



Our Wonderful World

August, 2011
Volume 2 :: Number 8

The Art of Living Green



Safari
*South Florida
Style*

America
*Overweight and
Starving*

The
Magnificent
Melon


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Volume 2 Number 8

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Our Wonderful World

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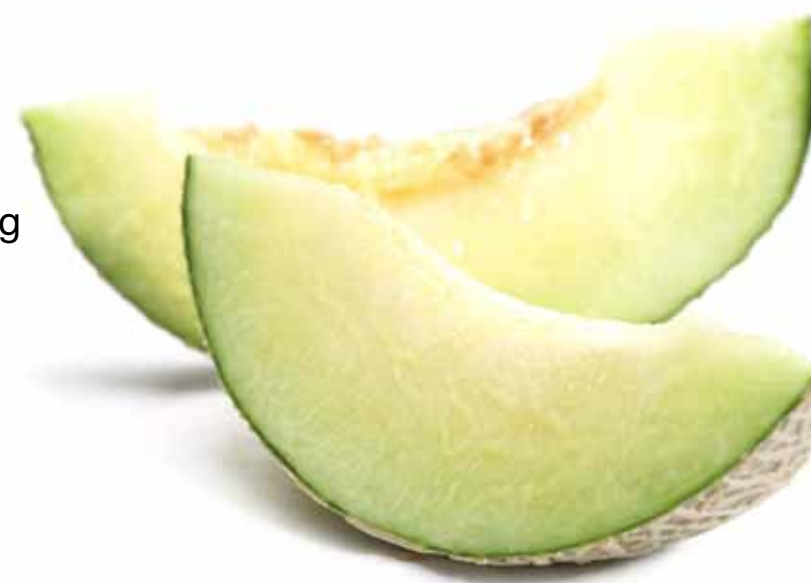
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FROM THE PUBLISHERS

*Nature trail at Billie Swamp,
Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation in
Clewiston, FL*

Welcome to the August, 2011 issue of **Our Wonderful World**, Florida's leading green digital magazine. Our leading feature story takes you on a safari...South Florida style! Splash through 2,200 acres of untamed nature with our very own Green Goddess and learn about one of the Sunshine State's best kept secrets — the Billie Swamp Safari. Located on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation in the heart of the Everglades, the Billie Swamp Safari is a great way to see alligators, turtles, fish, birds, raccoons and other wild animals in their natural environment. Thanks to Marketing Director Melissa Sherman for brining this to you.

Speaking of the Green Goddess, this month she shares a few more of her Pearls of Wisdom about how best to relax and soothe your body with recipes for bath salts and massage oils. Then again, be sure to check out the Goddess' column in the Eating Well section entitled, "The Magnificent Melon," for all the reasons to eat this wondrous fruit. (Just in case you needed any!)

We give a high five to Suzanne Kovi for her powerful message in "Having the Perfect Life." Suzanne recently came on board as a contributing columnist, and her story this month provides some useful tips about how all of us can hold on to our dreams, yet remain open to a new direction in life should it present itself.

Our dear friend Betty Ann Baker has written a wonderful article, "Touch — The Small Act of Caring," beautifully illustrating how one of the most basic acts of compassion can go a very long way in the healing process.

Kudos to Jenn Cohen for giving us a different perspective in "The Germ Theory" and to Richard Hawkins for some eye-opening realities about a very serious problem facing our country in "America Time to Tighten the Belt."

Well, we've got a lot more in store for you as we always do. So, grab your cup of coffee and start clickin'.

Sincerely,



Sharon

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Glenn

Glenn Swift, Editor in Chief
glenn@owwmedia.com

BILLIE SWAMP SAFARI

2,200 Acres of Untamed Everglades Wilderness

by Glenn R. Swift



Enjoying a ride on the "swamp buggy" at Billie's



(Front to back and left to right) Donna Peters, Sue Chieco, Cheryl Abrams, Ena Roseman, Jan Friedman and Sharon Quercioli



The Billie Swamp as seen from the swamp buggy

For those who enjoy nature and like to do things a bit out of the ordinary, perhaps it's time to take a safari — South Florida style that is!

Thanks to the courtesy of Florida's unconquered Seminole Indians, you can explore 2,200 acres of untamed Everglades wilderness by taking a trip to Billie Swamp Safari. Located on the tribe's Big Cypress Reservation just outside of Clewiston, Billie's provides an unsurpassable opportunity to view native and exotic wildlife in a way that few can ever imagine. Follow Sam Jones Trail, named after the famous Seminole who was a fierce guiding spirit behind the Seminoles' resistance to being relocated by the U.S. Army, and encounter alligators, gopher tortoises, wild African and European deer, bison, water buffalo, ostriches, wild boars and even panthers, while effortlessly gliding in an airboat or swamp buggy through a seemingly endless trail of cypress domes, hardwood hammocks and lush tropical vegetation.

At Billy's your friendly Seminole guides will graciously share with you their rich heritage and history, as well as teach you about the natural healing qualities of the vast array of indigenous herbs and plants that grow abundantly in the tropical cypress forest. The guides will also take you to a recreated traditional Seminole camp, where one can easily imagine how this amazing people lived and thrived for generations in the hidden forest as they eluded capture.





Critter Show at Billie's

Be sure to take advantage of this unique opportunity and make your reservations to take Billie Swamp Safari to-day!

Swamp Safari Day Package

Adult (13-61 years)	\$49.95
Senior (62 & up)	\$45.95
Child (4-12 years)	\$35.95
Children Under 3	Free

Includes the following:

Swamp Buggy Eco-Tour

Every hour from 11am - 5pm

Airboat Rides

Every ½ hour from 10am - 4:30pm

Children 3 and under may not ride for their safety

Herpetarium Alligator & Snake Show

2:15 pm

Swamp Critter Show

1:15 pm

Exclusive VIP Eco-Tour

This is a new in-depth, private eco-tour of the Florida Everglades that is available for booking seven days a week between 10am and 5pm. Two weeks advanced reservations are required. Call for earlier availability at 800-GO-SAFARI.

Directions

Billie Swamp Safari is located on the Big Cypress Seminole Indian Reservation at
30000 Gator Tail Trail, Clewiston, FL 33440



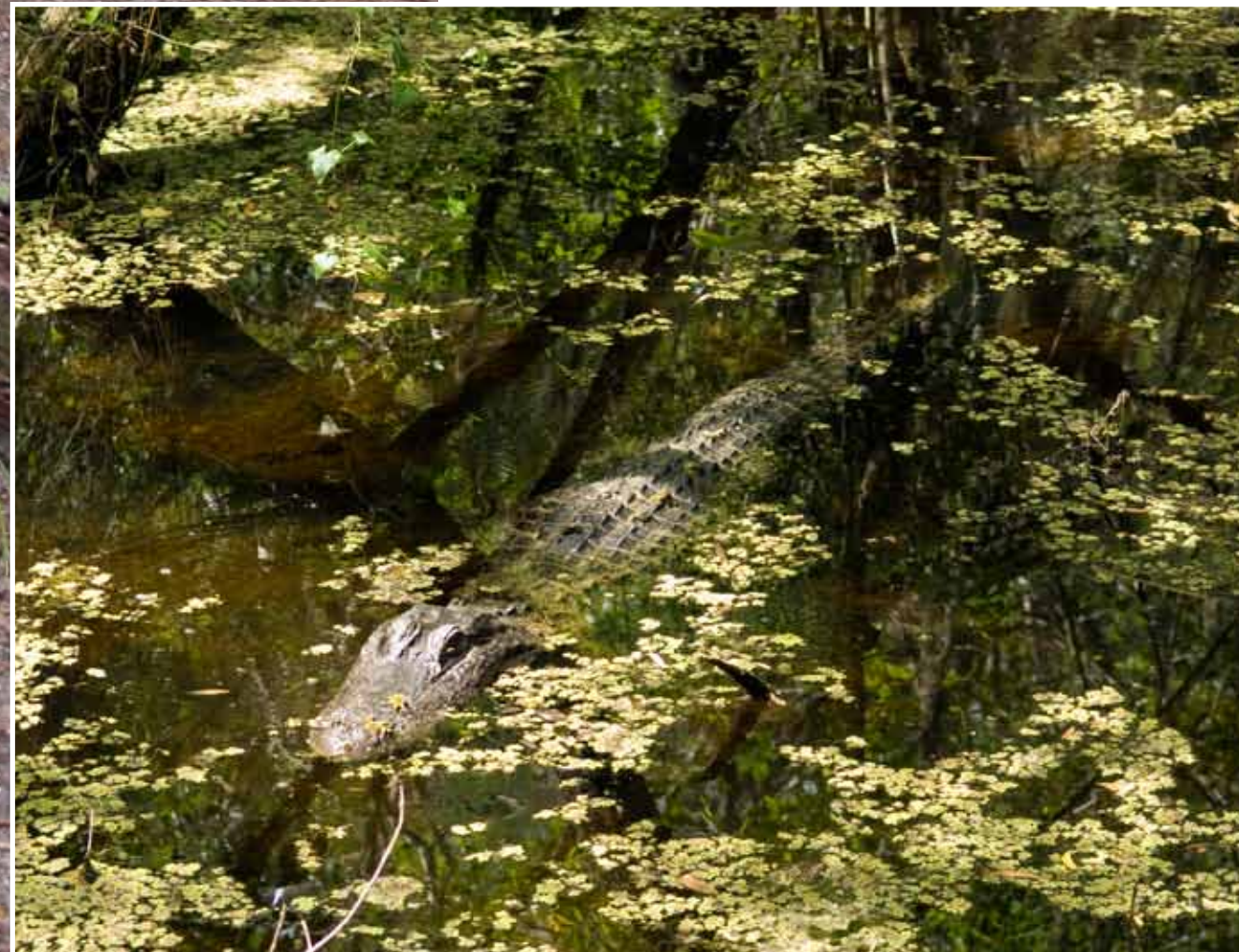
A water buffalo takes a dip underneath the blazing South Florida sun



Chickee - A traditional Seminole house



Medicinal herbs known to the Seminoles for centuries abound on this Florida cabbage palm.

**GPS Coordinates:**

Clewiston, Florida,
Lemon Grove Road
N 26 19 50 - W 81 3 18

From Fort Lauderdale:

Take 595 west to I-75 (Alligator Alley) north. Take Exit 49 and follow signs 19 miles to the park entrance.

From Naples/Fort Myers:

Take I-75 (Alligator Alley) south to Exit 49. Follow signs 19 miles to the park entrance.

From Clewiston Area:

Take 835 to 833. Follow signs to the Big Cypress Seminole Reservation.

From West Palm Beach:

Take Sawgrass Expressway to I-75 (Alligator Alley) north. Take Exit 49 and follow signs 19 miles to the park entrance.

From Miami – Pending Location:

Take I-95 north to 595 west to I-75 (Alligator Alley) north. Take Exit 49 and follow signs 19 miles to the park entrance.

From Miami – Pending Location:

Take 836/826 to US27 to I-75 (Alligator Alley) north. Take Exit 49 and follow signs 19 miles to the park entrance. 🌍

For more information about Billie Swamp Safari, please visit www.billieswamp.com.



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Green Living Fare, San Jose. **Wellness and Alternative Medicine**, La Fortuna. **Canopy Tours**, Arenal. **Rainforest Tours**, Monteverde. **State of the Oceans Summit**, Guanacaste. **Green Golf Tournament**, Guanacaste. **Hot Springs and Mud Baths**, La Fortuna, **EcoPhoto Challenge**, Guanacaste, **Snorkel Treasure Hunt**, Guanacaste. **Yoga and Meditation**, La Fortuna. **Recycle Art Show**, San Jose. **Scuba Exploration**, Guanacaste. **Kayak Tours**, Lake Arenal. **Coffee and Cocoa Tasting**, San Jose.

Photography By RichardHStewart.com

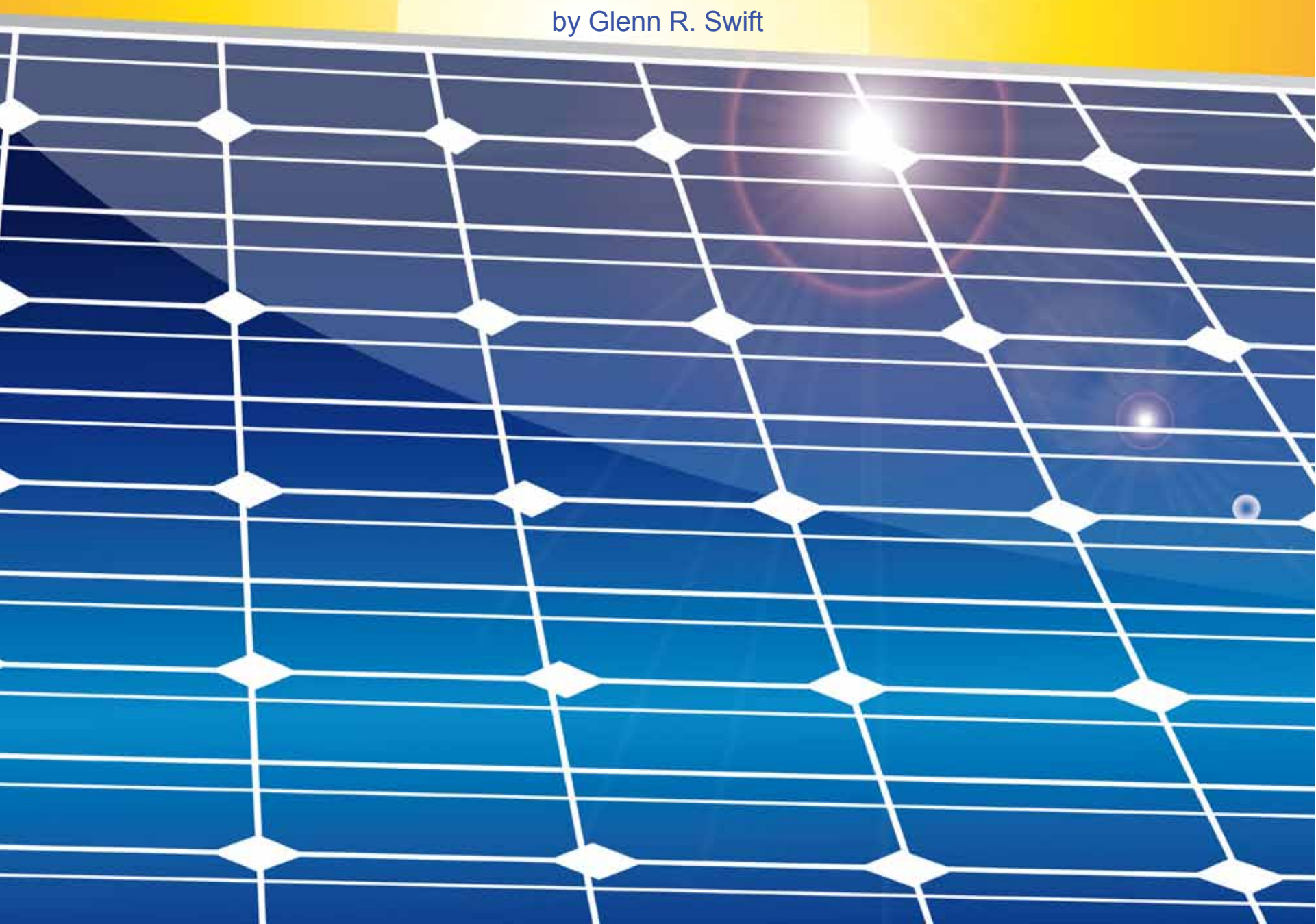


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FPL PIONEERS SOLAR POWER INITIATIVE

Florida's Largest Public Utility Offering Consumers
\$1000 Rebate for Solar Water Heaters

by Glenn R. Swift



Long known as a trailblazer in electric power generation, Florida Power & Light Company (FPL), the principal subsidiary of NextEra Energy with over \$15 billion in revenues and 4.5 million customers, is once again showing why it is among the nation's leading clean energy companies.

As part of a five-year pilot program authorized by the Florida Public Service Commission, FPL is offering rebates of \$1,000 for every new residential solar water heater. The rebate is available to all existing FPL residential customers with electric or gas water heating. This is big news for potentially thousands of South Florida consumers. Why? Besides doing the right thing for our planet, a solar water heater can cut a family's water-heating costs by up to 85% according to a recent study by the Florida Solar Energy Center (FSEC).

Florida Power & Light Company customers who are interested in installing solar-powered upgrades to their homes and businesses can apply for rebates starting June 29 through a new pilot program approved by the Florida Public Service Commission. Rebates will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for residential and business customers who install solar water heating or solar photovoltaic (PV) panels in 2011. The program is designed to help reduce energy consumption and peak demand.

"While the funding is limited, this new pilot program will help make individual invest-

ments in distributed, small-scale solar power more affordable for more customers," said Marlene Santos, FPL's Vice President of Customer Service.

The FPL initiative is unique to South Florida and may have an impact nationwide. "The leadership that FPL has shown with the rebate packages on solar power and solar hot water has to be lauded," said Sean Cochrane, Co-Owner of SuperGreen Solutions (www.supergreensolutions.com), a Northern Palm Beach County, Florida-based premium "one stop shop" energy efficient products store.

"These rebates will not only stimulate the adoption of P.V. Solar Power Units and Solar Hot Water Units for homes and businesses in South Florida, which will no doubt promote huge energy savings and the energy efficient products industry as whole, but will also stimulate the local economy as installers of these products will be put to work for the foreseeable future," added Cochrane, a native South African who has spent the last 17 years working in the green industry in Australia with his wife and business partner, Clare Cochrane.

Although Australia is known as one of the "greenest" countries in the world, the ever-growing interest in recent years with regard to environmentally sensitive products and initiatives in this country convinced the Cochranes that it was time to test the waters of the U.S. market. As they say, timing is everything and this latest initiative by FPL may



very well prove to be a bonanza for the new business, which will be celebrating its Grand Opening from 1pm to 5pm on Friday, August 5 in Lake Park at 3583 Northlake Blvd. The event is expected to draw a number of Northern Palm Beach County's most high profile business and community leaders

"Local solar and energy efficient products companies can't wait to see how much fund-

ing will be allocated to the 2012 Rebate set to open in October of this year. Hopefully the state and federal governments will piggyback on FPL's initiative with similar rebates," Cochrane said.

A quick glance at the SuperGreen Solutions website shows an array of cutting-edge, state-of-the-art energy-saving products including insulation, skylights, solar power panels, so-

lar hot water heaters and wind power generators. Clearly, the Cochranes' new venture offers homeowners simple tools to understand and control their energy usage, leading to significant energy savings and reduced costs. "There's no better reason to go green than to save green," Cochrane advised.

Approximately 1,100 of FPL's 4.5 million customer accounts currently operate their

own solar generation, and FPL expects the funding cap for new solar PV rebates to be reached quickly due to growing interest in distributed solar generation. Interested customers should begin exploring options as soon as possible to ensure that they have time to identify a contractor and gather the required information before the application period reopens on August 30. Program details and application checklists are available now



at www.FPL.com/solarrebates. (Note: The first round opened on June 29 and on that day the Whole allocation for PV solar was subscribed for! However, the Solar Hot water side still has funding available. A second chance for FPL Solar Rebates will open on August 30, and those who miss out on this one should watch out for 2012 rebates set to be initiated in October of this year.)

Residential Solar Water Heating – FPL’s residential solar water heating program will provide \$1,000 per installed solar water heater. FPL estimates rebates will be available for about 4,500 customers depending upon the size of the systems installed.

Business Solar Water Heating – Business customers will be eligible for a variable rebate based upon the size of the system installed that will equal \$30 per 1,000 BTU/h/day of the maximum rated output of the installed system. The maximum incentive during the life of the program is \$50,000 per site. Businesses with multiple locations can receive a maximum combined rebate of up to \$150,000 per funding year. FPL estimates rebates will be available for about 50 customers depending on the size of the systems installed.

Residential Solar PV – The residential solar PV program will provide an incentive of \$2,000 per kW of the rated direct-current (DC) output of a

PV system up to a maximum of \$20,000. FPL estimates rebates will be available for about 400 customers depending upon the size of the systems installed. (This was a great success and the first round was snapped up in less than 1 hour! Refer to August and October per above – also on the FPL website under Solar Rebates.)

Business Solar PV – The business PV program will provide a variable incentive depending on the output of the system. The rebate will be up to \$50,000 per site during the life of the program and will be calculated as: \$2 per DC watt nameplate rating of the solar panel up to the first 10 kW; \$1.50 per DC watt nameplate rating of the solar panel from 10 kW up to 25 kW and \$1 per DC watt nameplate rating of the solar panel greater than 25 kW. Businesses with multiple locations can receive a maximum combined rebate of up to \$150,000 per funding year. FPL estimates rebates will be available for about 80 customers depending on the size of the systems installed. (This was also a great success and the first round was snapped up in less than 1 hour! Refer to August and October per above – also on the FPL website under Solar Rebates.)

FPL will also connect the customers’ solar PV systems to the electric grid through its net-metering program, which allows customers to receive a credit for the electricity they produce but don’t use. For more details, visit www.FPL.com/netmetering.

These new solar incentives are part of FPL’s expansive energy-efficiency program for customers. FPL ranks No. 2 among electric utilities nationwide in electric generation avoided through demand-side management programs according to the latest U.S. Department of Energy data.

“Because of our partnership with customers, FPL has saved more megawatts than nearly any other utility in the country. These efforts have allowed FPL to avoid building 13 medium-sized power plants since 1980,” Santos said.

In addition to the residential and business customer rebate programs, FPL is partnering with nonprofit organizations to install solar water heaters in new construction for low-income families. FPL also plans to expand a successful energy-producing, educational program that has installed 10 solar PV arrays at schools and other educational facilities within the company’s service territory. Through this pilot program, FPL plans to install at least one Next Generation Solar Education Station in 28 school districts throughout Florida. 🌍

For more info about FPL and NextEra energy, go to www.nexteraenergyresources.com. To learn how you can reduce your carbon footprint and save money with the very latest in energy-saving products, go to www.supergreensolutions.com.

"ROCK 4 A CAUSE"

Rocks the Gardens

by Penny Sheltz

A rockin' great time was had by all Saturday, July 16 when two of South Florida's premiere classic rock acts took the stage at The Borland Center in Midtown, Palm Beach Gardens to benefit four worthwhile charities — American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Cancer Alliance of Help and Hope, Gold Coast Down Syndrome and concert producer, the JB Barber Memorial Foundation. The two talented acts performed more than two hours of timeless classics from the '60s and '70s.

The evening began at 7pm with cocktails and silent auction; with the concert following at 8pm. Guests enjoyed meeting local celebrities Tiffany Kenney, news anchor with WPBF Channel 25, and Kelley Dunn, four-time Emmy Award-winning journalist and co-anchor with WPTV Channel 5. Glenn Swift, Editor of Our Wonderful World Media & Entertainment, served as the event's master of ceremonies. All net proceeds went to support the four great charities. For more information about Rock 4 A Cause and the JB Barber Foundation, visit www.jbbarber.org.



(Left to right) Sue Chieco, Paula Frank, Sharon Quercioli and Glenn Swift



(Left to right) Celine Thibault, Tiffany Kenney and Kelley Dunn



(Left to right) Gail Ganzlin, Sharon Quercioli, Scott Benge, Maureen Barber and Celine Thibault

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HAVING THE PERFECT LIFE

by Suzanne Kovi, Author, Speaker, TV Host



When I was younger, I had a vision of the perfect life. The perfect job, the perfect body, the perfect family, and, like most women, the perfect spouse. I remember watching *Marley and Me*, and besides the fact that Jennifer Aniston's GQ magazine eventually made it into my house, and her less than ideal physique loomed in my magazine rack for months, I still loved her representation in the movie about real life. She and Owen Wilson captured the true essence of what a loving and passionate marriage looks like to me. It was a slice of *American Pie* — representing the “white picket fence” ideal. But what does this have to do with having the perfect life? I'm glad you asked. It showed me that our ideal image of what should be in our lives may be keeping us from being truly happy. But should you drop your ideals? What about your dreams? No Way!

How do ideals serve you? They give you an image of what life should look like in your mind. Ideals allow you to reach for something beyond your current circumstances and motivate you to reach for a more fulfilling life. This is all good stuff! Hold onto your dreams, but don't let your ideals of what those dreams should look like prevent you from being open to a new direction in life should it present itself.

I love this quote: “Life will give you anything you ask of it, so long as you ask intelligently.” (Tony Robbins) Now ask yourself: How

do your ideals affect your happiness? Do they prevent you from being flexible? Having an ideal image in life isn't the same as holding onto a vision for yourself. An ideal image comes with standards while a vision is a “knowing.” Only you can determine if the vision you hold supports you. Ideals can be a great place to start as you envision the life you desire. It is when we base our ultimate happiness on the outcome of those ideals that can deny us the joy we deserve.

Do I want to have the beautiful marriage that I see across the big screen? Sure, I can't think of any woman that wouldn't want that, but it's our own ideals and standards of how life should be that may be preventing that from happening. Have you ever heard someone tell you, “Get out of your own way?” Not such bad advice sometimes. Maybe the perfect life is just beyond our own perspective, and as I always say — our perspective is always our choice. 🌍



Suzanne Kovi – Author of *Ignite Your Life – 24 Choices to Transformation, Health and Healing for Women*, Speaker and National Television Host.



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PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM THE GREEN GODDESS

by Sharon Quercioli

Quote of the Month:

“Understand that the journey is as important as the destination.”

(Chinese Proverb)



Making Your Own Body Care Products

Did you know that you can use Essential Oils to make your own body care products and gifts?

Here are some interesting and easy-to-make recipes that come in handy at home and make inexpensive, healthy and fun gifts!

BATH SALTS/SALT GLOW

For the entire body from the neck down:

Equal parts of Epsom Salts, Kosher Salt and Sea Salt

Mix together and add:

1 teaspoon of Young Living V-6 Mixing Oil per cup of salt

10-15 drops of a Young Living Essential Oil blend per cup of salt, such as:

Joy (#3372); Peace & Calming (#3393); RC (#3405); Valor (#3429); or Aroma Siez (#3309)

All are excellent choices!

MASSAGE OILS

Massage oils make fantastic personalized gifts for weddings, anniversaries, birthdays or any other special occasion. Give a single bottle, or create a massage gift-pack with several varieties of oils.

Instructions

- 1) Pour one ounce of pure vegetable oil in a small cup or bowl (one ounce equals 1/8 cup, 2 tablespoons or approximately 30 milliliters). Some oils that work well for massage are Young Living V-6 Mixing Oil (a blend of seven different vegetable oils: grape seed oil, sweet almond oil, olive oil or sesame seed oil).
- 2) Add 15-30 drops of your favorite essential oil or blend to the vegetable oil and stir together. Some oils that might work well either individually or as part of a blend are listed below:





Calming & Relaxing: Cedarwood, Roman Chamomile, Lavender, Clary Sage, Jasmine, Myrrh or Ylang Ylang.



Invigorating or Energizing: Cypress, Fir, Juniper, Lemon, Nutmeg, Orange, Grapefruit or Peppermint.

Romantic: Rose, Jasmine, Clary Sage, Rosewood, or Ylang Ylang.

Pour the combined oils into a one-ounce amber glass bottle, a one-ounce plastic bottle or into two half-ounce plastic dropper bottles.

Create a label or gift-tag that says what kind of massage oil it is, what the ingredients are and how to use it. For example, your label or gift-tag might read: “Peaceful Moment Massage Oil: Contains pure grape seed oil and natural essential oils of Lavender and Chamomile. Apply to desired area and massage oil into the skin.” 🌍

Have fun making your own wonderful personal care products and gifts that your friends and family will love! To purchase Young Living Lemon Essential Oils and other Young Living products, go to www.youngliving.org/owwmedia.

Disclaimer Notice: The information contained in this announcement is intended for educational purposes only and is not meant to substitute for medical care or to prescribe treatment for any specific health condition.

THE GERM THEORY

by Jenn Cohen

Last week, I was at a local popular eatery for lunch. Midway through our meal, a woman and her toddler sat down one table away from us. She pulled out of her purse a mini-aerosol bottle of Lysol and proceeded to liberally spray down the highchair, table and seats. She placed the child in the highchair, engulfed in a cloud of chemicals, and gave him a large piece of the complimentary sourdough bread to chew on. I wondered what would kill him first: chemical poisoning, chok-

ing on that obscene piece of bread or cancer. Within seconds, the potent smell traveled over to our table. I could practically taste Lysol in my mouth. I shot the woman a dirty look as I quickly packed up our stuff and moved myself, my two-year-old and our food across a crowded restaurant. As we were leaving, her kid dropped his bread on the floor. She picked it up and handed it back to him without even brushing it off. WHAT???

This is not the first time I have seen mothers adopt this obsessive compulsive behavior over “germs”; although, it is first time that I saw someone practically asphyxiate an entire restaurant with Lysol spray. Antibacterial wipes, lotions, soaps, sprays and gels are everywhere. People buy this stuff in bulk! These products cause more harm than good. It might kill the “bad” germs and bacteria, BUT it also kills the Good Bacteria on our skin — the bacteria that is responsible for killing the bad bacteria and keeping our skin, and immune system, healthy. The more a person uses these products regularly, the more they are actually susceptible to getting sick because there is no defense.

As a Personal Trainer and Yoga Instructor, I am in close contact with people every day, as well as my family. Honestly, we are rarely sick. I am not a “germ-a-phobe.” We wash hands after using the bathroom and before eating, but I do not wipe down the shopping carts or “gel up” every time I leave a store. (Have you noticed that those gel pumps are literally everywhere!) I do not have any “antibacterial” products, nor do we use Lysol or bleach when cleaning the house — only all-natural products, mostly made with vinegar, baking soda and essential oils. (See the post “Cleaning the House Naturally” on my blog.)

“If the ‘Germ Theory of Disease’ were correct, there’d be no one living to believe it.” (BJ Palmer)

A healthy person with a highly-functioning immune system, and good bacteria thriving on their skin and in their gut, should have no problem naturally fighting off these “germs.”

Simple ways to stay healthy are to eat a diet high in fruits and veggies and low in sugar and processed foods; take Vitamin D, Omega-3 and probiotic supplements, reduce stress, breastfeed your children as long as you can and DO NOT use antibacterial products on your skin! Even if you do get a cold or even the flu, that is OK! That is how your body gets stronger and builds up antibodies. Viruses and bacteria are living organisms, and, as actor Jeff Goldblum said in Jurassic Park, “Life will find a way.” That is why no matter how many flu shots you get or antibacterial products you use, these “bugs” are alive, and they will find a way to adapt, survive, get stronger and multiply. Instead of worrying about the “bad bugs,” focus more upon your own body’s “Good Bugs” and keeping them strong!

Consider this... Is the one thing we think that keeps us from getting sick, actually making us sick? 🌍

Jenn Cohen is a Certified Personal Trainer, Yoga & Pilates Instructor and Holistic Lifestyle Coach. You can visit her blog at www.the-natural-mama.blogspot.com. You can also contact her at (561) 309-4543 or at jenncohen79@yahoo.com.



THE MAGNIFICENT MELON

by Sharon Quercioli

There's nothing bad about melons. They're yummy; they're super good for you, and they're one of the most social foods around. No self-respecting summer picnic would be complete without a big ol' watermelon! In fact, Americans purchase 3 billion pounds of the big green yum-balls annually. You'll always find those big slices of sweet pink vitamin C-packed goodness, secretly supplying hungry partygoers with an abundance of vitamins, minerals and carotenoids.

One of my little treasured memories from when I was a little girl growing up in Ohio was of my dad and I munching away on a simply but delicious combination of Italian bread and watermelon. Yummy!

OK...Let's learn a little bit more about melons.

Melonology 101

You can buy melons in the grocery store year-round, but they're in season in America in the summer, so save your consumption for that season, and make sure you buy local. There are a couple of reasons to do this. First, once a piece of fruit is picked, it starts to lose nutrients, so not only do melons shipped from Central America tend to be mealier in texture, they're also less nutritious. Second, imported melons are more expensive.

You can store a melon at room temperature for a few days. Refrigerating it will help the

nutrients last longer, but you lose flavor, particularly with cantaloupes. Once you've cut it open, all bets are off. Seal that melon and store it in the fridge. It should last about a week.

And even though you're probably not going to eat the rind, give your melon a good washing before cutting it up, so you can avoid any dirt, residues or pesticides (if it's not organic) that might get into the flesh when you cut it. While the watermelon is arguably the rock star of the melon world, having recently been rated the second healthiest fruit around by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (behind guava), it's just one of dozens of melon varieties. Let's discuss a few.

Watermelon

Actually, the watermelon is the only melon that's not a member of the cucumis genus. It's a member of the genus citrullus, which totally matters, right? Anyway, why did the CSPI go nuts for watermelons? They're loaded with vitamins and minerals, including vitamins C, A, B6 and B1, as well as potassium and magnesium. More importantly, they're loaded with carotenoids, pigments existing in plants that give them their vibrant colors. Carotenoids also have beneficial effects on those who eat them, including protecting cell walls from free radicals, improving your immune system and helping to maintain reproductive health.

One of the most prominent carotenoids in watermelon is cardiovascular-system-enhanc-



ing lycopene, which is usually associated with tomatoes, even though watermelon contains a much higher concentration by volume.

Although watermelon lacks fiber, it is incredibly water- and nutrient-dense, meaning you get a lot of vitamins and minerals for very few calories. One cup, which works out to about a

pound of fruit, is only 49 calories. Furthermore, I defy you to show me anyone who's ever gotten fat from eating watermelon.

Picking a good watermelon is easy. As is the case with all melons, once it's been plucked from the vine, it stops ripening. So, don't buy it hoping it'll improve! According to The World's

Healthiest Foods by George Mateljan, there are two tricks to identifying a ripe watermelon. First, the "ground spot," where it rested in the dirt, should be yellow. If it's green or white, it's probably not ready. Seedless watermelons sometimes don't have ground spots, so this doesn't apply to them. Second, give it a thump. If it responds with a dull thud, that's good. If it sounds hollow, put it back.

On a final note, if you're concerned about the genetic modification factor when it comes to seedless watermelon varieties, don't be. They're hybrids, meaning they're a cross between two types of melon. No genes are manipulated in the making of this summer treat.

Cantaloupe

Let's talk about the fruit the CSPI ranked as the eighth healthiest fruit. The cantaloupe, as we know it, is actually a muskmelon. Real cantaloupes are grown in France and rarely make it to the states. Muskmelons (or cantaloupes) are packed with vitamins C, A, B3, B6 and B9, as well as potassium. Unlike watermelons, they have a little fiber, a little over 1 gram for a 56-calorie, 1-cup serving.

They're also a good source of carotenoids, particularly beta-carotene, which you'll also find in carrots. Remember how I said carotenoids are pigments? Cantaloupes and carrots are both orange. Watermelons and tomatoes, with their lycopene, are both red.

Cantaloupes stop ripening when picked,

but unlike watermelons, the tap test should sound hollow. They should have a subtle, fruity smell. If a cantaloupe smells too strong, it's probably overripe. Also, the side opposite the stem should be slightly soft. Other than that, there should be no bruises or odd spots. Another fond memory that I cherish from childhood was when mom used to cut a cantaloupe in half and fill it with vanilla ice cream. Oh what a treat! Matter of fact, I still love it!

Honeydew

Although they're still yummy, honeydew melons fare poorly from a nutritional standpoint when compared to their pink and orange brethren. That 1 cup of cubes has 61 calories and 1 gram of fiber, but the vitamin C is only about half that of cantaloupe, and there are also much lower amounts of other micronutrients, although there's still a pretty good amount of potassium.

The carotenoid that gives honeydew its green hue is zeaxanthin, which promotes eye health. You'll find even more impressive amounts of zeaxanthin in almost all leafy greens.

You determine whether a honeydew's ripe the same way you find a good cantaloupe. Hollow tap, fruity smell, and no soft spots.

Which melon is right for you?

All of them. What I love to do... is buy one of each! Chop them up, mix them together and have a colorful, nutrient-rich fruit salad that'll be the hit of any party. 🌍

DON'T SWEAT IT THIS SUMMER... VENTILATE!

by Sean Cochrane

On a hot August afternoon, you probably wouldn't consider propping open your refrigerator door to cool off your kitchen. Neither would you think about cranking up your air conditioning while curling up

in front of a warm fireplace in January. But I still find that many homeowners are throwing away their hard earned dollars, into energy bills unnecessarily — and mostly to keep cool in summer.

So my advice to homeowners is that as the warmest part of the year beats down on us is to consider a home improvement that has many benefits — and that being a proper roof ventilation system. Now is the perfect time for homeowners to tackle this quick, easy and affordable way to make their homes more comfortable and more energy efficient, in time for the hottest months of the year.

There are several products on the market that are great at extracting the hot, moist, stale air that builds up in the roof cavity. Some of these products include fitting a few wind-driven roof vents (a.k.a. “wind vents” or “rood turbines”). These products can extract up to 90 cubic yards of air per hour. Or, you could always fit one or two of the thermostatically-controlled, electrically-powered vents. These units can draw up to 530 cubic yards of air per hour. But these versions do require energy to work.

Better still, smart home owners are turning to a new solar-powered roof vent—the Solar Star by Solatube or the solar-powered attic fan by Sunrise Solar, Inc. as these units can extract up to 1320 cubic yards of air per hour.

My prediction is that these solar-powered roof ventilation fans will become increasingly

popular as a way to draw heat up and out of the roof space. These solar extractor fans run entirely on free energy from the sun and pay for themselves through improved energy efficiency for the entire home. Consider the benefits of having sufficient ventilation :

Inadequate roof ventilation causes air conditioning units to work overtime, hence utility bills go through the roof (pardon the pun!).

Properly ventilated roofs helps insulation performance and makes the entire home feel cooler and more comfortable.

Excessive heat and moisture build-up in the roof can cause significant damage to critical roof structures (and proper ventilation can extend the life of the roof).

Recent trends towards “tight” and poorly ventilated homes can cause many indoor air quality problems, such as mold, odors and “sick building syndrome.”

So my call would be to ask your local energy-efficient products specialist to show you a few of these ventilation options and ask them to answer any other questions you may have re-cooling your home and saving money on energy bills this summer. 🌍

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TOUCH

The Small Act of Caring

by Betty Ann Baker, Executive Director Healing Touch Buddies

“Healing Touch Buddies, Inc. is a local non-profit health and education organization, dedicated to improving the quality of life of those challenged with breast cancer; providing patients with Healing Touch and volunteer practitioners with instruction and support.”

For the past seven years, this is how our mission has read. It’s remained a factual statement, connecting us to our goals and objectives. It has served as our official communication on what we were organized to do and for whom. What it hasn’t revealed is the immense added value to those of us charged with providing the services.

Since our founding in 2004, scores of nurses, massage therapists, physicians, lay persons and clergy have taken the minimum of 50 hours of Healing Touch training required to be a Healing Touch Buddies volunteer. They are representative of the rich variety of cultures and social backgrounds of our area. The common connection is their dedication to reaching out to relieve the suffering of another while striving to live a balanced life so as to be in a position to serve. They found that being a member of a wonderful community of individuals dedicated to lifting others up had significant personal and professional benefits as well.

One volunteer expressed the personal and professional impact of being with her HTB client from diagnosis through surgeries, chemo, radiation and into her client’s post treatment “new normal” life.

“During the past year with my client, I have been able to draw on our training of “serving vs. saving.” I was able to walk with my client through all the phases of her journey, honoring that it was her story and her hard deci-

sions, not mine. By being able to exercise active listening, I could provide the safe space for her to explore her options without judgment or pressure. I’ve been able to use these techniques to also improve my relationships in my private practice and my personal life.”

Another volunteer relates the sense of positive accomplishment at being able to meet the needs of her client in a holistic way, enjoying the results as well as the relationship. “My client and I looked forward to our sessions. She always felt relaxed and energized after a treatment. And Healing Touch helped her deal with her physical discomfort as well as a lot of other family issues that came up during the year.”

Serving in my roles as co-founder and director has brought me gifts I can’t begin to measure. In our Healing Touch community and especially through our Healing Touch Buddies program, I have developed personal and professional relationships of exceptional quality that I treasure. They define all I would hope to be a part of as I evolve as a person in this life. I so gratefully thank each and every one of our volunteers for bringing so many blessings to me and to this community. 🌍

For more information about Healing Touch Buddies services or to inquire about sponsorship for the event, please contact Betty Ann Baker at (561) 741-1671 or htbuddiesinc@cs.com.

AMERICA

Overweight and Starving

by Richard Hawkins

A new report issued June 30 shows an increasing trend of obesity in America. The report shows that only one state (Colorado) has an obesity rate under 20%. Twenty years ago, not a single US state had an obesity rate over 15%.

According to Jeffrey Levi, Executive Director of Trust for America's Health, the organization

that co-authored the report with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, "When you look at the problem year by year, the change is incremental. When you look at it by a generation you see how we got into this problem."

Statistics show that around 33% of the US population is obese and 67% of the US population is overweight. It is estimated that at

current trend levels by 2030 86% of adults will be overweight or obese. Obesity rates in children and teenagers have tripled from 1980 to 2008.

The added weight is having an impact upon America's health and our health costs. In 1995, four states had diabetes rates over 6%. Now 43 states have diabetes rates over 7% and hypertension rates have risen to more than 20% of the U.S. population.

The old adage is that to control our weight we just need to do two things — diet and exercise. This still holds true, but cultural, economic and environmental factors are also adding to our weight.

What has happened in a generation? Our life patterns and priorities have changed, and we don't build in physical activity to our routines. We have communities that are "food deserts" where the only food available is unhealthy fast food.

And food itself has changed. Fast food and processed foods are delivering calories without the needed nutrition. As the food supply has changed, our bodies have not adapted to these changes. We have not evolved to reap healthy nutrition from deep-fried foods, soda, candy bars, refined sugars, refined grains and other highly processed foods.

We are all exposed to billions of dollars of advertising for junk food every day. These

companies compete with one another for low costs and large portion sizes. Unfortunately, what they are offering is fat- and sugar-laden products that fill us up but keep us hungry for the lacking nutrients.

Much of this advertising is targeting children. Caregivers and parents make food decisions for children, so it is imperative that they learn what healthy foods are and they are guided to make healthy choices for themselves.

But there is progress. Michelle Obama is promoting healthy meals in schools and keeping kids active. Across the country farm to school programs are being created to promote real food in school cafeterias.

Localecopia is working to support the methods needed to make locally grown healthy food an option to residents in South Florida. Please join us in our quest of promoting localized and sustainable food systems by asking for healthy local foods at your grocer, at your favorite restaurants and at school. 🌍

For more information about Localecopia, please visit www.localecopia.org.



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Sprouts! is pleased to present our latest creation — eco-friendly door hanger messages!

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To see the full selection of all the plantable door hangers Sprouts! has to offer, please visit www.sproutem.com/category/Plantable-Door-Hangers. Have your own idea for a door hanger? Sprouts! is more than happy to customize any of our products for you. Please e-mail us at info@sproutem.com for more information.



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Meet the Team...

SHARON QUERCIOLI

Sharon Quercioli is a highly successful entrepreneur with over 20 years in the recycle industry. The former Vice President of Static Control components, Inc. and four-time president of her own companies, Quercioli is widely recognized as a marketing guru and has consulted numerous companies across the United States. In 2004, Quercioli founded Sprouts, Inc., an innovative company that uses 100% recycled paper embedded with flower seeds to create a diverse array of eco-friendly products including greeting cards, book-marks and unique marketing pieces that grow flowers when planted. In 2009, Sprouts was named Small Business of the Year by the Northern Palm Beach County Chamber of Commerce, and in 2010 the company received recognition by the U. S. Chamber of Commerce for being one of the leading small businesses in the country.

Co-Founder & President



DORI BEELER

A native Southern Californian, Beeler graduated with a BFA from Cal State University Fullerton in 1995. Since graduating, Beeler has worked professionally in graphic design for numerous companies and ten years ago founded her own firm, where she served as operating project manager and senior graphic designer. Her vast experience ranges from developing Web sites to designing high-end craft books.

Art Director



GLENN SWIFT

Glenn Swift has been a feature story writer and editor for a number of high-end publications across the United States, and over the past decade has established himself as one of South Florida's leading journalists. Holder of a B.B.A. in Finance from Stetson University and a Master's Degree in European History from the University of Central Florida, Swift was the Winner of the Florida Magazine Association's Bronze Award for Excellence in Writing and is a member of Phi Alpha Theta, the International History Fraternity. Swift has interviewed many of the biggest celebrities in the Arts & Entertainment world and is renowned for his in-depth knowledge in that field. He has also hosted several radio shows, all of which focused on his passion for entertainment. From 2005-2007, Swift served as Managing Editor of Newport Beach, California-based Advisys, Inc., one of the nation's most highly respected e-publishers for the financial services industry.

Co-Founder & Editor-in-Chief



KRISTIN PURCELL

Kristin is a native Northern Ohioan with over 15 years in operations as a Client Services Manager. The majority of her managerial experience has been with the insurance industry where today she is still a licensed insurance agent in Ohio. "I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with a state-of-the-art digital magazine focusing upon the Art of Living Green!"

Kristin is no stranger to green initiatives as she worked vigorously with two insurance agencies helping them transition to a paperless environment. "It is really important to me to recycle and do as much as possible to save our precious planet. I have two young children and teach them every day the importance of living green for their future and the future of their children."

Operations Manager



Meet the Team...



Photographer

ROBBY ANTONIO

Robby is a native South Floridian who holds two bachelor degrees in Management Information Systems and Marketing. His background in photography started at an early age shooting with the inspiration from his family and friends. Under the tutelage of a great teacher in high school and some extremely talented friends, he has honed his craft to capture life through a viewfinder. Robby continues to pursue his passion as a freelance photographer shooting with friends, travelling, and as an active member of the Freelance Photography Studio in West Palm Beach. He views each shoot as a new challenge, never knowing what he can expect when he gets there. So far with Our Wonderful World he's shot in 9° temperatures for ICE! at the Gaylord Palms Hotel in Orlando and in the rain at the Worth Avenue Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony.

"Photography is an adventure, and you can never be afraid to do what it takes to get the shot."

ALICIA DONELAN

Alicia Donelan is a native Texan who has lived and worked in South Florida for seventeen years. She holds a Masters Degree in Photography from New York University in conjunction with The International Center of Photography in New York City. Donelan's photography is best expressed in her destination weddings and lifestyle portraits for private clients in Palm Beach, New York and Dallas, as well as numerous high-end publications throughout the United States.

Photographer



MISSY STRAUSS

Missy Strauss is a Vice President of Eco Advisors and the host of Radio Green Earth, South Florida's first all environmental talk show. She is a sustainability consultant working with clients to develop programs for their businesses, vendors, supply chain and facilities through corporate social responsibility programs, operational procedures, strategic planning and marketing. Strauss is currently the Vice Chair of the Palm Beach/Treasure Coast Branch of the U.S. Green Building Council South Florida Chapter and an adjunct faculty member at Palm Beach State College on the subjects of Sustainability, Green Programs and LEED. When off the green circuit, she spends her time exploring the joys of life with her husband Paul and her two wonderful daughters, Sabrina and Gabrielle.

Contributing Columnist



JOHN POGGI

John Poggi is an environmental scientist and the Founding Principal and President of Eco Advisors, LLC, an environmental services professional focusing upon environmental, sustainability and green building solutions, CEO of the Green Earth Environmental Education Foundation, a nonprofit media corporation promoting environmental stewardship through education, and Executive Producer of Radio Green Earth, an environmentally focused radio program produced for public radio.

An environmental professional with over 30 years experience in South Florida, Poggi is a member of the U.S. Green Building Council, a Registered Environmental Manager and a Florida licensed environmental contractor. Poggi routinely lectures on sustainability and environmental subjects to a wide variety of audiences, including government, education, healthcare and commercial development industry representatives.

Contributing Columnist