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Attractions

Mourning Dove by Carol Ellis
Luke Sommer Glenn Blog

What's Hot & What's Not

Artist of the Month:
Kathy Sperl-Bell
Crocodile Lake
National Wildlife Refuge
The History of Memorial Day

Maps

Key Largo Locator Map Page
Getting from Here to There

All the Buzz

Coco-Nut Funnies
Daily OM
Business in the Keys
Adopt a Key Largo Shelter Pet
Conch Characters



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May 2026
Volume 21 Issue #237
Prestige Publishing, Inc
101425 Overseas Hwy.
PMB #628
Key Largo, FL 33037

Deadline

for the Coconut
Telegraph's
next issue is **Thursday,**
May 14, 2026

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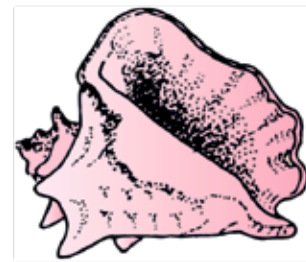
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Pocket Lent — A blog by Luke Sommer Glenn

My buddy's birthday was coming up and he had decided to party pretty hard. We'll call him Charles for this post.

Charles wanted to get a 1/4 ounce of the pink flake that had been going around for a buck fifty a g(ram).

He also wanted to get a QP (1/4 pound) of weed to go with the keg of beer. He wanted the GOOD stuff.

You see, every now and then, this lime green bud with red hairs, no seeds (sinsemilla) and a great high would come to town very much like the song Panama Red...

Maybe some hallucinogenics if we could find any, be it mushroom, cacti or bathtub variety.

He had scrimped and saved for pert near two months, working overtime, bringing his lunch instead of eating off the food truck twice a day, staying out of the bars...

As my dad would say, "Shit in one hand and want in the other and see which hand fills up quickest."

As the big weekend approached, things were looking grim. Charles's girl dumped him, he forgot to put a deposit down on the keg and he got laid off on his actual birthday.

A lot of guys would've just skipped to bourbon and beer chasers at home to lick the wounds and regroup. Not my boy. His way of collecting his thoughts were by throwing his fists. In Tite-ass-ville, there was no shortage of people to oblige.

His mom bailed him out Thursday afternoon and we smoked the pinner (small marijuana cigarette about the size of a toothpick) he had managed to conceal

through the entire search when he was processed into jail. His mom was so proud. She called us a "bunch of inmates."

Determined not to let a little setback like getting arrested kill the festivities, we spent the rest of the night in search of anything and everything in banned substances. When I got home, strolled in at sunrise to get ready for work, we had not succeeded in our quest for party favors.

My freshly unemployed friend continued the search while I was attempting to work a day job and be normal.

I managed to score an ounce of Mexican brown weed from a guy at work, it was seedy and full of stems but it was crumbly dry too. Looked like dirt when it was crushed up and cleaned. A hundred bucks for \$25 worth of weed... supply and demand during "Just Say No."

Charles stopped by my work on the afternoon break and we smoked some of my mediocre weed and he turned me on to a few lines of what was probably baby laxative and benzocaine he had found somewhere while he was out day drinking around town in search of said party favors.

We were going to meet up later at another buddy's auto body shop in Mims, a.k.a the lonely hearts club- Where the recently divorced/dumped gathered to drink cheap beer by the case, whatever was on sale; Old Milwaukee, Stroh's, Natural, Black Label...\$4.99 a case! Can't get a six pack of soda for that these days!

At any rate, the cheapest beer in town was at the old Majik Market, which used to

be one of the pricier places, ironically, the Indian-owned, Discount Beverage. The whole family worked the store.

They were willing to sell rolling papers when the corporate chains stopped selling them to do their part for the war on drugs - Just Say No! D.A.R.E to be different!

They were lax on IDs so parents could send in their barefoot kids with black feet to buy beer and cigarettes along with a sugary treat for themselves; no harm, no foul.

Charles had managed to find an 8 ball (3.5 grams- 1/8 of an ounce; don't judge, it's

the only math I know) of off-the-brick blow (right off the kilo, not stepped on, cut with Ajax or baby powder) and stopped in at the cheap beer store which was quite busy with all the nearby Mims residents stocking up for the weekend.

He made his way to the front of the line lugging his two twelve packs and as he reached in his pocket to grab his wad of cash, unbeknownst to him, the contraband fell out of his pocket.

He was counting out his money to the clerk, looking forward to an evening of cold beers and cocaine, when the guy behind him said, "You dropped this."

My friend figured he dropped some cash so he turned around to thank the guy and it turned out to be a Brevard County deputy, holding that little baggie of white powder.

Charles's throat dropped into his stomach, his buttohole puckered up tight - not even dark yet on Friday night and he's going to jail, goddammit, man. Hadn't even had time to crush it up in the grinder and do a blast...

Luke Sommer Glenn is a local entertainer and Conch Character.



For more info:
www.lukesommerglenn.com

In the meantime, all of us at the Home for Broken Hearted Suckers drank our beers and smoked some of the worst pot ever, figuring our friend must've reconnected with his ex and was toe to toe by now. His girl always seemed to show up shortly after the cocaine did...

There was no Sheriff's web page back then so we didn't hear about his troubles until Monday, after his mother picked him up from jail. Somehow, in her mind, it was our fault.

I was just giving him a ride to pick his truck up from the impound lot but I had to listen to the lecture about leading her son astray, being a bad influence. "He was effed up when I met him so this has more to do with you than me," was my response.

"Birds of a feather," my mother called it. "Dumb ol' boys, burning off testosterone."

That was her way of saying that we weren't getting any, because whenever one of us had a girlfriend, the rest of us wouldn't see him around until the relationship soured, then it was back to the Lonely Hearts and Auto Shop, to pass the time drinking beer, smoking pot and talking about the crazy women in our lives.

Peace and Love!





Eurasian collared doves feeding in groups on the ground.

Critters articles are inspired by the photographs I've taken, or photos I will take when prompted by the editor, as is with this story about the Mourning Dove.

The editor sent me a Facebook post illustrated with a beautiful Mourning Dove... and the caption had "Keys" written all over it... "this bird thrives with basic amenities such as gravel driveways and shallow water." That crunchy coral rock driveway is actually health food, as the doves need to swallow small stones to help them grind up the seeds in their gizzard.

I looked in my library, and I didn't have pictures, probably because these doves were so common, I overlooked them. No problem, they are always in my yard.



This challenge from my editor turned into a search for an elusive dove.

After more research I learned that aside from their coloration and markings, they had different, but similar calls. I was incorrect in thinking the koo-KOO-koo call was of the Mourning Dove. But no! The koo-KOO-koo is of the ECD, and is shorter and more frequent than the Mourning Dove's call of coo-AHH, coo-coo-coo which comes from the male sitting on his "cooing perch" letting females know he is available.

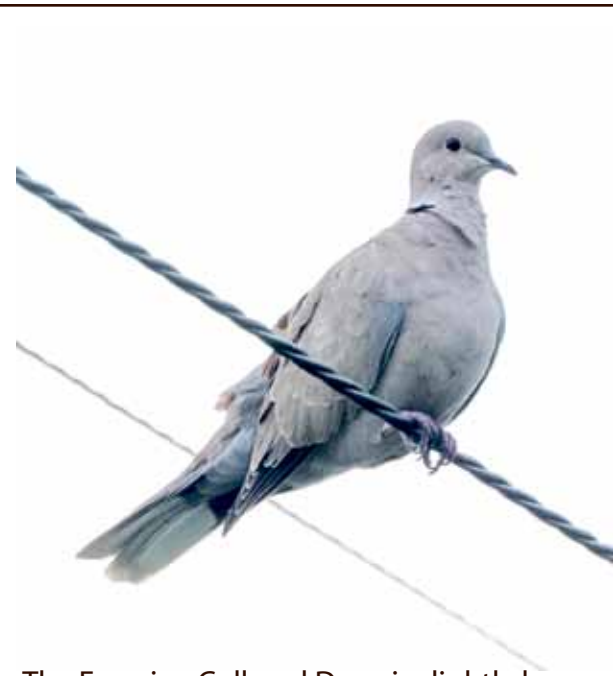
The ECD species name "decaocto" comes from Greek mythology. Decaecto was a servant girl transformed by the Gods into a dove, to escape her dreadful treatment; the dove's mournful cry references her former life.

Obtaining photos of the Mourning Dove (*Zenaidura macroura*) was becoming a greater challenge. Each time I'd venture out, I'd return with more ECD photos. I was beginning to think the Mourning Dove did not exist. A birder told me that ECD definitely outnumber

In just a few minutes I had obtained photos for the article. I uploaded them to the website iNaturalist, a site where I load my nature photos for positive identification. The online community responded within a day, identifying my dove as "Eurasian-Collared Dove." (*Streptopelia decaecto*) or ECD.



The Mourning Dove has a long tail, and a head that looks small in comparison to its plump body.



The Eurasian Collared Dove is slightly larger, has a shorter, squared off tail, and a distinct black half-ring on the back of its neck.

A learning moment... I thought the ECD were Mourning Doves.

ECD have plump bodies, small heads, long tails and pale, chalky, grayish-tan feathers. The ECD gets its name from the half round black collar on the back of its neck. Mourning Doves have a long pointed tail with white outer feathers; they have a fleck of black markings on their wings and are a warmer, pinkish-brown.

the Mourning Doves, but to look at the power lines or maybe construction sites to find them foraging on the ground.

After several days of hunting I finally spotted a few Mourning Doves in my yard. The Mourning Doves were under the bird feeder, cleaning up the seeds dropped there. Doves are the perfect clean-up crew. While the Cardinals and Blue Jays are careless feeders, allowing seeds to drop, the doves are

Mourning Dove... CONTINUED - Photos by Carol Ellis.



Eurasian collared doves blend in with dead branches, and find safety in an old avocado tree.

content to forage on the ground below.

A few more Mourning Doves were spotted on the loose brown mulch; their coloration made them blend in very well. They were very skittish, kept their distance and took flight when I got too close, but luckily I got some photos.

The ECD are invasive and becoming more common. The ECD have come a long way from their origin in India around 1600; from there they migrated to Turkey, and by 1945 had made it to Germany. By 1955 they had spread to England and most of Europe. The ECD population here stems from a 1970 Bahamian pet shop escape of about 50 doves. They made their way to Florida around 1980, and with up to six broods a year, they rapidly colonized North



Mourning Doves have fleck of black markings on their wings and are a warmer, pinkish-brown.



You will often see Mourning Doves grazing on the ground for seed. Above, on the loose brown mulch their coloration made them blend in very well.



The Eurasian collared dove are a pale, grayish tan.

CAROL ELLIS has lived in South Florida her entire life and Key Largo for over 40 years.

Currently a Master Gardener volunteer, Carol has a degree in Journalism from the University of Florida and is the resident photographer /artist at Ocean Reef Club.



Eurasian collared dove.

America. They have adapted very well to living among people, and are easy to spot if you take the time to look.

This story is important to tell because it points to the level of awareness and appreciation we have as humans for the natural world. Think of what happens when you go outside with awareness: Step number one, you hear something or see movement in the brush. Step two, you try to identify it... it is something small, what color is it? ... a lizard? or is it a bird? Step three... you ask what is it doing? Is it feeding? It is eating a worm? What kind of worm... And so forth. We all lie on some part of the "curiosity spectrum." Now when I hear a dove, I am trying to decide if it is koo-KOO-koo (ECD) or coo-AHH, coo-coo-coo (Mourning Dove). And to make life interesting we also have White-winged Doves, the Common Ground Dove, and White Crowned Pigeons in our area.

In time, as we get to explore more in nature, we become more knowledgeable. It all starts with appreciation, active observing, or even a challenge.

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With Age Comes Wisdom

I took my suit to the cleaners, who wanted to charge me \$40, so I gave it to the charity shop next door. They cleaned and pressed it and put it in the window. I bought it back for \$15

My wife and I decided to never go to bed angry. We've been awake since Tuesday.

Someone just gave me half a peace sign. Weird.

My wife said: "That's the 4th time you've gone back for dessert! Aren't you embarrassed?" I said: "No, I keep telling them it's for you."

She said she missed me. That would be good but she's reloading.

My wife and I started role-playing in the bedroom. Her favorite is The Sexy Librarian where I sit quietly while she reads a book.

Being old is when you don't care where your spouse goes, just as long as you don't have to go too.

I now know how it will all end for me, one of my kids will unplug my life support to charge their phone.

At a wedding reception, someone yelled: "All married people please stand next to the one person that has made your life worth living." The bartender was almost crushed to death.

I met my wife at a singles night. I was surprised because I thought she was home with the kids.

I want someone I can share my entire life with who will leave me alone most of the time.

Artist of the Month: She Paints Music: Kathy Sperl-Bell by Karen Beal

"There were no art classes offered in the schools I attended, none at all! When I moved to New York City at 17, I was exposed to so much art, music, and dance that have absolutely influenced me today."

Art was not her first language. In 2017, while visiting an artist friend, Becky Steele, Sperl-Bell was encouraged to take up a blank canvas, a few brushes, and acrylic paints. That experiment became her first painting. But it wasn't until five years later that she tried painting again.

It was her husband's dream to live in the Florida Keys; in fact, he told her on their first date they would eventually live here! So, after several careers, including travel, technology, and



Wearing one of her art-inspired fashion pieces, Sperl-Bell creates interest in her work at Art Under the Oaks, the Coral Isles Winterfest, and Island Fest.

real estate, they relocated.

Once in the Keys, at the age of 74, she began to attend some local art classes. Her art friends introduced Sperl-Bell to online art classes. When the time is right - things just click!



Sisterhood of Survivors - Inspired by stories of Keys women highlighting the power of female friendships.



Jam Session - inspired by clubs in New York City, and later in Washington, DC. Great music!

She joined the Art Guild of the Purple Isles in 2023. "Everyone was so welcoming; I never expected that! Since then, I've participated in many of their sponsored shows."

Then Sperl-Bell discovered Le Galeriste, a company in Montreal that turns art into beautiful clothing. The unique items can be purchased online, at shows or at a local gallery, where many pieces are displayed right next to her artwork.

When she is not painting, she is probably playing pickleball. When not on the rock, she and her husband travel in an RV through the U.S. and Canada. Music and art travel with them.

You can see her art on www.kathysperl-bell.com, and ArtWear can be ordered at www.legaleriste.com/en/art-by.ksb.



Gisela Llorens, Kathy Sperl-Bell, Kay Morrow wearing fashion pieces created with original art work.



Gettin' Down - Inspired by NYC clubs for Jazz and Blues featuring groups like The Modern Jazz Quartet, Mose Allison, Quincy Jones, and so many more. Bass and the Saxophone are two of Kathy's favorite instruments.



Pieces of Me Here and There - Before creating this mixed media piece, the artist was stuck, affected by all the turmoil in the world over the past few years. Finally, it came together and she felt better when it was finished. It sold quickly to a woman who was feeling the same kind of stress. When she saw it, she had to have it!



Rock On! - Music is always playing in the studio, and between strokes, the artist may be found dancing and singing. Honorable Mention in Mixed Media at the AGPI Judged Show in 2024.

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"I can see you're upset. Take a deep breath and use your words."	"You better stop crying or I'll REALLY give you something to cry about."
"You can't walk around the block by yourself. I'll drive you. Text me when you need a ride back."	"You want to go out? Take your bike. Be home before dark."
"I packed your bento box with almond butter on whole grain, kale chips, and an organic smoothie."	"Take a brown bag with a bologna sandwich on Wonder Bread. Grab a Twinkie and a Hawaiian Punch too."

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Garden snakes also known as garter snakes can be fatal. Yes, grass snakes, not rattle-snakes. Here's why:

A couple in Sweetwater, Texas, had a lot of potted plants. During last winter's cold spell, the wife was bringing some of them indoors to protect them from the freeze.

It turned out that a little green garden grass snake was hidden in one of the plants. Once it had warmed up, it slithered out and the wife saw it go under the sofa.

She let out a very loud scream. The husband (who was taking a shower) ran out into the living room naked to see what the problem was. She told him there was a snake under the sofa.

He got down on the floor on his hands and knees to look for it. About that time the family dog came and cold-nosed him on the behind. He thought the

Garden Snakes Can Be Fatal!

snake had bitten him, so he screamed and fell over on the floor.

His wife thought he had had a heart attack, so she covered him up, told him to lie still and called an ambulance.

The attendants rushed in, would not listen to his protests, loaded him on the stretcher, and started carrying him out.

About that time, the snake came out from under the sofa and the EMT saw it and dropped his end of the stretcher. That's when the man broke his leg and why he is still in the hospital.

The wife still had the problem of the snake in the house, so she called on a neighbor who volunteered to capture the snake. He armed himself with

a rolled-up newspaper and began poking under the couch. Eventually, he decided it must be gone and told the woman, who sat down on the sofa in relief.

But while relaxing, her hand dangled in between the cushions, where she felt the snake wriggling around. She screamed and fainted, the snake rushed back under the sofa.

The neighbor man, seeing her lying there passed out, tried to use CPR to revive her.

The neighbor's wife, who had just returned from shopping at the grocery store, saw her husband's mouth on the woman's mouth and slammed her husband in the back of the head with a bag of canned goods, knocking him out and cutting his scalp to a point where it needed stitches.

The noise woke the woman from her dead faint and she saw her neighbor lying on the floor with his wife bending over him, so she assumed that the snake had bitten him. She went to the kitchen and got a small bottle of whiskey, and began pouring it down the man's throat.

By now, the police had arrived. Breathe here...

They saw the unconscious man, smelled the whiskey, and assumed that a drunken fight had occurred. They were about to arrest them all, while the women tried to explain how it all happened over a little garden snake!

The police called an ambulance, which took away the neighbor and his sobbing wife.

Now, the little snake again crawled out from under the



sofa and one of the policemen drew his gun and fired at it. He missed the snake and hit the leg of the end table. The table fell over, the lamp on it shattered and, as the bulb broke, it started a fire in the drapes.

The other policeman tried to beat out the flames, and fell through the window into the yard on top of the family dog who, startled, jumped out and raced into the street, where an oncoming car swerved to avoid it and smashed into the parked police car.

Meanwhile, neighbors saw the burning drapes and called in the fire department. The firemen had started raising the fire ladder when they were halfway down the street. The rising ladder tore out the overhead wires, put out the power, and disconnected the telephones in a ten-square city block area (but they did get the house fire out).

Time passed! Both men were discharged from the hospital, the house was repaired, the dog came home, the police acquired a new car and all was right with their world.

A while later they were watching TV and the weatherman announced a cold snap for that night. The wife asked her husband if he thought they should bring in their plants for the night.

And that's when he shot her.



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Drumming

The rhythm of drumming is easy for our bodies to take in as was the rhythm of our mother's heartbeat.

That rhythm renews us is no secret. Drumming is the oldest form of music on the planet. Virtually every culture that exists or has existed on earth has practiced some form of drumming. In Africa, the beating of a drum continues to be an important part of significant ceremonies and holiday celebrations.

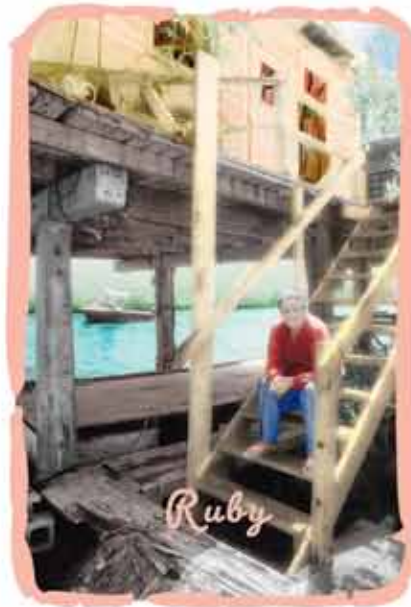
Native American cultures use drumming as a means to reconnect an individual's mental and physical selves. Throughout history, drumming has been a part of performing rituals, marking significant transitions, and celebrating life's cycles. Our lives are infused with rhythm beginning at the very moment we first sense our mother's heartbeat in her womb.

All manner of drumming has the ability to put us in touch with our own natural rhythms, the rhythms of the earth, and the rhythms of the people we choose to drum with. The drum can represent the heart, and drumming awakens the mind while stirring the soul. Drumming can take you to a place deep inside you where you are keenly aware of your mind and your body, as well as the vital bond between the two.

Much like human beings, each drum has its own vibration and voice. Drumming alone can help you release tension, dispel stress and aggressive feelings, and restore your energy. It can also give you an opportunity to reestablish your connection to Mother Earth, as the beat of a drum can represent a crack of lightning, pounding ocean waves, or the tumult of an earthquake.

Drumming with others brings with it many benefits. Taking part in a drumming circle attunes us to the invisible energy that exists between us while uniting us in a common purpose. Drumming can be relaxing as well as energizing. It quiets mental chatter and can create a peaceful meditative state. In Navajo lore, the drum is the Great Spirit's favorite instrument. It is said that this is why all human beings were given a heartbeat. The rhythmic beating of a drum can move us into new realms of consciousness. There is no right or wrong way to drum, and everyone has the innate ability to create rhythm. When you drum with intention, you'll discover the rhythms that move you.

Reprinted from DailyOM - Inspirational thoughts for a happy, healthy and fulfilling day. Register for free at www.dailyom.com



Ruby Stern known as "Miss Ruby", was the matriarch of Downtown Card Sound. She was a familiar site to travelers across Card Sound bridge.

ORIGINAL LOCAL ARTWORK BY



305-451-7778

On the shirt back is Carol's image of Ruby Stern, matriarch of Downtown Card Sound Road, a place that doesn't exist on any map... yet was home to a community of free spirits, fishermen and independent thinkers who took up residence there. Located on the west side of the road south of Alabama Jack's, and the toll booth, the shack was originally built by workers who constructed the toll bridge around 1968. In 1972 Ruby moved in and lived there for 27 years. She'd sit on the steps of her shack, with an old Colt 44 daring anyone to throw her off the land. She stayed. Not even the destructive forces of hurricane Andrew and the county's condemnation of the shack could send her from her spot on the bay on Card Sound. She moved to a trailer alongside and lived there until 1999 when she had to leave due to illness, and died at age 90.

Dress like a Florida Keys local and be comfortable in the sun in our DRI-FIT shirt designed by Carol Ellis | Little Salt Photography featuring original artwork of the HISTORIC FISHING VILLAGE OF DOWNTOWN CARD SOUND



SCAN CODE WITH YOUR SMART PHONE TO PURCHASE



SPF 50, long sleeve fishing performance shirt in aqua, limeade and white

The Secret World of Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge

by Karen Beal

When you think of Key Largo, you might think of coral reefs and fishing, but we also have a truly special place on land: Crocodile Lake National Wildlife Refuge, located about two miles north on Card Sound Road.

Established in 1980, this Refuge was created to protect the critical breeding and nesting habitat for the endangered American crocodile, a species that is vital to our ecosystem. Spanning over 6,700 acres, including open water and land, the Refuge is a testament to our commitment to preserving the unique and fragile environment of the Keys.

While the part of the Refuge that is the nesting grounds is generally closed to the public to protect the sensitive habitats within, there's an interesting public visitor station that offers a wonderful glimpse into this sheltered world.

And at that visitor station, you'll find one of the most delightful surprises in

the Upper Keys: the butterfly garden. This isn't just a small patch of flowers; it's a dedicated sanctuary designed to attract and support a variety of butterfly species, including the rare Schaus swallowtail butterfly. As you walk through the garden, you'll be surrounded by vibrant flowers and lush native greenery, all carefully chosen to provide food and shelter for these beautiful insects.

It's a perfect spot for a leisurely stroll or some quiet contemplation. Kids absolutely love it, and it's a fantastic educational opportunity for the whole family to learn about the butterfly lifecycle and the importance of native plants.

The refuge and its surrounding area host occasional educational events, especially during National Wildlife Refuge Week, the second week of October. These events, which might include bird walks or lectures, are a great way to learn more about the wildlife and conservation



The butterfly garden and visitor station provide a perfect window into this hidden world, offering a peaceful and beautiful experience that's a little off the beaten path



Photo: Floridahikes.com

efforts in our area.

The Refuge is a sanctuary for migratory birds, and it's a popular spot for bird-watching and photography, too. It's a reminder that the Keys are home to more than just our marine life; our land is just as important.



Photo: Floridahikes.com

Tips for Visiting

Crocodile Lake NWR is not open to the public, but you can get behind the scenes:

- Community Butterfly Garden and Kiosk area, open during daylight hours.
- Volunteering- Python patrol, Cleanups, Habitat restoration, RV work-camping and more.
- Special Events- Generally occur during the winter season.
- Research: Scientists must submit USFWS Research special use permit.

Email crocodilelake@fws.gov for more information.



Schaus Butterflies have few habitats. They can be found at the Crocodile Lakes location.



We always have something "Elk-citing" going on!
(Members and Their Guests are Welcome)

Monday: Line Dancing Lessons 5 pm (\$5 cost)
Show Me the Money — Fun card game! 6:30 pm


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Fun Starts at 6 pm • Drawings at 6:30 and 7:30 pm

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Sunday Bingo starts at 5 pm

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Bingo

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"Show Me the Moosebucks"

Wednesdays 7pm
Live Music & Queen of Hearts

Thursdays 8pm
Karaoke with Jenny & Friends

Members & Guests Welcome
Hours 11am - 11pm

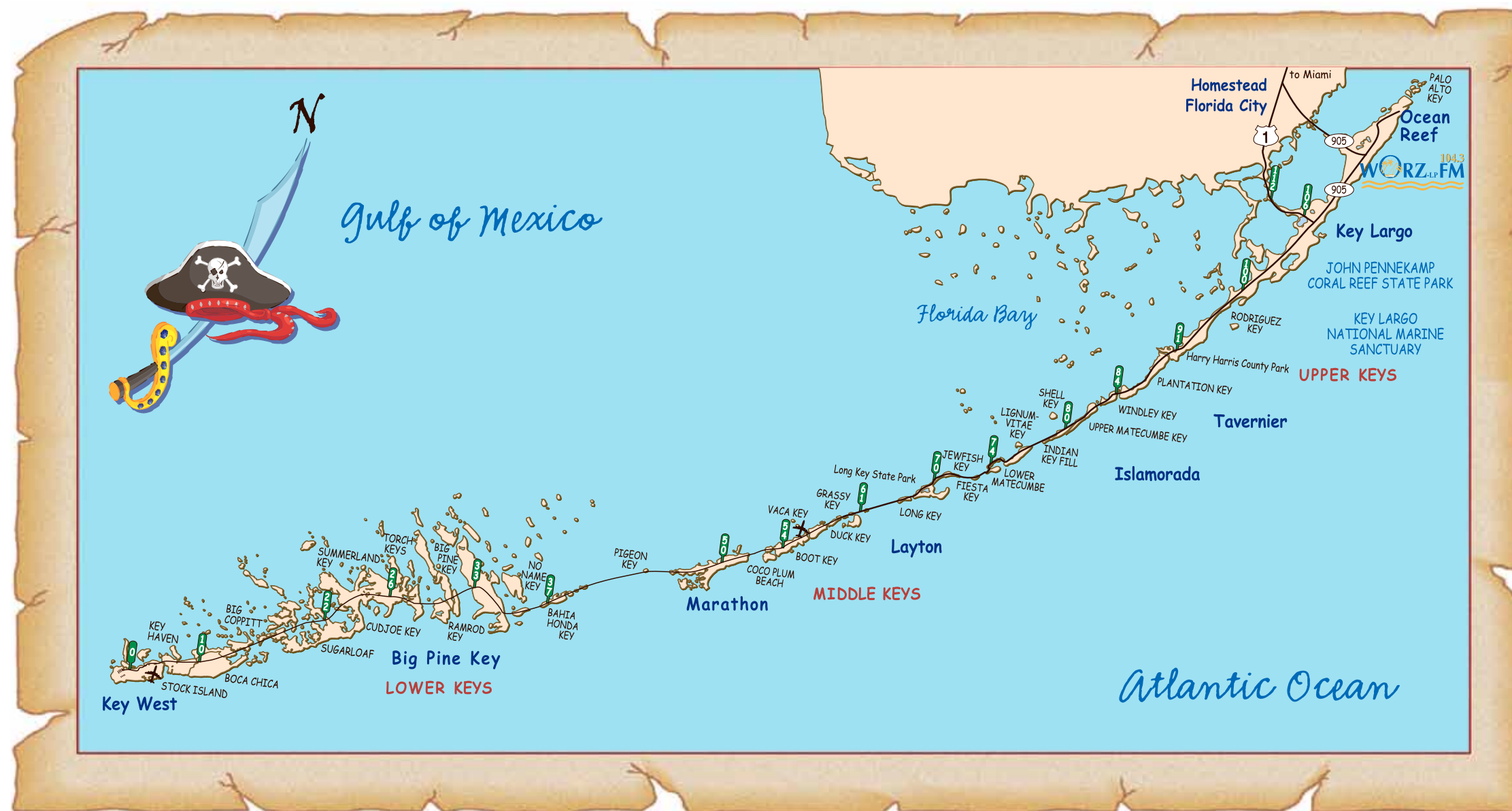
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Medical Humor

I went to the library to get a medical book on abdominal pain... somebody had ripped the appendix out.

Two blood vessels fell in love but alas... it was all in vein.

An organ's favorite boat is... a blood vessel.

Why do your heart, liver and lungs all fit in your body? Because they are well organized.

For years I was against organ transplants... then I had a change of heart.

Statistically, nine out of ten injections are in vein.

What did the vein say to the pessimistic blood clot? Be positive.

When do you get a bladder infection? Urine trouble!

You can hear the blood in your veins if you... listen varicosely.

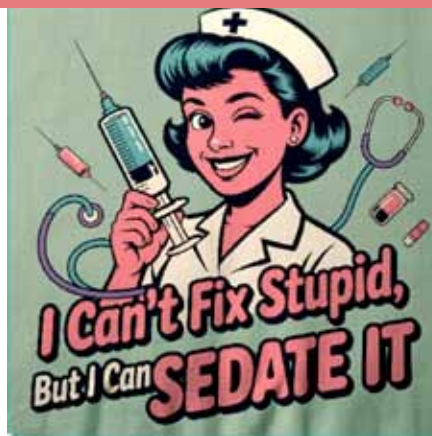
When neurons commit a crime... they are put in a nerve cell.

If you steal someone's heart... do you get cardiac arrested?

The brain is an amazing organ... it really makes you think.

It takes some guts to be an organ donor.

A cardiologist keeps sending me x-rays of his chest... a bit weird I know, but it shows his heart is in the right place.



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The History of Memorial Day

Memorial Day was first widely observed in May 1868. The celebration commemorated the sacrifices of the Civil War and the proclamation was made by General John A Logan. Following the proclamation, participants decorated graves of more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers.

In the years since World War 1, the day has become a celebration of honor for those who died in all America's wars, as well as those who are Veterans and current members of the US military.

In 1971, Memorial Day was declared a national holiday. The United States celebrates this holiday the last Monday of May.

President Ronald Reagan is credited with reviving the practice of honoring Memo-

rial Day and its meaning. One of his famous speeches was given at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day in 1986. It begins...

"Today is the day we put aside to remember fallen heroes and to pray that no heroes will ever have to die for us again. It's a day of thanks for the valor of others, a day to remember the splendor of America and those of her children who rest in this cemetery and others. It's a day to be with the family and remember."

He went on to talk about those buried in Arlington Cemetery - military personnel both famous and unknown, Joe Louis, Audie Murphie, two space shuttle Challenger astronauts, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and so many more. He went on to say...

"All of these men were different, but they shared this in common: They loved America very much; they stood for something.

Look up the full speech, it was a great one.

Does Memorial Day have meaning to you? Many communities around the United States have memorial day events at cemeteries where veterans and spiritual leaders speak. Other cities and towns host parades to honor the military. However, in many cities around the country, these events have been forgotten.

It is important for Americans to take time to remember the sacrifices that bought their freedom. Here are some ideas on how to celebrate this important American holiday:

- Send a note or verbally thank Veterans you know.
- If you know someone who has lost a loved one in battle, offer to help with a household project or help meet a special need they have.
- Visit a local cemetery and place flags or flowers on the graves of fallen soldiers.
- Visit local monuments to military service.
- Fly the American flag at half-staff until noon.
- Participate in the National Moment of Remembrance at 3:00 pm. Pause and think upon the meaning of Memorial Day.
- Pray for God's blessing on America. Ask for His protection over all branches of our military.

Critters in our Midst
Carol Ellis

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6:00 p.m.

2026 Schedule

January 13	June 9
February 10	July 14
March 10	August 11
April 14	September 8
May 12	November 10

IS YOUR PROPERTY TITLE PROTECTED FROM FRAUD?

A malicious form of real estate fraud is on the rise, one that can be devastating for homeowners. Known as home title theft, the scheme involves forging documents to record a phony transfer of property ownership. Criminals can then sell the home, take out a mortgage on it, or even rent it out for a profit.

PROPERTY FRAUD ALERT

Monroe County Clerk, Kevin Madok, is offering Free Title Monitoring to help fight property fraud in Monroe County. By subscribing, a homeowner will receive alerts if a document is recorded in their name. To subscribe, go to monroe-clerk.com and click on the Free Title Monitoring tile. It is easy and it is free.

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Coco'Nut' Funnies

The U.S. should add 3 more states.

Because 53 is a prime number. Then they can truly be one nation, indivisible.

Now that spring is here, everybody should start thinking about cleaning out the house. Also, the senate.



My new girlfriend and I were traveling to meet my parents, when she got a flat tire. So I called my parents and said, "Sorry mum, we're going to be late. My girlfriend's got a puncture!"

"Oh!" she sighed, "I thought you had a real one this time!"

A woman fasted and prayed every single day. Morning, night, no breaks. Finally, God appeared before her. "I am pleased with your devotion," He said, "You may have five wishes."

Without hesitation, she said: "My husband must never go anywhere without me." "Nothing in his life should be more important than me." "He should only fall asleep when I'm beside him."

"When he wakes up, I must be the first thing he sees." "And if I even get tiny scratch... he should feel the pain too." God listened carefully, then He smiled. "Done." And instantly... she turned into his smartphone.

My friend writes songs about sewing machines. He's a Singer songwriter. Or sew it seams.

To all the husbands out there, Mother's Day is May 10th. Make sure your wife gets all the housework and yard work done by May 9th so she can enjoy her special day.

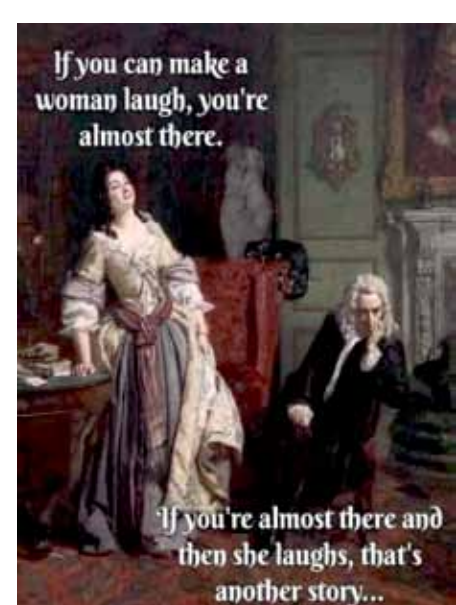
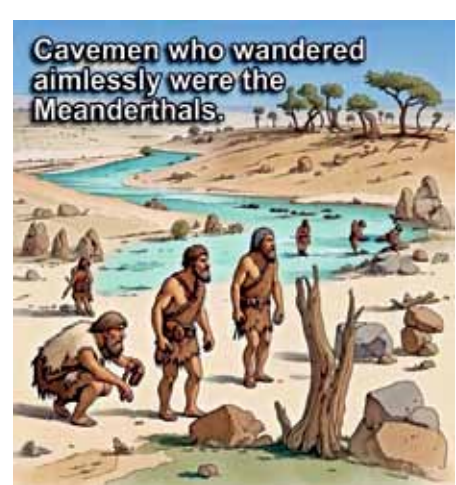
I'm a huge advocate of medicinal mozzarella.



"Go to bed, you'll feel better tomorrow" is the human version of "Did you try turning it off and back on again?"



me: hi, I have no power at my house
power company: ok, when did it happen
me: probably when we had kids, but it was a gradual shift



Someone ripped the 5th month out of my new calendar.

I'm dismayed

DOCTORS HAVE JUST IDENTIFIED A FOOD THAT CAN CAUSE GRIEF AND SUFFERING, YEARS AFTER IT'S BEEN EATEN. IT'S CALLED "A WEDDING CAKE"

BARGOYLE :
A PERSON (TYPICALLY FEMALE) WHO STANDS AT THE BAR WAITING FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO BUY THEM DRINKS.
SIMILAR TO A GARGOYLE AT A CATHEDRAL, BUT MUCH LESS ATTRACTIVE.



My kids asked me what I wanted for Mother's Day & I said for there to be no arguing & then they all started arguing about who would probably be the first one to start an argument.

PARENTS LIVE FOR THE TINY VACATIONS FROM THEIR KIDS. LIKE WHEN YOU PUT YOUR KIDS IN THE CAR AND YOU CLOSE THEIR DOOR, AND THAT LITTLE WALK AROUND TO YOUR OWN DOOR. IT'S LIKE A CARNIVAL CRUISE.



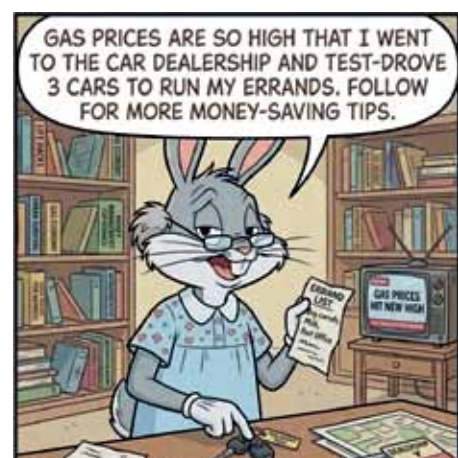
"I got my paperwork, Bert! This means I'm finally a certified professional!"

"That's not what being a registered sex offender means, Fred."

JUST TOLD MY KIDS I'M OLDER THAN GOOGLE. THEY THINK I'M JOKING

Friend: Take this pill! It'll make dancing way more fun.
Me: Nah, I don't do that stuff anymore.
Friend: ...It's ibuprofen.

National Lost Sock Memorial Day, celebrated annually on May 9, honors all the socks that are no longer with us. Where did they go? We are not certain but what we do know is that losing one sock of a perfectly-matched pair is a wide-spread phenomenon. So much so that we have a day on which to honor those socks we have loved and lost.



DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF

THE MOM IN E.T. HAD AN ALIEN LIVING IN HER HOUSE FOR DAYS AND DIDN'T NOTICE

A truck loaded with Vicks VapoRub overturned on the highway. Amazingly, there was no congestion for eight hours.



A couple was awakened at 3am by a loud pounding on the door. The man goes to the door where a drunken stranger, standing in the pouring rain, is asking for a push. "Not a chance," says the husband. "It's 3:00 in the morning!" He slams the door and returns to bed. "Who was that?" asked his wife. "Just some drunk guy asking for a push," he answers.

"You didn't help him?" she asks. "No, I did not, it is 3:00 in the morning and it is pouring with rain out there!" "Well, you have a short memory," says his wife. "Remember about three months ago when we broke down, and those guys helped us? I think you should help him. You should be ashamed of yourself!"

The man gets dressed, and goes out into the pounding rain... He calls out into the dark, "Hello, are you still there?" "Yes," comes back the answer. "Do you still need a push?" calls out the husband, now soaking wet. "Yes, please!" comes the reply from the dark. "Where are you?" "Over here on the swing!" replied the drunk.



The pessimist looks at the glass as half empty. The optimist looks at the glass as half full.

A mother looks at it as just one more thing to wash.



Imagine being eight years old and your absent father hires a woman off the street to sing to you about how fun it is to drink cough syrup.

I told my daughter to check her attitude and she looks at me and said "For complaints about attitude please contact the manufacturer." Well played well played!

LOR-E-LEI

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Dinner from 4 pm
Live Music Every Night



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- \$3 Domestic Drafts
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MUSICIANS

Amateur & seasoned musicians wanted!
Keys Community Concert Band begins rehearsals in the fall.
More info call 305-451-4530.

CLUBS

Florida Keys Orchid, Fern and Bromeliad Society meets the 2nd Tuesday of every month at the Key Largo Civic Club at 6:00pm.
Open to the public.
KeysOrchidClub@gmail.com

QUILTERS

Meet Florida Keys Quilters: Fridays, come to "Sit and Sew" KL Library 9:30-12:30
floridakeysquilters@gmail.com

THE KEY PLAYERS

Community Theater Group needs volunteers to work behind the scenes & audition for roles!
Check the website for upcoming auditions and productions:
thekeyplayers.org

Conch Characters / Around Town



Hundreds of young sailors from across the country competed in the 17th annual Buccaneer Blast hosted by the Mark Sorensen Youth Sailing Program in April. Blackwater Sound was the perfect place for this huge community-building event. The youth sailing program also offers local children several Summer Camp opportunities. 305-391-8661 for info on camp and scholarships.



Naked Pete entertaining at the Key Largo Moose.



Catch Luke Sommer Glenn - with the band or solo, around town. Check www.lukesommerglenn.com for schedule.



U.S. Congressional candidate Hector Mujica met with a dozen locals to learn more about concerns and values here in the Upper Keys. Questions about housing, jobs, habitat, FEMA and quality of life took two hours but he didn't seem to mind sitting in the breezy bayside location. He learned that Keys people care about our environment and individualism. L-R Ali Woltanski, Judy Miller, Hector Mujica, Sue Woltanski, Karen Beal, Sue Beal, Barbara Overton, Brenda Carr.

Adopt a Key Largo Animal Shelter Pet

Meet a few of the animals who are currently available for adoption at the Key Largo Animal Shelter. If you are interested in taking one of these adorable furry friends home, stop by or call. The Shelter is located at mile marker 106 Oceanside; phone 305-451-0088.



Chance & Jasper



Holly



Jack



Columbo



Clyde



Ruby



Ida



Harry



Mango



Felix



The Florida Keys Orchid Club "Member Plant" winner for April. See page 14 for their schedule.



Before they had the right to vote, Florida women made history. League of Women Voters of the Upper Keys hosted Monica Elliott, PhD, presenting "The Women Behind Everglades National Park." The park celebrated its 78th anniversary in 2025. But, part of the park was preserved 31 years earlier and was maintained during that time by a group of determined women - the Florida Federation of Women's Clubs.

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					Michael Trixx @Sunset	Uncle Rico 6-10
3 Rob Garza 12-3	4 Carousers 6-10	5 Micah 6-10	6 Webb & Davidson 6-10	7 Webb & Davidson 6-10	8 Shindig 6-10	9 Rob Garza 12-3
Webb & Davidson 6-10	Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset	Abstract Radio 6-10
10 Rob Garza 12-3	11 Carousers 6-10	12 Leah Sutter 6-10	13 Webb & Davidson 6-10	14 Webb & Davidson 6-10	15 Uncle Rico 6-10	16 John Ciulla 12-3
Webb & Davidson 6-10	Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset	Brothers of Others 6-10
17 Micah 12-3	18 Carousers 6-10	19 Steve Venini 6-10	20 Webb & Davidson 6-10	21 Webb & Davidson 6-10	22 Carousers 6-10	23 Devin Spaulding 12-3
Webb & Davidson 6-10	Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset	Abstract Radio 6-10
24 Mark Edward Hill 12-3	25 Carousers 6-10	26 Micah 6-10	27 Webb & Davidson 6-10	28 Webb & Bellamy 6-10	29 Ego Freak 6-10	30 Brothers of Others 6-10
Webb & Davidson 6-10	Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset		Michael Trixx @Sunset	
31 Webb & Davidson 6-10	Open for Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner 7am-10pm Enjoy breakfast on the deck overlooking the water. • Enjoy lunch or dinner on the beach.					



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