205	2 Bed/2	884	\$375,000
140 ESTERO BLVD #2108	1 Bed/1	383	\$250,000
863 OAK ST	0 Bed/0	200	\$225,000

Based on information from the Florida Gulf Coast MLS, Inc. for the period 2-29-24 to 3-26-24 for FB01-FB07 • Best Version Media does not guarantee the accuracy of the statistical data on this page. The data does not represent the listings of any one agent or agency but the entire real estate community in the area. Any real estate agent's ad appearing in the magazine is separate from the statistical data provided which is in no way a part of their advertisement.



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