

# FORT MYERS BEACH



## THE WHALE

YOUR LOCAL WATERING HOLE

*Dawn & Mike Miller*

A "Whale" of A Life!

# **PAIN** Keeping you from doing the things you enjoy?



Gardner Orthopedics focuses on providing patients with all medical options in a caring office environment, offering regenerative medicine, imaging services, physical medicine, rehabilitation, and orthopedic surgical services.

## ***So you can get back to doing the things you love!***

### **Ronald Gardner, MDI ABOS**

Specializing in Orthopedic Surgeries and Sports Medicine

### **Brad Castellano, DPM ABFAS**

Specializing in Foot and Ankle Trauma Sports Medicine and Reconstruction

### **Andrew Hodge, MD ABOS**

Specializing in Knee and Hip Surgery

### **Aileen Padilla, DO**

Specializing in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation

### **Robert Martinez, MD ABOS**

Specializing in Shoulder, Hip, and Knee Arthroscopy; Joint Replacement, and Sports Medicine

**[www.gardnerorthopedics.com](http://www.gardnerorthopedics.com)**  
**Prompt appointments available for urgent care.**

**239-277-7070**

3033 Winkler Ave., Suite 100  
Ft. Myers, FL 33916

## **Restorative & Anti-Aging Clinic**

### **Are you struggling with the middle age blues?**

Do you feel you are just not yourself or not meeting the expected potential of the "younger" you? Are you feeling run down, low energy, or experiencing muscle loss? Are you starting to see fine wrinkles or loss of skin elasticity?

- Thyroid / Hormone Testing & Management
- Bio-Identical Hormone Replacement
- Food Sensitivity & Micro-Nutrient Testing
- B-12 Injection Packages
- I.V. Vitamin & Chelation Infusions
- OBAGI Skincare Products • Blue Peel Packages
- Botox • Xeomin • Belotero • Radiesse • Volbella
- Voluma • Juvederm • Kybella

***Give us a call today to discuss how we can help you be the best you!***

*Sherry Valverde, APRN-C*

## **NOW OFFERING!**

### The *Myers' Cocktail* IV Nutrition Therapy

Invented by physician John Myers, as an intravenous nutrient mixture which combines Magnesium, Calcium, B12, B-Complex, Vitamin C and Electrolytes to address a wide range of clinical conditions. Treatment for conditions including but not limited to: inflammation, acute sinusitis, muscle spasm, fatigue, stress and upper respiratory infections to chronic conditions like migraines and allergies. Studies show it can aid in detoxification, increases energy levels and even help cure the side effects of a hangover.

***Schedule your drip today!***

## **MORE OPTIONS, LESS RISK — Gardner Orthopedics**

# FORT MYERS BEACH

A Best Version Media Magazine  
An independently owned community magazine.

PUBLISHER..... **Sandy Sandness**  
239-222-0129 • [ssandness@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:ssandness@bestversionmedia.com)

CONTENT COORDINATOR ..... **Gary Mooney**  
239-898-7905 • [gmooney@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:gmooney@bestversionmedia.com)

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER ..... **Sandy Sandness**

DESIGNER..... **Joe Kelly**

**For Sponsorship Information**

CONTACT | **Sandy Sandness**  
Email | [ssandness@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:ssandness@bestversionmedia.com)  
Phone | **239-222-0129**

**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](mailto: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.

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:**

- 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

Any content, resident submissions, guest columns, advertisements and advertorials are not necessarily endorsed by or represent the views of Best Version Media (BVM) or any municipality, homeowners associations, businesses or organizations that this publication serves. BVM is not responsible for the reliability, suitability or timeliness of any content submitted, inclusive of materials generated or composed through artificial intelligence (AI). All content submitted is done so at the sole discretion of the submitting party. © 2026 Best Version Media. All rights reserved.



HAPPY  
*New Year*

- By Gary Mooney -

**SUDOKU RULES:**

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

**SUDOKU**

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

Answers on page 10



*We've weathered the storms with you.  
We will be building back on the beach soon.  
Until then, we are here to service you from our  
Gladiolous office below*



**Wendy Matura**  
[wendy@trustrti.com](mailto:wendy@trustrti.com)  
D (239)314-1307  
O (239)463-5200



**SERVING FORT MYERS BEACH FROM THE SAME  
LOCATION ON ESTERO BLVD SINCE 1997!**

**HOME • FLOOD • AUTO • CONDO • BOAT**

**9681 Gladiolus Drive Suite 111, Fort Myers, FL 33908 • [www.trustrti.com](http://www.trustrti.com)**

# Hello Friends & Neighbors!

## HAPPY NEW YEAR!

January 1, 2026 brings a special significance to Fort Myers Beach, as we continue our island-wide rebirth. Sometimes it seems like Hurricane Ian on September 28, 2022 was a million years ago and at other times, it seems almost like yesterday. Our island home's recovery is steadily making progress, with seemingly another business reopening and another neighborhood house completing its renovations every few days.

One of our highest-profile reopenings is the FMB legend, "The Whale!" I will go out on a limb here and say that prior to Ian, "The Whale," or "The Beached Whale" as many of us still recall it, was among the six most-visited bars and restaurants on FMB, where scores of us made lifelong and lasting memories.

This month's cover feature is on Dawn and Mike Miller, who purchased "The Whale" just three months before Ian. In their feature, Dawn and Mike explain why they decided to rebuild, and which one of us did not have a similar conversation when we balanced our own personal devastation with the long road of rebuilding. As Mike first said when he saw what was left of "The Whale" in Ian's aftermath: "We are done." But Dawn saw the exact same destruction and she immediately said, "We will rebuild" and they did! "I love this island and I love 'The Whale,' so to me there was no other option," concluded Dawn, again speaking for many of us who eventually reached that same conclusion in our own lives.

The start of a New Year is a generally a time to make a New Year's resolution so let me make one for the entire FMB community – I resolve that 2026 will be just as Hurricane-Free as 2025!

Another article in this edition previews the first major social event of every FMB New Year: the "Putt-&Pub Crawl" on Saturday, January 17, that occurs at twelve participating FMB bars and restaurants. While the "Putt-&Pub Crawl" will certainly be a sell-out by the time you read this, join the party anyhow! Wear your own colorful costume, visit as many of the bars and restaurants as you can, and know that every dollar you spend on the drink specials and raffle tickets for the outrageously fantastic gift baskets goes directly to each partnering FMB "Putt-&Pub Crawl" Non-Profit. Even as a member of the gallery, you will soon discover why the annual "Putt-&Pub Crawl" is a beloved island tradition.

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 do visit, please let them know that you saw their ad in our magazine so we can continue to provide you with this community-oriented original entertainment each month.

Happy New Year & Have An Awesome Beach Day!



*Sandy Sandness*

**Publisher**

*Fort Myers Beach LIVING*

239-222-0129

ssandness@bestversionmedia.com

HAPPY  
NEW YEAR



# 14th Annual Putt & Pub Crawl

## Fundraising Tradition Tees Off on January 17

- by Gary Mooney, photos provided by Dawn Thomas & The FMB Woman's Club -

The 14th Annual "Putt & Pub Crawl" is Saturday, January 17. Hosted by the FMB Woman's Club, the "Putt & Pub Crawl" kicks off the island's 2026 social season and is one of FMB's most popular charity events!

"We are excited to announce a new format for the 2026 'Putt & Pub Crawl,'" enthuses Dawn Thomas, the "Putt & Pub Crawl" Chair. "Previously, we had a Putt-Putt hole at nine FMB bars and restaurants and each foursome made up their own 'course,' playing each hole whenever they chose. This year, however, we are increasing the number of bars and restaurants from nine to twelve, so more island businesses can take part, as well as expanding the number of local Non-Profits."

With more venues, the FMB Woman's Club can no longer allow participants to select their own order in playing the holes. "We organized three 9-hole courses," Dawn explains. "These dictate which FMB bars and restaurants your foursome will play. We implemented this new layout for three reasons: to prevent a backlog at any particular establishment; to ensure that each participating bar and restaurant has roughly the same number of patrons; and to increase the number of participating FMB bars, restaurants and Non-Profits."


For 2026, the following FMB bars and restaurants will partner with the corresponding Non-Profits: Beach Bar with The Beach Kids Foundation; La Ola Surfside Restaurant with The Friends of the Mound House; Margaritaville Beach Resort with The Friends of The FMB Public Library; Mr. Waves for the Sanibel School Seahorse Choral; Nervous Nellie's Crazy Waterfront Eatery and the FMB Art Association; Petey's Upper Deck with the FMB Chamber of Commerce; Smokin' Oyster Brewery and FMB Strong; Snug Harbor Waterfront Restaurant and the FMB Community Foundation; The Whale and The Friends of Lovers Key State Park; Tiki Bar at The Lighthouse for the FMB Lions Club; Wahoo Willie's Tiki Bar & Grill and the FMB PTO; and Yucatan Beach Stand with the

Women of Irish Heritage SWFL; as well as the FMB Woman's Club as the overriding sponsor.


### Three Beloved Traditions

While the twelve holes and three course formats are new, Dawn explains that three beloved "Putt & Pub Crawl" tradition return. "It would not be a 'Putt & Pub Crawl' without the unique gift baskets that each Non-Profits assembles. Pre-

*continued on page 14*



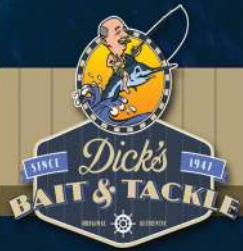
## DIVERSIFIED YACHT SERVICES, INC.



751 Fishermans Wharf • Ft. Myers Beach  
239.765.8700 • DYSinc.com

**SERVICES INCLUDE:**

- Outboard Service Center
- Factory Trained Technicians
- Services, repowers, diagnostics, electronics installation
- Accessory installation i.e. power pole and trolling motor
- All major OEM parts for gas and diesel engines



**VISIT DICK'S FOR ALL YOUR SHIPBOARD GOODS:**

- FUEL
- BAIT & TACKLE
- BOATING ACCESSORIES
- REFRESHMENTS
- APPAREL & MORE

703 FISHERMANS WHARF • FT. MYERS BEACH 33931



## A “Whale” of A Life!

### *Dawn & Mike Miller Love the FMB Vibe*

- By Gary Mooney -

Mike and Dawn Miller are Buckeyes from near Columbus, with she being born in Hilliard and he in Dublin, and when they eventually met, it was love at first sight! “My sister was dating Mike’s brother,” recalls Dawn, “and he kept saying, ‘you must meet my brother!’ However, neither of us wanted the ‘Blind Date’ route.” Mike discovered that Dawn had a favorite Country bar hangout so he came over one evening and it was love at first sight for both. “We have basically been together ever since,” chuckles Dawn. They met in 1993 and married on April 25, 1998, “so 27 terrific years and counting,” says Mike.

The Millers are parents to Hailey, who lives in Orlando with Jasen, her significant other, while Hanna resides in Syracuse, Utah, with fiancé Tyler. Other important family members are their two beloved Papillons, Twiggy and Mickey!

#### **My Two Favorite Places**

It was love at first sight for FMB as well. “My parents owned an FMB condo since the late 1970s so I basically loved the island my entire

life,” recalls Dawn. “For my 25th birthday, I told Mike I want to take him to my two favorite places – FMB and Disney World – and he immediately fell in love with both. Eventually we had the kids, so as they were growing up, we rented at several places, like the Holiday Inn, GullWing Beach Resort, and the Pink Shell Beach Resort. By the time our youngest was a high school senior, we knew we could soon move so we began looking for a house.”

Dawn arranged to see a south end home, on Bahia Via, but for Mike, it was a non-starter: “It was way out of our price range, so for me it wasn’t even a consideration. Then we pulled in the driveway and I immediately fell in love, thinking, ‘heck, we must own this one!’” They began as Snow Birds, before eventually becoming full-time residents during the Pandemic.

Their home is on the Back Bay “so we get a stunning sunrise every morning,” explains Mike. “At our restaurant, ‘The Whale,’ we have a high-end camera that streams beach sunsets and we added one from our home so you can view FMB sunrises and sunsets daily. Our home was built to survive a Category 5 hurricane and it did, despite 7-1/2 feet of water during Ian. While our home was fine, we lost one car, three golf carts, three boats and four waverunners, but that was nothing compared to what happened to ‘The Whale.’”

#### **“The Island’s Favorite Watering Hole”**

Prior to becoming restauranteurs, Mike bought and sold copiers to third-world countries while Dawn worked for her Mother in a fastener company that distributed nuts and bolts. “We decided to diversify so we began to acquire real estate, primarily for commercial purposes and the large trucking industry,” Mike explains. “When we moved to FMB, we wanted to continue to diversify so we purchased FMB real estate. We learned ‘The Whale’ was for sale and thought the price reasonable for an established bar and restaurant with a liquor license and dedicated clientele, so we bought it. Three months later came Ian.”

Mike rode out Ian in their home. The next morning, he made his way down to where “The Whale” used to be! “My first thought was, ‘we are done.’ But when Dawn came, she immediately said we would rebuild. I replied, ‘do you know how much time and money and effort that will take,’ and she answered, ‘I don’t care; we will rebuild’ and we did!” “I love this island and I love ‘The Whale,’ so to me there was no other option,” emphasizes Dawn.

The new “Whale” is ready for the next major hurricane. “It is a fortress,” raves Mike! “We pounded 103 pilings 45 feet into the ground.” “The Whale” is an artistic



Two important family members to Mike and Dawn are their beloved Papillons, Twigg and Mickey.



The Millers are parents to Hailey, who lives in Orlando with Jasen, her significant other, while Hanna resides in Syracuse, Utah, with fiancé Tyler.

showpiece as well. “We had local artists hand-paint all the stairwells and bathrooms, and the top-level floor around the tiki bar looks spectacular,” beams Dawn. “We didn’t want ‘The Whale’ to be just an ordinary bar, but the island’s favorite ‘watering hole!’ Come in for a sandwich and a drink, then stay awhile, as we have a fantastic team.” Mike points out that the 2-seat bar golf cart out front is already a selfie-magnet and Dawn cannot wait for the 10-foot whale statue to arrive this Spring. “We are doing our best to make FMB a ‘must-see’ tourism destination again,” summarizes Mike.

### “What’sUpFMB” Business Alliance

In July 2025, Dawn started the “What’sUpFMB Business Alliance.” “Several island businesses collaborated with Jacki Liszak and the FMB Chamber of Commerce to bring tourism back to FMB, especially during the off-season, so we formed a 501c3 organization,” says Dawn. “Our first event was ‘Mullet Madness’ this past Summer and that was a huge success. Membership for a small fee is open to any FMB business, Non-Profit, residents and island supporters. We will have a ‘South End Zen’ with beach yoga and meditation in January 2026, a ‘Gilligan’s Island Treasure Hunt’ in April and a ‘Charmed Crawl’ from May through July. Go to [www.What’sUp-FMB.com](http://www.What’sUp-FMB.com) and see everything we offer.”

Giving back to FMB is important to them. Dawn is an Advisory Board member of The Friends of Lovers Key State Park and serves on its Gala Committee. “Of course, we contribute to all island Foundations and fundraisers,” she adds. “I love our friends and neighbors and feel proud when we make somebody’s life better and they appreciate it; that warms my heart.” “After Ian, we had a simple choice: leave or stay,” recounts Mike. “Either dig in or move on, but we love this Town so we dug in.”

### FMB’s Future is Strong!

The Millers gaze into their crystal balls to imagine FMB in five years. “Much of the community will be rebuilt,” Mike theorizes. “We must continue rebuilding to bring visitors back. We need more attractions, so rebuilding the FMB Pier is huge. We need Downtown to continue its comeback and I hope Times Square

will be fully back. We need more hotels and more businesses, so hopefully our rebuilding ‘The Whale’ is just the start. Big or small, rebuilding must continue. I know many people hate having so many contractors on the island but the faster construction starts, the sooner it will end.”

“Pounding pilings is music to our ears,” echoes Dawn. “Some people hate it but we embrace it! I predict that most of the returning businesses will be rebuilt and thriving again, with new businesses filling in the blank spaces, with a thriving Downtown and Times Square. Hopefully, reopening ‘The Whale’ brings us one step closer to that day.”

As for what they most love about FMB, “the vibe,” expresses Dawn! “I love the people and I love the community. You cannot replicate FMB anywhere else.” “I appreciate how most people look forward, while memorializing our past,” concludes Mike. “Most of us wish we could go back to the FMB from before Ian but you can’t look back. Today, when we see people returning to ‘The Whale,’ whether they are longtime residents, newcomers or visitors, I know FMB’s future is strong!” ■



“After Ian, we had a simple choice: leave or stay,” recounts Mike. “Either dig in or move on, but we love this Town so we dug in.”



# Caregiving 202

- By Judi Woods -

**Former First Lady Rosalynn Carter was a passionate champion of mental health, caregiving, and women's rights. She reminded us of these facts: "There are only four kinds of people in the world...those who have been caregivers... those who are currently caregivers...those who will be caregivers, and those who will need caregivers."**

As America's population ages, our nation faces an unprecedented shift: by 2029, the last of the Baby Boomers will turn 65, marking a wave of **older adults who often prefer to age in place — 70% of whom can expect to need some form of long-term caregiving.**

Many of these individuals may rely on family members or close friends — **informal caregivers** — to support them through the evolving challenges associated with aging, from physical limitations to cognitive decline. These caregivers offer a compassionate, personal touch but frequently struggle with stress, competing priorities and a lack of access to adequate resources or training.

Caring for individuals with long-term and chronic illnesses can extend across many years, often resulting in significant emotional and financial implications. And by 2030, individuals age 65 and older will make up approximately 20% of the U.S. population. There is a major demographic shift in which age-related health issues are increasingly prevalent. Notably for instance, the number of Americans living with Alzheimer's disease is expected to nearly double by 2060. This alone placing greater demand on caregivers and health care systems alike.

**The financial costs of long-term care are substantial.**

In 2024, the average annual cost for in-home care exceeded \$70,000, with a private room in a nursing home averaging around \$105,000 per year -- WOW! For loved ones providing unpaid care, substantial out-of-pocket costs are compounded by the personal sacrifices required to balance caregiving with other responsibilities.

As **chronic conditions like dementia** continue to rise, the role of informal caregivers becomes even more critical. Equipping these caregivers with the tools and resources they need to navigate this complex landscape is essential -- not only for

## MEDICARE QUESTIONS?

Life ♦ Health ♦ Disability  
Group Insurance ♦ Employees Benefits  
Pension Plans ♦ Annuities  
Medicare Supplements



**MEDICARE OPEN ENROLLMENT**  
10/15 - 12-7

**Judi L. Woods Agency**

**(239)281-7378**

**www.judiwoodsinsurance.com**

Visit my *BLOG* for updated info for 2026

the well-being of those they care for, but for maintaining a sustainable health care system that can support our aging population

### It's a family affair

According to our 2024 Long-Term Care Consumer Study, 53% of Americans expect to receive long-term care at home if they unexpectedly become ill, with many anticipating that a partner or family member will take care of them. In line with this finding, when the need for long-term care does arise, caregivers are often selected because of their close relationship with the care recipient. These familiar caregivers can offer emotional comfort, tailored support and a deep understanding of the care recipient's needs, providing a sense of security during vulnerable times.

### Convenience plays a role

Sometimes, informal caregivers are selected due to practical considerations, such as living near the care recipient (39%), having a flexible schedule (37%) or volunteering for the role (35%). Given the substantial demands of informal caregiving, full-time caregivers are less likely to be chosen simply because they live in close proximity to the care recipient (26%).

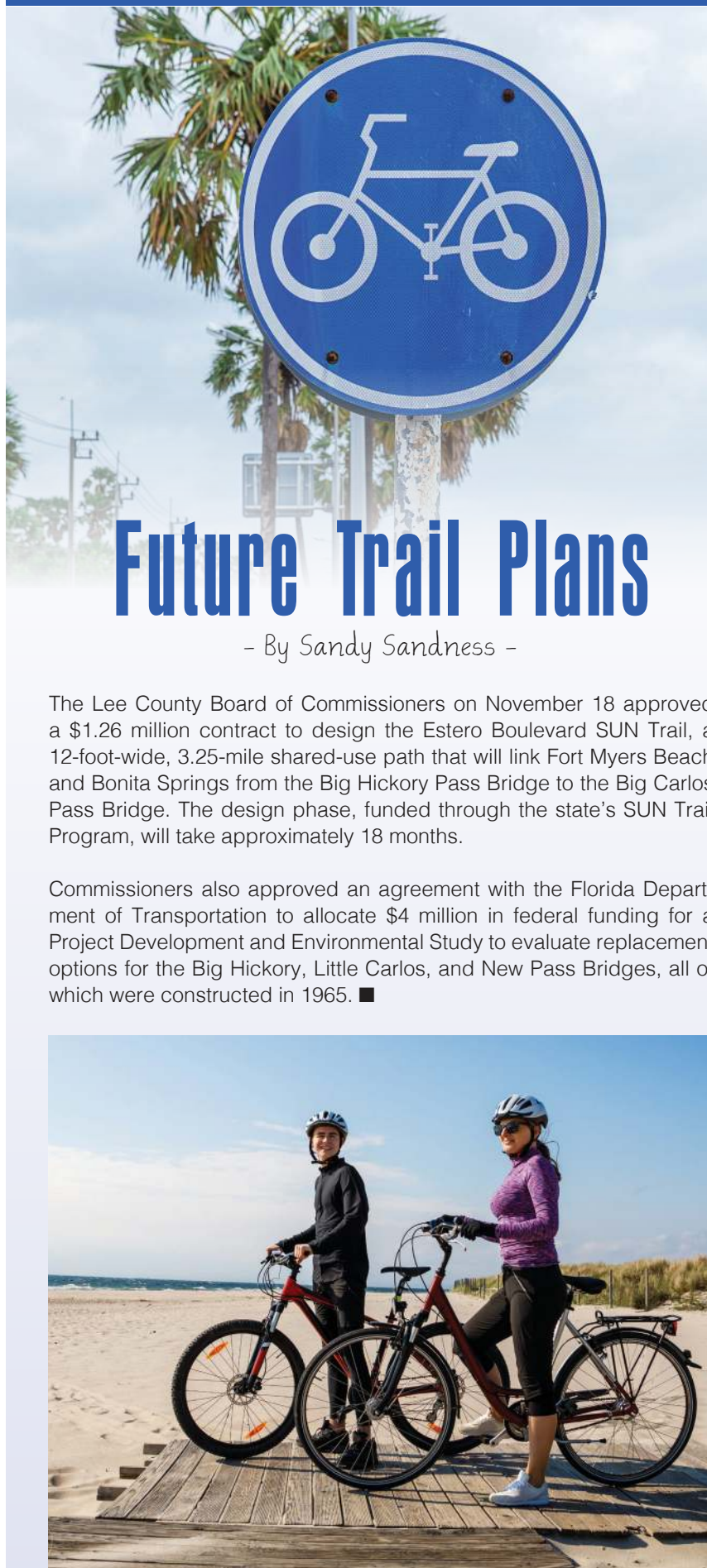
### Conclusion

As Americans age and the need for long-term care grows, the role of informal caregivers has never been more crucial. These caregivers are the backbone of long-term care, offering a personal and often unpaid service that helps maintain a sense of normalcy for aging loved ones. However, their dedication comes at a significant emotional and financial cost; many have lost their hope and dreams as well.

Being an insurance professional, I see the difference in people having **Long Term Care Insurance** and those who depend on **Medicaid** for their care, I am sure many of you will agree. Please know that Medicare only pays for a short period for **Skilled Nursing Care**. Most long-term care needs (called **tasks of daily living**, like eating, dressing and bathing, to name just a few) are defined as **Custodial Care** and are **NOT** covered by Medicare. This brings up the need for a discussion on Long Term Care Insurance. Ask me, as I can explain your options.

**Go to Wellbeings.org a documentary on Caregiving** ■

Fort Myers Beach LIVING



The Lee County Board of Commissioners on November 18 approved a \$1.26 million contract to design the Estero Boulevard SUN Trail, a 12-foot-wide, 3.25-mile shared-use path that will link Fort Myers Beach and Bonita Springs from the Big Hickory Pass Bridge to the Big Carlos Pass Bridge. The design phase, funded through the state's SUN Trail Program, will take approximately 18 months.

Commissioners also approved an agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation to allocate \$4 million in federal funding for a Project Development and Environmental Study to evaluate replacement options for the Big Hickory, Little Carlos, and New Pass Bridges, all of which were constructed in 1965. ■

# January

**EVERY DAY**

**LeeTran FREE Hop-On, Hop-Off Tram**

Looking for a way to ditch that car as you traverse FMB in Season? Then hop aboard the FREE LeeTran Tram that runs daily from the FMB Public Library to Bowditch Point Park through April 2026. The Tram runs approximately every 35 minutes, from 8:20 a.m. to 10:55 p.m. For details, see [www.LeeTran.com](http://www.LeeTran.com).

**Monday Through Friday**

**Bay Oaks Recreational Center**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
The Bay Oaks Recreational Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. FMB residents \$7 with all others \$10 and memberships available. For information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://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 through 6 p.m. \$125 for FMB residents & \$175 for non-residents per semester! For information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Thursday, January 1**

**HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

FMB bars and restaurants are open up-and-down the island to continue your merriment! Town Hall closed December 31 & January 1.

**Friday & Saturday, January 2 & 3  
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](http://www.41markets.com).

**Friday, January 2**

**FMB Art Association**

**Fall 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; Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. See [www.fortmyersbeachart.com](http://www.fortmyersbeachart.com).

**Friday, January 2**

**FMB Art Association Winter**

**Juried Show: "Outside the Lines"**

@Cape Coral Art Center  
"Outside the Lines" is the FMBAA's "Winter Judged & Juried Show" at a special location: Cape Coral Art Center at 4533 Coronado Parkway. "Outside the Lines" remains on display through January 29; Monday through Saturday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. See [www.fortmyersbeachart.com](http://www.fortmyersbeachart.com).

**Tuesday, January 2**

**FMB Art Association January Show: "Cool to be Square!"**

@FMBAA Gallery  
Kick off 2026 with the FMBAA's January show, "Cool to be Square!" This exhibit runs through Friday, January 30, 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 Monday through Wednesday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. & Thursday through Saturday Noon to 6 p.m. See [www.fortmyersbeachart.com](http://www.fortmyersbeachart.com).

**Friday, January 2  
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.! For Friday evening concert information, see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Sunday, January 4  
AND EVERY SUNDAY**

**Bayside Park Concert Series**

@Bayside Veterans Park  
Relax while listening to fantastic tunes from local musicians at these FREE weekly outdoor concerts from 4 to 7 p.m.! For Sunday evening concert information, see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Sunday, January 4  
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](http://www.lighthouseislandresort.com).

**Monday, January 5  
& EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY**

**Spin with Sue Anderson**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Increase your cardio, burn fat, gain leg strength, build muscular endurance & more with Sue EVERY

Monday & Thursday at 8 a.m. No reservations necessary; for class prices and more information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Monday, January 5  
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](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Monday, September 5  
& EVERY MONDAY & THURSDAY**

**Senior Spin with Sue Anderson**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Define all muscles in this 60-minute class set to increase your metabolism, boost your energy and make you feel great! "Senior Spin" is EVERY Monday & Thursday at 9:15 a.m. No reservations necessary; for class prices and more information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Mondays, January 5 & 19  
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](http://www.myparrotkey.com).

**Tuesday, January 6  
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](http://www.41markets.com).

**Wednesday, January 7  
& EVERY WEDNESDAY**

**Gentle Resistance Yoga with Annie Neaf**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Join Annie for gentle resistance yoga EVERY Wednesday at 9 a.m. No reservations necessary; for class prices and more information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Wednesday, January 7  
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](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Wednesday, January 7  
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](http://www.41markets.com).

SUDOKU

Answers from page 3

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

**Wednesday, January 7  
& 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. Wednesday through Saturday from 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](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Wednesday, January 7  
& EVERY WEDNESDAY  
"Story Time"**

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

**Wednesday, January 7  
& EVERY WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY  
Zumba with Jian Tang Heinel**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Join Jian and experience the most fun you will ever have while exercising EVERY Wednesday & Friday at 10:15 a.m. No reservations necessary; for class prices and more information, see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Wednesday, January 7  
FMB Woman's Club Monthly Meeting**

@The Whale  
Join the best club on the entire island! Dawn Thomas discusses the Capital Campaign to replace the beloved FMB Woman's Club Clubhouse destroyed by Hurricane Ian. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m.; see [www.fmb-wc.org](http://www.fmb-wc.org).

**Thursday, January 8  
FMB Chamber Membership Luncheon**

@TBA  
Join your FMB Chamber friends to savor a scrumptious luncheon, then listen to a presentation from Danny Rosenfeld with Epilepsy Services of SWFL. Extreme Companies of Florida sponsors the January Membership Luncheon from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. \$32 members & \$42 prospective members; for the location see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Friday, January 9  
& EVERY FRIDAY  
Iyengar Yoga with Susan Carter**

@Bay Oaks Recreational Center  
Focus on creating space and alignment in the body and the careful sequencing of poses EVERY Friday with Susan at 9 a.m. No reservations necessary; for class prices and more information see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Friday, January 9  
Welcome & Discovery Center**

@Lovers Key State Park  
The Welcome & Discovery Center educates and informs visitors about Lovers Key habitats through interactive displays

Wednesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The W&DC is FREE with the park entry fee; see [www.friendsofroverskey.org](http://www.friendsofroverskey.org).

**Saturday, January 10  
St. Raphael's Church "Shrimp Dinners"**

@St. Raphael's Comfort Hall  
St. Raphael's Legendary "Shrimp Dinners" return 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. Dine in or carryout; see [www.straphaelschurch.org](http://www.straphaelschurch.org) for times and pricing. St. Raphael's Comfort Hall is at 5601 Williams Drive; see [www.straphaelschurch.org](http://www.straphaelschurch.org).

**Monday, January 12  
& 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](mailto:reservations@crowclinic.org).

**Tuesday, January 13  
FMB Local Planning Agency Meeting**

@Town Hall  
The FMB LPA, appointed by 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](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Wednesday, January 14  
& 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-per person including MH admission with reservations necessary at [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Wednesday, January 14  
& 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 including Mound House admission; see [www.moundhouse.org](http://www.moundhouse.org).

**Thursday, January 15  
FMB Chamber "Business After Hours"**

@Lovers Key State Park  
Join your FMB Chamber friends for a fun time while enjoying savory appetizers and a cash bar from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Members FREE & \$15 for perspective members; see [www.fortmyersbeach.org](http://www.fortmyersbeach.org).

**Thursday, January 15  
FMB Community Foundation  
Social Get-Together**

@To Be Announced  
The FMB Community Foundation is the island's leading philanthropic organization, so join in on the fun at their Monthly Social from 5 to 7 p.m.; for the location, see [www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com](http://www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com).

**Thursday, January 15  
"Dolphin Safety & Interaction"**

@Lovers Key State Park  
Join Monica Lynn, FMB's "Fairy Pod Mother," as she discusses "Dolphin Safety & Interaction" at the Lovers Key State Park Speaker Series at 6 p.m. To register or for more information, contact Carmen at [carmen@friendsofroverskey.org](mailto:carmen@friendsofroverskey.org).

**Saturday, January 17  
Putt & Pub Crawl**

@Bayside Veterans Park  
The "Putt & Pub Crawl" is an FMB tradition! This putt-putt fundraiser from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. includes the Awards Ceremony and dinner at the Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB Sun Deck. Groups compete for 1st and 2nd Place, the Duffer's Award, the Best Dressed Team and Best Team Name, but its main goal is to raise money for 13 FMB Non-Profits! For information see [www.fmb-wc.org](http://www.fmb-wc.org).

**Tuesday, January 20  
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. Please note the change in day due to the MLK Holiday; see [www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov](http://www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov).

**Saturday, January 31  
"Jimmy Keyes Returns!"**

@St. Raphael's Comfort Hall  
Jimmy Keyes is a crowd favorite known for his high energy variety show featuring comedy, visual musical impressions, and Broadway tunes. For show time, cost and details, see [www.straphaelschurch.org](http://www.straphaelschurch.org). St. Raphael's Comfort Hall is at 5601 Williams Drive.

**Saturday, January 31  
Murder Mystery Dinner**

The Friends of the Mound House presents a murder mystery dinner "The Case of the Black Parrot Brigade" Miami 80's Style. Cocktail Hour 5pm, Dinner & Show 6pm. \$150 per person includes dinner & one cocktail. Diamond Head Resort, 2000 Estero Blvd. Help solve the crime and dress like it's the 1980's! Tickets available at [www.Eventbrite.com](http://www.Eventbrite.com)

# Get Your Pup Beach-Ready

- Submitted by Brittany O'Reilly -



Summer and the beach are a match made in heaven, and what could make it even better? Bringing your furry best friend along! A successful and enjoyable beach day with your dog requires a little preparation. From finding the right spot to packing the essentials, here's your guide to getting your canine companion beach-ready.

Websites for local parks and recreation departments, tourism boards, and even dedicated dog travel sites are excellent resources. Look for beaches that explicitly state they allow dogs, and note any specific rules, such as leash requirements, off-leash areas, or seasonal restrictions. Some beaches might have designated dog-friendly sections, which can be a great way for your pup to socialize safely.

Scouting out a dog-friendly beach is essential. Not all beaches welcome our four-legged friends, and ignoring these rules can lead to fines or being asked to leave.

Once you've found the perfect dog-friendly oasis, it's time to think about what to pack. Just like you need



**ENJOY FOOD & DRINK**  
Full Menu Available

at our Patio or Swing Bar  
Open Daily 11am • LIVE MUSIC 2-5pm



**239.333.4386**  
YucatanBeachStand.com  
250 Old San Carlos Blvd, FMB





sunscreen and a towel, your dog has their own set of beach day essentials. A long leash (preferably waterproof) is crucial for keeping your dog secure while still allowing them some freedom to explore. Don't forget waste bags – always clean up after your pet to keep the beach clean for everyone.

Hydration is key, especially on a hot summer day. Pack plenty of fresh water for your dog and a portable water bowl. Even if your dog enjoys lapping up seawater, it can lead to dehydration and an upset stomach. Consider bringing a cooler to keep the water (and any dog-friendly treats you pack) nice and chilled.

Sun protection isn't just for humans. Dogs with short or light-colored fur are susceptible to sunburn, particularly on their ears, nose, and belly. Look for pet-safe sunscreen and apply it liberally before heading out. A dog-friendly life vest is also a wise investment, especially if your dog isn't a strong swimmer or if you plan on venturing near deeper water.

Finally, pack a comfortable towel specifically for your dog to dry them off after a swim and a few favorite toys to keep them entertained. A first-aid kit designed for pets is also a good idea for minor scrapes or injuries.

There are other ways to prepare your dog for a beach adventure. If your pet isn't used to crowded or noisy environments, gradually introduce them to similar settings before hitting the beach. Basic obedience commands like "stay" and "come" are essential for ensuring their safety and the enjoyment of others.

Consider your dog's temperament and energy levels. A very young puppy or a senior dog might not be up for a long, active day in the sun. Choose a time of day when the sun isn't at its peak to avoid overheating. Be mindful of the sand temperature, as hot sand can burn your dog's paw pads. If it feels too hot for your bare feet, it's too hot for theirs.

A trip to the beach with your dog can be an incredibly rewarding experience for both of you. By taking the time to scout out a dog-friendly location, packing the right essentials, and preparing your furry friend for the environment, you can ensure a safe, fun, and memorable summer day by the sea. ■

**TUNASKIN**

1300 ESTERO BLVD | FORT MYERS BEACH  
OPEN DAILY 9:30AM - 7PM  
SHOP LOCAL OR ONLINE AT [TUNASKIN.CO](https://www.tunaskin.co)

LIVE  
A  
CRAZY  
GOOD  
DAY



*"The team costumes are proof that 'Putt & Pub Crawl' golfers let their imaginations run wild."*

*continued from page 5*

view these marvelous gift baskets when you register, then you can view them again at the Putt-Putt holes. Purchase raffle tickets at the registration table or at each hole location for \$5 or 5 tickets for \$20. Spectators can buy raffle tickets as well, with the FMB Woman's Club drawing the winning tickets at the Awards ceremony. The best part is that each Non-Profit keeps every dollar from their gift basket ticket sales."

Another favorite aspect of the event are the distinctive team names and colorful costumes. "We encourage all foursomes to come up with an imaginative team name, as well as to dress in fun and unique costumes – and the crazier the better! We have seen everything from the slightly risqué and full of double entendres to clever golf themes. To top it off, the team costumes are proof that 'Putt & Pub Crawl' golfers let their imaginations run wild."

Finally, each bar and restaurant concocts a drink special that golfers and spectators can purchase, with all proceeds going directly to their partnering Non-Profit.

### **Tee Times**

"Putt & Pub Crawl" registration begins at Bayside Veterans Park from 8:30 to 10 a.m. "If possible, be at Bayside a bit on the early side," Dawn advises. "Part of the switch to the three-9-hole courses is we will start everyone off with a Shotgun Start at 10 a.m., so we need foursomes at their 1st Hole bar or restaurant by that time. Foursomes must complete their 9-holes by 4:30 p.m., with each hole sponsor supplies the putters and golf balls for your team."

After completing their course, foursomes adjourn to "The 19th Hole" at the Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB "Sunset Terrace." "Turn in your scorecard by 5 p.m.," Dawn says. "We will serve a dinner buffet at 5 p.m. and will start the drawings and announce the winners at 5:30 p.m. 'Putt &



*"The 'Putt & Pub Crawl' kicks off the 2026 FMB social season and is one of the island's most popular charity events!"*

'Pub Crawl' golfing awards are 1st and 2nd place for the lowest score, the 'Duffer Award' for the highest score, Best Team Costume, and Best Team Name. The 'Best Hole Awards' are cash prizes for 1st, 2nd and 3rd Place, with only the golfers voting on that."

"Putt & Pub Crawl" 2026 sponsors are The Alex King Family Foundation; Beach Talk Radio; Breeze Newspapers; CCMSI Insurance; Coconut Jack's Waterfront Grille, EisnerAmper; Ennovation Engineering Services Inc., Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB; Sanibel-Captiva Community Bank; Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits; Suncoast Beverage Sales; and Sweet Melissa's Homemade Ice Cream Shop.

### **Join In On The Fun!**

The "Putt & Pub Crawl" is likely already Sold Out by the time of this publication, "but you never know," exclaims Dawn. "Go to [www.fmb-wc.org](http://www.fmb-wc.org) QUICKLY to see if there are still any openings. Even if it is a sellout, please still come, as spectators have almost as much fun as the golfers! Line the galleries to cheer on the golfers and purchase the raffle tickets and specialty drinks, as your money goes directly to the partnering Non-Profits. Make a day of it by buying lunch at the bars and restaurants while marveling at the creative costumes. Once you are around all this wackiness, I guarantee you will register a foursome for 2027!"

When contemplating on what makes the "Putt & Pub Crawl" an FMB institution, "it is the perfect combination of fun, community spirit and uniqueness," says Dawn. "First, it is just plain fun. Second, it is the ideal forum to not only financially support our island Non-Profits but to learn more about them. Third, you may wander in to an island bar or restaurant to which you were previously unfamiliar and suddenly discover your new favorite place! Finally, it is its uniqueness. FMB hosts our 'Pub Crawl' in a way unrivaled anywhere else, so join in on the fun!" ■

# NOW ON FORT MYERS BEACH!!!!

SANTINI PLAZA MON – SAT 8-7, SUN 9-4 • 239-401-7641



# Gavin's



*Your Island Grilling Center!*



Gavin's  
**ACE**  
**\$25 OFF**  
Coupon

ANY PURCHASE OF \$100 OR MORE

Not valid on Weber, Traeger or Big Green Egg Grills. \$25 Off On Purchase Of Regularly Priced Items. See Store For Complete Details

Expires January 31, 2026

Gavin's  
**ACE**  
**\$13 OFF**  
Coupon

ANY PURCHASE OF \$50 OR MORE

Not Valid on Weber, Traeger or Big Green Egg Grills. \$13 Off On Purchase Of Regularly Priced Items. See Store For Complete Details.

Expires January 31, 2026

South Fort Myers [gavinsacehardware.com](http://gavinsacehardware.com) North Cape Coral



### A Marina that fits all your needs!

- Conveniently located in the heart of downtown Fort Myers Beach, surrounded by the rich history of Estero Island & some of the world's best waterways.
- Walking distance to the beach, shopping & the famous Times Square.
- Local restaurants & bars a stroll away.



### "It's a lifestyle, Stay awhile!"

- ⚓ Manitou Sales Dealer
- ⚓ Mercury, Suzuki & Minnkota Sales & Service
- ⚓ Wet Slips
- ⚓ Dry Storage
- ⚓ Service Department
- ⚓ Fuel Docks



Pelican Bay Charters LLC

**Contact Info**

- ☎ (239) 994-1238
- ✉ cccswfl@gmail.com
- 📍 450 Harbor Court  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931



Check our website for local activities held at Moss Marina  
[www.MossMarina.com](http://www.MossMarina.com)

450 Harbor Court, FMB  
26°27'23."N, 81°57'20."W  
(239) 765-6677  
Open daily 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

