

PUNTA GORDA ISLES CIVIC ASSOCIATION

The **Commentator**

April 2026

Inside:

Giving Challenge
New Member Reception & Open House
Volunteer Recruitment
Shredding Event
Blood Drive

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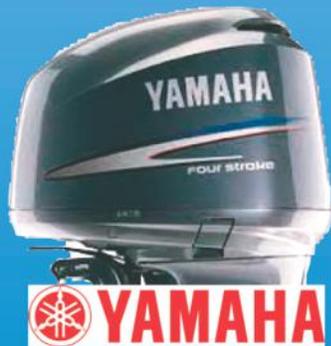
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The Commentator

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PGICA Mission Statement

“To enhance the quality of life in Punta Gorda as a vibrant and unique waterfront community.”



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FITNESS/DANCE



ZUMBA. Tuesdays and Fridays. 8:30 to 9:30 a.m., \$12 per class. Zumba is a fun, effective dance workout that is a good option for people who enjoy upbeat music and an energetic group exercise environment. Instructor: Gigi Caceda. Students will register and pay as they attend at the PGICA office. 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



Chair-a-Cise. Tuesdays and Thursdays. 9 to 10 a.m., \$10 per class. Chair-a-Cise is a low-impact, full-body workout designed to strengthen and tone muscles using a sturdy chair for support. This class targets: improving strength, flexibility and balance. It also targets muscle groups for toning and strengthening and promotes blood flow and circulation. Instructor: Cathy Wetzelberger. Students will register and pay as they attend at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGI-CA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



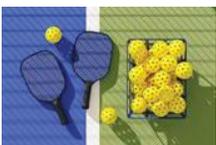
Morning Yoga. Tuesdays and Thursdays. 10 to 11 a.m., \$10 per class. Enjoy a safe and playful mixed level Yoga Flow class designed for beginners to intermediate-level practitioners. Join us and explore the awareness of the mind/body connection to inspire good posture, better breathing, movement, balance and relaxation. Instructor: Linda Haverlock. Students register and pay as they attend at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



Basic Beginner Line Dancing with Judy. Wednesdays through April 8, 3 to 4 p.m., \$10 per class. Learn beginner line dancing with repeating sequences of steps to a variety of musical rhythms. Dances are performed individually without a partner, in rows of other dancers. Dancing enhances physical and mental health as well as providing social interaction. Let's start "Boot Scootin' Boogie!" Instructor: Judy Barnhill. Students register and pay as they attend at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



Advance Line Dance with Judy. Wednesdays through April 8, 4 to 5 p.m. \$10 per class. This class is for students who took the basic class, along with dancers who have previous line dance experience. Instructor: Judy Barnhill. Students register and pay as they attend at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



Pickleball Beginners 101. Tuesdays and Thursdays. March 24 through April 9. Free to PGICA members, \$35 for non-members. This is the perfect class for you to learn how to play! Classes will be held at South County Regional Park (670 Cooper Street. Punta Gorda) at the Dedicated Courts. Please bring a pickleball paddle if you have one. Supportive footwear is required. Please, no sandals. Signing of Waiver is a requirement, this will be done at your first class. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Provided by the Friends, Family and Community PGICA Club.

ART and MUSIC



Paper Quilling. Fridays. 10 a.m. to Noon. \$35 per class. Whether you are new to this beautiful art form or you're a seasoned quillist, please join us! Learn a few techniques, complete a project to take home, and keep the tools to pursue more creations at home. Instructor: Kathy Peters. 2026 **Class dates: Apr. 24 and May 22.** Advance registration required. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.



Beginner Ukulele Lessons. Thursdays. 1:30 to 3 p.m., Mar. 19 through Apr. 23. \$15 per class. Each student will realize they can be a Ukulele player! Focus points will be tuning, strumming, music keys, and chord shapes. Students should bring their ukulele and buy the yellow and blue "Daily Ukulele" books. ISBN numbers for books: 9-781423-477754, yellow book; 9-781458-482686, blue book. Instructor: Peter Coleson. Advance registration requested. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda. 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.

WORKSHOPS



Creative Cell Phone Photography. Thursdays. 2 to 3:30pm. \$35 per class. Take beautiful pictures, exploring color, portraits, nature, close-ups, flowers, and architecture. You only need your smart phone, iPhone, Google, Android - all smart phone types are welcome! Meet at PGICA. Instructor Jim Austin, has been teaching and photographing for over 40 years, has an engaging and supportive way of teaching, offering visual examples tailored to each photographer. No experience is needed. Advance registration required. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.



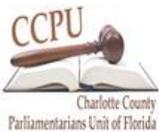
The ART of a Traditional French Dinner. Friday, Apr. 10. 10 a.m. to noon. \$50 per class. All proceeds benefit the PGICA! April - Dessert course. Profiteroles. We will also taste the dishes in class! Students will be advised of what bowls, pans etc. to bring. (Maximum 8 students). Advance registration required. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.



Let's Make Soap! Wednesdays. Apr. 1, 15 and 29. 5:30 to 7 p.m. \$45 per class. Have you wondered how soaps are made? We have the class for you! Your instructor, Jennifer Gosnell, will instruct how to make, melt and pour soaps. Each month will focus on a different soap. You can even look forward to holiday soaps as holidays pop up. Classes will range from 45 minutes, to an hour. Advance registration requested. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda. 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



Mahjongg-Review of classes. Friday. April 24. 1 to 4 p.m. \$25. This is the class to review what you learned in the Beginner and Intermediate classes. Also, the annual card comes out April 1 and you'll be exploring tips and tricks for the new card together. Your Instructor for this class is Patty Albert. Players are asked to bring their own cards, tiles are provided. Registration is required. Participants can register online at www.PGICA.org or at PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda, 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.



CCPU Have a Better Meeting. Wednesdays. April 8, 13 and 22. 6 to 8 p.m. \$25. Join us to unlock strategies and make your meetings efficient, fair, and organized. Understanding the importance of a well-planned "Agenda." Presiding tools to keep your meeting on point and "Minutes" from several pages to how Robert's Rules of Order provides clear and concise language for recording minutes. Advanced registration required. Students can register online at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda. 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public.



Landsberg Bennett Wealth Insight Seminar. Monthly sessions. 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Please come and gain more insight to your finances. Seminar dates: Apr. 7. Interested participants can register at www.PGICA.org or at the PGICA office: 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda. 941-637-1655. All PGICA classes are open to the public. Walk-ins are welcome.



NEED ASSISTANCE WITH AN ESTATE SALE?

ISLES GIRLS AND GUYS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
A Club of the PGICA

The Isles Girls and Guys Assistance Program started over 25 years ago and has been one of the PGICA's most successful volunteer programs. The original goal was, and still is, to provide a service to PGICA members by conducting estate sales. The Isles Girls and Guys do it all! Proceeds from the sale are presented to the homeowner who in turn donate 30% to the PGICA.

WWW.ISLESGIRLSANDGUYS.COM

CONTACT INFORMATION
Tom Teubert: 201-960-5340
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It's hard to believe that we are nearing the end of the season, when many of our members will be leaving for other parts of the country. All-in-all it has been a great season - we collectively had a lot of fun, fellowship and laughs.

I particularly want to say thank you to all the club and group leaders that came to our leadership meeting. Your input, ideas and opinions were so extremely valuable to setting the course of our organizational planning. We captured all those wonderful thoughts and are actively working to categorize and rank them. We will be arranging a follow-up meeting to solicit your help in achieving the highest priority, highest value, most impactful initiatives that we can accomplish this year.

One last note, as many of you are leaving to head north, please don't forget to make the 2026 Giving Challenge your highest priority on April 15 and 16 from noon to noon. By giving in this way, your gifts will be matched and magnified. As you are aware, our key benefactor of the proceeds will be to purchase a newer van for our Isles Gals & Guys, who pledged 30% of their estate sale proceeds to the PGICA general fund. It is even more important this year than ever as we are running at a slight deficit.

Thank you all for being the best civic association in all of Florida.

ISLES GIRLS & GUYS CLUB

Dave Little, dblittle321@gmail.com

As we look forward to the April showers that will bring May flowers, we also look forward to more exciting estate sales. April also ushers in several holidays and observances that focus on the outdoors such as National Garden Month, Keep America Beautiful Month, Stress Awareness Month and National Volunteer Month, as well as Easter. You can also wear blue to support Autism awareness. You can plant a vegetable garden, raise a glass on National Beer Day, plant a tree on Arbor Day or volunteer for a good cause during Volunteer Week.



The Isles Girls and Guys is made up of a group of volunteers who work very hard not only in April but all year long to facilitate the estate sales for our area. You can always find out what sales are coming up by checking our website, www.islesgirlsandguys.com and you can follow Isles Girls & Guys Estate Sales on Facebook to get more information. If you would like to get an email about future sales, fill out the form at <https://islesgirlsandguys.com/contact-us>. Don't forget, if you have any flat white



sheets that you are going to get rid of, please bring them to a future sale as we use sheets to cover the tables.

The Isles Girls and Guys Club is very thankful for being able to serve our community by having estate sales and raising money for PGICA. One of the things that separates us from other estate sales companies is that

the owner gets 70% of the proceeds while the PGI Civic Association gets 30%. If you think you might want to have an estate sale, do not wait. Please call Tom or Karen so we can get you on the calendar. We will come out to your home and preview what you have to ensure there is enough to justify us conducting a sale. If it qualifies, we will negotiate a date for your sale.



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Punta Gorda, Florida

Full-Time, Exempt

Reports to: Board of Directors

Compensation: Competitive and commensurate with experience; flexible starting salary \$50K – \$70K; positioned as the highest-paid role in the organization to attract exceptional talent.

About Us

The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association is a vibrant, member-driven nonprofit dedicated to education offerings, fostering community spirit, civic engagement, and quality of life in Punta Gorda and surrounding areas. With annual revenues of approximately \$500,000, we operate a community facility for events and rentals, offer educational programs, host gatherings, offer many social clubs and groups, and advocate for local interests. We are at an exciting inflection point—seeking a hands-on, strategic leader to reverse recent declines in membership, rental income, and advertising revenue while building sustainable growth and deeper community impact.

Position Overview

This pivotal Managing Director role is truly hands-on in our small-team environment. You will serve as Managing Director, balancing big-picture strategic vision with daily execution. Reporting directly to an engaged Board of Directors, you will lead efforts to expand membership, diversify and grow revenue streams, optimize operations, and strengthen ties across Punta Gorda. We need a dynamic, results-oriented leader who thrives in resource-constrained settings, thinks critically, motivates teams (staff and volunteers), and turns challenges into opportunities for our community’s future.

Key Responsibilities

- **Membership Growth and Retention:** Design and execute targeted recruitment strategies (outreach, marketing, events, networking) while building loyalty through value-added programs, surveys, and proactive retention efforts to stabilize and grow our engaged member base.
- **Revenue Generation and Financial Management:** Identify and secure new income sources (grants, sponsorships, partnerships, innovative offerings); market and manage building rentals for maximum utilization and contract value; curate, promote, and oversee education classes for fee generation; maintain financial health via budgeting, forecasting, expense control, and transparent Board reporting for long-term sustainability.
- **Daily Operations:** Oversee all operational aspects in a lean environment—including supervising staff/volunteers, facility upkeep, event coordination, administrative duties, and compliance with nonprofit regulations, safety standards, and best practices.
- **Board Collaboration and Governance:** Partner closely with the Board to set and advance strategic goals, deliver performance updates/metrics, support policy development, and implement decisions effectively.
- **Community and Civic Engagement:** Serve as the public face of the association—representing us in local forums, forging partnerships with government, businesses, schools, and organizations; lead civic initiatives, events, advocacy, and volunteer programs to boost visibility and impact.

Qualifications

- **Education & Experience:** Bachelor’s degree preferred (business management, public administration, or related field). 5–7+ years of progressive leadership in nonprofits, civic groups, small businesses, or community organizations—with demonstrated success in revenue generation, membership development, and managing budgets under \$1M.
- **Skills & Competencies:**
 - Strong financial acumen (budgeting, fundraising, revenue diversification).
 - Excellent communication, relationship-building, and stakeholder management.
 - Proficiency in marketing, event planning, and operational leadership.
 - Critical thinking and strategic problem-solving in resource-limited settings.
 - Ability to lead and inspire small teams/volunteers while handling hands-on tasks.
- **Personal Attributes:** Deep passion for civic engagement and community building; highly organized, adaptable, ethical, inclusive, and results-driven. Local knowledge of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County is a strong plus.
- **Other Requirements:** Flexible schedule (including evenings/weekends for events); valid Florida driver’s license and reliable transportation for outreach.

Why Join Us?

This is more than a job—it’s a chance to shape the future of a beloved Punta Gorda institution during a transformative period. You’ll enjoy autonomy, direct Board support, and the opportunity to make tangible, visible impact in a welcoming Southwest Florida community.

How to Apply

Please submit your resume and a tailored cover letter (addressing your experience with revenue turnaround, membership growth, and hands-on nonprofit leadership) to searchcommittee@pgica.org with the subject line: “Managing Director Application – Your Full Name.” Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis; priority given to those received by March 30, 2026. We are an equal opportunity employer committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion. The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association is proud to serve our community and looks forward to welcoming our next visionary leader!



2026
**GIVING
 CHALLENGE**

Be The One

Presented by the
 Community Foundation of Sarasota County

The 2026 Giving Challenge is presented by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation.

CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COME TOGETHER!

The PGICA enhances the quality of life for both Punta Gorda Isles and surrounding communities. From community events and weekly markets to open-to-the-public workshops, PGICA brings neighbors together while supporting local initiatives. During this year's Giving Challenge, your donation helps continue these programs and keeps our community thriving.

Fund will be used in part to replace the PGICA van.

NOON TO NOON APRIL 15TH | GIVINGCHALLENGE.ORG

📍 Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association
 2001 Shreve Street, Punta Gorda
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NEED MORE INFO? CALL:
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2026

GIVING CHALLENGE

The 2026 Giving Challenge is presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County with
giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation.

NOON TO NOON APRIL 15 – 16

VISIT [GIVINGCHALLENGE.ORG](https://givingchallenge.org)





Spring may have gotten off to a slow start, but it's now in full bloom - and so is our JFF community. Our March Mix & Mingle at Sunset Beach Club in Fishermen's Village was a wonderful success, with great weather and company. A big thank you to Wendy and Kevin for organizing such a fun evening. We're looking forward to our next gathering on April 6 at the Library Room at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel. Hope to see you there.

If you've ever wanted to learn Mah jongg or are looking for a regular group to play with, be sure to check the JFF calendar for weekly meetups. You'll also find details for our monthly ladies' and men's lunches, Bite Night and Girls' Game Night - all great ways to get involved and meet new friends.

If you haven't joined us yet for Dinner and Darts at the Ice House Pub, you're missing out. It's all about laughter, friendly competition, and good company - no experience required. Be sure to sign up on the club website and come give it a try.



Girl power



March Madness

March Madness was another highlight, and it truly showcased the energy and teamwork of this group. Events like this don't happen without volunteers, and we are so grateful to everyone who stepped up. Special thanks to Jay for serving as head referee and MC, and to Rosanne, Ron, Kerry, and Bob for keeping things running smoothly as assistant referees. Thanks also to Kim and Brenda for organizing food, Kevin for jumping in with AV support, and Laura and Deb for managing check-in and brackets. And to everyone who helped set up, clean up and participate, thank you for making it such a fun and memorable night. And yes, the women definitely brought their A-game this year.

Looking ahead, don't miss our Spring Fling on

April 15 at Ponce de Leon Park pavilion, starting at 4:30. The club will provide a full spring barbecue. Just bring a dish to share, your lawn chair and your favorite beverage. It's a perfect chance to gather, especially before some of our snowbird friends head north for the summer.

And if you know someone who might enjoy being part of this welcoming community, we'd love to have them. For membership information, contact Nancy Keppel at 585-267-9272.

Thank you to all our volunteers and members who make this such a friendly, vibrant group. JFF truly lives up to its name -Just For Fun.



Dart winners



March Madness



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Top Row: Braden H. Sharrer, Nicole S. Peet and Brett H. Sifrit
Bottom Row: Guy S. Emerich, Forrest J. Bass and Dorothy L. Korszen

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PGICA FRIDAY BRIDGE*Sharon Biernat, 941-833-4441 or (c) 941-286-3062, biefla3@gmail.com*

We meet every Friday at 12:15. When everyone arrives, we start the game. All players are required to be members of the PGI Civic Association. To join the association, please call the front desk at 941-637-1655 or visit the association's website at www.pgica.org and select Membership. We only compete for prizes if we have at least two tables (eight players). We collect \$1 from each player when you check in.

If you wish to play and are not signed up, please contact Sharon Biernat. Contact information is shown above.

MONDAY AFTERNOON DUPLICATE BRIDGE*Debbie Meyer, 352-615-3976, Dmeyer50@msn.com*

We play Duplicate Bridge on the first and third Monday of every month at 1. At sign in we collect \$1 for prize money. You and your partner must sign up in advance to play on a specific day. A signup email is sent out a week in advance. We are a fun, welcoming group and are always looking for new players.

If you wish to play or want additional information, please contact Debbie Meyer. Her contact information is shown above.

Remember, all players are required to be members of the PGICA. To join, call the front desk at 941-637-1655 or visit the association's website at www.pgica.org.

MEN'S SOCIAL BRIDGE*John Iredale, 919-474-1223, jiredale1243@gmail.com*

Attention all men: We need you to join us.

- If you played bridge in college and have not played since but would like to rekindle an interest.
- If you think only women play bridge, you might be surprised.
- If your wife would like you to learn to play bridge with her (But you don't want to read Bridge for Idiots and can't stand her lessons or criticism).
- If you would like a new, less active hobby other than boating, golf, fishing, carving, woodwork, drinking, carousing or bingeing Netflix series.
- If you just want to get out of the house for one morning a week.
- If your wife would like to get rid of you for one morning a week.
- If you would just like to learn how to play bridge.
- If you already know how to play and would enjoy a challenge from some decent bridge players.
- If you would just like to enjoy some fun and a little kidding and fellowship with PGICA members.
- Enjoy competing against other great and not so great minds.

We would love to have you. Men's Social Bridge group, Mondays at 9.

Contact John Iredale at 919-474-1223. To leave a message or text, be sure to mention PGICA Men's Bridge. Better to text - that way if I miss it when you send it I can still read it later.

COUPLES BRIDGE*Melissa Brown, 734-769-3138, melbrown@umich.edu
Jeanne Hogan, 317-431-5948, jeanno383@gmail.com*

Our fun and friendly group usually meets on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. We have changed our starting time to 12:30. If you get to bridge on time, you will receive 500 bonus points toward your score for the day.

Contrary to the name of the group, you do not have to be a married or committed couple. All that is necessary is that there are two of you - yourself and your partner. We happily welcome players of all skill levels. Whether you are new to bridge, have played forever, or are a little rusty since you have not played in years, we would love to have you join us. If you need a partner, we can help you find someone.

If you have questions and/or would like to sign up to play, please contact either one of us by email or by phone. We are always looking for new players.

BUNCO BUDDIES

Mary Dowdall, 904-210-3168, mcdowd1@aol.com



If you're looking for a fun group of people playing a really easy game, look no further than Bunco Buddies. No skill involved, purely a game of chance - if you can roll three dice, you can play Bunco*. Great for meeting others because you change teammates every round. Come alone, with a friend, or even a spouse. Beginners welcome - you'll be an expert in no time. We play the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30, usually ending around 8:30. Bring a snack to share, your own beverages/glasses, and \$5 for prizes. Check out our website** (https://www.pgica.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=799073&module_id=655892) for more details. If possible, register in advance so the tables/chairs are set up appropriately.

*only physical requirement is you do get up and change tables with each hand - unless you win

**We're a group of the PGICA, not a club, so no dues or membership required.

THURSDAY EUCHRE CARD GROUP

Marcia Ellis, 269-760-2582, marcia.ellis@wmich.edu



Please join us on Thursday nights at 6:30 at the PGI Civic Association to play a friendly game of Euchre. Bring a snack to share and your own beverage of choice. If you don't know how to play, we will teach you. Everyone is welcome. For more information and to get onto the mailing list, contact Marcia Ellis at ellism@wmich.edu.



CANASTA/HAND AND FOOT GROUP

Janet Lynn, jlynnpgi@hotmail.com

We play canasta/hand & foot every Thursday at noon. We draw cards for our partners at 11:55 and play until around 4. This is a fun group we play for laughs. No signup required. We play year-round unless the building is closed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

MONDAY MORNING MAH JONGG

Donna Bernhardson, 732-713-3723

We play on Mondays from 9:30 a.m. to noon. Call Donna if you have any questions.

PGICA PINOCHLE GROUP

Mary Ann Kot, 941-347-8582, mamkot@aol.com



Consider joining us for cards. Getting together to play pinochle is enjoyable and an easy way to have fun. We welcome returning and new players. If you are new or want to learn more, you are welcome to observe. The time is every Tuesday at 12:30.

Current high score: 677 Gary Sblendorio

IN STITCHES

Norma Angus 941-575-1049, Debbie Scholtes 941-347-7044



In Stitches has many philanthropic interests. One of them is the Guardian Ad Litem program. We made more than 100 Izzy Dolls to be distributed to children during stressful situations. We sincerely hope they are of some comfort and assistance to the children. Wednesdays, 9:30 a.m. to noon.



PGICA Beautification Group

Julie Towers, julitowers@live.com

The newly formed PGICA Beautification Group held its first meeting to outline plans for improving the five welcome signs. These signs have been maintained over the years by various volunteers, but it's time for a more coordinated and consistent approach.

Our plan is straightforward: clean, refresh and enhance each sign area with updated landscaping, improving visibility and a cohesive look that reflects the pride we have in our community. Work will be done in phases, tackling one sign at a time so residents can see steady progress.

Stay tuned - we think you'll like the results. If you are interested in helping, contact Julie Towers at julitowers@live.com.



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Mother Nature continues to demonstrate she enjoys all kinds of weather, and in no particular order. She's treated us to cold, dry, blustery, steamy hot, and thankfully, a few torrential summer-like downpours in March.

A small but enthusiastic group of boats participated in a two overnight cruise and anchor-out in Pelican Bay. This quiet, unspoiled anchorage is a Mariner favorite for those who enjoy spending time on the hook.

Hugh and Rita Bass, sailing *Life is Good*, organized a special cruise March 2; special because participants were able to enjoy rise of a full moon followed about a half hour later by a beautiful setting sun. The boats congregated in Charlotte Harbor at marker 2 to witness this unusual event. All headed dockside aided by the light of the full moon.



Sunset moonrise cruise

Commodore Mike Guler and Nautical Notes editor Beth Guler are hosting Sunday brunch March 29 at the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club. This cruise is open to both vessels and land yachts; the approach to the marina can accept boats with up to a three foot draft.

Following some missed years due to hurricane damage, Mariners will once again celebrate our annual

Regatta at Burnt Store Marina April 10 to 12. The regatta proper will be preceded by a lunch cruise to Cass Cay Restaurant on April 9. Thanks to Michael Mankin for managing the boating side of the arrangements. Past

Commodore and current Social Director Sue Hills and her team of volunteers are organizing activities landside.



Ladies lunch at Blossom & Brie



Pelican Bay anchor-out

The Mariners social calendar is just as active as the cruise side of things. Many members attended our March first Sunday of the month breakfast, always held at Tamiami Tavern. April 5 is the next event, perhaps to be enjoyed on the patio if the weather cooperates.

In addition to our monthly Sunday breakfast, Mariner gals plan a monthly Lunch with the Ladies. The very well attended February outing hosted by Sheila Wiens was held at the farm-to-table open-air restaurant Blossom and Brie, located in North Fort Myers. The March lunch will be March 26 at King's Roadhouse Bar and Grill in Port Charlotte; Patti Conner is hosting.

Julie Towers will lead a group of intrepid thrifting enthusiasts to Sarasota on March 31. This full day of activities will include shopping at three thrift/consignment shops, lunch at Morton's Gourmet Market, and a possible rest and revive session at North Lido Beach before heading south for home.

Past Commodore and current Education Director Bobby Conte is developing a boating safety and information program. Anticipated areas of focus include first aid training and on-the-water skills such as vhf radio operation, chart plotter/GPS operation, etc. Commodore Mike Guler will present a refresher about typical navigational aids we encounter on the water at our March general membership meeting. As this program progresses, we anticipate more refresher units will be presented at upcoming general membership meetings. These meetings are held in the auditorium of the PGICA on the fourth Monday of each month beginning at 7.

To honor fallen Mariner Brad Betting, who passed away suddenly on February 9, the Mariners hosted a farewell gathering and sunset conch blow at Ponce de Leon Park on February 26 following Brad's memorial service. Attendees included Brad and Laurie's extended families and friends far beyond the Mariner family. Mariners also are hosting the Brad Betting Memorial Golf Outing on March 31 at St. Andrews South Golf Club.

If the above has sparked your interest, we invite you to join in the Mariners fun, fellowship and family feeling. Drop by and meet the crew at one of our happy hours, held every Wednesday from 5 to 7 at the Village Brewhouse in Fishermen's Village. Check out our monthly newsletter, Nautical Notes, which can be viewed at <https://marinersofpgi.org/nautical-notes/>. For questions, give our Membership Co-Directors Paul Baird (330-347-9023) and Tracie Goin (815-922-9833) a call. We look forward to meeting you.



Brad's Sunset Conch Blow

Can you believe it, we are already into April. The time is flying by, and it is hard not to wonder if that has something to do with just how full the Castaways calendar has been. When there is always something coming up, something new to try and familiar faces to connect with, the weeks have a way of moving quickly.

The Castaways calendar continues to do what it does best - offer a little bit of everything, and then some. From time on the water to ballpark afternoons, from creative showcases to events that are simply hard to explain, the variety is what keeps this group moving and growing.

The Boat Poker Run delivered exactly the kind of day Castaways have come to expect, even with a little help from unpredictable Florida weather. Dark clouds and passing showers tried to make an appearance, but the mood never shifted. Boats still set out, stops were made, and at each dock there was laughter, storytelling and that easygoing connection that defines this group. Cards were drawn, strategies were debated, and by the final reveal, Belle Hopley claimed the top hand and the big prize. It was a well-earned win and a great finish to a day that never lost its momentum. Steve and Leanne Murphy deserve special recognition for hosting. They created a welcoming hub that kept everyone grounded, organized, and in good spirits no matter what the skies were doing.

Then there was the Florida Man Games, which may go down as one of the most unusual outings on the calendar. This was not your typical spectator event. It was part competition, part chaos and entirely unforgettable. Those who attended witnessed events that pushed the boundaries of creativity and common sense in equal measure. It was the kind of experience where you find yourself laughing, shaking your head and wondering how something like this even exists. The Castaways who went leaned into it fully, and while they came back entertained, it is fair to say they may still be processing what they saw.

Back on more familiar ground, the Philadelphia Phillies vs. Tampa Bay Rays spring training game brought everyone together for a classic Florida afternoon. The setting was relaxed, the pace was easy and the conversations were just as important as the action on the field. Some came for the baseball, others for the sunshine and social time, but everyone left with that satisfied feeling that comes from a simple, well-spent day. Spring training has a way of slowing things down just enough to enjoy the moment, and this group did exactly that.

The Punta Gorda Short Film Festival added a completely different dimension to the lineup. This was an opportunity to step into a more creative space and experience storytelling in a way that felt both local and personal.

The films sparked conversation, curiosity and appreciation for the talent within the community. It was a quieter kind of event, but no less engaging, offering a chance to connect over something thoughtful and unexpected.

And there is no slowdown in sight. In the coming weeks, Castaways will be hosting private in-theater showings of first-run movies, bringing everyone together for a shared big-screen experience without the crowds. For those looking to shift into a higher gear, Fast Trax racing offers a chance to tap into a competitive side and see who really has the need for speed. On the water, kayaking outings will take advantage of some of the most beautiful natural surroundings in our area, while deep sea fishing trips will give members a chance to head offshore for a completely different kind of adventure. And if experience tells us anything, there will likely be a few surprises added along the way.

None of this happens on its own. It is made possible by the generosity of our members and their willingness to step forward, share ideas, host events and volunteer their time. That spirit is what keeps the calendar fresh and the group connected. If you have been thinking about getting more involved, consider this your invitation. Bring your ideas, lend a hand, and be part of what makes the Castaways what it is. It is time well spent.



Introducing the Aardvark Fish and Game Adventures Group

Are you passionate about the outdoors? Do you enjoy fishing, hiking, shooting sports, or simply spending time in nature with like-minded adventurers? If so, we invite you to join the Aardvark Fish and Game Adventures Group, a new community of outdoor enthusiasts right here in Punta Gorda Isles.

Our group was founded to bring together people who love the outdoors - whether you're an experienced angler, an avid hiker, a shooting sports enthusiast, or someone who just enjoys fresh air and good company. We'll be organizing a variety of excursions, including fishing trips, hiking outings, wildlife explorations, visits to local sporting clubs and social gatherings, all designed to embrace the natural beauty of Southwest Florida.

In addition to fishing Charlotte Harbor and offshore and exploring local trails, we'll also plan trips to sporting clubs like the Sarasota Trap, Skeet & Sporting Clays Club for those who enjoy shooting sports. Whether you're a seasoned marksman or just interested in trying something new, these outings will be a great way to connect and enjoy some friendly competition.

We also want your input. What types of outdoor adventures interest you most? Are there specific fishing spots, hiking trails or sporting clubs you'd love to explore with the group? Let us know - we're excited to shape this club around the interests of our members. Stay tuned for upcoming events, and don't hesitate to reach out with your ideas. We look forward to seeing you out there.



Stay safe with the Punta Gorda Police Department's Away from Home Program

When you're away from home, whether on vacation, for the season, or just spending time somewhere else, the last thing you want to worry about is the safety of your property. The Punta Gorda Police Department offers a helpful service to give residents peace of mind while they're gone, the Away from Home Program. This free service is a great resource for residents looking for extra reassurance that their home is secure, even when they're away.

The Away from Home Program is a courtesy service offered by the Punta Gorda Police Department to assist residents who are temporarily away from their property. This program is open to year-round residents, seasonal residents and vacationers. Its main purpose is to enable quick contact with residents in the event of issues at their homes, such as suspicious activity, utility emergencies, or other urgent matters.

When you enroll in the Away from Home Program, you'll provide the Punta Gorda Police Department with contact information for yourself or a designated key holder. This enables the department to quickly notify you or your designee if a problem occurs at your home while you're away. Whether it's a security issue, a utility failure, or a more serious emergency, the police will be able to contact you or your designated contact promptly.

One of the program's unique features is that the Volunteers on Patrol (VOP) team can conduct occasional house checks while you're away. These volunteers are trained to spot signs of suspicious activity, damage or other unusual activity. If they find any issues, they will quickly inform you or your designated keyholder to ensure quick resolution.

It's important to understand that the Away from Home Program is not a replacement for home security systems or private security services. Instead, it adds an extra layer of protection to help the Punta Gorda Police Department respond rapidly to emergencies. While home security systems notify you and the authorities of potential intrusions, the Away from Home Program provides an additional level of vigilance and support from local law enforcement and volunteers when you're away.

Signing up for the Away from Home Program is easy. Just visit the Punta Gorda Police Department's official website at www.PuntaGordaPolice.com, where you can quickly submit your contact information and that of your designated key holder. After registering, you can feel confident knowing that the Punta Gorda Police Department is watching over your home while you're away.

The Away from Home Program offers Punta Gorda residents peace of mind when they're away from their homes. It's a valuable free service designed to improve security and allow the police department to respond quickly to emergencies if needed. Whether you're going on vacation or away for other reasons, the Punta Gorda Police Department is here to help keep your property safe and secure.



Greetings to everyone from the Seafarers Cruising Club. With warm weather and gentle breezes, summer's presence is unmistakable, drawing boaters out to take advantage of our area's wonderful water and social activities. The Seafarers embraced these ideal conditions by planning yet another packed calendar of events in April.

A summary of the Seafarers' March cruises and social events is appropriate due to members' strong participation and enjoyment. On March 7, Cruise Director Kathy Nelson coordinated a lunch cruise to Miller's Dockside at Boca Grande Marina where members spent a lovely afternoon together, enjoying good food and conversation. The annual Arcadia All-Florida Championship Rodeo took place on March 12, with Social Director Jane Orlin coordinating the participation of the Seafarers in this notable social event. The widely celebrated St. Patrick's Day theme Poker Run was organized by Vice Commodore Ron Elsworth and held on March 14 with prizes being awarded for best decorated host dock and boat. The poker run concluded with all participants gathering for a raftup at Ron and Michelle Olsen's dock, the final stop. To finish out March, Cruise Leader Kathy Nelson guided the Seafarers on a delightful weekend trip to Marina Jacks from March 19 to 22.



Arcadia Rodeo

Throughout April, the Seafarers calendar would be scheduled with events for every week. Starting on April 1, cruise leader Dan Roda guided the Seafarers on a lunch cruise to the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club, where members had the opportunity to visit and enjoy a leisurely waterside luncheon. The Seafarers annual picnic was scheduled for April 10 at Ponce de Leon Park pavilion. Commodore

Jeanne Myers organizes this signature social event, where club members prepare and serve hamburgers, sausages, hot dogs and a variety of delicious sides to create an enjoyable gathering. Social Director Jane Orlin organized the Seafarers to attend the training event of Herrmann's Royal Lipizzans stallion horses in Myakka City on April 16. This thrilling event will feature the Lipizzans stallions, renowned as the "ballerinas of the horse world." A highly anticipated Seafarers' overnight cruise, scheduled from April 17 to 20 at Twin Dolphins Marina in Bradenton, will be coordinated under the leadership of Cruise Leader Rick Bunnell. This marina is situated on the scenic Manatee River, offering attendees easy access on foot to Pier 22, downtown Bradenton's nightlife, the Riverwalk, Bishop Museum, Manatee Performing Arts



Poker Run New Members

Center and other attractions. In April, as part of the closing out, Cruise Leader Kathy Nelson would guide the Seafarers on a brunch cruise to Cass Cay Restaurant scheduled for April 26. It promised another wonderful day spent on the water, with delicious food served in style.

The Seafarers look forward to making new friends and sharing our adventures with you. Membership Director Lisa Wienecke is looking forward to greeting prospective members with a warm welcome aboard. The Seafarer membership is a friendly, inclusive and active group. We are committed to providing a variety of day and overnight boating adventures as well as numerous fun filled land-based activities



Poker Run

Each month several fun and interesting new boaters are joining the Seafarers. We encourage you to visit and get to know us at one of our meet and greets at St. Andrews South Golf Club from 5 to 7, the fourth Thursday each month. As a friendly reminder, please add April 23 to your calendar and jump aboard one of our social events so you can meet our members and learn about all the fun we have together. There is no obligation - just stop by the 50/50 table in the foyer to let our greeting team know you are a new visitor interested in the Seafarers.

We are eager to welcome new members who wish to join our many fun adventures and make lasting

friendships along the way. For more information, please contact Membership Director Lisa Wienecke at 630-715-6333 or lawienecke@gmail.com or Jeanne Myers at Jeanne.myers@icloud.com.



The PGI Car Club (PGICC) meets at Beef O'Brady's in Punta Gorda at 11:30 on the second Tuesday of each month. Our next general meeting and lunch is on Tuesday, April 14 at Beef O'Brady's. Look for a reminder email a couple days before.

Cars and Coffee at the Bal Harbor Plaza is open to all automobile enthusiasts and continues to meet on the third Tuesday of each month at 9. If you are interested in joining our club, join us at the Bal Harbor side of the parking lot. Come and join us for some coffee, donuts and car talk. It is always interesting.



Another great way to spend an afternoon and meet other car guys is The Celtic Ray Car Show. The location is across the street from the Celtic Ray, on the second Thursday from 3 to 6. They offer discounts on food and drink for all participants.

Please keep in mind, we are always looking for additional events and lunch cruise destinations to new establishments, as well as some old favorites. Our members do have a variety of gathering spots that are fun and enjoyable too.

This month I want to share a special event that our members worked very hard on, to collect a huge amount of items, and set up selling tables two months in a row, at the Port Charlotte Moose Lodge Swap Meet. The swap meet starts very early on Sunday mornings, and so does the fun. At 6:30 a.m. the action gets fast and furious with all the treasures gathered. It gets even better as the temperature goes up and the prices go down. Great fun and hustle clearing out the very special, slightly used items for cash. At final count, \$1,350 cash in the bag. All members who collected, stored and transported the goods deserve recognition and a big thank you. For those who worked and sold the items, well we had a lot of fun. Finally, and most rewarding is that all the money earned was fully donated to the Harry Chapin Food Bank to help feed the hungry. This makes me proud to be a member of this car club.

Our club members post photos of impressive automobiles and current happenings on the PGICA Car Club Facebook page. Check it out and post your favorite vehicle images.

The purpose of the Punta Gorda Isles Car Club is to create friendships among auto enthusiasts through the fun and enjoyment of owning and operating special and/or antique vehicles. The club sponsors overnight and day trips, automobile maintenance and safety education, displays, shows and related social events.

If you are interested in finding out more about PGI Car Club, check us out at: pgicarclub.com/ or contact Wayne and Joan Erickson at mabax2@aol.com for membership information.

PGICA ACOUSTIC MUSIC GROUP

Jennifer deChiara, jenniferdechiara@gmail.com



A great aspect of the Acoustic Music Group is that there is an entry point for all members, regardless of skill level, musical preferences, even one's personal schedule. No one is keeping track of attendance - we are happy to see and hear anyone who comes to a Tuesday night meeting. There are regulars and newbies, year round residents and snowbirds, people who are comfortable singing and people who are not comfortable singing, veteran musicians and beginners. Regardless of who shows up on any given night, there is always good music and a fun time.

If you are thinking of joining this group but have some questions, please email our president, Terry Dotson at terrywdotson@gmail.com. Grab your guitar, choose your favorite song, and come join us.

SEASONAL FLOCKERS

Paula Mcilvrde, pmcilvrde@att.net, 248-330-7802



Seasonal Flockers

Seasonal Flockers are snowbirds that gather to socialize, meet new people, share stories of our seasonal travels and perhaps share in some adult beverages and fun times. We will meet once a month at the PGICA or sometimes take field trips for other fun adventures. Seasonal Flockers meet beginning in November and ending in April each year. If this sounds like your kind of group, please text or email me. Looking forward to meeting my fellow Flockers.

April Activities



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Celebrate 60 years of the PGICA with us!
 More details to follow.

SAVE THE DATE

Thursday, April 23, Perspective Member Reception
Thursday, May 28, Afternoon Tea & PGI History
Thursday, June 18, TRIVIA NIGHT
Saturday, October 3, 1st Annual Punta Gorda Isles Community Golf Tournament
Including Cocktail Reception Friday, October 2



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
			9:30a In Stitches 12:00p PGIsland 1:00p Couples 3:00p PGIsland 4:00p Beginner 4:30p Dancing 5:30p Advance Newcom Let's Mal
5	8:45a Monday Morning Men's 9:30a Social Bridge 10:00a Monday Morning 12:00p Mahjongg 5:00p Tag Team - Artists Duplicate Bridge Friends, Fun & Community	6 8:00a Car Club Show & BBQ 8:30a Zumba 9:00a Car Club Board Meeting 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 10:00a Morning Yoga 10:30a Landsberg Bennett Wealth Insight Seminar 11:30a Newcomers Club- Lunch & Learn 12:15p Pinochle 1:00p Pickleball Beginner 101 6:30p Bunco Buddies 7:00p Acoustic Music Group	7 9:00a PGICA B 9:30a In Stitches 12:30p Duplicat 1:00p * MEMBE SCAM, F ACTIVE GUN SA 1:00p Just For 1:00p PGIsland 3:00p Beginner 4:00p Dancing 4:30p Advance 6:00p Dancing PGIsland CCPU Ha Meeting
12	8:45a Monday Morning Men's 9:30a Social Bridge 10:00a Monday Morning 6:00p Mahjongg 7:00p Tag Team - Artists Seasonal Flockers Aardvarks Outdoor Group 7:00p Texas Hold'em	13 8:30a Monday Morning Men's 8:30a Social Bridge 9:00a Monday Morning 10:00a Mahjongg 12:15p Tag Team - Artists 5:30p Seasonal Flockers 7:00p Aardvarks Outdoor Group	14 9:00a Beyond 9:30a In Stitches 11:00a Beyond 12:00p Tour 24HR GIV CHALLE 12:00p Couples 1:00p PGIsland 2:00p Just For 4:00p Fling 4:30p Just For 5:30p Newcom 6:00p Let's Mal CCPU Ha Meeting
10:00a Newcomers Olympics	19 8:45a Monday Morning Men's 9:30a Social Bridge 10:00a Monday Morning 12:00p Mahjongg 3:30p Tag Team - Artists Duplicate Bridge Friends, Fun, & Community Board Friends, Fun & Community 5:00p Friends, Fun & Community 7:00p Aardvarks Outdoor Group	20 8:30a Zumba 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:00a Member Shred Event 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:15p Pinochle 3:00p Tennis Club 6:30p FF&C Ladies Game Night 7:00p Acoustic Music Group	21 9:30a In Stitches 12:30p Duplicat 1:00p PGIsland 4:30p PGIsland 6:00p CCPU Ha Meeting
26	8:45a Monday Morning Men's 9:30a Social Bridge 10:00a Mariners Board Meeting 12:15p Monday Morning 5:00p Mahjongg 5:30p Tag Team - Artists 7:00p Mariners Texas Hold'em	27 8:30a Zumba 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:15p Pinochle 5:00p Seafarers 7:00p Acoustic Music Group	28 9:30a In Stitches 1:00p PGIsland 5:30p Let's Mal

CALENDAR

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 es Bridge ers- Mahjongg -Basic Line with Judy d-Improve Line with Judy ers Club ke Soap	2 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 1:00p Pickleball Beginner 101 1:30p Beginner Ukulele 2:00p Creative Cellphone Photography 4:00p Paradise Friends Sips n Dips 6:30p Euchre Group 6:30p PGIslanders	3 8:30a Zumba 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge	4 5:30p Newcomers Special Events
8 board Meeting es e Bridge ERS ONLY * FRAUD ALERT, SHOOTER, FETY SEMINAR Fun- Book Club ers- Mahjongg r-Basic Line with Judy d-Improve Line with Judy ers Club ave a Better	9 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 1:00p Pickleball Beginner 101 1:30p Beginner Ukulele 2:00p Creative Cellphone Photography 6:30p Euchre Group	10 8:30a Zumba 10:00a The ART of a Traditional French Dinner 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge	11
15 Ourselves es Ourselves Home /ING NGE BEGINS! Bridge ers- Mahjongg Fun - Spring Fun ers ke Soap ave a Better	16 12:00p 24HR GIVING CHALLENGE ENDS 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 1:30p Beginner Ukulele 2:00p Creative Cellphone Photography 6:30p Euchre Group	17 8:30a Zumba 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge	18
22 es e Bridge ers- Mahjongg ers- Social ave a Better	23 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 2:00p Creative Cellphone Photography 5:00p New Member Reception 6:30p Euchre Group	24 8:30a Zumba 10:00a Paper Quilling Workshop 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge 1:00p Mahjongg - Review, Tips and Tricks	25
29 es ers- Mahjongg ke Soap	30 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:00a PGIslanders- Board 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 2:00p Creative Cellphone Photography 3:30p Paradise Friends 6:30p Euchre Group		

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Looking Ahead to May

CALENDAR

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					8:30a Blood Drive 8:30a Zumba 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge	5:30p N E
3	4 8:45a Monday Morning Men's 9:30a Social Bridge 9:30a Monday Morning Mahjongg 10:00a Tag Team - Artists 12:00p Duplicate Bridge 7:00p Aardvarks Outdoor Group	5 8:30a Zumba 9:00a Car Club Board Meeting 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 10:00a Morning Yoga 11:30a Newcomers Club- Lunch & Learn 3:30p Paradise Friends 6:30p Bunco Buddies 7:00p Acoustic Music Group	6 9:30a In Stitches 12:00p Couples Bridge 1:00p PGIslanders- Mahjongg 4:30p Newcomers Club	7 9:00a Chair-a-Cise 9:30a Just For Fun Mah Jongg 10:00a Morning Yoga 12:00p Hand & Foot Card/ Canasta Game 12:30p Mariners Mah Jong 6:30p Euchre Group 6:30p PGIslanders	8 8:30a Zumba 12:30p PGICA Friday Bridge	



Please welcome these new members who have joined since the last publication:

Marc Anthony
Roseann & Kent Avery
Karen & William Freeman
Tammy & Milon Fiser
Robert Gelman
Tara & Robert Incantalupo
Lynn & Michael Jablonski
Isaac James
Larry Lyon

Sindy & Joseph Micho
Lisa & David Morgan
Amy & Steven Peacock
Brigitta & Larry Peters
Mary Ann & Dean Steinmeyer
Conn Thomas
Linda & Greg Thomas
Vinceann Wahrab




PGICA EXCLUSIVE MEMBER BENEFITS

- Substantial PGICA member discounts at more than 40 local shops and restaurants with the **Shop & Save Program**.
- Free use of the PGICA **Loaner Program** to borrow items including car seats, wheelchairs, life jackets, walkers, kids bikes, foldable cribs, chairs, toys, and more.
- Ability to join more than 30 PGICA **Clubs and Groups** which include popular activities such as fishing, boating, table games, cars, music, painting, tennis, paddling, and social clubs. And you can start your OWN new club or group!
- Receive discounts on all PGICA **Entertainment** events including concerts, comedy shows, and dance parties.
- **PGICA Room Rentals** are discounted by 25% for your upcoming event including all varieties of parties, weddings, receptions, showers, life celebrations, etc.
- **The Commentator**, a full-color digital magazine, will be emailed to you every month to keep you apprised of all PGICA news and activities.
- Receive the weekly **In The Know** email newsletter which includes PGICA news and announcements, city news, and reminders for upcoming classes and events.
- Attend special **Community Seminars, Presentations, and Events**.
- **Be quickly notified** of important issues, breaking news, and emergency weather tips and announcements.
- Access the **On-line Member Directory** which allows you to keep in contact with your PGICA friends and neighbors.
- Utilize the drive-thru document **Shred Event** twice every year.
- Participate in the **Annual Arts & Crafts Fair, Annual Nautical Flea Market** and our very popular **Weekly~Wednesday~Markets** with premium locations.
- Attend annual **Exclusive Member Parties**.
- Your annual dues of \$80 **help the nonprofit PGICA** provide these many member benefits and additional events and opportunities for the entire Punta Gorda community.

You are supporting a reputable and valuable community asset which, with **over 3,100 members**, has existed for more than 60 years ... the PGICA.



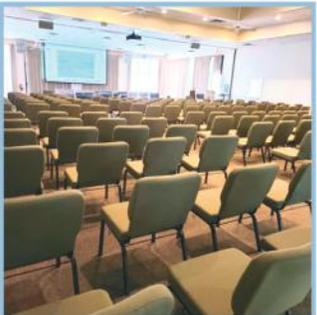
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2001 Shreve Street *Punta Gorda FL 33950
941-637-1655 * info@pgica.org * pgica.org
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SATURDAY

Newcomers Special Events 2

9

Keep the PGICA venue in mind for your next special occasion...



Call for more information or to schedule a tour!

 2001 Shreve Street
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941-637-1655 pgica.org

TYPES OF EVENTS

- ◇ Weddings and Receptions
- ◇ Bridal Showers
- ◇ Rehearsal Dinners
- ◇ Anniversary Parties
- ◇ Baby Showers
- ◇ Business Meetings and Seminars
- ◇ Celebrations of Life
- ◇ Birthday Parties
- ◇ Bar/Bat Mizvahs
- ◇ Promotional Events
- ◇ Dinner Parties
- ◇ Graduation Parties
- ◇ Quinceaneras
- ◇ Fundraisers

AMENITIES

- ◆ Auditorium Capacity:
 - 125 with tables (dance floor open)
 - 160 with tables (entire room)
 - 225 with chairs only, auditorium style seating
- ◆ Tables and padded banquet chairs included.
- ◆ Catering kitchen with commercial refrigerators, freezer, warming ovens, microwaves, commercial sinks, large granite work areas.
- ◆ Auditorium split with one-third dance floor and two-thirds carpet.
- ◆ Podium, microphone, portable bar, various tables, projector, large drop-down screen, sound system, stage and stage lights available.
- ◆ Air purification system throughout building.
- ◆ Wireless Internet Service
- ◆ Meeting Rooms
- ◆ Large Parking Area
- ◆ Outdoor Pavilion



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NEW MEMBER
Reception
& OPEN HOUSE
THURSDAY, APRIL 23RD



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1966-2026

All new members and prospective members welcome!

PGICA has over 30 Groups and Clubs which include activities such as fishing, boating, table games, cars, music, painting, tennis, kayaking, and social clubs.

Come meet members of our Groups and Clubs and other new members. See all the exclusive member benefits that the PGICA has to offer!

LITE REFRESHMENTS

5 TO 7 P.M.
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RSVP: 941-637-1655

PGICA Volunteer Recruitment

The Punta Gorda Isles Civic Association, Inc. (PGICA) is a 501(C)3 nonprofit community organization. It serves the entire Punta Gorda area by providing a wide variety of programs and services which highlight a transparent commitment to overall civic welfare and education. It is one of more than 800 nonprofit organizations serving our community.

Volunteers in several areas would greatly assist with the success of PGICA programs and services.

You are needed!

ADVERTISING SALES- Does cold-calling make you feel all warm and fuzzy? Are you a CRM guru? Do you absolutely love the PGICA? If yes, yes, and yes ... this might be for you! *The Commentator* digital magazine and a new monthly digital advertiser beginning in January could use your devotion.

(There might even be a \$small commi\$\$ion?)

EVENT PROMOTION- How organized ARE you? It's hard to believe, but the PGICA has an average of more than 50 classes and events each month. That does not even include club and group events or private functions. Those 50 activities include ukelele lessons, festivals, line dancing, fundraisers, concerts, yoga, photography, markets, exercise, and more ... without an advertising budget. Yes, members have the resources to stay informed of the PGICA happenings. However, we need the general public to be constantly kept updated about those happenings. That includes postings on all digital community calendars and other free announcement resources.

EVENT PARKING LOT ASSISTANCE- Maybe you were a school crossing guard, or you had an orange Safety Patrol belt and badge, or you generally like to ~~boss people around~~ ... help people! As our events become more successful, additional assistance is needed. It's a good problem to have, but it is a problem.

- ◆ Pre-marking vendor spaces
- ◆ Signage placement
- ◆ Directing traffic/traffic control
- ◆ Vendor assistance— parking, tables, electrical, etc.
- ◆ Traffic cone placement
- ◆ Trash can placement/emptying
- ◆ General safety
- ◆ Break down

LOANER PROGRAM ASSISTANCE- By far the most popular service offered by the PGICA, the Loaner Program does demand quite a bit of TLC. Assistance is needed with inventory organization, cleaning of returned items, repairs to equipment, and the disposal of unusable items.

HANDS-ON TECHIE TYPES- We do get ourselves into a jam sometimes. Maybe it's a paper jam in the copy machine or a musical jam when the audio/visual equipment decides to become obstinate, we sometimes need fixing. What seems like a major computer malfunction to us just might only be a case of the wrong button being clicked. Who we gonna call? **TECH BUSTERS!**

INDOOR EVENT SET-UP- Yes, we make it look easy, but there is a lot more to hosting an event other than opening the doors. When needed, how about volunteering to help with:

- ◆ Stage assembly and skirting
- ◆ Audio/visual set-up and operation
- ◆ Table and chair placement
- ◆ Table coverings
- ◆ Centerpieces/flyer placement
- ◆ Lobby set-up
- ◆ Green room set-up
- ◆ Greeter/registration
- ◆ Refrigerator/warmer clean out
- ◆ Ice inventory
- ◆ Holiday decorating
- ◆

MAINTENANCE AND FACILITIES ASSISTANCE- As much as we love doing it all ourselves, sometimes it's just not possible. If you are experienced in bid research and solicitation, plumbing projects, electrical work, computer glitches, copy machine jams, and stone work, and if you have a love for special projects, WE are here for YOU!

GRANT WRITER- Are research, project alignment, and persuasive writing your passion? Do you have an unwavering Oxford comma stance? Have you ever experienced joy because of new highlighters, binders, and colored tabs? You are in luck ... we are here to "grant" you hours of bliss!

PGICA OFFICE RECEPTION- The little desk behind the glass window in the lobby loves to have new attendants. All you need is a very friendly face and voice! Volunteering in the PGICA office involves answering the phone, checking in and out loaner program items, assisting with class and event registrations, making copies, providing general information, and other various office tasks.

THE 2026 GIVING CHALLENGE- It's almost time for the April 15-16, 2026 Giving Challenge. We need to rally the troops, muster the masses, and assemble our supporters. The best thing about the Giving Challenge is that every donation to the participating nonprofit organization is matched up to \$100! Each year there are more nonprofits vying for the Giving Challenge dollars, and we need your help. Another good thing? It only happens every-other-year. Feel free to take a peek at givingchallenge.org.

To be added to the volunteer list for any of these categories, please contact Alexa Rice at alexarice@pgica.org or by calling 941-637-1655. A special orientation is being planned for all new volunteers, which may or may not involve refreshments. Yes, we will resort to bribery.





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IN 2025:
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BILLION**



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JUST SOLD PGI FEBRUARY 2026*

HOMES

List Price	Sold Price	SP/LP Ratio	Address	HTD	Built	Pool	BE	FB	HB	CDOM	Sold Date	LP/SqFt	SP/SqFt
\$350,000	\$318,500	0.91	135 GULFVIEW RD	1,556	1962	None	2	2	0	259	02/18/2026	\$224.94	\$204.69
\$475,000	\$435,000	0.92	2424 SIERRA LN	2,100	1989	None	4	2	0	22	02/04/2026	\$226.19	\$207.14
\$525,000	\$515,000	0.98	2826 LA MANCHA CT	2,324	1988	None	3	2	0	14	02/20/2026	\$225.90	\$221.6
\$550,000	\$500,000	0.91	2215 PALM TREE DR	1,914	1962	Private	3	2	0	14	02/06/2026	\$287.36	\$261.23
\$550,000	\$525,000	0.95	33 OCEAN DR	1,884	1978	Private	3	2	0	187	02/19/2026	\$291.93	\$278.66
\$580,000	\$550,000	0.95	529 BELVEDERE CT	1,593	1969	Private	3	2	0	96	02/09/2026	\$364.09	\$345.26
\$589,900	\$588,000	1.00	3451 NIGHTHAWK CT	1,917	1995	Private	3	3	0	0	02/13/2026	\$307.72	\$306.73
\$600,000	\$565,000	0.94	505 VIA CINTIA	2,304	1975	Private	3	2	0	264	02/23/2026	\$260.42	\$245.23
\$625,000	\$600,000	0.96	1736 SUZI ST	2,171	2011	Private	4	2	1	5	02/04/2026	\$287.89	\$276.37
\$635,000	\$622,500	0.98	301 DELIDO CT	1,871	1963	Private	3	3	0	21	02/25/2026	\$339.39	\$332.71
\$649,000	\$615,000	0.95	2000 EL CERITO CT	2,177	1986	Private	3	3	0	38	02/27/2026	\$298.12	\$282.5
\$649,000	\$620,000	0.96	611 VIA TUNIS	1,839	2002	Private	3	2	0	5	02/12/2026	\$352.91	\$337.14
\$669,000	\$628,750	0.94	221 DI VINCI DR	2,337	1990	Private	3	2	0	35	02/02/2026	\$286.26	\$269.04
\$674,900	\$650,000	0.96	1428 KITTIWAKE DR	1,802	1988	Private	3	2	0	67	02/05/2026	\$374.53	\$360.71
\$699,000	\$650,000	0.93	1435 SEA FAN DR	2,089	1984	Private	3	2	0	107	02/26/2026	\$334.61	\$311.15
\$699,999	\$700,000	1.00	211 LIDO DR	2,132	2006	Private	4	3	0	276	02/13/2026	\$328.33	\$328.33
\$745,000	\$690,000	0.93	1592 AQUI ESTA DR	2,987	2002	Private	3	2	0	114	02/26/2026	\$249.41	\$231
\$749,999	\$711,000	0.95	340 BELAIRE CT	1,903	1992	Private	3	2	0	105	02/10/2026	\$394.11	\$373.62
\$750,000	\$737,000	0.98	2160 PALM TREE DR	1,809	1963	Private	3	2	0	283	02/19/2026	\$414.59	\$407.41
\$779,000	\$779,000	1.00	2855 DEBORAH DR	2,175	1985	Private	3	2	0	2	02/09/2026	\$358.16	\$358.16
\$799,000	\$770,000	0.96	1310 MONTE CARLO CT	2,513	2015	Private	3	3	0	90	02/06/2026	\$317.95	\$306.41
\$825,000	\$750,000	0.91	2856 DEBORAH DR	2,805	1985	Private	3	2	1	39	02/19/2026	\$294.12	\$267.38
\$975,000	\$950,000	0.97	2064 EL CERITO CT	2,205	2013	Private	3	3	0	93	02/17/2026	\$442.18	\$430.84
\$1,196,000	\$1,089,000	0.91	250 FREEPORT CT	2,962	1990	Private	4	3	0	227	02/26/2026	\$403.78	\$367.66
\$1,295,000	\$1,250,000	0.97	3607 DARIN DR	3,513	2006	Private	3	3	0	371	02/20/2026	\$368.63	\$355.82
\$1,395,000	\$1,300,000	0.93	3335 GRENADA CT	2,649	2018	Private	3	3	0	304	02/23/2026	\$526.61	\$490.75
\$1,595,000	\$1,550,000	0.97	2815 CORAL WAY	2,689	2025	Private	3	3	0	240	02/27/2026	\$593.16	\$576.42

CONDOS

List Price	Sold Price	SP/LP Ratio	Address	HTD	Built	Pool	BE	FB	HB	CDOM	Sold Date	LP/SqFt	SP/SqFt
\$194,900	\$189,000	0.97	255 W END DR Unit#2211	1,351	2004	Community	2	2	0	3	02/07/2026	\$144.26	\$139.90
\$198,000	\$185,000	0.93	255 W END DR Unit#3202	1,351	2003	Private, Community	2	2	0	5	02/23/2026	\$146.56	\$136.94
\$214,900	\$185,500	0.86	1080 BAL HARBOR BLVD Unit#12C	1,114	1974	Community	2	2	0	219	02/27/2026	\$192.91	\$166.52
\$250,000	\$250,000	1.00	247 COLDEWAY DR Unit#B11	1,111	1985	Community	2	2	0	0	02/23/2026	\$225.02	\$225.02
\$250,000	\$240,000	0.96	1780 DEBORAH DR Unit#28	2,582	1989	Community	3	2	0	146	02/17/2026	\$96.82	\$92.95
\$270,000	\$235,000	0.87	1890 DEBORAH DR Unit#14	2,429	1989	Community	3	2	1	342	02/03/2026	\$111.16	\$96.75
\$275,000	\$240,000	0.87	3228 PURPLE MARTIN DR Unit#116	1,586	2004	Community	3	2	0	266	02/06/2026	\$173.39	\$151.32
\$279,000	\$260,000	0.93	240 WEST END DR Unit#522	1,519	2006	Community	3	2	0	21	02/25/2026	\$183.67	\$171.17
\$279,900	\$245,000	0.88	3920 BAL HARBOR BLVD Unit#B1	1,183	1988	Community	2	2	0	55	02/20/2026	\$236.60	\$207.10
\$299,500	\$280,000	0.93	1335 ROCK DOVE CT Unit#unit 49	1,384	1989	Community	3	2	0	196	02/24/2026	\$216.40	\$202.31
\$299,900	\$290,000	0.97	240 LEWIS CIR Unit#29	1,146	1987	Community	2	2	0	144	02/11/2026	\$261.69	\$253.05
\$315,000	\$300,000	0.95	101 N MARION COURT Unit#222	1,592	1991	Community	3	2	0	63	02/26/2026	\$197.86	\$188.44
\$319,000	\$300,000	0.94	1780 DEBORAH DR Unit#15	2,006	1987	Community	3	2	1	35	02/13/2026	\$159.02	\$149.55
\$320,000	\$295,000	0.92	2002 BAL HARBOR BLVD Unit#1712	1,517	2002	Community	3	2	0	102	02/20/2026	\$210.94	\$194.46
\$325,000	\$325,000	1.00	255 WEST END DR Unit#2203	1,768	2004	Community	3	2	0	18	02/06/2026	\$183.82	\$183.82
\$350,000	\$339,000	0.97	1780 DEBORAH DR Unit#23	2,582	1989	Community	3	2	0	148	02/17/2026	\$135.55	\$131.29
\$355,000	\$355,000	1.00	240 LEWIS CIR Unit#214	1,534	1987	Community	3	2	1	0	02/03/2026	\$231.42	\$231.42
\$395,000	\$390,500	0.99	268 LEWIS CIR Unit#132	2,021	2004	Community	3	2	0	137	02/20/2026	\$195.45	\$193.22
\$399,000	\$375,000	0.94	2595 TARPON COVE DR Unit#1222	2,495	2003	Community	3	3	0	136	02/23/2026	\$159.92	\$150.30
\$495,000	\$475,000	0.96	1531 AQUI ESTA DR Unit#1	1,806	2002	Private	2	2	0	49	02/25/2026	\$274.09	\$263.01
\$695,000	\$685,000	0.99	1425 PARK BEACH CIR Unit#136	1,782	2020	Community	2	2	1	71	02/26/2026	\$390.01	\$384.40

****CLICK ON THE PLUS SIGN BELOW THIS PAGE TO ENLARGE THE PRINT****



3941 Tamiami Trail, Suite 3121
 Punta Gorda, FL 33950
 Each office independently owned and operated.



* Based on data supplied by the PuntaGorda-PortCharlotte-North Port MLS. Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed.



Farewell to chilly winter days and welcome to sunshine and warmer weather. With April's beautiful conditions, Newcomers are heading outdoors to enjoy a wide variety of events while continuing to take full advantage of the PGICA building and pavilion. These spaces have been a hub of activity throughout the first months of 2026 and remain one of the many valued benefits of membership.



Tropical flower arranging class

March was a particularly busy and engaging month, filled with opportunities to learn, socialize and try something new. Jane Connors organized members to tap into their creative side during a tropical flower arranging class, leaving with beautiful arrangements to enjoy at home. It was a wonderful reminder of the fun and fulfillment that comes from stepping outside the routine and exploring new interests. Be sure to keep an eye on the calendar for more educational and creative offerings in the months ahead.

The Bring Your Lunch and Learn series continues to be a standout. In March, Punta Gorda Mayor Dr. Debi Lux shared valuable insight into city operations and current and upcoming projects. In April, the focus shifts to

hurricane preparedness with popular meteorologist Matt Devitt. Interest in this important topic has been tremendous, and the event is expected to draw a full house. As always, this event is open to the entire PGICA membership.

Our lunch outings, thoughtfully coordinated by Deb and Dave Horney, continue to delight members by mixing local favorites with new and unique destinations such as Cass Cay Restaurant and Nav-A-Gator Bar and Grill. These gatherings are a perfect blend of great food and even better company.

Tasting events remain a favorite as well, combining education with a lively social atmosphere. A recent gin tasting led by Jeff Critser offered a fun and informative look at a variety of



Gin tasting

gins and their role in cocktails.

The PGICA classroom was transformed into a festive setting, and members fully embraced the experience. In April, Nan Eb will return with her popular Taste of the Town wine and appetizer event. These gatherings showcase not only great flavors, but also the incredible spirit of our members, who enthusiastically help with setup, cleanup and everything in between.



Men's social at Bermont Gun Club

Appetizer Nights, coordinated by Wendy Panourgas continues to be a favorite way for members to connect in a smaller, more intimate setting. Generous hosts open their homes, providing a welcoming space while guests bring appetizers and beverages to share. These evenings are simple to host and always memorable, and new hosts are always welcome.

Dine-Arounds, led by Donna Culver offer another way to explore the local dining scene. A recent outing to Ortigia was a lively success, and

this month's brunch at Leroy's Southern Kitchen promises to be just as enjoyable. Donna also introduced the ever-popular Sip Sip Bingo, which quickly became a hit and is sure to return.



Sip, Sip, Bingo with Donna & Craig

The men's activities committee, led by John Crawford is off to a strong start with events like clay shooting and an upcoming outing to cheer on the Florida Everblades in Estero. This new group is already adding another dynamic layer to the club's offerings.

All of these activities are made possible by the creativity, dedication, and hard work of our Social Director Alison O'Brien, along with our outstanding board members and volunteers. Their efforts keep the Newcomers Club vibrant, welcoming and full of opportunities to connect and enjoy everything our community has to offer.

Joining a team not only builds lifelong friendships but also helps you stay active and healthy. If you're new to the area, our tennis club warmly welcomes you to become part of our tennis family. We strive to make sure everyone enjoys themselves both on and off the court - whether it's through regular social events, friendly matches or group outings, there's always something fun and inclusive for everyone. To get started, visit our tennis webpage, https://pgica.org/content.aspx?page_id=22&club_id=799073&module_id=404446. Once you reach out, we'll connect you with a team captain who will guide you through the next steps and help you settle in.

The PGICA tennis club hits the courts whenever they get the chance. This month we are featuring our women's Charlotte County teams. The league season starts in October and runs until the end of March. The club currently has three 50+ teams that have matches on Fridays and one team that is open to all ages and competes on Mondays. The teams practice on Wednesdays coordinating start times so that each team has the use of all three courts each week. Each league match consists of three doubles courts. Matches are held all over the county at clubs and neighborhood courts and are played on both clay and hard surfaces.

Friday 50+ Double Trouble captained by Mitzie Khorman.

Friday 50+ Suncatchers captained by Cindy Simoni

Friday 50+ Sunhitters captained by Jackie Rahsaz

Monday 18+ Suncatchers captained by Susan Armo

Prefer casual play? Drop-in play days are open to everyone and posted on the schedule. Members get the gate code, court scheduler and use of the ball machine.

Membership dues keep our courts in great shape. It's \$75 a year, plus a one-time \$100 fee for new members. Everyone who joins also needs to be a PGICA member, just like with all the other clubs. Want more info? Check out our Tennis Club page on the PGICA site.

Our 2026 officers: President Jackie Rahsaz, Vice President Tony Rahsaz, Treasurer Janet Lynn, Secretary Janelle Anthonie, Social Director Mitzie Kohrman, Webmaster Bill Hogue.



Double Trouble Friday



Monday Suncatchers



Friday Suncatchers



Sunhitters Friday



Beyond Ourselves is thrilled to announce that the 2026 Share the Love for the Kids Home Tour raised \$90,000 to be distributed to eight children's charities in Charlotte County. This is a new record for us, possible only with the help and support we received from our sponsors, donors, ticket buyers and volunteers. Thank you to everyone who supported us, we are very grateful.

If you didn't get a chance to join us on the home tour this year, we hope you'll join us in 2027 when we will be showcasing an all-new group of local homes for you to visit and enjoy. Mark your calendars for February 27, 2027 for the next Share the Love for the Kids Home Tour.

We hope you'll also join us for our next fundraising event, Chip In For Charity, to be held on Saturday, October 17. This inaugural golf event will be held in partnership with St. Andrews South Golf Club. All proceeds will benefit the Peace River Wildlife Center and the Charlotte CARE Center. The day will include a golf scramble, prizes, giveaways and lunch. Visit the Beyond Ourselves website for ticket details and to reserve your spot. Both single players and foursomes are welcome.



Riley home on the tour

As a reminder, the PGICA Member Shred Event, a drive-through event, will be held on Tuesday, April 21 from 9 to 11. Beyond Ourselves members will be on hand to help with the event and to collect donations for the Peace River Wildlife Center (PRWC) and the Charlotte CARE Center (CCC, formerly the Homeless Coalition).

Even if you don't have paper to shred, we hope you will consider donating to one of these worthwhile organizations on April 21, as they are in need of our support.

We invite you to visit PRWC's website at www.prwildlife.org/support-prwc/stock-our-wish-list/ to view their donation wish list, particularly the items in red, which are needed now.

We also invite you to visit CCC's website at www.svdpsp.org/programs/homeless-services/charlotte-care-center/ to view their donation wish list. Donations of toiletry items and cleaning supplies are needed for the shelter.

The Fabulous Finds truck will be at the shred event to support CCC's mission. The resale store accepts donations of clean, new and gently used clothing, shoes, books, linens, kitchen items, furniture, small electronics and appliances, decorative items, lamps, artwork, household goods and much more.

Beyond Ourselves members will attend the PGICA's Open House on Thursday, April 23 from 5 to 7. This event is now open to the public, so please come meet us and learn more about our club.

On the first Saturday of every month, Beyond Ourselves members volunteer their time by serving dinner at the Charlotte CARE Center. If you wish to volunteer to serve dinner, please contact Lynn Rogers directly via email at earthlyynn25@yahoo.com.



Delivering donations to PRWC

SAVE THE DATE



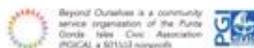
Beyond Ourselves, in partnership with St. Andrew's South Golf Club, invites you to

Chip In For Charity

Benefitting the Peace River Wildlife Center and the Charlotte CARE Center

Saturday, October 17, 2026

\$125. per person
Shotgun start at 8:30 am
Golf, prizes, giveaways & more



Beyond Ourselves is a community service organization of the Punta Gorda Intra Civic Association (PGICA) a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

Every Wednesday, Beyond Ourselves members pick up donations of perishable food and deliver it to the Peace River Wildlife Center. Nancy Klaren coordinates these volunteers to ensure the wildlife receives much-needed food that might otherwise be thrown away.

Beyond Ourselves is a community service club that meets the third Wednesday of the month, September through May. Our next regular meeting will be on Wednesday, April 15 at 10 at the PGICA. We hope to see you there.



Serving dinner at CCC

This article is written by Laura Hart. If you have photos or information to contribute, please email them to me at BeyondOurselvesPuntaGorda@gmail.com.

April is a wonderful month to spend time in Punta Gorda. Some experts say it is considered one of the best times to come to Charlotte County to gather to celebrate, go to parties, eat together and do all the fun opportunities we provide. So please join us this month as we avoid most April showers, but luckily enjoy beautiful flowers year round, and come to our events.

Sips and Dips will be happening on April 2 from 6 to 8 at the PGICA outdoor pavilion. You need to be signed up for this event ahead of time. Please bring an appetizer or dessert, and of course, BYOB. Dennis Barkow at dbarkow@gmail.com and Carol Barkow at barkowc@gmail.com are in charge of this event. If you need to cancel, please phone Carol Barkow at 262-902-5052 as there is a limit of 50 people and there is probably a waiting list.



ChowHounds Men's Lunch

Chow Hounds Men's Lunch will be held on Thursday, April 9 from 11:30 to 1 at the historic Bean Depot in El Jobean. It has a great atmosphere and food. It is known for its casual atmosphere, live music, and homemade food like chili dogs and salads. It has a quirky atmosphere with dollar bills on the walls and outdoor seating. They also provide live music. Please sign up on our website. For more information, contact Mike Dougherty at CaptnMikeD@gmail.com.

Ladies Lunch is on Thursday, April 9 at High Tide Social House, 6095 Silver King Boulevard in Cape Coral from 11:30 to 2. This restaurant is known for great water views. It has an American cuisine, including seafoods, pizza and other entrees. Please register so we know how many will be coming. Contact Lois Benvin at lbenvin@gmail.com for information.



Ladies lunch

You are most welcome to come to the Happy Birthday America to commemorate America's 250th birthday. Not only will you be offered some terrific music, it will also Tribute to America's Drone Extravaganza. It will be held April 12 from 7:30 to 9:30 at Charlotte Harbor Convention Center. It will actually take place outdoors, rain or shine. You must buy refreshments, including alcohol there. This will be a remarkable evening. The Symphonic Winds of Charlotte County non-profit will provide the music for the drone display by Sky-Elements. They won America's Got Talent show in 2024. Tickets are \$30 per person, and you can purchase these tickets on line through the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center website. Please sign up on our website so we can plan to sit together. For more information, contact Dan Kain at dkain01@gmail.com.



Fun at happy hour

Our Paradise Friends Mixer will be held at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel in The Library Room on April 16 from 5 to 7. We will be inside so weather won't matter. Please register ahead for this fun event. For more information, contact Jack Gardner at 4jackgardner@gmail.com.

On the last day of the month, Thursday, April 30, we are excited to offer a Japanese steakhouse style evening from 5:30 until 8 at the PGICA outdoor pavilion. We are bringing in Chef Peter of the Iron Grill on Wheels who will cater this event. He will be creating Teppanyaki grilled steak or chicken, and a veggie and shrimp appetizer. We will also provide bottled water and iced tea. We ask that you bring an appetizer, salad or dessert to share. You are welcome to bring a BYOB. The cost of the Japanese food will be \$35 per person and \$50 per person for non-members. Please register for this event no later than April 23 and

send cash or a check to Dennis Barkow no later than April 23 at 617 Santa Margarita Lane. This is limited to 60 people, so make sure you sign up early.

To join our club, membership forms are in the lobby of the PGICA and on our website under the Join the Club bar. If you would like to contact someone, please contact Membership Director Dan Kain at dkain01@gmail.com who will answer your questions about our wonderful club.

Please submit any photos to Sue Kelley who will writes this article at skelley180@aol.com.



Officers Dan Kain, Jack Gardner & Mary Heins



Hi everybody, and welcome to our page. Our middle name is fun. Our event of the month was when an excavator working on something in downtown Punta Gorda broke a four inch gas line just before Saint Patrick's Day. Oh well, less eating, more drinking.

February and March in review: February began with a large group our members for dinner at Italia, our hometown Italian restaurant right in the middle of downtown Punta Gorda. The group was so large we filled up the banquet room and three large tables in the restaurant proper. The food and service were great. Then there is the ever popular



Cruise ship

Breakfast Belles ladies breakfast at various restaurants. A special treat was happy hour at Sunset Beach in Fishermen's Village. It was karaoke night. There was a large crowd in addition to our group - some could sing, some could not, or should not ha-ha. Everyone was having a great time. The ladies also have their own special game nights. Since men are not invited, I don't know exactly what games they are playing...hmm. March rolled in and the weather starting getting warmer. While many of our events are done monthly due to their ongoing popularity others are one-of-a-kind special events. The first one of these was a Lunch and Learn sponsored by the Newcomers Club. The guest speaker was Dr. Debi Lux, the mayor of Punta Gorda and an FFC member. The next one was an open air concert by The Little River Band at the Caloosa Amphitheatre, a beautiful waterfront venue. Unfortunately it rained cats and dogs and we had to swim home in our ponchos. Looking further ahead the club occasionally does some very special things to wit: FFC as well as friends and family will soon depart for Barcelona and begin a ten-night cruise aboard the Celebrity Equinox to Malta, Turkey, various ports in Greece and end in Rome



Happy Hour

- pics of this event will follow soon. We are already planning our FFC Cruise 2027 adventure, also available to friends and family of our members - we will be sailing aboard the Majestic Princess for 12 nights beginning on April 7, 2027. Ports of call: Southampton, Cornwall, Cork, Dublin, Liverpool, Belfast, Glasgow, Invergordon, Edinburgh and LeHavre (opportunity to visit Normandy or Paris). Please email Cruise Director Susie Krause at susiekrause@yahoo.com if interested. We will also be having a margarita tasting contest in May and a Christmas party on December 13 at the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club. Put a hold the date on your calendar for the Christmas party.



Out to lunch

If you would like a peek at our April schedule reach out to our Social Director Betty Wilcocks at bhw613@gmail.com or

757-508-1070 and she can send you a link. There is always something to see and/or do for FF&C members. Pay attention to the email reminders and be sure to use the website calendar to sign up. Remember, the reservation slots fill up quickly. Reservation cancellations are available up to 24 hours in advance directly on the calendar. For cancels inside the 24-hour window please reach out to Social Director Betty Wilcocks bhw613@gmail.com or 757-508-1070, so others on the waitlist can be accommodated. As always, if you have a recommendation for a new restaurant to try or venue to checkout please contact Betty. If you're outside of the club looking in and would like to join us for Friends, Fun and Community, please contact Membership Director Linda McMeans at lhmcmmeans@aol.com, or President Donna Cary at carydkc1@yahoo.com for membership information.

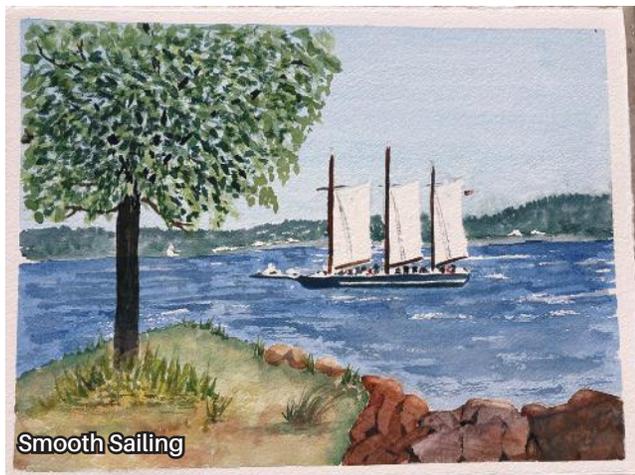


St. Patrick's

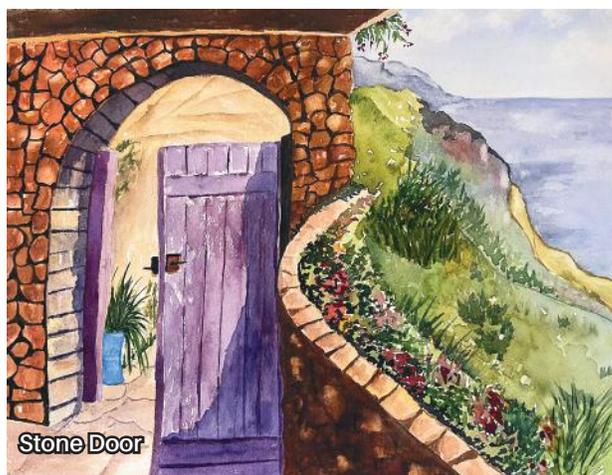
I am Dottie Brydges, a watercolor artist. I was born and grew up in Grand Rapids, Michigan. I specialize mostly in painting realistic landscapes and floral studies inspired by the beauty of nature. I paint from photographs taken during my travels and also from photographs taken close to my home. I try to capture the quiet details and natural light that make each scene feel alive and personal. Although I took some art classes in college, I'm mostly self-taught. I have taken several classes and workshops from excellent watercolor artists and learned different techniques.

Although I had long dreamed of painting, it wasn't until I retired in 2000 that I was able to fully devote myself to my art. Since then, watercolor painting has become both my creative voice and a reflection of my lifelong appreciation for the natural world.

Dividing my time between Florida for much of the year and Michigan in the summer months, I find inspiration in the changing scenery of both regions - from coastal vistas and tropical blooms to the peaceful charm of northern landscapes. My work invites viewers to pause, reflect and reconnect with the simple beauty found in everyday landscapes and blossoms. Through each painting, I hope to share serenity, color and timeless beauty of places that touched my heart.



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Summer Blooms



Winter's Fury

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VOLUNTEER

WE NEED YOUR HELP

PGICA Members, do you occasionally have a few hours free, and are interested in donating your time?

We could use your help with various events and tasks!

Call the office to inquire: 941-637-1655



It's Change of Watch season. Yes, our new bridge will take over April 1. Congratulations to our new Commodore Dave "This is not a meeting" Porter. Dave was our vice commodore and prior to that, he was an excellent cruise captain. Known for a sense of humor and attention to detail, Dave will lead the PGIslanders to infinity and beyond. OK, maybe not infinity, but at least 2026.

Even with a few days of cool weather, our cruise schedule hasn't slowed down one bit. Upcoming cruises include a raftup off the shores of Gilchrist Park. Plans are underway for an April southbound cruise to the Keys and Dry Tortugas. If you like cruising, the PGIslanders are your go-to group.

I am curious as to the reasoning behind the placement of Resume Normal Safe Speed markers on Alligator Creek just after Buckley's Pass. The marker is quite a bit inland compared to the Ponce de Leon Inlet, and the other canal exits around Punta Gorda. So many times, I have seen boaters at high-speed coming into the Alligator Creek channel, with big wakes. I've also seen kayakers, sailors and fishing skiffs bounced around as these boats come into the channel. Why is the speed of these crafts ok, but elsewhere it is not?

According to a recent Boat U.S. magazine article, the research staff at the University of Minnesota's St. Anthony Falls Laboratory found bow and stern pressure waves, transverse waves and propeller wash have a profound effect on our waterways. The damage due to these waves can extend as far down as 20 feet. We all know the depth here is nowhere close to that, so the damage could be even more profound than we realize.

The forces described above have a damaging impact even several hours after the craft passes. The effects include suspended sediment and shear, which can uproot submerged aquatic vegetation. The sediment that is suspended may include phosphorous, which is the primary fuel for algae blooms. Fortunately, we haven't seen algae blooms as our neighbors to the south have seen. But why invite trouble?

With the speed in this area, the potential for striking manatees also increases. Manatees do inhabit this area between Buckley's Pass and Charlotte Harbor. With so many manatee deaths this year already, the additional risk is not warranted. Although I am not privy of any manatee strike reports, it is only a matter of time before one occurs or maybe strikes have occurred but not reported.

I'm sure my opinion on this matter will strike some nerves. But let's be realistic. A no wake or minimum wake area coming into or out of Alligator Creek is not a deal breaker for your boating enjoyment. I would suggest it is just common boating courtesy to your fellow boaters.

Let's all be safe out there!



Dave Porter, our new Commodore, is presented with his flag by outgoing Commodore Kevin Ruane





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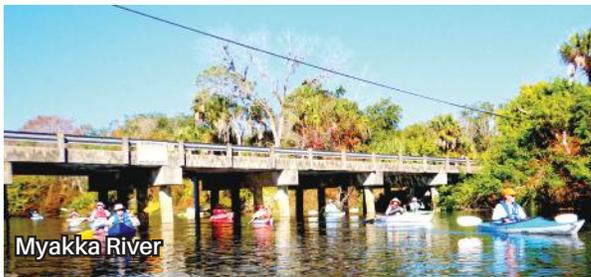


*Applies only to residential improved properties.
Listing fee does not include buyer-agent compensation. Additional terms apply.*

PGICA Kayak Group

Miriam Taylor, miriamktay@gmail.com, 317-716-4430

Our last two paddles turned out great. Bob Mueller led a group of 15 of us down Shell Creek on a very welcome warm day following a lengthy cold spell. Shell Creek is one of the most beautiful waterways around, having calm water, serene vistas and many varieties of exotic plant life on the banks. Following the paddle, we convened at Peace River Seafood for an old Florida style lunch.



Myakka River

Kathy Leitsch chose to lead the next one, a trip downstream on the Myakka River from the modern Senator Bob Johnson kayak launch. Having the river to ourselves we were happy to discover a very active American Wood Stork rookery on a small island. The weather was perfect and afterwards we gathered for lunch at the Tarpon Point Grill.

Our April events begin with a paddle in Bokeelia on Pine Island, led by Bill Kowal. This is a really fun outing launching from Carmen's Kayaks (where rentals are available and you can contact them directly) and we proceed through a mangrove lined bay and then conditions permitting, we venture out into the harbor for a trip around an island. Following the

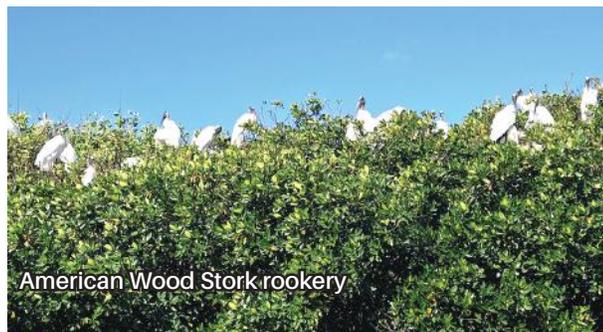
paddle, we re-convene at an old Florida tiki bar for lunch and to swap stories.

Our last April paddle of the season is always a trip though the Ponce de Leon Park mangrove tunnels. For anyone who hasn't made this trip, they are in for a completely different experience. Following the paddle we have a pitch-in picnic dinner at the shelter and then a sunset farewell until next season.

For more information about our group, please send an email to pgikayakers@gmail.com or visit the PGI Paddlers website www.pgikayakers.org.



Snowy Egret hunting



American Wood Stork rookery



DONATE BLOOD

PGI Civic Association

Friday, May 1st
8:30 am -2:30 pm

All donors receive*:
- \$20 eGift Card

- OneBlood Sun Shade
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- **Wellness Checkup** including blood pressure, pulse, temperature, iron count, and cholesterol screening.

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Appointments are encouraged, please visit oneblood.org/donate-now and use sponsor code **36192**

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THE PGICA MEMBERS DRIVE-THRU

FREE SHREDDING EVENT



WHEN:
Tuesday, April 21
9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

WHERE:
PGICA Parking Lot
2001 Shreve Street
Punta Gorda, FL 33950

- FREE - Bring two boxes of documents to be shredded and securely destroyed. (Standard copy paper/file box size.)
- Additional boxes of documents can be shredded for \$2 per box.
- Enter the parking lot from Shreve Street. Drive-thru event!

Sponsored By:



PGICA Exclusive Event

2026 Candidate Meet & Greet

Thursday, April 9, 2026

6 p.m. until 8 p.m.

You are invited to attend this informal opportunity!

The PGICA is a 501(c)3 organization and this *Candidate Meet & Greet* is organized to help provide the community with the most up-to-date, reliable information ... directly from the candidates. This is a great opportunity to meet candidates, especially the ones whose races could be determined in the August primary.

All candidates for offices representing our community (city, county, state, and federal) are welcome to attend. Each will be provided with an area to speak directly with attendees and share their information.

This will not be a speaking or debate format. However, each candidate will be allowed a couple minutes on the microphone to introduce themselves from their table. Otherwise, their time will be devoted to meeting with YOU!



Mark Your Calendars & Plan to Attend!





Across much of the country, March marks the transition from winter to spring - sometimes gradually, sometimes all at once. For the PGI Cruising Club, it has also been a month of transition as we settle into our new weekly happy hour location at the Four Points by Sheraton Hotel, following more than 20 years at St. Andrews South Golf Club. While we continue to adjust to differences in parking and room size, it's safe to say members are enjoying the hotel's happy hour drink pricing and the option to stay for a relaxing dinner at the Dockside Grill.

One thing that hasn't changed is our busy calendar of events. In early March, members traveled by car to the Broadway Palm Dinner Theatre in Fort Myers to see *Cats*. This venue consistently delivers Broadway-caliber performances paired with an excellent dining experience at a reasonable price. We're already looking forward to the announcement of the 2026-2027 season.



Another favorite activity is Dart Night at the Ice House Pub. On the first Thursday of each month, 20 to 30 club members gather for dinner before forming randomly paired two-person teams for friendly competition. From first timers to seasoned dart whisperers, everyone enjoys the evening, and winners receive gift cards generously donated by the venue. We truly appreciate the Ice House Pub staff's hospitality.

Boating activities have also been in full swing. We recently enjoyed a lunch cruise to Burnt Store Marina, followed by a delightful outdoor meal at Cass Cay Restaurant. Later in March, we'll head to the Charlotte Harbor Yacht Club - our first visit there - for a short cruise across the Peace River and lunch with a beautiful view of PGI from their waterfront restaurant.

Continuing the dining theme, our monthly men's luncheon was held at Las Mariachi's South, while the ladies gathered at Leroy's Southern Kitchen in downtown Punta Gorda.



And if March hasn't been busy enough, another lunch cruise is planned for April, with details still to be announced. Rumors include a possible raftup, a Pelican Bay beach party, or even a Kingfisher trip to Cabbage Key aboard the Charlotte Lady - so stay tuned!



Our final major event before many members head north for the summer is the annual spring picnic. We've once again reserved the main pavilion at Gilchrist Park for Sunday afternoon, March 29. The event will feature a catered lunch followed by games, including the ever popular cornhole tournament and a balloon toss. A recap will appear in next month's Commentator.

If boating and socializing with fellow enthusiasts sounds appealing, visit our website at www.pgicruisingclub.org and click on the Events tab, or contact our Membership Chair Marcia Ling at mjling28@gmail.com. Better yet, join us at one of our happy hours.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FOR SALE / WANTED

ARE YOU CONSIDERING AN ESTATE SALE ~ Reduce stress, save time, make some money and help the PGICA. The volunteer club, Isles Girls and Guys, will plan, organize, price, conduct the sale, and help with disposition of leftover items. All for a tax-deductible donation of 30% to the PGICA. Call Tom Teubert at 201-960-5340.

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GOVERNMENT UPDATE

Kay Abbs, 941-979-6667, bnkabbs@yahoo.com

Be sure to attend the PGICA Meet the Candidates Night on Thursday, April 9 from 6 to 8 in the main auditorium. There are already eight confirmed city, county and state candidates attending, as of The Commentator publication deadline date. There will be short introductions by each of the candidates at the beginning, then each candidate will have a table where they can meet voters, share their visions and answer questions. Feel free to stop by at any time from 6 to 8. We are having this additional Meet the Candidates because several elections will be decided in the August primaries. Please attend to let the candidates know that the PGICA has an active voter base and that we are very interested in their platforms. This is open to the public, so please share with your friends and neighbors. It is a great opportunity to meet those who will be making decisions on your behalf.

Have you noticed the repair work being done on the Freeman House, the yellow building at the foot of the 41 southbound bridge? Due to a win/win venture between the local builders and the City, City Council could save almost \$2 million. Previous estimates for repairs and improvements came in at over \$2 million. As a joint cooperation between the local builders who are donating some of their time and materials at costs, the cost to the taxpayers is expected to be closer to \$400,000. Thanks to T.J. Thornberry of Thornberry Custom Builders for spearheading this.

Steven Leskovich was hired as the City Attorney. He had been filling the position as the interim city attorney.

Good news for Punta Gorda City water, State Representative Vanessa Oliver's House Bill 4077, which was for the County takeover of the City water, is now dead. Thanks to all concerned citizens who made their opinions known to the legislature.

The City of Punta Gorda City Council meetings are scheduled for April 8 and 22, beginning at 9 at 120 Laishley Court. All residents are invited to attend and welcome to speak for three minutes in the public comment section of the meeting. Agendas can be found on the City website.

Effective February 8, the Modified Phase II Water Shortage Order reduces lawn watering to one day a week. See the City website to determine your day.





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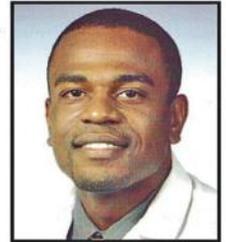
Alan Glassman
Jack Waldron
Diann Englehart

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- Make a difference...helping people can benefit the whole
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- Be an inspiration to others...a willingness to serve others may inspire those around you to follow suit.

Please call the PGICA office for more information and opportunities at 941-637-1655

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- On the blue title bar, select "Members." The dropdown list appears, select "PGICA Shop and Save" to view the list.

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Left to Right: Nicole S. Peet, Forrest J. Bass, Dorothy L. Korszen, Guy S. Emerich, Brett H. Sifrit, and Braden H. Sharrer



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