

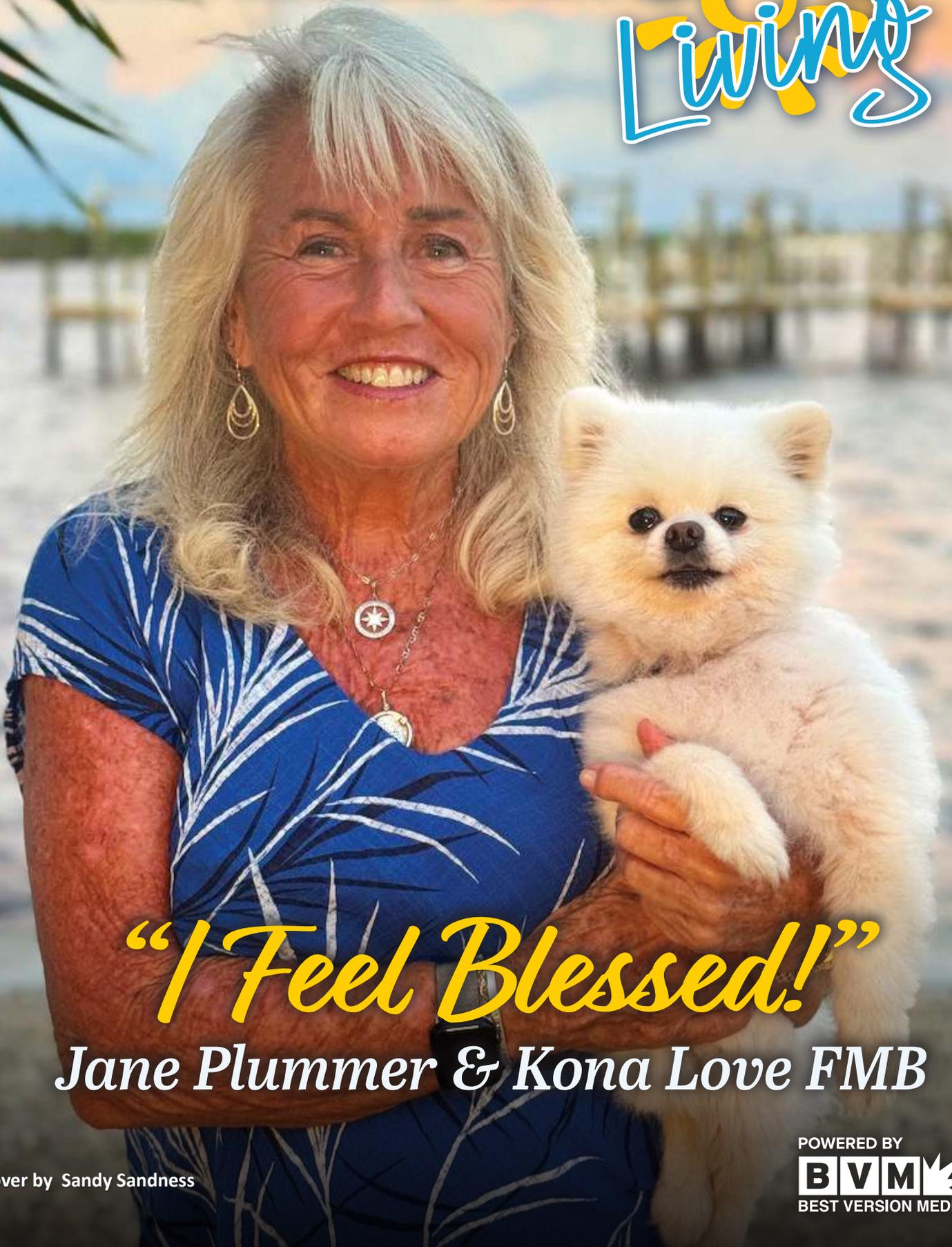
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An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Fort Myers Beach

November 2025

FORT MYERS BEACH

Living



“I Feel Blessed!”

Jane Plummer & Kona Love FMB

Cover by Sandy Sandness

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FORT MYERS BEACH

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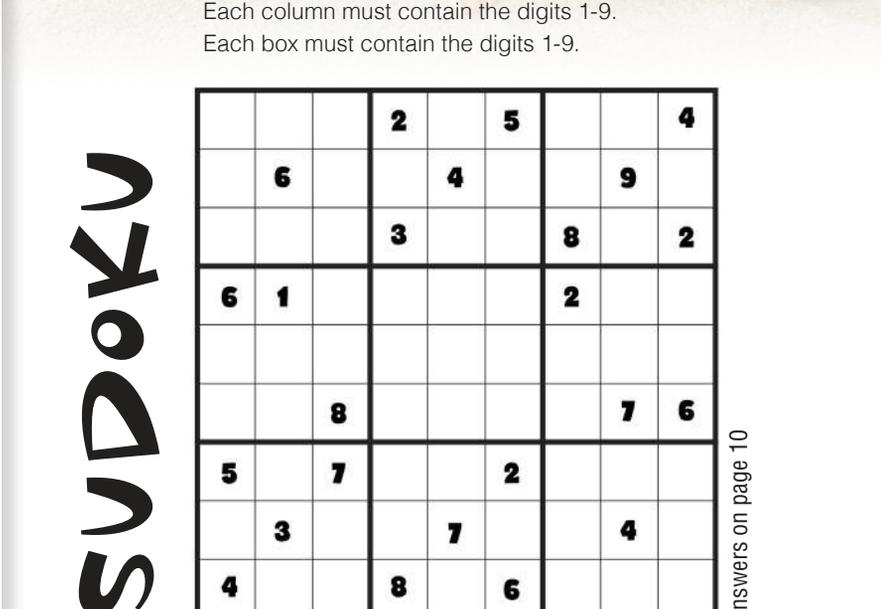
FEEDBACK / IDEAS / SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 20th of each month, 6 weeks in advance of publication. Email your thoughts, ideas and photographs to gmooney@bestversionmedia.com. Submissions must be original and exclusive to *Fort Myers Beach LIVING*, at a maximum of 500 words. *Fort Myers Beach LIVING* reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, space limitations and spelling.

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- Emergency: 911
- Lee County Sheriff's Office: 239-477-1000
- FMB Fire Department: 239-590-4200
- FMB Town Hall: 239-765-0202
- FMB Public Library: 239-765-8162
- Lee County Parks & Recreation: 239-533-7275
- Beach Elementary School: 239-463-6356
- FMB Water Department: 239-463-9914
- Trash Collection: 239-334-1224
- Florida Power & Light (FPL): 1-800-226-5885
- CenturyLink: 239-335-3111
- Comcast Cable Company: 239-432-9277
- FMB Chamber of Commerce: 239-454-7500

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- By Gary Mooney -

SUDOKU RULES:

- Each row must contain the digits 1-9.
- Each column must contain the digits 1-9.
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SUDOKU

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Answers on page 10



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Chamber Chatter!

Welcome to Season!

November is the transition month on Fort Myers Beach. The month begins in the quieter-than-normal offseason, but by Thanksgiving Weekend, get ready for six months of "Tourism Insanity!"

November's highlight is an FMB signature event: The American Sand Sculpting Championship! The FMB Chamber is thrilled to bring this event back to our sugar-white sands from Thursday, November 20, through Monday, November 24, in partnership with "The Sand Lovers" and the DiamondHead Beach Resort, and sponsors led by Florida Power & Light. Admission is \$5 per person, with children under 2 free and family packs available. For tickets and information, see www.fmb sandsculpting.com.

This year, we've added a fifth day on Monday, November 24, so you can admire all the complete sculptures, shop the "Vendor's Village" at your leisure and speak with the sculptors about their inspirations and techniques. Sculptors are also happy to talk while working from Thursday through Sunday; just remember to not enter their sculpting space and to be respectful of their time.

The competition features 21 Master and Semi *continued on page 14*

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Hello Friends & Neighbors!

I know that all November thoughts should center around Thanksgiving as well as the fabulous “American Sand Sculpting Championship,” but when I read “Jacki Lyszak’s “Chamber Chatter” where she raved about the upcoming “Christmas Boat Parade” on December 6, it suddenly hit me that the 2025 Holiday Season is right around the corner! That discovery led me to already dig out my ugliest Christmas Sweaters while anxiously awaiting several of FMB’s most cherished Holiday programs and traditions.

It does all start with the “Christmas Boat Parade” on December 6. Nothing says Christmas on an island community more than an enchanting Holiday flotilla that sparkles with holiday lights and decorations. Make sure you vote for the best decorated boats as well as the other awards like the “Most Spirited Crew.” The parade makes two loops through the Back Bay so pick out your favorite table at your favorite bar or restaurant and enjoy!

The next weekend is the annual “Christmas Tree Festival” hosted by the FMB Woman’s Club in the Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB Ballroom on Friday and Saturday, December 12 & 13. The FMB Woman’s Club sponsors the auctioning off of dozens of one-of-a-kind Christmas Trees handcrafted by FMB Non-Profits, with the auction funds going to those Non-Profits. Friday features the VIP Reception, then the Preview Party that is open to the public for FREE! The Christmas Tree auction continues on Saturday, along with the “Vendor’s Market,” “Christmas Treats & Bake Sale,” “Chili Cookoff & Tasting,” and more. The FMB Woman’s Club concludes the “Festival” by announcing the Christmas Tree Auction winners, “Chili Cook-Off” winner and Grand Prize winner. Bring a new unwrapped toy for the Beach Kids Foundation to spread the cheer.

If you prefer to ring in your Holidays on two wheels, the “Christmas Bicycle Parade” on Saturday, December 20 is for you, as we meet at Bayside Veterans Park,

then peddle through the streets of FMB, enjoying our Holiday lights, starting at 6 p.m. Keep your eyes open for Christmas programs from the FMB Community Foundation and the FMB Chamber. And it’s simply not the Holidays on FMB until you make the pilgrimage to Times Square to gaze at the annual Poinsettia Christmas Tree that is surely the mother of all beloved FMB Holiday traditions!

Of course, you don’t need a program or event to live the Holidays island-style! Neighbors will throw Holiday parties. Family and friends from all over will flock here to lovingly invade us islanders. FMB restaurants, bars and shops will all be open and are eager to help you make this year the best Holiday Season ever! Why cook on Christmas when you can take the family out to one of our savory restaurants? And NOTHING brings out the ENVY more in family and friends all over the nation than those Christmas Day photos on FMB, where even Santa wears short pants and flip-flops!

Speaking of beloved island traditions, please support our advertisers because we cannot deliver “Fort Myers Beach LIVING Magazine” to you free of charge without them. When you visit, let them know that you saw their ad in our magazine so we can provide you with this community-oriented original entertainment each month.

Happy Thanksgiving, GOD BLESS OUR VETERANS, & Have An Awesome Beach Day!



Sandy Sandness

Publisher

Fort Myers Beach LIVING

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“I Feel Blessed!”

Jane Plummer Loves FMB

– By Gary Mooney,
photos by Sandy Sandness & Jane Plummer

“I was born in Anderson, Indiana, to a family of 5 children: Joni, Julie, Jane, Jill and John,” laughs Jane Plummer. “I am twice a widow, first from Bill Plummer, who passed in 1995, then from Vern Underwood, who I lost in 2021. I have four children: Jessica and Rob Gillium live in Colorado Springs, Colorado; Jacob and Leigh Plummer are in Carmel, Indiana; Katy and Tony Tipton live in gorgeous Honolulu, Hawaii; and Courtney Plummer and Justin Primus are here in Fort Myers. I have ten grandchildren, with Number Eleven on the way! Family is everything to me and that includes Kona, my 7-pound Pomeranian best friend and guard dog that fills me with joy and unconditional love every day!”

Jane and Bill first discovered FMB while bringing their kids to “Spring Break,” then expanded their annual visits from just before Christmas through January. “We were independent contractors who set our own schedules so we could take extended breaks. We all loved the water and being on the beach so I knew that as soon as family responsibilities would allow, I wanted to live here long-term.”

They did so in 1989, purchasing the “Anchor Inn Cottages” on Virginia Avenue. “We gutted and redid everything, including installing a swimming pool, turning it into a AAA Resort. We had so many returning guests year after year that the kids had a million grandparents! We basically ran it as a ‘Mom-&-Pop’ operation, doing everything from booking the guests to the laundry and cleaning. Then Bill died and with two small children, it became too much so I sold it.”

Jane became a Licensed Realtor in 1990. “At first, I did so for the convenience of the resort guests, but I slowly branched out, and when Bill passed, Real Estate became my fulltime occupation. Being a single Mom, Real Estate allowed me to set my own schedule, so I could go to soccer games and



My home is ‘Grandchildren-Friendly!’ One grandchild asked, ‘Why go to Disney when we can go to Yaya’s house?’”

pick up the kids after school. You could not pick a better community to raise kids, with the sun, sand and water and of course with the Bay Oaks Recreational Center, life was good on the island. As for Real Estate, many clients now are dear friends. I love my work because I help people make their dreams come true, because when you move to Paradise, that is always a happy move! If you need Real Estate assistance, I would love to help you!”

Truly Paradise to Me!

Jane lives on the Back Bay in a home she bought in 1999. “At night, the lights across the Bay are gorgeous and there is an abundance of wildlife – my grandkids are always talking to dolphins and love to fish off the dock! My home is ‘Grandchildren-Friendly!’ On my dock, I have swings and a zipline that goes from the house to the dock, a swimming pool and trampoline. The kids would rather swim in the Bay than in the pool. They also love to paddleboat, kayak and canoe. One grandchild asked, ‘Why go to Disney when we can go to Yaya’s house?’ This is truly Paradise to me!”

Like most others, her home sustained hurricane damages. “During Ian, I had 15 feet of water; so much that my refrigerator bounced off the ceiling. My home however remained structurally

sound so with the incredible help of family, friends and a contractor, we restored it. It took over a year but everything was beautiful. Then Milton struck last year and I got six inches of water, so I basically had to replace the baseboards, furniture and appliances again. At least I knew what furniture I wanted!”

Her neighborhood made an amazing post-Ian recovery. “We still have a few empty lots but overall we have a beautiful new neighborhood with 9 brand new houses; as bizarre as this sounds, Ian was good long-term for our street. Even surviving homes like mine are now better fortified for future hurricanes. I know hurricanes are a part of life in Florida but in twenty-five years, I never had one touch my pool or the inside of my house, so I believe Ian was a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I am an optimist – No Hurricanes On My Calendar!”

Our recent hurricanes, however, did change Jane’s outlook on life. “When you lose everything, you focus on what is truly important. I let go of anything negative and look to the bright side of life. I once again attend church and so many wonderful things have happened to me since then, that I now view Ian almost as a blessing, as I gained far more than what I lost. Today I focus on being happy and grateful for all my blessings.”

“Islanders are My Family”

Jane loves to travel and recently returned “from the trip of a lifetime to Greece, with eight islands in-between. Of course, having family in Honolulu means that I must visit there once a year – and sometimes twice! Since I do not cook, I look for any opportunity to dine out with friends. A particular passion is audiobooks; since I am always on the go, I often listen to three books a week, with thrillers my favorite as I love to figure out who did it!”

Jane is a long-time member of the Town’s Local Planning Agency (LPA) and serves as Vice Chair. “My first LPA experience was on the other side of the dais, when I sought a swim-

ming pool variance. I immediately thought that, as a Realtor, I should know the island’s rules and regulations to prevent misrepresenting a property, so when an LPA opening came up, I was thrilled that Town Council appointed me. In fact, I may be the Town’s longest-serving LPA member. I want to help people get what they want and I listen to each case with an open mind. I know as we rebuild FMB that many projects are emotional. I want everyone to live out their best possible dream in Paradise but we must balance that with the rules to attain what is best for the entire island – It Is HARD!” Jane was formerly on the Bay Oaks Recreational Center Advisory Board; Historical Preservation Board including stints as Chair and Vice Chair.

When pondering why FMB means so much to her, “This is my family,” she exclaims! “When Bill died and I was a single Mom with two young kids, people all around stepped up to help, and it felt like the entire beach community gave me a big hug. Then it happened again when Vern passed, with folks saying, ‘I got you, join us; you will be OK!’ Islanders picked me up when I most needed it and I want to embrace this community back. Islanders are my family!”

When asked what FMB will look like in five years, “WOW,” Jane gasps! “Sadly, the era of cute little beach cottages with wrap-around porches is gone, so I am trying to embrace the concept of mega-houses. Unfortunately, we will be more of a tourist community than a residential one, with more owners utilizing their houses for rentals rather than fulltime homes. There will be bigger and higher hotels, condominiums, resorts and restaurants, if for no other reason than we must now build everything higher. I am personally not excited about some of these changes but that is life.”

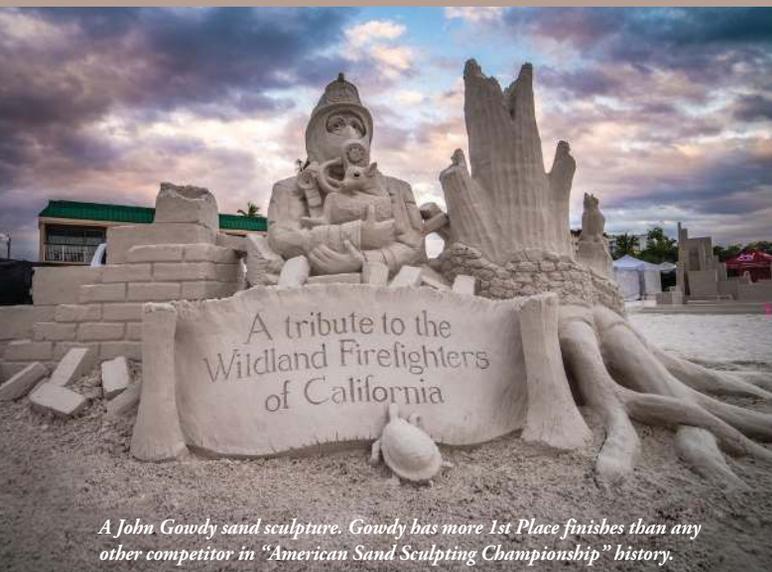
What hasn’t changed is that every time Jane drives onto FMB, the view from the top of the bridge still inspires her. “When I see this island, I know I love this island and always will. Life is good here and I am happy here; I feel blessed!” ■



Jane lives on the Back Bay: “My grandkids are always talking to dolphins and love to fish off the dock.”



“Family is everything to me and that includes Kona, my 7-pound Pomeranian best friend and guard dog!”



A John Gowdy sand sculpture. Gowdy has more 1st Place finishes than any other competitor in "American Sand Sculpting Championship" history.



"FMB has some of the best beach sculpting sand on the entire planet," explains Bill Knight.

"Build It & They Will Come!"

Annual "American Sand Sculpting Championship" Returns

- by Gary Mooney, Images by Bill & Marianne Knight -

Later this month, thousands of visitors will flock to FMB for the annual "American Sand Sculpting Championship," (ASSC) in partnership with "The Sand Lovers" of Bill and Marianne Knight, the FMB Chamber of Commerce, and the DiamondHead Beach Resort, in conjunction with a plethora of sponsors highlighted by Florida Power & Light. The "American Sand Sculpting Championship" is at the DiamondHead Beach Resort at 2000 Estero Boulevard, Rain-or-Shine, from Thursday, November 20 through Monday, November 24, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person, with children under 2 free and Family Packs available. To purchase tickets or for more details, see www.fmbandsculpting.com.

The 2025 "ASSC" features 26 talented Master, Semi Pro, and "Showcase Sculptors." The ten Masters are Matt Diebert of Atlantic City, New Jersey; John Gowdy of Atlantic City, New Jersey; Paul Hoggard from England, Remy Hoggard of The Netherlands; Ferenc Monostori from Hungary; Todd Pangborn from Jamestown, New York; Bruce Peck of Saint Louis, Missouri; Oleksiy Poda from Poland; Laurie Tournoux of Navarre, Ohio; and Bruce Waugh from Canada.

Eleven Semi Pros will compete, in a category also known as Advanced Amateurs: Marcie Cowles of Louisville, Ohio; Pete Faverio from New Castle, Delaware; Bob Lechtenberg from Heartland, Wisconsin; John Martinez from Frankenmuth, Michigan; Tyler Morris of Floresville, Texas; Darrell O'Connor of Dewey Beach, Delaware; Shannon Summey of Bonita Springs, Florida; Scott Triplett from Grand Rapids, Michigan; Lauren Waldo of Floresville, Florida; Mark Wilson from Astatula, Florida; and Resa Wohlrabe of San Antonio, Texas.

In addition to the competitors, the "ASSC" features several "Showcase Sculptors," including Marc Mangia of Columbus, Ohio, and "Amazin'" Walter McDonald of South Padre Island, Texas, as well as "The Sand Lovers" team of Bill and Marianne

Knight, Dennis Fewless and Misti Knight-Fritz. "We are thrilled to have Amazin' Walter with us this year, who is affectionately known as 'the oldest sand sculptor in captivity,'" laughs Bill Knight! "Walter retired from competing last year, but he loves FMB so he consented to do some sand sculpting for us."

Master Versus Semi Pro

Bill explains the difference between Master and Semi Pro sculptors. "It comes down to experience, as Masters not only have many sculpting years under their belts but do sand sculpting for a living. Semi Pros are often just starting out and do sand sculpting as a glorified hobby rather than as a profession. After Semi Pros gain experience and start to win trophies, we invite them to the Master level."

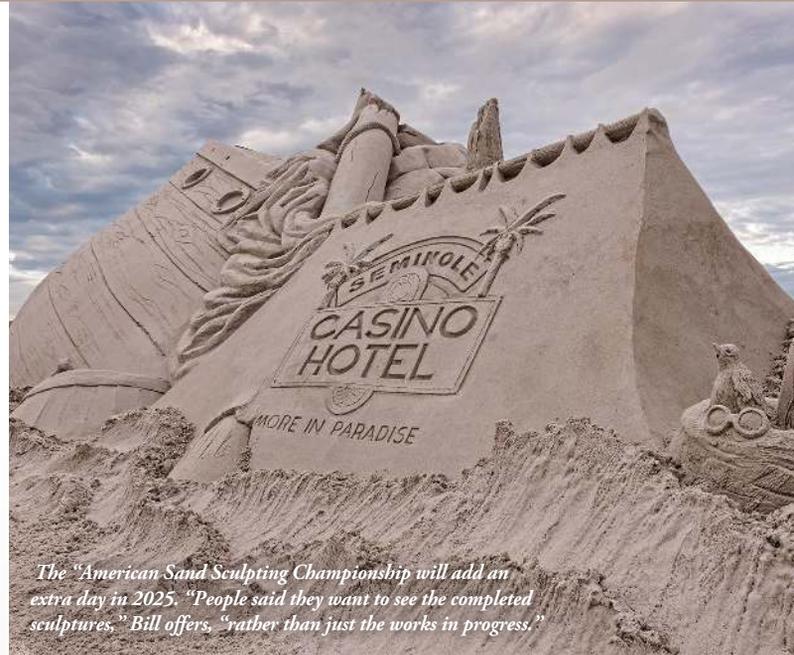
Marianne and Bill are in charge of inviting sand sculptors to compete in the "ASSC." "We do sand sculpting professionally so we know who is in the cream of the crop," he explains. "Some selections are 'No-Brainers,' like John Gowdy, who has more 1st Place finishes in our competition than anyone else. In addition to talent and creativity, we look for one other important aspect – do they interact with the crowd? Some sculptors just put on headphones and go about their business, but we prefer those who are personable. Once we draw up our tentative list, we run it past our partners at the FMB Chamber and the DiamondHead for their approval, then we issue the invitations."

The "ASSC" is much more than just the sculptors and their masterpieces, however. "There will be a fantastic 'Vendor's Village,' with arts, crafts, clothing and more," raves Bill. "We will have a 'Kid's Zone,' 'Quick Sand Speed Sculpting' and sand sculpting demonstrations, free sand sculpting lessons for children, live music, and food and beverages through the DiamondHead."

In addition to the Master and Semi Pro sculptors, this year's "ASSC" features a true "Amateur Contest" on Saturday, No-



One of the 2024 "American Sand Sculpting Championship" winning masterpieces.



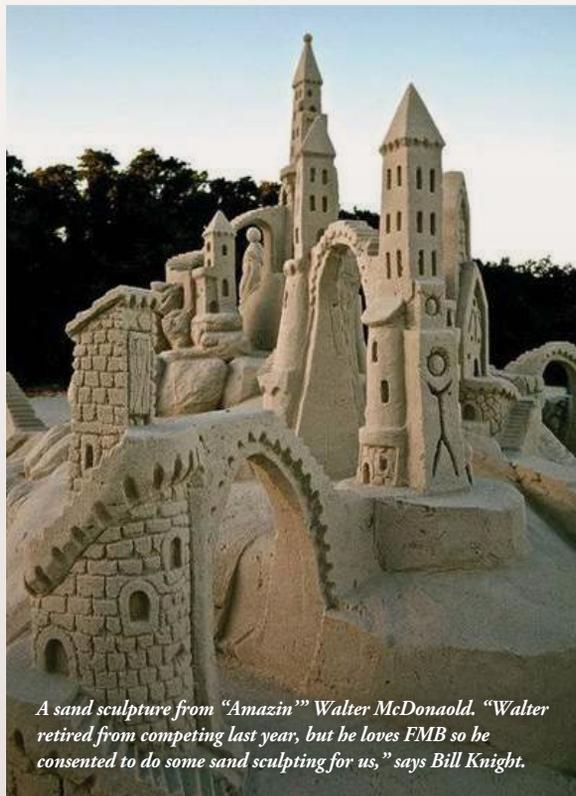
The "American Sand Sculpting Championship" will add an extra day in 2025. "People said they want to see the completed sculptures," Bill offers, "rather than just the works in progress."

November 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., with that Awards Ceremony for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place at 4 p.m. "As the term implies, 'No Experience Necessary,'" chuckles Bill. "Register at www.fmb-sandsculpting.com or sign up that morning for just a \$10 entry fee. The 'ASSC' Awards Ceremony is the next day, on Sunday, November 23, at 4:30 p.m. Competitors vie for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place in each division, along with awards for 'Sculptor's Choice' and 'People's Choice.'"

The 2025 Awards Ceremony however is not the end of the 2025 "American Sand Sculpting Championship!" "For the first time ever, we are adding an extra day, on Monday, November 24," offers Bill. "People told us that they would like to see the completed sculptures, rather than just the works in progress, so we added Monday so you can view the winning artworks. The 'Vendor's Village' remains open and there will be music all through the day, so please join us!"

Actual Beach Sand

Bill explains why the "ASSC" is so popular with the world-wide sand sculpting community. "First, it is the American Championship, so if you are fortunate enough to win it, you call yourself the 'American Champion' forever! Second is the location – everybody loves FMB! Finally, it is the quality of the beach sand. At most major competitions, organizers must truck in sand from another location, but on FMB, we sculpt from the actual beach sand! Sculptors crave that when they choose where to compete. FMB has some of the best beach sculpting sand on the entire planet because it is very fine, with just enough dirt in it to help hold everything together."



A sand sculpture from "Amazin'" Walter McDonaold. "Walter retired from competing last year, but he loves FMB so he consented to do some sand sculpting for us," says Bill Knight.

He encourages the audience to interact with the sculptors, but please remember to be respectful and patient, as the artists are working. "Without spectators, we would not have competitions," reasons Bill. "It is a great way to grow our competitions and sometimes when you learn that a sculptor is from your state or maybe even your hometown, suddenly that sculptor becomes your all-time favorite!"

Bill believes that the "American Sand Sculpting Championship" is more important to FMB now than ever before. "Hurricane Ian devastated the island just over three years ago, and this is just our 2nd 'ASSC' since then. The 'ASSC' is an ideal forum to attract people back to FMB, possibly for the first time since Ian, to show everyone that FMB is back and well on its way to a total recovery. Hotels, restaurants and bars are open and the beach is back, better than ever before."

To Bill, the best part of the "ASSC" is "that in the beginning, I am super-busy, running here-&-there, surrounded by a bunch of sand piles. Then all of a sudden, I turn around and see the most magnificent sand sculpture that arose from the beach sand seemingly out of nowhere, as if by magic, and I will literally exclaim, 'Oh My Gosh – I did not see that coming!'"

Experience these magic moments for yourself in our breathtaking beach setting at the annual "American Sand Sculpting Championship" at the Diamond-Head Beach Resort from Thursday, November 20 through Monday, November 24, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■



November

Monday Through Friday
Bay Oaks Recreational Center

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center
The Bay Oaks Recreational Center is open Mondays through Thursdays from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Fridays from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. FMB residents \$7 with all others \$10 and memberships available. See www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Monday Through Friday
CLUB REC!

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center
Bay Oaks hosts this incredible "After School Program" for Beach Elementary School students EVERY Monday through Friday throughout the academic year for games, snacks and homework from after-school to 6 p.m. \$125 for FMB residents & \$175 for non-residents per semester! See www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Saturday, November 1
FMB Art Association
"75th Anniversary Celebration"

@FMBAA Gallery
The FMB Art Association invites the entire FMB community and surrounding area to join them to celebrate their 75th Anniversary at this FREE event! Enjoy food and music and of course fantastic art, with adult beverages available via a contribution. The FMBAA "75th Anniversary Celebration" is at their new Gallery at 13451 McGregor Boulevard, Unit #1, in Cypress Square in Fort Myers, near the Prawnbroker Restaurant & Fish Market, from 3 to 7 p.m. See www.fortmyersbeachart.com.

Sunday, November 2
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 7 p.m.! November 2: TBA; November 9: "Wayward Souls"; November 16: "Remedy"; November 23: "Riverside"; & November 30: "Guilty Pleasure". See www.fortmyersbeach.org.

Sunday, November 2
AND EVERY SUNDAY
Reggae Party

@Lighthouse Island Resort Tiki Bar
After you enjoy Sunday's "Bayside Park Concert Series,"

boogie on over to the nearby Lighthouse Island Resort Tiki Bar to get your Reggae on from 6 to 9 p.m. Dreadlocks optional! See www.lighthouseislandresort.com.

Mondays, November 3 & 17
FMB Town Council Meeting

@Town Hall
The FMB Town Council continues its work to rebuild FMB in the New Town Hall at 6231 Estero Boulevard at 9 a.m.; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Monday, November 3
FMB Art Association
November Show: "Celebration!"

@FMBAA Gallery
In conjunction with the FMBAA's 75th Anniversary, it presents "Celebration!" The exhibit runs through Friday, December 5, at the FMBAA's new Gallery at 13451 McGregor Boulevard, Unit #1, in Cypress Square in Fort Myers, near the Prawnbroker Restaurant & Fish Market. The Gallery is open with FREE admission Mondays through Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. & Thursdays through Saturdays Noon to 6 p.m. See www.fortmyersbeachart.com.

Monday, November 3
& EVERY MONDAY
THROUGH FRIDAY
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 90-minute tour is Monday through Friday at 11 a.m.; \$25-per-person with advance registration and payment necessary at 239-472-3644, x-229 or reservations@crowclinic.org.

Mondays, November 3 & 17
Caribbean Cruise-In Car Show

@Parrot Key Caribbean Grill
The largest FMB Car Show returns on the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month through April 20, 2026. Enjoy music, food and prizes while marveling at these fantastic cars! The FREE car show is from 3 to 6 p.m.; see www.myparrotkey.com.

Tuesday, November 4
AND EVERY TUESDAY &
THURSDAY THROUGH APRIL
Santini Marina Plaza Market

@Santini Marina Plaza
This FMB South End Market offers fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more EVERY Tuesday & Thursday through April 2026 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; see www.41markets.com.

Wednesday, November 5
AND EVERY WEDNESDAY
THROUGH APRIL
Moss Marina Market

@Moss Marina
The Moss Marina Market at 401 Old San Carlos Boulevard offers fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more EVERY Wednesday through April 2026 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; see www.41markets.com.

Wednesday, November 5
& EVERY WEDNESDAY
"Story Time"

@The FMB Public Library
The perfect way to educate and entertain your little ones, with a family-friendly story each Wednesday at 10 a.m. There is something for everyone at the fabulous FMB Public Library! See www.fmb.lib.fl.us.

Wednesday, November 5
& EVERY WEDNESDAY THROUGH
SATURDAY
The Historic 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 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with Grounds daily from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Adults \$15, Students \$8, Kids 6 to 12 \$5, & 5 & under free; Grounds free. See www.moundhouse.org.

Thursday, November 6
FMB Town Council
Management & Planning Session

@Town Hall
The FMB Town Council continues its work to rebuild FMB in the New Town Hall at 6231 Estero Boulevard at 9 a.m.; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Thursday, November 6
& EVERY WEDNESDAY THROUGH
SATURDAY
Mound House Eco-Kayak Tours

@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 Tours are every Wednesday through Saturday from 9 to 11 a.m. \$50 per person including MH admission, with reservations necessary at www.moundhouse.org.

Friday & Saturday, November 7 & 8
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 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; see www.41markets.com.

Friday through Sunday, November
7 to 9
FCSAA Volleyball
State Championship Tournament

@Suncoast Credit Union Arena
The 3-Time Defending National Junior College Volleyball Champion Florida SouthWestern State College Lady Buccaneers continue their four-peat quest as they host the FCSAA Volleyball State Tournament to

SUDOKU

Answers from page 3

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

defend their back-to-back-to back State Titles! Games vary so check the website for days & times. \$8 to \$10 per person; see www.fswbuucs.com.

**Friday, November 7
AND EVERY FRIDAY
Bayside Park Concert Series**

@Bayside Veterans Park
The "Bayside Park Concert Series" each Sunday evening proved so popular that it now expands to EVERY Friday! Relax while listening to fantastic tunes from local musicians at these FREE weekly outdoor concerts from 6 to 9 p.m.! November 7: TBA; November 14: "Jacob's Ladder"; November 21: "Limited Edition"; & November 28: "Thunder Beach." See www.fortmyersbeach.org.

**Saturday, November 8
St. Raphael's Church "Shrimp Dinners"**

@St. Raphael's Comfort Hall
St. Raphael's Legendary "Shrimp Dinners" return for the first time since Jan, on the second Saturday of each month through April 11, 2026! Savor scrumptious "Pink Gold" shrimp, along with baked beans, slaw, cornbread, dessert and a beverage, with music by "The Goldtones." Dine in or carryout; see www.straphaelschurch.org for times and pricing. St. Raphael's Comfort Hall is at 5601 Williams Drive.

**Saturday, November 8
Movie on The Mound: "Shrek"**

@The Historic Mound House
Bring your blankets and chairs to the Mound House for an evening of fun and laughter with our "Movie on The Mound," as we screen the classic "Shrek!" Pre-movie activities at 5:30 p.m., with "Shrek" at 6:30. No reservations necessary and "Shrek" is FREE! See www.moundhouse.org.

**Tuesday, November 11
VETERANS DAY:
GOD BLESS OUR VETERANS!**



HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

Veterans Day

**Wednesday, November 12
& EVERY WEDNESDAY THROUGH
SATURDAY**

Calusa Tours
@The Historic Mound House
Discover the incredible history of the Calusa, the original stewards of Southwest Florida, on this 30-minute guided outdoor tour. Learn how this powerful and innovative Indigenous society thrived across our region for centuries, leaving an enduring legacy still visible today with their shell mounds. Explore how the

Calusa shaped their environment and uncover the stories revealed by archaeologists through hands-on activities such as an atlatl demonstration. Calusa Tours are Wednesday through Saturday at 11 a.m. & 2 p.m. \$15 includes Mound House admission; see www.moundhouse.org.

**Thursday, November 13
FMB Art Association Juried Show:
"Coming Around"**

@Arts Bonita – Performing Arts Center
"Coming Around" is the FMBAA's "Fall Judged & Juried Show" at a special location: Arts Bonita – Performing Arts Center at 10150 Bonita Beach Road. "Coming Around" remains on display through January 8, 2026, on Mondays through Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Opening Reception is November 13 from 6 to 8 p.m. See www.fortmyersbeachart.com.

**Friday, November 14
"Shell Walk"**

@Lovers Key State Park
Join a ranger for a shelling trip along the Lovers Key shoreline from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Learn the names of the seashells as well as fun facts about the creatures that made them. The "Shell Walk" is one of nine November Lovers Key nature education programs that are free with park admission; to see the schedule and register, go to www.loverskey.eventbrite.com.

**Friday, November 14
Welcome & Discovery Center**

@Lovers Key State Park
The Welcome & Discovery Center educates and informs visitors about Lovers Key habitats through interactive displays Wednesday through Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The W&DC is FREE with the park entry fee; see www.friendsoflovesskey.org.

**Friday, November 14
& EVERY FRIDAY
Sunset Kayak Tours**

@The Historic Mound House
Immerse yourself in the breathtaking beauty of a guided "Sunset Kayak Tour!" Paddle through a pristine landscape as the Golden Hour transforms the Estero Bay into a picturesque landscape. The "Sunset Kayak Tours" include a two-hour guided experience, kayak and paddling equipment, and Mound House admission. \$45-per-person, with reservations required and start times at www.moundhouse.org.

**Saturday, November 15
Beach Kids Foundation
Pickleball Tournament**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center
Enjoy America's fastest growing sport in a set partner round robin format, beginning at roughly 8 a.m. \$50 per player and must register by Saturday, November 8, with all proceeds to benefit the Beach Kids Foundation, dedicated to serving the children of FMB. For information, contact Megan Haataja at meganhaataja@gmail.com; to register see www.swishtournaments.com.

**Saturday, November 15
"Illuminations Parade"**

@Bayside Veterans Park
The "Illuminations Parade" is coming to FMB! It begins at Bayside Veterans Park at dusk, so bring your family, friends and creativity to light up the night with glowing paper lanterns. This community celebration of art, animals and family winds through San Carlos Boulevard and finishes on the beach, ending with a magical display of light! The King Family Foundation and The Whale sponsor the "Illumination Parade," see #IlluminationsParade.

**Wednesday, November 19
FMB Community Foundation
Membership Meeting**

@The Island Pancake House
The FMB Community Foundation is the island's leading philanthropic organization, so attend the Membership Meeting to learn all about us from 5 to 6:30 p.m. The Island Pancake House is at 2801 Estero Boulevard; see www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com.

**Thursday, November 20 to
Monday, November 24
"American Sand Sculpting
Championship"**

@DiamondHead Beach Resort
Thousands flock to FMB for the annual "American Sand Sculpting Championship," sponsored by the FMB Chamber, "The Sand Lovers" and the DiamondHead Beach Resort, Rain-or-Shine, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition to sand sculpting masterpieces, there will be the "Vendor's Village," "Kid's Zone," "Quick Sand Speed Sculpting" and sand sculpting demonstrations, free sand sculpting lessons for children, live music, and food and beverages. \$5 per person, with kids under 2 free and Family Packs available. To purchase tickets or for more information, see www.fmbandsculpting.com.

**Thursday, November 27
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

Many of your favorite FMB bars and restaurants are open up-&-down the island! Town Hall closed until December 1.



**Saturdays, December 7 & 14
"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 8:15 a.m. to Noon; see www.scbps.com.

"The Wings of An Angel!"



Betty Simpson Turned Dreams Into Reality

- by Sandy Sandness -

The Fort Myers Beach community lost a true icon on September 5 when the legendary Betty Simpson passed away at 93 years young. "FMB LIVING Magazine" had the honor of profiling Betty in our 3rd-ever issue, in March 2022, in an appropriately-entitled article, "The Wings of An Angel!" To call Betty a trendsetter who was often decades ahead of her time is an understatement.

Betty was originally from Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She graduated from The University of South Dakota with a Radio Speech Bachelor's degree as well as hosting her own university radio program, years and years before most women graduated college or were in the media.

It was through her in-laws' family that Betty discovered FMB. "My father-in-law suggested we visit Florida so he got a map, closed his eyes, spun his finger around and it landed on Fort Myers Beach! We first came in 1952, with Grandpa Bob buying a small parcel of land. Every year he bought another parcel until he had enough land for a cottage court that today is the Pink Shell Resort!"

Like generations of people, Betty and her family flew to Southwest Florida, but not many in the 1960s did so as

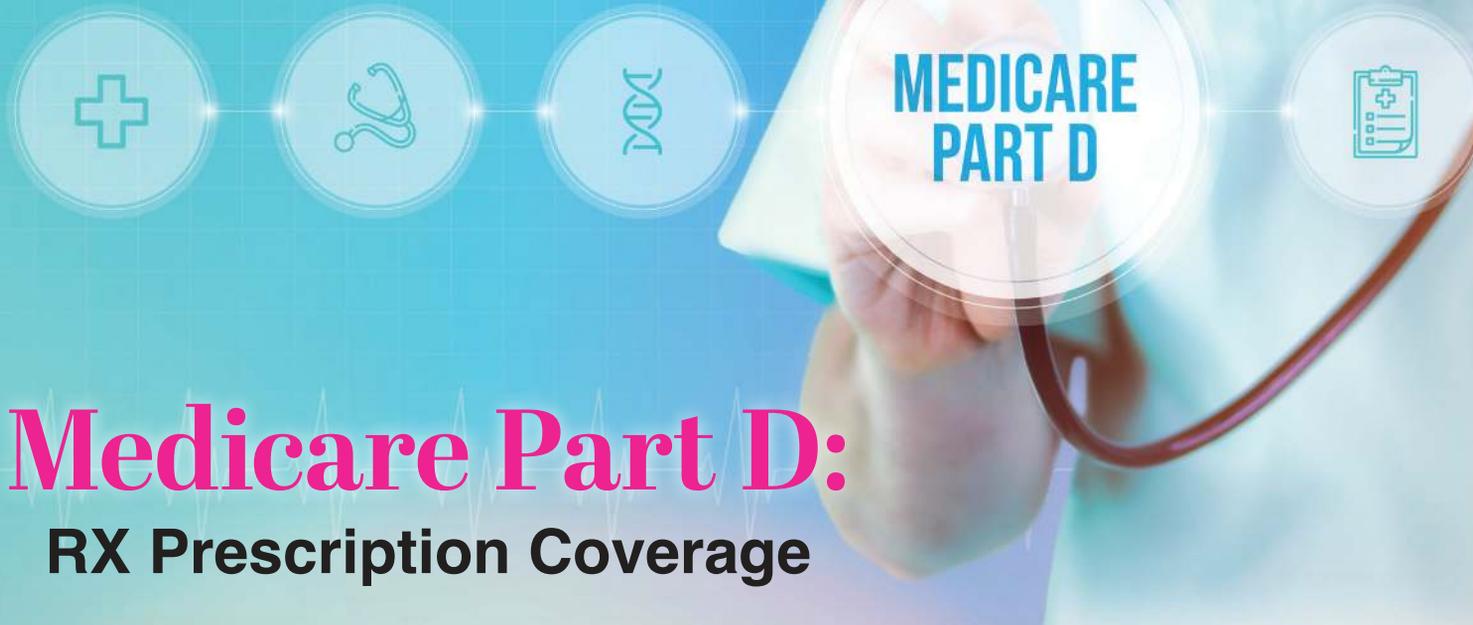
a female pilot in her own airplane! "I earned my Commercial, Flight Instructor, Multi-Engine and Instrument ratings. I flew Mercy Flights, taking ill children to places like Denver Children's Hospital and the Mayo Clinic. After moving here, I flew charters for Gulf Airways from Page Field. I was also a military flight instructor, out of Ellsworth Air Force Base where I was the only female pilot. This was a strategic Air Force Command Base for gigantic B-52s and KC-135s flown by all-male crews; on weekends the pilots wanted to take out small single-engine aircrafts to fly their family and friends and needed to qualify, so I had to check them out for approval. That was a big deal to me."

Betty relocated fulltime to FMB in 1966 and discovered her next passion – real estate. "I have been a Realtor for well over 50 years, including being the three-time President of the Board of Realtors. My crowning moment was receiving the Board of Realtors Lifetime Achievement Award."

One of Betty's true passions was the Bay Oaks Recreational Center Advisory Board (BORCAB). "I have been a BORCAB member since it began 37 years ago." Betty proudly helped preserve two FMB treasures – the Mound House and Matanzas Pass Preserve. "I was one of the first Mound House docents and today the Mound House is on the National Register of Historic Places, so sometimes dreams really do come true. Equally near-&-dear to me is the Matanzas Pass Preserve, as there will never again be 60 acres of pristine natural beauty on FMB. There are five Preserve nature trails, with one named for me."

Betty was the Chair of the "Friends of the FMB Public Library"; member and Chair of the Cultural & Environmental Learning Center Advisory Board; member and past Chair of the FMB Pilot Club that is now the FMB Community Foundation; a Board member for Friends of Matanzas Pass Preserve, the Estero Island Historical Society, the Mound House, and was an original "Cupcake Lady" who distributed cupcakes on New Year's Eve to celebrate the Town's birthday. She was on the Town of FMB Incorporation Transition Team, the Local Planning Agency, was an FMB Fire Commissioner, and FMB Chamber of Commerce Past President, among many other roles. "Give me an opportunity," Betty underscored, "and I will do it! You cannot beat FMB and Fort Myers Beach citizens are the best!"

FMB LIVING expresses its deepest condolences to Betty's three children as well as to her voluminous family and friends. We shall surely never see her like again. ■



Medicare Part D: RX Prescription Coverage

- by Judi Wood -

OPEN ENROLLMENT IS THROUGH DECEMBER 7:
During this time you can change or add an RX card if you are covered by a traditional Medicare Supplement Plan.

In 2025, the Part D “donut hole,” or coverage gap, **closed**. **Many generic RX are not subject to your deductible.** Once you meet your deductible (if it applies) and the \$2,000 out of pocket limit, **you pay nothing for covered Part D drugs for the rest of the year.** Many are confused about this; if you don't understand, contact your agent. I strongly recommend discussing this with your pharmacist. Also ask your pharmacist if **GOOD RX** is less expensive than using your Part D RX card. In most cases you do not need a **GOOD RX** card.

Here is some helpful information regarding Medicare Part D

Medicare Part D, the RX benefits, are plans you can purchase through private insurance companies; for example, **WellCare, Aetna (Silver Script)** and more. This does not apply to Medicare C that are Advantage plans.

The Benefits are Covered in Stages; RX are categorized in Tiers

Stage 1:
Yearly Deductible (see below for changes in 2026)
You start at this payment stage each calendar year. In this stage, you pay the full cost of many of your drugs. You generally stay in this stage until you have paid the amount of your deductible (\$590) Note: *deductible does not apply to covered insulin products and most Adult Part D*

vaccines, including shingles, tetanus and travel vaccines and many generic RX.

Stage 2:

Initial Coverage (see below for changes in 2026)

In this stage, the plan pays its share of the cost of your drugs, and you pay your share of the cost. **You generally stay in this stage until your year-to-date Out-of-Pocket costs reach \$2,000.**

Stage 3:

Catastrophic Coverage

In this stage you pay nothing for your covered Part D drugs. **You generally stay in this stage for the rest of the calendar year.** ■

MEDICARE QUESTIONS?

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Group Insurance ♦ Employees Benefits
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Medicare Supplements



MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT
10/15 - 12-7

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www.judiwoodsinsurance.com

Visit my **BLOG** for updated info for 2026

continued from page 4

Pro sculptors from 6 nations and 10 states, creating stunning art using only sand, water and a light mist of glue. This is the premier United States title for sand sculptors, making it a must-see event.

Want to try sculpting yourself? Sign up for the “Amateur Contest” at www.fmb sandsculpting.com and bring your pale and shovel!

The Championship also includes a “Vendor’s Village” with arts, crafts, clothing, jewelry, pottery and more from over 60 vendors for your browsing and shopping pleasure. There is a kids play area, live sculpting demonstrations, “Quick Sand” competitions, music, food and drinks from the DiamondHead Beach Resort and more. Local commercial parking lots are partnering with non-profits to share the proceeds. Join us from November 20 through 24 and watch the sand come to life at the annual “American Sand Sculpting Championship!”

Christmas Boat Parade & New “Roxie”

As soon as we put “The American Sand Sculpting Championship” and the Thanksgiving Holiday Weekend in our collective rearview mirrors, it is time to officially kick off the FMB Holiday Season and the best way to do that is with the annual “Christmas Boat Parade” on Saturday evening, December 6!

The “Christmas Boat Parade” is a fun, feel-good evening, perfect for families, friends, neighbors and guests to welcome in the spirit of the Holidays in FMB style. You will love the glimmering and shimmering holiday boat lights as they glide by on the water. This family-friendly event lights up the Back Bay, led by Santa Claus and friends on the FMB Chamber’s lead boat. Vote for the best decorated boats in the small, medium and large categories, as well as awards like the “Most Spirited Crew.” The best views can be had from the many restaurants, bars, parks and the Matanzas

Pass Bridge along the parade route. The parade makes two loops through the Back Bay so please be considerate and rotate your viewing spot after the first loop. Boat registration and route information is at www.fortmyersbeach.org.

We’re also saying goodbye to an old friend and hello to a new one! By early December, our longtime satellite office, “The Roxie,” will be retired and replaced by a larger, air-conditioned, self-contained “Roxie 2.” Huge thanks to Beth and Brian Bright for generously loaning us the airstream “Roxie.” Stay tuned for more information on our own “Roxie 2” ribbon cutting as we welcome her to FMB! Stop by and check out “Roxie 2,” as she’ll still be located at 1028 Estero Boulevard and remember to ask for all your FMB coupons and information.

Take a Breath & Be Kind

In the spirit of the season, remember to pause and show kindness. Rebuilding our island can be stressful, but we’re all in this together. Before sending that sharp text or email, ask yourself if you would send it to Santa; if the answer is no, don’t send it to anyone else. Let’s work together to carry the Christmas Spirit all year long as we continue to rebuild our island home.

The FMB Chamber Office is open Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., on the 3rd floor of 100 Lovers Lane. Our satellite office, The Roxie in Times Square, next to the Trolley Stop, is open seven days a week, weather permitting, from 10 a.m. to sunset. Interested in volunteering at The Roxie? Contact us at info@fmbchamber.com or call 239-454-7500. On behalf of our 400-plus FMB Chamber members, remember:

Island Life; It’s *Our* Business! ■

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



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Coupon

Expires November 30, 2025

Not valid on Weber, Traeger or Big Green Egg Grills.
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Coupon

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Contact Info

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- 📍 450 Harbor Court
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