

TAMPA BAY INFORMER

Photo by Maggy Graham

Volume VII, Issue 9 • Pinellas Edition • www.tampabayinformer.com

The Good News Newspaper

GASPARILLA FILM FESTIVAL

ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

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Gov. Charlie Crist, Rising Star award recipient Arielle Kebbel, Rep. Kevin Ambler and next year's GIFF president Eric Pollins—Photo by Brad Kugler

TAMPA

By Heidi Lux

Tampa's Gasparilla International Film Festival is only in its fourth year, but has already become a world-class event. Although trimmed from sixteen days to a more manageable four, the quality of the films, the caliber of the celebrity guests, and the size of the crowds has grown. "It was better than ever," said festival President Chad Moore.

The festival, held from March 18 through 21, celebrates the budding local film industry and the artistic aspect of the medium. Premiering on opening night was The Gasparilla International Film Festival's "Green the Screen" contest winner *God of the Ground* featuring spoken word poet Aleshea Harris.

Independent films this year included happythankyoumoreplease, Charlie

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ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT



A magician entertains GIFF party goers —Photo by Brad Kugler

FURYK ENDS PGA DRY SPELL

PALM HARBOR

By Heidi Lux

In a one-shot victory over tough competitor K.J. Choi, Jim Furyk ended a three-year losing streak while playing at the Copperhead Course at the Innisbrook Resort and Golf Club in Palm Harbor, Florida.

The Transitions Championship rolled into town March 18th through the 21st, bringing 150 great names in golf to tackle a course known for its "Snake Pit"—the 16th, 17th, and 18th holes—the fourth-hardest holes on any PGA Tour course. Steve Stricker, Ian Poulter and Furyk, three of the world's top ten golfers, competed along with John Daly, Kenny Perry and Stewart Cink for the \$5.4 million purse. Retief Goosen, last year's Transitions champion, also returned.

Participants received FedEx Cup points, qualifying them for the PGA Tour playoffs—a series of four high-stakes tournaments beginning in August.

The event is sponsored by Transitions Optical based in Pinellas Park, and benefits over 100 local charities. In the event's 33-year history, over \$24 million has been donated, \$9 million of that in the past five years alone. For more information on the Transitions Championship, go to www.transitionschampionship.com. ♦

SPORTS



Jim Furyk wins Transitions tournament at Innisbrook, breaking a three-year dry spell. —Photo courtesy of Transitions Championship

COMMUNITY

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Photo by Heidi Lux

Strut Your Mutt

by Heidi Lux

The Humane Society of Pinellas held their signature event, the Mutt Strut, on March 20th on beautiful Honeymoon Island. Dogs with their owners in tow . . .

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Photo by David Ziff

Local Human Rights Groups Advocate for Youths

by Chad Andro

Every five seconds during the school day, an African American public school student is suspended. In Cuba, 5,000 citizens were sentenced to prison . . .

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MARINE LIFE

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Photo by Heidi Lux

Winter's New Home

by Heidi Lux

Clearwater Marine Aquarium just celebrated their 38th anniversary with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of a new home for Winter the Dolphin . . .

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DOG LOVERS “STRUT THEIR MUTTS” ON HONEYMOON ISLAND

DUNEDIN

by Heidi Lux

The Humane Society of Pinellas held their signature event, the Mutt Strut, on March 20th on beautiful Honeymoon Island. Dogs with their owners in tow came from all over to enjoy the day’s worth of pet-friendly activities and vendors. The Mutt Strut included pet contests, with categories ranging from “shortest legs” to “cutest dog” and, fittingly, the chance for owners to strut their mutt along Osprey Trail.

Officer Barbara Baugher of the Pinellas County Schools Police Department brought along T-Rex. T-Rex was rescued from the Humane Society, and now serves as a K-9 officer, working as a drug-sniffing dog. According to Officer Baugher, the dog was named “T-Rex” when she found him at the Humane Society. She decided to keep the name because she wanted the previous owner, whomever that may be, to know that T-Rex is doing fine, and has a great job, and to signify her gratitude for having found him.

In a special plaque presentation, Millie Esterline and Jeff Zhu of the Pinellas County Sheriff’s Office, were honored for their concept and implementation of PCSO C.A.R.E.S, a program which reunites lost pets with their owners.

The Mutt Strut serves as a fundraiser for the Humane Society of Pinellas, with funds raised from pledges from individuals, and a variety of raffles. “Wag Bags” filled with goodies were given away to those who donated over \$10.

While the Mutt Strut is an annual event, the Humane Society of Pinellas puts on many different pet-friendly events throughout the year. The next event will be Bark at the Ballpark, in which people will be able to take their pooches to see a Threshers game at Bright House Field.

For more information on the Humane Society of Pinellas, visit www.humane-societyofpinellas.org. ♦



Owners line their pets up to be judged in the Cutest Pet contest, MC'd by Twila Cole of the Humane Society. The audience chose the winner by applause.—Photo by Heidi Lux



Officer Barbara Baugher introduces K-9 Officer T-Rex to other dog lovers—Photo by Heidi Lux



Bruce Meligan with Newfoundlands Blossom and Olaf, winners of the “cutest dog” contest —Photo by Heidi Lux



The Golden Retriever Rescue of Mid-Florida, and two beautiful and very grateful rescued retrievers.—Photo by Heidi Lux



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Editor
Angela LeMay

TAMPA BAY INFORMER'S PURPOSE

"To improve the community by raising awareness and responsibility and providing solutions to community issues."

We are achieving this purpose by publishing informative articles related to issues in the community which include community activities sponsored by non-profit and civic groups. Our articles invite members of the community to get involved and take action to help improve our community.

Our advertisers help fund our purpose, and in turn, our marketing department is continuously expanding our circulation and increasing the exposure of our advertisers, resulting in expansion of their businesses."

LOCAL HUMAN RIGHTS GROUPS ADVOCATE FOR YOUTHS

CLEARWATER

By Chad Andro

Every five seconds during the school day, an African American public school student is suspended. In Cuba, 5,000 citizens were sentenced to prison for nothing more than the concept of "dangerousness," without being charged with any specific crime. More than 5.7 million students have been involved in bullying in American schools, with the bullies being four times more likely to be convicted of a crime by age 24. Regardless of the statistic, the violation of human rights is the message from Dustin McGahee of Youth for Human Rights Florida, Femi Kennedy of Abel's Community Services, and Lianet Vazquez of the USF Cuban American Student Association.

The Cuban American Student Association of USF

The Cuban American Student Association of USF has the message to unite students around a cause of a free Cuba and disseminate information related to the human rights situation in Cuba, as it still outlaws peaceful advocacy for human rights.

Abel's Community Services, Inc.

Abel's Community Services, Inc. is a nonprofit organization dedicated to positively supporting individuals throughout Tampa Bay, Florida, with the message to reduce violence by teaching

Dr. Martin Luther King's nonviolence principles for civil rights and to eliminate recidivism of ex-offenders by providing comprehensive services that effectively change their perception of life's potential. For more information go to: www.abelscommunityservices.org.

Youth for Human Rights Florida

Youth for Human Rights Florida is a non-profit secular organization that educates about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, both in and out of the classroom, with youth friendly DVDs and educational booklets. For more information go to: www.youthforhumanrights.org. ♦



Dustin McGahee, Femi Kennedy, Rozelia Kennedy, and Lianet Vazquez
—Photo by David Ziff

United with the common purpose of tolerance and peace, and the United Nations 2010 theme of "Embrace Diversity—End Discrimination," these youth have a message for all youth.

- It is the youth of today who are the voices that speak for those targeted because of racial discrimination.
- It is the youth of today who are the voices who speak out for those imprisoned where there is no freedom of speech.
- And it is the youth of today who are the voices to say it is not okay to bully another, as we are all born free and with equal rights.

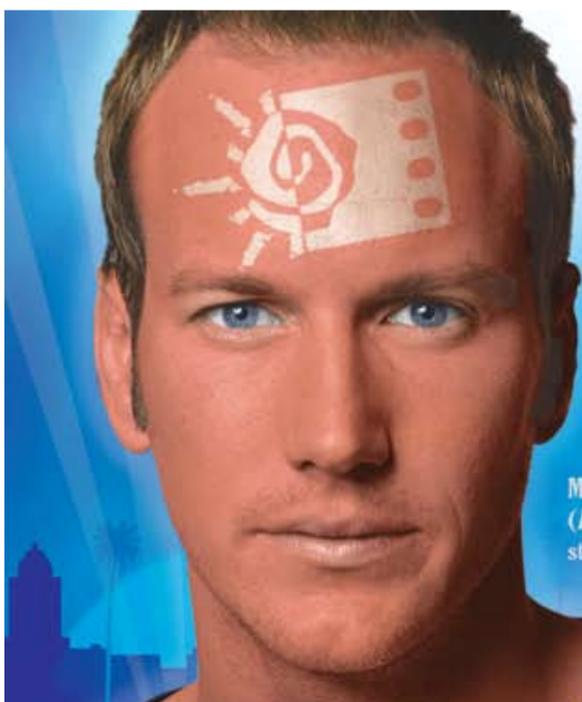
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GASPARILLA FILM FESTIVAL

Continued from page 1

Valentine, and Breaking News Breaking Down, which were screened at Cinebistro, Muvico Ybor, and the Tampa Theatre.

Actor Raymond J. Barry, who received a lifetime achievement award at the age of 71, commented on the irony of it. "There are certain associations with something like this...because my life's not over," he quipped.

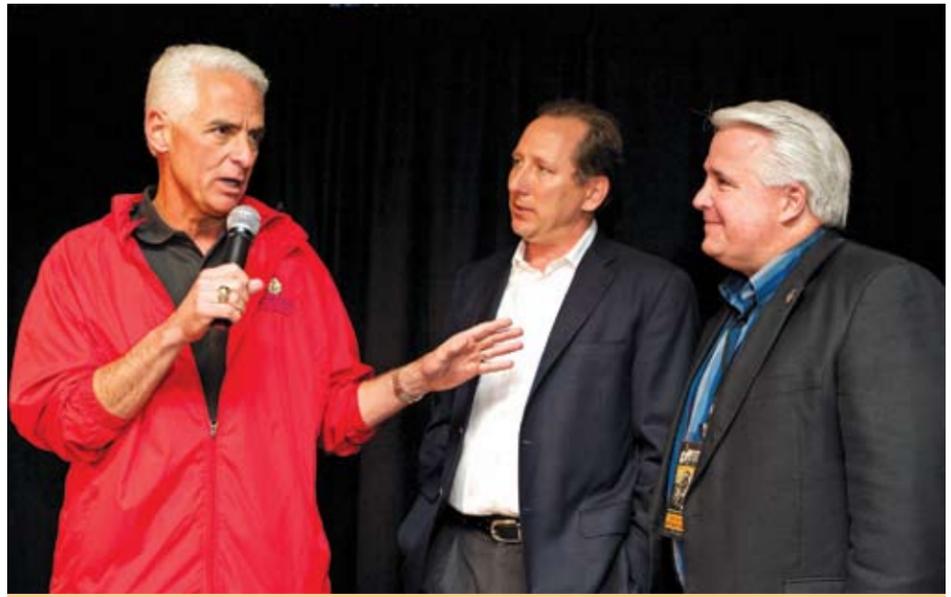
Other celebrities spotted at the festival were Jerry Springer and Melora Hardin (The Office), who both had films playing at the festival. Stephen Baldwin, Armand Assante, and local fashion designer Ben Chmura (Project Runway) were also there.

The festival held free educational panels to educate young filmmakers and actors, including "We Dare to Scare" on special effects, "Is Film Dead?," a discussion on digital film, and "The Future of Florida's Film Business." There was also a panel for actors.

Elected officials were there at the events alongside filmmakers and celebrities. Lt. Governor Jeff Kottkamp, State Representative Rich Glorioso, and State Representative Kevin Ambler all came out to support the budding film scene on opening night at the Tampa Theatre. Even Governor Charlie Crist stopped by to the closing night party held in fashionable Hyde Park.

But the politicians' support wasn't just for show; they are working hard behind the scenes as well. A tax incentive bill to court the industry to come to our beautiful state, sponsored by State Representative Kevin Ambler, (R-Tampa), recently passed through the House Economic Development Policy Committee unanimously. Rep. Ambler is also on the advisory board for the Gasparilla International Film Festival, and authored a film incentive bill in 2003.

"Film in Florida is so important to our state," said Governor Crist. "It's clean... high pay...creates jobs."



Gov. Crist, John Textor of Digital Domain and Rep. Kevin Ambler, all strong advocates of a vibrant film industry presence in Florida—Photo by Brad Kugler



Aleshea Harris, star of *God of the Ground*, which won the Green The Screen contest, and the Baroque Boys, who provided music opening night—Photo by Andrea Lypka



Ben Chmura of *Project Runway* with friends at the closing night party—Photo by Brad Kugler

More movies made in the state of Florida would provide jobs to local residents, either directly through being hired to work on the production, or indirectly by providing services to the production. Films shot in Florida would serve as an advertisement for the Sunshine State, turning fans into tourists. It is estimated that a film presence in Florida would generate \$18 billion a year.

The Gasparilla International Film Festival is made possible through the support of sponsors. One that made a particularly big impact this year is new sponsor Digital Domain. The visual effects studio, which

is responsible for about 70% of the top 20 highest grossing films of all time, just broke ground on a new studio in Port St. Lucie, to support the talent in Florida that comes out of such premier schools as Ringling and Full Sail. John Textor, the chairman, is from Florida.

Can't wait until next year? The Gasparilla International Film Festival offers private parties and film screenings throughout the year for those who support the arts by becoming a member.

More information on the Gasparilla International Film Festival can be found at www.gasparillafilmfestival.com. ♦



The Tampa Theatre, where opening night festivities took place—Photo by Andrea Lypka



Eric Polins, next year's GIFF President; Chad Moore, this year's GIFF President; and Eric Odum, last year's GIFF President—Photo by Andrea Lypka

WINTER'S NEW HOME

DUNEDIN

by Heidi Lux

Clearwater Marine Aquarium just celebrated their 38th anniversary with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the opening of a new home for Winter the Dolphin and her adopted mother Panama. Their new facility within the favorite Clearwater marine destination is a 40-foot round, 18-foot deep pool, which will give the girls more room to work with their trainers, and more room for Winter to work with her prosthetic tail. The aquarium will now be able to double the number of daily dolphin shows from three to six.

Underwater viewing windows are accessible next to the stingray exhibit downstairs.

Indy and Nicholas, the male dolphins, will remain inside their old tank, but will also benefit from the extra space now that the girls have their "own room." The freed-up tank will be used to give the boys more room to play.

Winter and Panama's new home will also double as a stranding pool for rescued dolphins. When a new arrival needs the space, Winter and Panama will be

moved back to their old pool, so the sick or injured dolphin can recover.

The ribbon on the new pool was cut by Maja, a Bosnian girl who lost a leg in the war and is now inspiring people with similar circumstances as Winter. She was assisted by Clearwater Marine Aquarium CEO David Yates; former Clearwater Mayor and Clearwater Marine Aquarium Director of Government and Corporate Affairs Brian Aungst; Clearwater City Councilman George Cretokos, Board Member Frank Chivas, Clearwater Marine Aquarium donor Dick Jacobson, and Chairman of the Board of Directors Tom Orr.

After the ribbon was cut, Winter and then Panama were relocated to their new home with the help of Clearwater Marine Staff, volunteers and a board member, who transferred the dolphins from one pool to another on a stretcher.

The Clearwater Marine Aquarium, which has received national and international attention for Winter the Dolphin and her amazing story, continues to expand their facilities. Within the next few weeks, they will be opening a sea turtle rehab area,



CMA Staff, Volunteers and a member of the board of directors help to remove Winter by sling and crane from her old pool—Photo by Heidi Lux

with nine new pools. After they have completed this project, they will turn their attention towards acquiring the empty lot next door to the aquarium, as well as the basin nearby. This will allow them to build an educational center, as well as expand their rehabilitation area,

so that Winter and Panama won't have to move when a new dolphin comes in, and marine animals will be able to recover in their natural habitat.

For more information on the Clearwater Marine Aquarium, visit www.seewinter.com. ♦



Ribbon cutting ceremony (l to r) Jeni Hatter, David Yates, Brian Aungst, George Cretokos, Maja, Frank Chivas, Dick Jacobson, Tom Orr and Krista Rosado—Photo by Heidi Lux



Winter is moved to edge of her new pool and released—Photo by Heidi Lux



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Winter and Panama greeting their training, Abby Stone, in their new pool—Photo courtesy of the Clearwater Maine Aquarium

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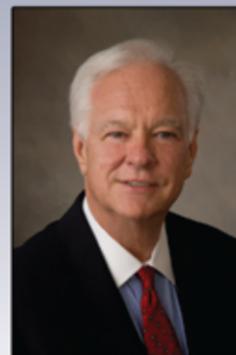
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IS FLUORIDE GOOD FOR YOU OR IS FLUORIDE BAD FOR YOU?

by Winston Kao

What do you need to know about the fluoride that is in your drinking and bathing water and the products you consume? Is there a situation that needs action on your part? Where do you go for truth on the subject? A few simple facts and you can make up your own mind.



Symptoms of Fluoride Toxicity

Most people don't realize that a minimum dose of fluoride can produce acute toxicity.¹

Every year excessive ingestion of fluoride dental products (toothpaste, mouth rinses, and supplements) results in thousands of reports to **Poison Control Centers** in the United States. Ingestion of as little as one percent of a tube of flavored children's toothpaste can produce acute fluoride toxicity in a young child. (**How many little kids eat toothpaste?**)

Every parent (not to mention the rest of us) would benefit from knowing the early symptoms of acute fluoride toxicity. They are gastrointestinal pain, nausea, vomiting, and headaches. These symptoms can be produced at doses as low as 0.1 to 0.3 mg/kg. This is *about 15 to 50 times lower than the dose (5 mg/kg) that can kill.*²

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Let's consider why we have nicotine patches, seasickness patches, female

1 <http://fluoridealert.org/health/accidents/acute.html>

2 Excerpts from the Scientific Literature—Early Symptoms of Acute Fluoride Toxicity:

"Fluoride has several mechanisms of toxicity. Ingested fluoride initially acts locally on the intestinal mucosa. It can form hydrofluoric acid in the stomach, which leads to GI irritation or corrosive effects. Following ingestion, the GI tract is the earliest and most commonly affected organ system." SOURCE: eMedicine.com

"Nausea (90%), vomiting (80%), abdominal pain (52%), diarrhea (23%), loss of appetite (13%), headache (11%), weakness (10%), itching (9%), numbness or tingling of an extremity (4%), shortness of breath (4%), fatigue (4%)." SOURCE: Gessner BD, et al. (1994). Acute fluoride poisoning from a public water system. *New England Journal of Medicine* 330:95-9.

hormone pill patches, and birth control patches. Because our *skin is extremely absorbent!* So in addition to drinking fluoridated water, we also absorb the fluoride through our skin. Every time we take a hot shower or bath, we open the pores and absorb some amounts of chlorine, chloramines, and of course, fluoride, which unfortunately, happens to be an industrial waste.

In other words, what the city really adds to your drinking/bathing water is an industrial waste. It is called hydrofluorosilicic acid, and it has all kinds of heavy metals. This form of fluoride has been broken down by acids so that it is *extremely toxic and absorbable.*

Where to go for the truth

I have compiled an excellent condensed summary about the highly controversial political/medical issues of fluoridation. The first video is 3:30 minutes and is a super short version of the truth about fluoridation. It takes a little while to load. Please be patient, it is well worth it. www.cbsatlanta.com/video/22781769/index.html.

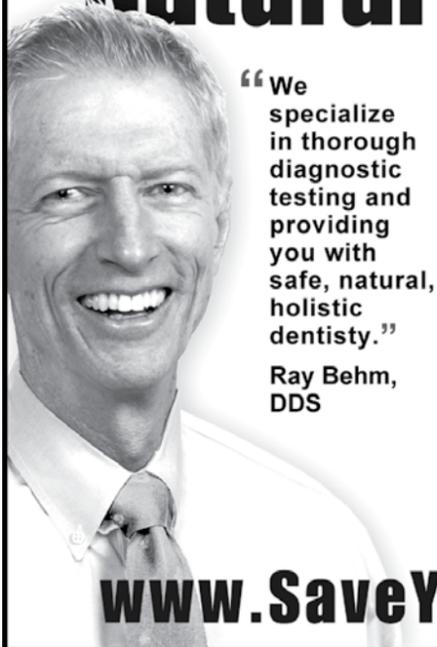
The second video is 30 minutes long and I guarantee you that this is probably the best 30 minutes you'll spend educating yourself on the full aspects of fluoridation. www.fluoridealert.org

Finally, if you want to be amused, type in the word **Fluoxetine** in the Internet. Don't be surprised if you see all the generic name brands for Prozac (a very powerful anti-depressant drug).

Eliminate fluoride from your water source & reduce your fluoride consumption

It really doesn't take a rocket scientist to figure out that maybe adding fluoride to the drinking water is not a good idea and just maybe, it would be a bright idea to fully remove this particular element from your drinking and bathing water. For more information, please call me at **Natural Plus Plus, LLC. 727-447-2344** or check out my website at www.gobeyondorganic.com. ♦

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Simaen Skolfield, Staff Photographer

With a passion for the arts, Simaen Skolfield has won the prestigious Grammy Award with his keen ears for capturing the realism of music and sound. In photography, he brings his uncanny skills to the visual world by framing life in its fullest senses. In photographic moments of all kinds; weddings to family, to portraits, Simaen possesses certain, rare abilities with which to capture our private world. As Simaen puts it, "I want to capture the full beauty of every special moment so our lives will be cherished again and again, the world over."

Mr. Skolfield is an independent professional digital-image-capture photographer, 'writing with light', at home here in Clearwater, Florida.

You can contact him at 727-557-6407

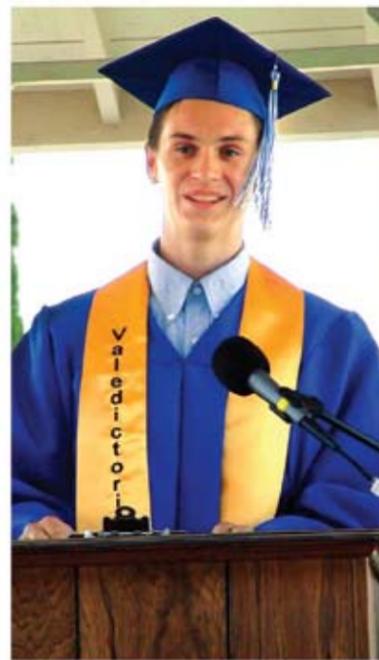


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UPCOMING EVENTS

March 27th, Annual Pet Festival: Bring your pet to Cleveland Street! Event features pet parade, puppy races, microchipping by the Suncoast Animal League, Pet Rescue Groups, and pet vendors. Downtown Clearwater, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. For more information, go here.

March 27th, Bill Cosby: Ruth Eckerd Hall, 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. Visit www.rutheckerdhall.com for tickets and more information.

March 29th, Stone Soup and Dragon Tales: Presented by the Eckerd Theatre Company. 2:00 p.m. at the Clearwater Main Library, 100 N. Osceola Avenue. Call (727) 562-4970 or visit www.myclearwater.com/cpl.

March 30th, Fitness Class for Kids: Jump, Jive and Jam at this specialized dance-based fitness class for ages 3 to 6. 10:30 a.m. at the Clearwater Main Library, 100 N. Osceola Ave. Call (727) 562-4970 or visit www.myclearwater.com/cpl.

April 1st, Mad Science: Learn about Mad Science. Participate in experiments with fire and ice. 3:00 p.m. at the North Greenwood Library, 905 N. MLK, Jr. Ave., Clearwater. Call (727) 562-4970 or visit www.myclearwater.com/cpl.

April 2nd, Learn to Draw Cartoons: Learn to Draw Cartoons at this program. For ages 4 and up. 2:00 p.m. at the East Library, 2251 Drew St., Clearwater. Call (727) 562-4970 or visit www.myclearwater.com/cpl.

April 3rd, Easter Eggstravaganza: The Countryside Recreation Center staff invite everyone to attend a FREE Easter Eggstravaganza and open house on Saturday, April 3, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. All ages will be able to participate and find something special for their enjoyment. Open gym, carnival games, Touch-a-Truck, Blood Mobile, Car Show, and complimentary massages. Demonstrations of fitness classes, games, an inflatable bounce house, and Easter Egg Hunt. Prizes, refreshments, and giveaways. Call (727) 669-1914.

April 3rd, Girls Gone Glam: The Clearwater Main Library will host a program where girls can get a gently used or new prom dress for free, on Saturday, April 3. Check-in is at 12:15 p.m.; event begins at 1 p.m. Girls can browse a wide selection of gowns and take one home for free. This event is open to Pinellas County students who will be attending prom this year. Bring a student I.D. or an official school document with their name on it. Limit one gown per student while supplies last. There are dresses in a variety of sizes. There will also be prize giveaways. Dresses donated by local community members. The Clearwater Main Library is located at 100 N. Osceola Ave. Call (727) 562-4970.

April 4th, 18th Annual Giant Easter Egg Hunt: Clearwater Community Volunteer's 18th Annual Giant Easter Egg Hunt. April 4th, noon to 2:00 p.m. at Coachman Park in Downtown Clearwater. 250 famous Golden Eggs hidden amongst over 20,000 eggs! Each child who finds a Golden Egg will receive a special stuffed bunny. Pony rides, a petting zoo, choo choo train rides, face painting and more!

Admissions is FREE and open to everyone, so don't forget to bring your Easter basket! Small fee for food and some attractions. This event is sponsored by the Clearwater Community Volunteers and The Church of Scientology who get their inspiration from the precept "Love and Help Children" found in *The Way to Happiness* by L. Ron Hubbard. For more information, go here.

April 5th-29th, Learn to be a Weekend Navigator: The US Coast Guard Auxiliary is presenting a "Weekend Navigator" program starting April 5th, Monday evening, with 8 sessions that end on April 29th. Classes are held at the Clearwater Sailing Center on Sand Key at 1001 Gulf Blvd., Clearwater. Contact Ann Bennett, Education Officer (727) 469-8895, fso-pe@a0701101.uscgauz.info, or on the web at <http://a0701101.uscgauz.info>.

April 6th, Tampa Bay Rays 2010 Season Home Opener: Get your tickets now for the Rays 2010 season home opener against the Baltimore Orioles and don't miss a minute! Tickets are on sale at all Ticketmaster locations, 1-800-FAN-RAYS or www.raysbaseball.com.

April 7th, Senior Citizen Discount Day: 10% off everything in the store for seniors at Nature's Food Patch, Clearwater. Visit www.naturesfoodpatch.com for more information.

April 8th, The Kalichstein-Laredo-Robinson Trio and Miami String Quartet: The Capitol Theatre, Downtown Clearwater. www.rutheckerdhall.com.

April 8th, 120 Years of Sherlock Holmes: 10 a.m. to noon. Sherlock Holmes has been a box office hit in 220 films since 1903 and continues to wow audiences worldwide. Instructor Rick Kistner will explore the history of Doyle, Sherlock Holmes' creator, who based this celebrated detective on a real life 19th century figure. Eckerd College Osher Life Long Learning Institute (OLLI), Peace Memorial Presbyterian Church, 110 S. Ft. Harrison Avenue (enter by office door in alley behind the church).

April 10th, AFLAC Iron Girl Clearwater: Coachman Park, race starts at 7:30. Go to www.irongirl.com for more information.

April 15th, Lunchtime Entertainment Series in Station Square Park: Swap Meet and Soft Pretzels. Bring household items you no longer need but would like to swap for something you do. And while you're there, get a free soft pretzel celebrating Soft Pretzel Month. Entertainment will be provided and admission is free! Noon to 2:00 p.m. in Station Square Park, Downtown Clearwater.

April 17th, Clearwater City Ballet: Live performance and reception at the Ft. Harrison Hotel, Downtown Clearwater at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and \$45 V.I.P. with reception. Please reserve your tickets by calling (727) 216-6989.

If you would like to submit your event to our list, please email editor@tampabayinformer.com

To view the complete listing of upcoming events, visit www.tampabayinformer.com. ♦



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