



Our Wonderful World

June, 2013
Volume 4 :: Number 6

The Art of Living Green



Monster Mosquitoes

Bermuda

Last Jewel of the Empire

Magnificent Magnolia

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Our Wonderful World



Table of Contents

Contributors and Advertisers

Letter from the Publishers

Cover Story

Bermuda: Last Jewel of the Empire
by Glenn R. Swift

Green Goings

“Stop the Tears” Golf Tourney a Huge Success
by Glenn R. Swift

Health & Wellness

Pearls of Wisdom from the Green Goddess
Magnificent Magnolia
by Sharon Quercioli

Vibro Acoustic Therapy
by Ed Scheer

Eating Well

Delicious Dragon... Fruit That Is!
by Sharon Quercioli

To go directly to a particular section or article, simply click on the title of your choice.



Click Here for the Downloadable pdf!



Our Wonderful World
Volume 4 Number 6

Going Green

Something Old...Something New...Something Green!
by Sandra Frens

Ask the Energy Expert
“Energy Integrity”
by Scott Ranck

Monster Mosquitoes
by Mandy Nolen

Nonprofit/Charity

Is the Manatee Our “Canary in the Coal Mine”?
by Richard Hawkins

Green Goodies

Eco-Friendly Door Hangers
Spoonk Acupressure Mat
Healthy CFL Light Bulbs
SunMate

Meet The Team

Contributors and Advertisers

Evo Merchant Services

Florida Public Utilities

JRC Consulting Group

Localecopia

Loggerhead Fitness

Mounts Botanical Garden

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Robby Antonio Photography

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Sprouts!

The O2 Zone

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Welcome to the June, 2013 issue of **Our Wonderful World**, Florida's leading green digital magazine. Our cover story, "Bermuda: Last Jewel of the Empire," features breathtaking images of one of the world's most magnificent islands. One of the last remnants of the once vast and mighty British Empire, Bermuda enjoys a rich, colorful history and a vibrant island culture. Who knows? You might be planning your next vacation before you know it!

The Green Goddess enlightens us to the many benefits of "Magnificent Magnolia" in Pearls of Wisdom, as well as a whole lot of great reasons in Eating Well why we need to be eating the rare, but oh so nutritious, dragon fruit.

Richard Hawkins of Localecopia explains just how the endangered manatee might very well be Florida's "canary in the coal mine," while Mandy Nolen tells us how to protect ourselves against the new "Monster Mosquitoes" that have recently migrated to the Sunshine State.

Ed Scheer tells us about the wondrous benefits of "Vibro Acoustic Therapy," a cutting-edge, state-of-the-art, holistic healing treatment now offered at The O2 Zone in Palm Beach Gardens, and our energy expert, Scott Ranck of Florida Public Utilities, explains to homeowners the concept of "Energy Integrity."

Last, but not least, Sandra Frens has some great ideas for any June brides out there that are a combination of "Something Old... Something New... Something Borrowed... and Something Green."

Of course, we've got a whole lot more, too. So, start clickin' and enjoy the latest issue of **Our Wonderful World**.

Sincerely,



Sharon

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Glenn

Glenn Swift,
Editor in Chief

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by Glenn Swift

BERMUDA

Last Jewel of the Empire

Photography courtesy of Ian MacDonald-Smith



Long stretches of pink-sand beaches divided by magnificent cliffs and caves, charming winding streets lined with tidy pastel cottages, meticulously manicured flowering gardens, wildly costumed African goombay dancers, businessmen in shorts and knee socks, cricket, and English afternoon tea – welcome to Bermuda!

COVER STORY

LOCATION Often mistakenly associated with the Caribbean (nearly 1,000 miles to the south), Bermuda lies in the North Atlantic, 570 miles off the coast of North Carolina. The “island,” as locals refer to it, is in actuality a cluster of more than 150 islands, the eight largest of which are connected by a series of causeways and bridges forming a continuous fishhook shaped land area that stretches 22 miles in length. Its remoteness and northerly locale has helped to make Bermuda unique in many respects.

Warmed by the waters of the Gulf Stream, Bermuda is a subtropical island that enjoys a mild climate throughout the year. In the summer, the temperature rarely rises above 85 F and there’s nearly always a cool breeze in the evening. Local water temperatures during this time of the year often run as high as 86 F – warmer than many inshore Caribbean waters. As for those “chilly” months (December through April), average daily temperatures are still a very comfortable 65 F. There is no rainy season, and when it does rain, the skies tend to clear quickly.

Bermuda’s remote location has enabled it to retain a very distinct island culture, one that is considerably different from that of the North American mainland or its Caribbean neighbors to the south. Formed around 100 million years ago by an underwater volcano (don’t worry, it’s now extinct), the islands are the uppermost peaks of a pyramid-shaped mountain mass whose base extends 2.5 miles from the ocean floor.

HISTORY The islands remained undiscovered until a Spanish sea captain, Juan de Bermudez, sighted the uninhabited islands around 1503. More interested in gold and plunder than he was in exploring islands, Bermudez took

little interest in the barren island chain. In fact, other than providing a temporary haven for shipwrecked plunder than he was in exploring islands, Bermudez took little interest in the barren island chain. In fact, other than providing a temporary haven for shipwrecked Spanish sailors, the islands remained uninhabited for over a century after their discovery. Nevertheless, Bermuda became a

landmark for Spanish sea captains who would reset their course, immediately after spotting the rocky islets, to follow a straight line for the Azores and Spain. During this time, Bermuda’s treacherous reefs gained an ominous reputation among mariners, and by the mid-16th century, the islands began appearing on Spanish maps as “Islas Demonios,” or “Isles of Devils.”

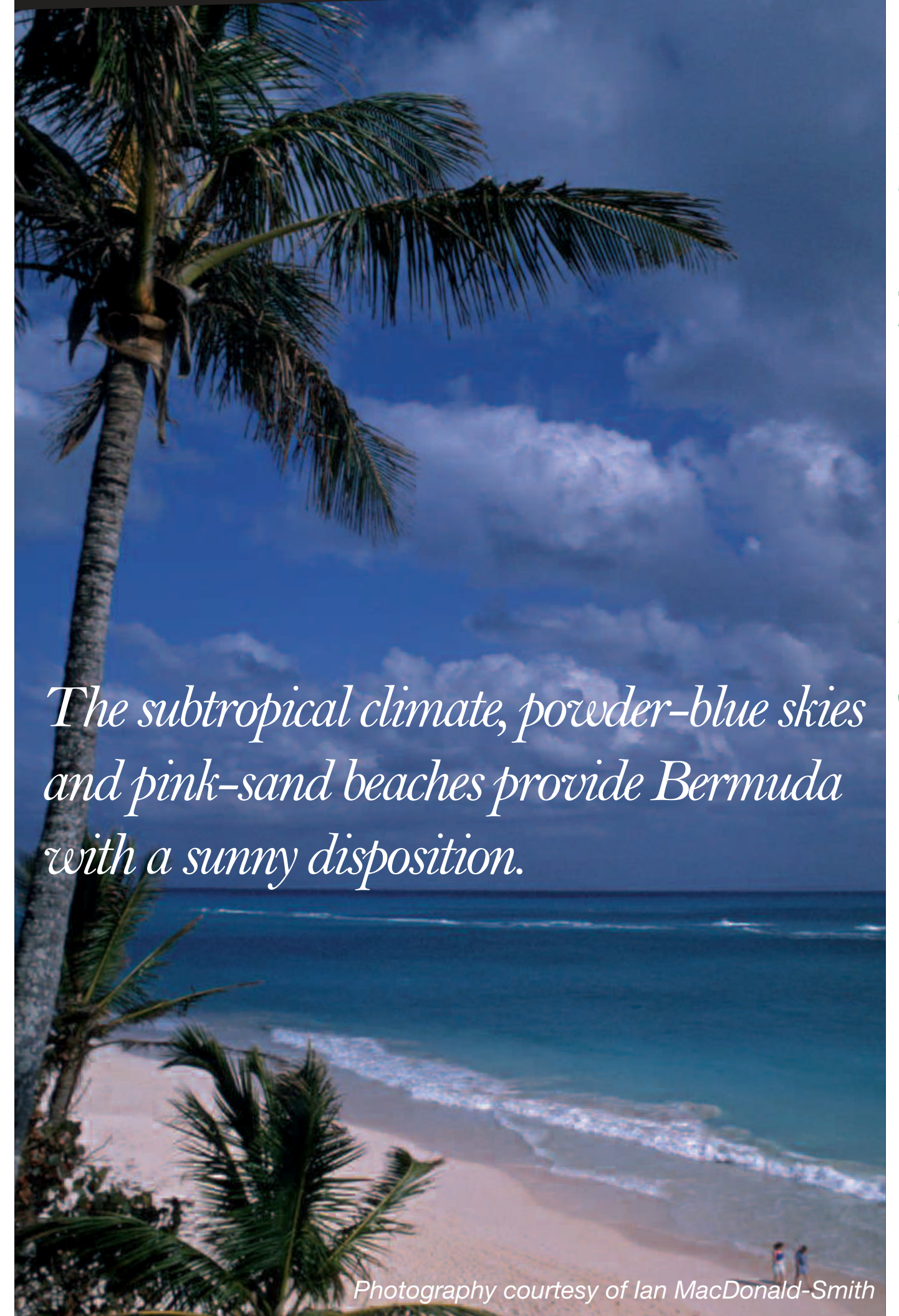
Suddenly, at the dawn of the 17th century, a mere twist of fate would change the course of Bermudian history forever. On June 2, 1609, an English ship, *Sea Venture*, headed for Jamestown, VA, was blown off course during a fierce storm and was shipwrecked on a reef three-quarters of a mile off the eastern shore of Bermuda. Miraculously, all 150 people onboard made it safely

ashore (near present-day Fort St. Catherine). All wasn’t lost, for the castaways salvaged much of the wreckage from the *Sea Venture* and used timber from native cedar trees to construct two new ships; a year later, *Deliverance* and *Patience* made their way to Jamestown. It would not be long, however, before the English would return. A 400-year relationship with Great Britain had begun.

African slaves had been introduced as early as 1616, but the lack of labor-intensive agriculture (i.e., tobacco, rice and



The warm, crystal-clear waters of Bermuda make boating and swimming the most popular water activities.



The subtropical climate, powder-blue skies and pink-sand beaches provide Bermuda with a sunny disposition.

Photography courtesy of Ian MacDonald-Smith

sugarcane) in the colony meant that few slaves ended up toiling in sweltering fields, as was the case in other parts of the New World. Although it is undoubtedly true that all forms of human bondage are inherently evil, conditions were not as brutally degrading as elsewhere. Most slaves were put to work as servants, construction workers, sailors and fishermen. Some even became expert craftsmen who passed their skills on to successive generations. Over time, Bermuda gradually evolved from a struggling agricultural hinterland into a successful port.

The American Civil War (1861-1865) produced an economic boom for Bermuda as it was thrust into the highly profitable role of serving as a center for Confederate blockade runners. Because Rebel vessels needed to be small and fast to outrun the U.S. Navy, the Confederates were forced to use Bermuda and the Bahamas as staging areas to purchase desperately needed guns and ammunition. The exorbitant profits racked up by the islanders, who served as middlemen for British industrialists, gave Bermuda a level of unprecedented prosperity. The boom was short-lived, however, and with the fall of the Confederacy, the Bermudian shipping industry suffered a near collapse.

Two decades later, a new industry – tourism – would spring forth and breathe new life into the depressed Bermudian economy. In 1883, Princess Louise, daughter of Queen Victoria and wife of the governor general of Canada, paid an extended visit to the island. Tired of the long, cold Canadian winters, the princess found the Bermudian climate much to her liking. The British and American press took note of her

story, and within months, many notables, including Mark Twain, followed in her path. Crossing the stormy Atlantic in winter was no easy task in the late 19th century, and Twain cleverly described the journey as “going through hell in order to reach paradise.”



The warm, crystal-clear waters of Bermuda make boating and swimming the most popular water activities.

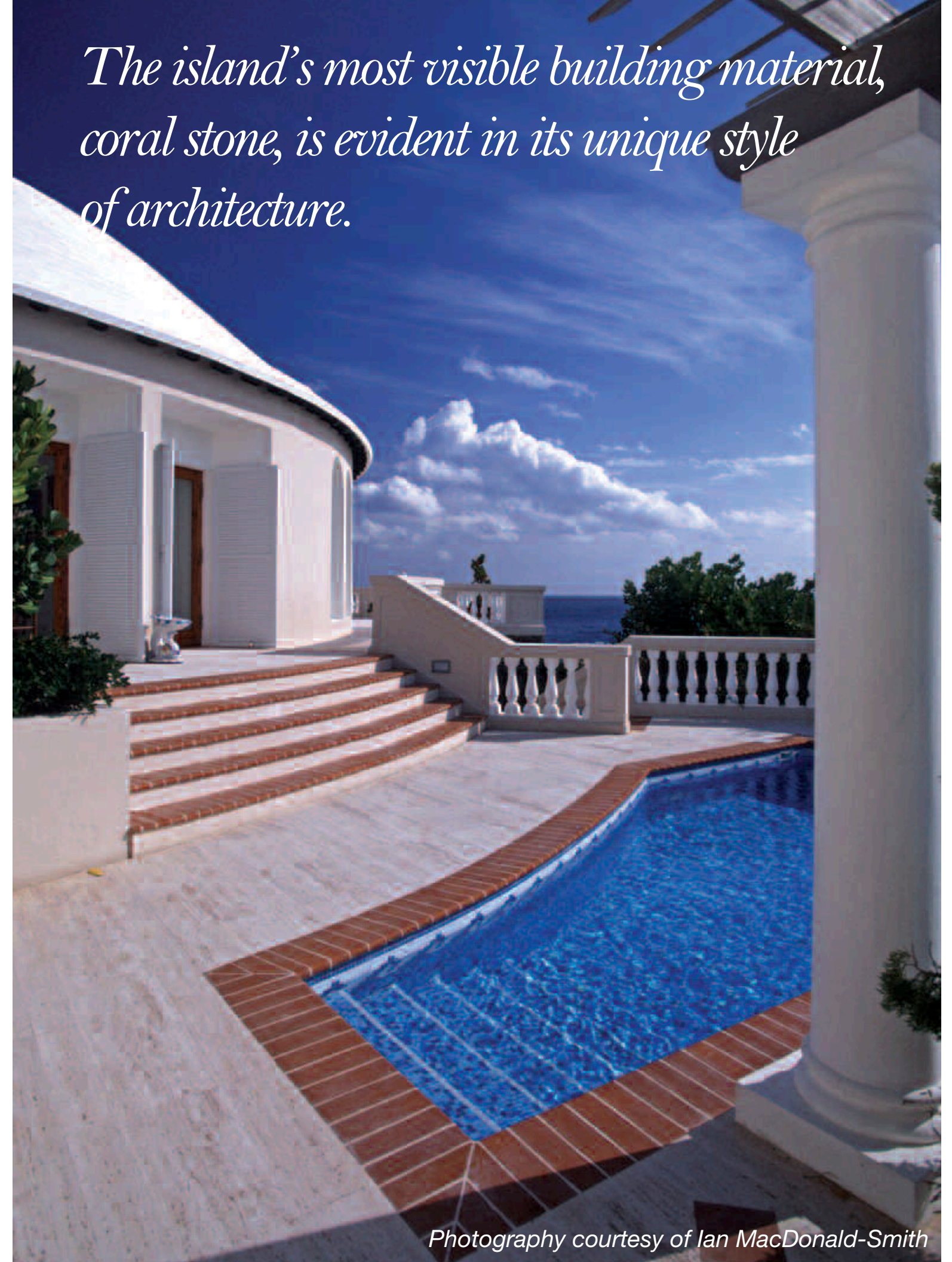


strangle Britain’s overseas lifeline in the early years of World War II, the Royal Navy turned Bermuda into a major center of operations. The Fairmont Hamilton Princess Hotel, the largest on the island, became a hub for British intelligence with more than 1,000 operatives working secretly in the basement monitoring Nazi communiqués and fleet movements. A short time later, the United States established a sizeable military presence in Bermuda during the

By the early 20th century, Bermuda had become a popular and fashionable resort for the well heeled, with steamers crossing regularly from New York to Hamilton. As more and more Yankee “snow-birds” visited the island, the influence of the United States became increasingly significant. Not long afterward, however, geopolitical forces on a global scale placed Bermuda at the center of the world stage.

In order to thwart the formidable Nazi U-boat assault that threatened to

The island’s most visible building material, coral stone, is evident in its unique style of architecture.



Photography courtesy of Ian MacDonald-Smith

Today, Bermuda remains what it has been for so very long – a unique blend of British, African, American and island cultures.



The Dockyard Marina, located at the Royal Naval Dockyard, and the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, offer first-class dockage.

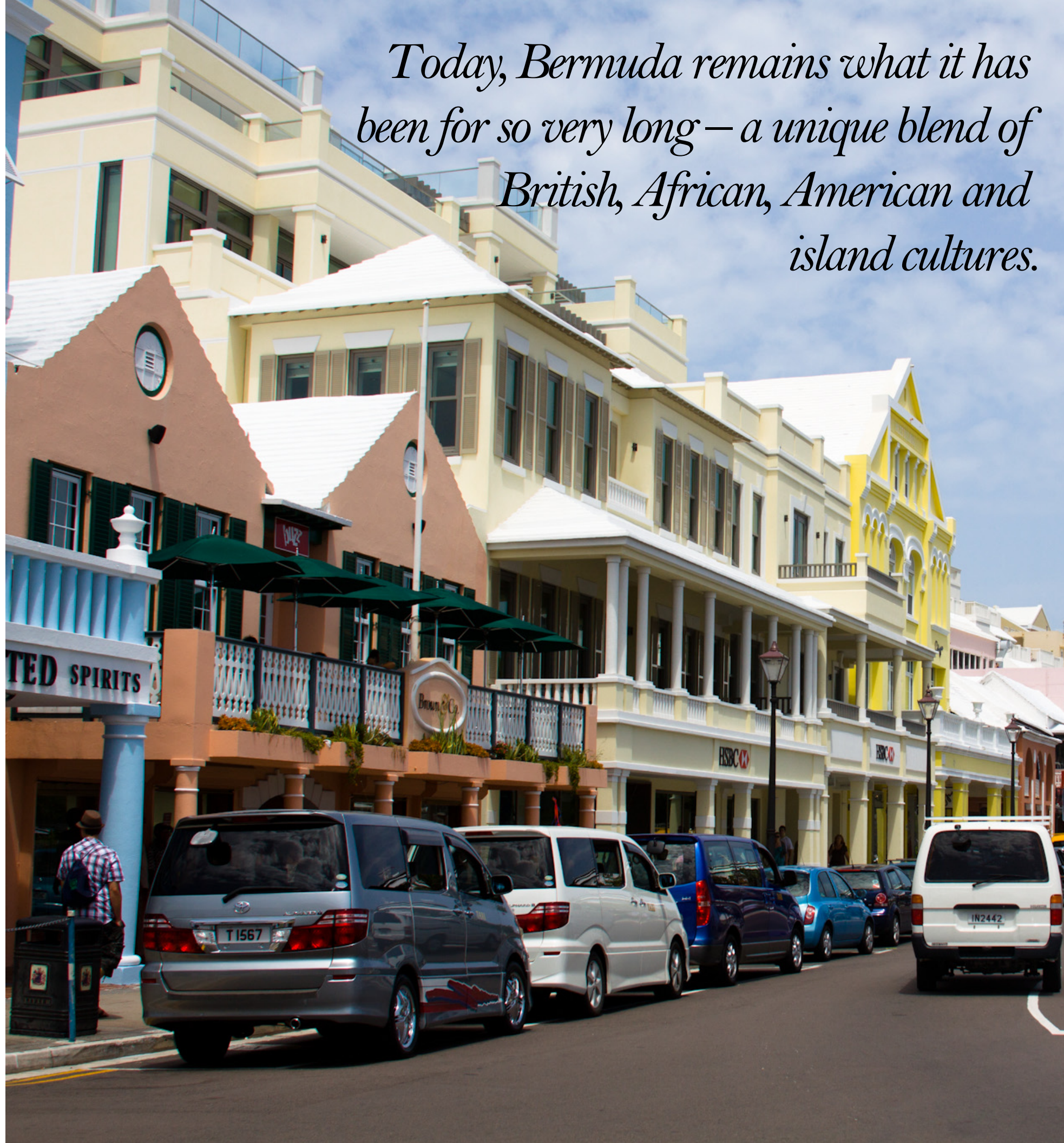


war when it constructed an air base on St. David's Island. Since the early 1970s, a number of new hotels and golf courses have been constructed, elevating Bermuda to a level of sophistication seldom rivaled by the islands of the Caribbean. As for the independence issue, a referendum was held in August 1995 and it was overwhelmingly defeated. Barely 25 percent of the island's electorate voted for separation. Although the issue is still bandied about, it appears that Bermuda will remain associated with Britain for the foreseeable future. With a standard of living far exceeding that of anywhere in the Carib-

bean, and on a par with that of the United States, the current political relationship appears to give the island the best of both worlds. Bermudians enjoy complete self-government under the Constitution of 1968, with only diplomatic and defense matters under the protective hand of the United Kingdom.


A recent United Bermuda Party (UBP) leader, after being confronted with the "I" word by an inquiring journalist, coined what has become the party's official slogan on the issue: "Independence From What?" Indeed, few would argue that the numerous former British colonies in the Caribbean that have chosen the path of independence have become models for social and economic progress.

WATER ACTIVITIES Although there are a number of airlines with direct flights to Bermuda, boating is undoubtedly the most pleasurable method of reaching this island paradise. So, for those who wish to take their own boats from the U.S. mainland, Somers Wharf and Hunter's Wharf offer excellent anchorage for yachts at the north side of Ordnance Island (free of charge on a first-come, first served basis). The Dockyard Marina, located at the Royal Naval Dockyard, and the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club, offer first-class dockage, but reservations are needed. An



excellent source for navigational information is bermudayachtservices.com. As for sporting enthusiasts, dinghy races (held on alternate weekends from mid-May to mid-September) are a favorite spectator sport in Bermuda. But perhaps the biggest event of all with regard to boating in Bermuda, however, is the Newport Bermuda Race. Begun in 1906 and held in even years since then, this gala competition is sponsored by the Cruising Club of America and the Royal Bermuda Yacht Club. It is considered the pinnacle in ocean sailboat racing. The next race is scheduled to begin off Newport, RI, on June 20, 2013. With some of the most beautiful waters in the world, Bermuda is a boater's paradise. There are a number of charter companies on the island that offer daily cruises lasting from three to eight hours. Those who prefer to strike out on their own can do so easily by renting a powerboat without a skipper. Boating excursions should be arranged early on, however, due to their extreme popularity. With hundreds of shipwrecks scattered among Bermuda's magnificent coral reefs (the most northerly coral reefs in the Western Hemisphere), diving in Bermuda is nothing short of extraordinary. For those who wish to discover the island's undersea treasures, several companies, and the major hotels, can arrange snorkeling trips, as well as single- and/or double tank dives. Be sure to ask about the reef at Elbow Beach – a local favorite! For those non-swimmers interested in seeing the underwater world around Bermuda helmet diving is the alternative to scuba diving or snorkeling.

Young children can even partake in the action since helmet divers are given brass helmets to wear as they descend 10 to 15 feet below the boat. Air is continuously pumped to the divers' helmets from the boat above. With helmet diving, there's no need to even remove your glasses or contact lenses. The crystal-clear water surrounding Bermuda is rich with game fish, especially during the prime fishing season (May through November). There are more than 20 charter fishing boats operating out of Bermuda, and a number of world-class records, in a wide cross-section of test-line categories, have been set from their decks – a testament to the skill and experience of the local guides. There is also an annual game-fishing tournament – the Bermuda Big Game Classic – sponsored by the Bermuda Department of Tourism. The tournament is held in July and no entry fee or license is required to participate. For contact information and a listing of specific companies to aid you with your boating, fishing and diving plans, visit <http://www.bermuda-online.org> or www.bermuda.com.

Another prime source of information is the Bermuda Department of Tourism (BDT), which operates at 675 Third Ave., 20th Floor, New York, NY 10017. Their courteous staff can be reached by calling (800) 223-6106 or by visiting www.gotobermuda.com. Upon request, the BDT can provide a complete packet of visitor information with regard to accommodations, activities, seasonal events and much more. 

BASIC FACTS

Area: Approximately 30 square miles (one-third the size of Washington, D.C.)

Population: 65,000

Government: Self-governing, overseas territory of the United Kingdom

Capital: Hamilton – the island's political and commercial hub

Currency: Bermudian Dollar (BMD) – equivalent to the U.S. Dollar

WHERE TO STAY

Bermuda has five first-class hotels: the Elbow Beach Club Resort, the Grotto Bay Resort, The Fairmont Hamilton Princess Hotel, the Wyndham Bermuda Resort & Spa, and the Fairmont Southampton, Bermuda Resort.

HOW TO GET THERE

There are regularly scheduled direct flights to Bermuda on a number of airlines (American Airlines, Continental Airlines, Delta, US Airways, Air Canada and British Airways) from the

United States, Canada and the United Kingdom. Travelers arriving from all other places must connect through one of these three countries. Bermuda is also a popular cruise-line destination with Celebrity Cruises, Princess Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean all visiting the island throughout the year.

DOCUMENTATION

U.S. citizens must have a valid U.S. passport.



The truly unique items that are the hallmark of Bermuda can be found in the many historical landmark shops.

Photography courtesy of Ian MacDonald-Smith

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STAY INFORMED:





Stop the Tears Golf Tourney a Huge Success

by Glenn R. Swift

GREEN GOINGS

Hosted by JRC Consulting Group and sponsored by Crown Car Care, the annual Stop the Tears Charity Golf Tournament to benefit United for Families was the most successful ever for the annual event. Held at Stuart's prestigious Mariner Sands Country Club, 104 golfers braved rainy skies for a fun event featuring a \$100,000 Hole-in-One Shootout, Closest to the Pin, Longest Drive, Putting Contest and much more. A silent auction was held after the tourney as was a succulent lunch in which the tourney's winners received their awards. 🌍

For more information about United for Families, please visit www.uff.us.



Presenting Sponsor Team Crown Car Care (from left to right)
Chris Higgins, Todd Harris – Owner of Crown Car Care, Nick Yancey and Dustin Sahlberg



From left to right: Dr. Jean Wihbey, Dana Middleton, David Middleton and friend.



From left to right: Bob Nichols, Sharon Quercioli, Dr. Jean Wihbey and Bill Goldman.



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PEARLS OF WISDOM FROM THE GREEN GODDESS

Magnificent Magnolia

Beautiful Tree... Flower... Mood Support

Quote of the Month:

**Set peace of mind as your
highest goal, and organize
your life around it.**

-Brian Tracy

The Magnolia Tree is just a beautiful tree. One cannot help but look admiringly upon the deep bronze and rich green colors of its firm, medium-sized leaves and its gorgeous creamy flowers that smell like creamy citrus. As we walk through a variety of gardens, the Magnolia Tree always stands apart in its rich grandeur. Only recently did we discover that its beauty goes just a bit deeper than its looks.

Say Hello to Magnolia Bark Extracts—in a product called Relora®!

A friend of mine who is also a nutritionist shared a secret with me. When I asked for recommendations for herbs useful in managing stress, he was more than happy to tell me all about a supplement with Magnolia Bark extracts in it to help with periodic stress management. As it turns out,

two extracts from Magnolia Bark have very positive benefits to mood support: Honokiol and Magnolol. These extracts are combined to form the main ingredient in a patented herbal supplement called Relora. (The secondary ingredient in Relora is Phellodendron Amurense, which is also a tree native to the orient and used in Chinese medicine.) Most health food and vitamin shops seem to carry it.

*Some users have reported
that it has helped them
to lose weight.*

Previously, I had tried Vitamin B supplements, various homeopathic stress formulas and St. John's Wort. As it turns out, I must have been barking up the wrong tree.

When I first took Relora, I was amazed at how different I felt. Almost immediately after my first dose, there was an overwhelming feeling of calm and relaxation. In fact, I was a bit too relaxed—almost sleepy. However, over the next day or two, the sleepi-

ness wore off and was replaced by an overall peaceful feeling. Suddenly, I more comfortably coasted through stresses both at home and at work.

Some users have reported that it has helped them to lose weight. This could especially be the case if the weight gain was triggered by negative stress.

Because of its link to treating anxiety, it is contraindicated with the use of medications for treating depression and other mental health conditions without the prior approval of a physician. It's better to be safe than sorry.

Of course, everyone reacts differently to different things. If you are feeling a reasonable amount of stress and agitation like we all do, you may find that this herbal blend, courtesy of the majestic Magnolia Tree, will work wonders in helping to combat the damaging effects of negative stress. And just maybe you might look on the next Magnolia Tree you see with new appreciation for its gift to us who love its majestic beauty—as well as its bark.



Mounts Botanical Garden Presents

Tropical Fruit Festival

"Come Taste the Tropics"

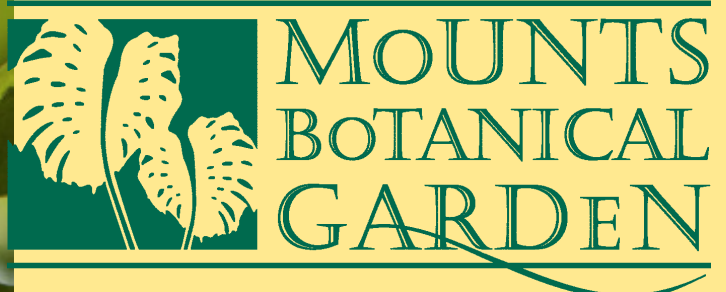
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Chef Nina Kauder of Rawsome Eats
Seating is limited.



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What is Vibro Acoustic Therapy?

by Ed Scheer

Vibro Acoustic Therapy (VAT) uses sound to produce vibrations that are applied directly to the body.



During the Vibro Acoustic Therapy process, a person lies down on a plush bed that vibrates very lightly to music played through head phones. After a 30-minute session, the body receives an internal message, and one feels extremely light, in an almost out-of-body way, as some of our customers have told us! VAT provides stress relief and muscle relaxation, as well as improved range of motion and muscle tone. It also increases sensory awareness, optimizes hormone levels and lowers blood pressure. There are a number of positive mental benefits, too, such as reducing fatigue and countering depression.

The most positive effects can be found in the treatment of COPD/Asthma/Cerebral Paresis, Stroke, Headaches, Fibromyalgia, Neck and Shoulder Pain, Body Stiffness, Autism, Insomnia, Pre-Menstrual Tension, Parkinson's disease and post-operative conditions.

In reference to risk involved with Vibro Acoustic Therapy treatments, there are none. More than 40,000 hours of therapy have been provided to

people in both Europe and the United States. There is not a single report of risk or mishap. No significant adverse effects have ever been found. However, some patients may experience mild nausea, sea/motion sickness, slight dizziness or feeling of light headedness.

In summation, Vibro Acoustic Therapy is highly recommended for all to come and try. It's a wonderful, relaxing and refreshing session that won't be soon forgotten.

The O2 Zone Oxygen Lounge and Spa in the LA Fitness Plaza in Palm Beach Gardens offers Vibro Acoustic Therapy as well as other non-invasive treatments such as O2 Aromatherapy, Far Infrared Ray Therapy and Zero Gravity Massage Chairs that are sure to relax even the most stressed out person! Check out www.theo2zone.com for more information or call (561) 630-4040.

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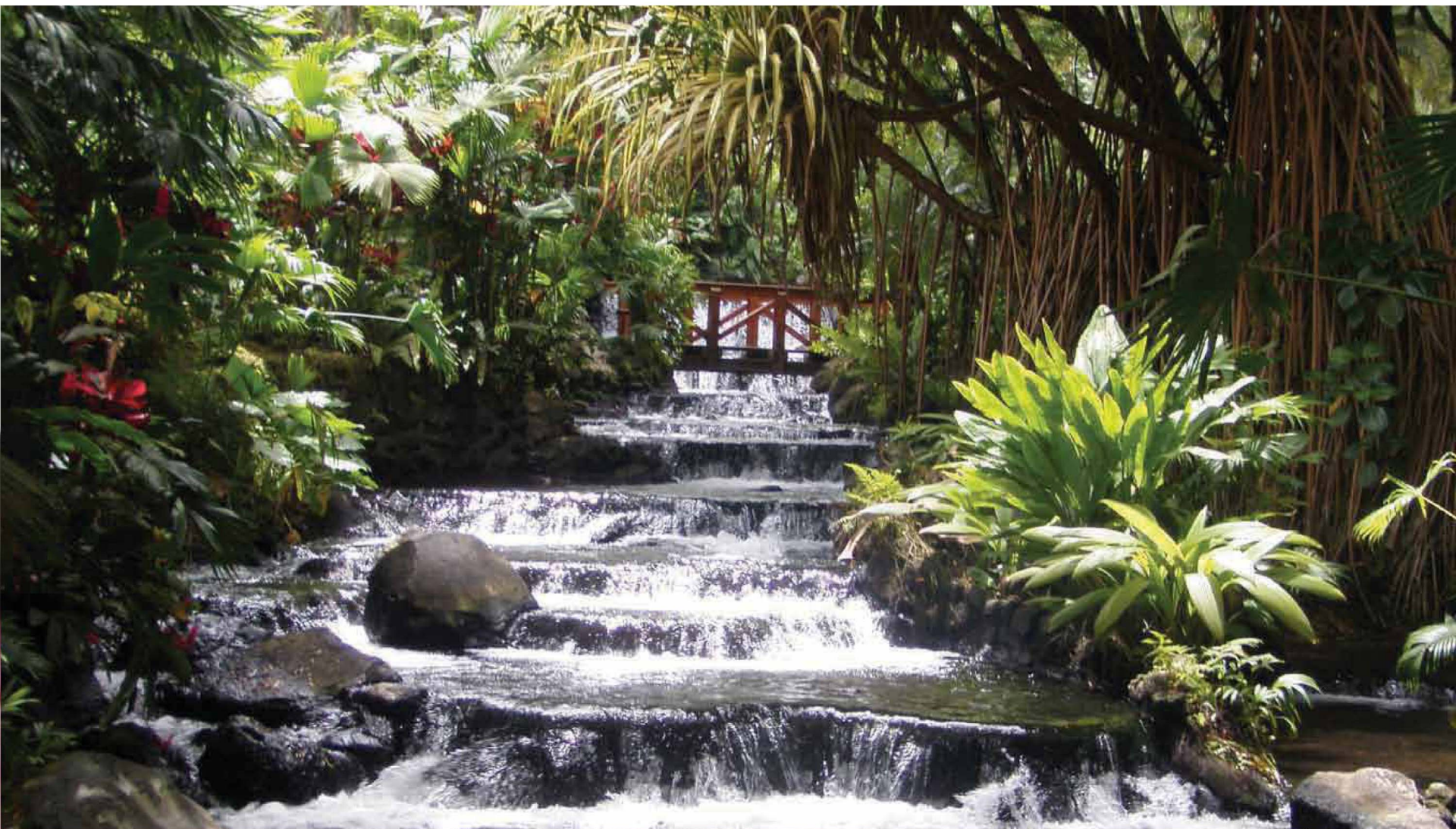
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Sign up now for a complimentary subscription to Florida's leading green digital magazine, Our Wonderful World, by going to www.owwmedia.com.





DELICIOUS DRAGON... FRUIT THAT IS!

by Sharon Quercioli

Dragon fruit (a.k.a. “pitaya”) is a beautiful fruit grown in Southeast Asia, Mexico, Central and South America, and Israel. The plant is football-shaped and has a leathery, leafy skin that is deep red or pink in color. It comes in three varieties: red flesh, white flesh and yellow flesh, all of which are embedded with hundreds of black seeds and have a mild, sweet taste. The best-tasting variety is the one with red flesh, which is succulent when eaten.

Dragon fruit is low in calories and offers numerous nutrients, including Vitamin C, phosphorus, calcium, plus fiber and antioxidants.

Dragon fruit tastes wonderful! Sweet and crunchy, with a flavor that's kind of a cross between kiwi and pear. Dragon fruit is particularly suited to making drinks since it is mostly composed of water, making it quick and easy to blend.

One dragon fruit can weigh between 150g and 600g, but with its thick covering only about 60% is edible. To enjoy dragon fruits, it is best to eat the creamy pulp cold. The middle part is the sweetest, and, after cutting the fruits in half, you just have to spoon the flesh out.

They are among the many wonder fruits that are said to provide multiple health benefits. In addition, dragon fruits help protect the environment because they absorb carbon dioxide at nighttime, and then release oxygen to purify the air.

Health Benefits of the Dragon Fruit

If you are looking for fruits that are filling and delicious, but will help keep your weight in check, dragon fruits are a perfect choice. A 100g serving of dragon fruit has only 60 calories: 18 calories from fat (all unsaturated), 8 calories from protein; and 34 calories from carbohydrates. Dragon fruits do not have complex carbohydrates, so they can be easily broken down by the body.

Dragon fruits are high in fiber, so regular consumption can help avoid constipation, improve your digestive health and help you reduce weight.

Dragon fruits do not contain cholesterol, saturated fat and trans fat, so regular consumption will help manage your blood pressure and control your cholesterol levels. The seeds of dragon fruits are high in polyunsaturated fatty acids (omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids) that reduce triglycerides and lower the risk of cardiovascular disorder.

Dragon fruits are rich in vitamin C, containing 9mg per serving that is equivalent to 10% of the daily value. Thus, eating dragon fruits helps strengthen your immune system and promotes faster healing of bruises and wounds. In fact, regular eating of dragon fruits will help ward off chronic respiratory disorders such as asthma and cough. Dragon fruits also contain B vitamins: B1 for better carbohydrate metabolism; B2 for recovery and improvement of appetite; and B3 for reducing bad cholesterol while improving skin condition.



Dragon fruits are also packed with minerals such as calcium for stronger bones and teeth, phosphorus for tissue formation and iron for healthy blood. One dragon fruit contains approximately 8.8g of calcium, 36.1mg of phosphorus and 0.65mg of iron.

Lycopene is also present in dragon fruits, and this is the pigment responsible for their red color. Lycopene is said to prevent prostate cancer.

Dragon fruits contain phytoalbumins, which have antioxidant properties that help prevent the formation of cancer cells. In addition, dragon fruits are also known to increase the excretion of heavy metal toxins from the body.

So, I'm challenging you to try this delicious recipe. Meanwhile, I'm on my way to the market to purchase my dragon fruits. Besides all the health benefits, the Thai Fruit Salad is amazing! You couldn't ask for anything more. 🌍

THAI FRUIT SALAD RECIPE

What a taste of paradise! You can use a mixture of tropical and local fruit, which you can toss together in a sweet coconut-lime fruit salad dressing that enhances (but never overwhelms) the luscious taste of the fruit. Choose your own combination of fruit for this easy fresh fruit salad. You can serve this beautiful Thai fruit salad in a pineapple or in your special fruit bowl.

Ingredients

- 1+1/2 cups fresh papaya, cubed
- 1 cup pineapple chunks, fresh or canned
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 cup mango, cubed
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced or cut into quarters
- 1 cup other fruit, local OR exotic such as blueberries, melon, dragon fruit, lychees, longans or rambutans
- Garnish: starfruit slices

Fruit Salad Dressing

- 1/4 cup coconut milk
- 1 tbsp. freshly-squeezed lime juice
- 2 tbsp. brown sugar or palm sugar

Preparation

1. Stir fruit salad dressing ingredients together in a cup until sugar dissolves. Set aside.
2. Place all the fresh fruit in a mixing bowl.
3. Pour the dressing over and toss well to mix.
4. Pour or scoop the fruit salad into a serving bowl or into a prepared pineapple boat. Garnish just before serving with a star fruit slice.

In 2013



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Something Old... Something New... Something Borrowed... and Something Green!

by **Sandra Frens**

The new trend in weddings is not the new Vera Wang dress or the blue Manolo Blahnik pumps. It's taking all the accouterments of the traditional (or non-traditional) wedding and finding a way to make them green. Having an earth conscious wedding celebration is a great way for you and your other half to start living a greener life together.

Too often weddings can get bogged down with many one-time use wares that end up stuffing our landfills to the brim or squandering energy resources. The following is a list of eco-friendly guidelines that will give your wedding class and be kind to our Earth.

The Ring & Dresses

To make the moment more romantic, see if there is a family heirloom that can be used when making the proposal. This will have more of a heartfelt impact on the bride-to-be. If an heirloom is not an option and the would-be bride is not into vintage jewels, there is the option of a new ring. Make sure when choosing a new diamond ring that the

stone came from a peaceful country, such as Canada or Australia, and read up on conflict-free diamonds from Amnesty International. Rings are an important symbol of the marriage, relationship and love between the couple and should carry nothing less than good intentions in both the giving and creation of them.

For the bride, usually choosing the dress is the most important aspect of preparing for the big day. Yet, she needs to be aware of not just her visual impact, but her environmental one, too! One way to go green with the bride's dress is to have grandma's or mom's altered. This gives the bride the bride that vintage style and creates sentimental value. If bride insists on something new, try finding a dress made from organic cotton and with a removable train so it can double as the reception dress. For the bridal party, try to choose dresses that they can wear for other occasions or see if they can be rented.

Venue & Food

Try to choose a central location and have an outdoor daytime ceremony. For the evening reception, use candles and torches to light up the night and create a romantic setting. As for food, keep the menu to items that are locally grown and organic. Make sure that your caterer is also using reusable dining wares and cooking implements. Doing these things will greatly reduce the carbon footprint of your wedding and keep other waste to a minimum.

Invitations & Favors

Even invitations can be green and eco-friendly without having to turn to a digital option. Sending a digital invitation is not always the greatest alternative, especially if you are inviting non-tech savvy individuals. The best thing to do is send a traditional invitation via mail; it then serves as a bonus wedding keepsake. When choosing an invitation paper stock look for something



made out of 100% recycled paper and avoid all foil stamping options. The foiling may look pretty, but it renders paper un-recyclable.

One thing you can do to really make your invitations stand out as eco-friendly is to have them created on plantable seed paper. Afterwards, your guests can plant them and have a garden of beautiful flowers to commemorate your big day.

When it comes to favors, again something plantable is a great way to keep your wedding sustainable. If you choose to give out candy to your guests, place them in seed paper boxes or (another idea!) is to give your guests plantable hearts to use as confetti. Use plantable paper to create your place cards and have the guests keep and grow them.

For more ideas for plantable wedding invitations and stationary including plantable favors, visit www.sproutem.com



Flowers & Décor

The easiest way to avoid costly flower arrangements is to have your event at a beautiful garden venue. Another option is to include potted plants into your décor versus buying cut flowers. At the end then they can be given away as gifts to guests or brought to your home and added to your garden. If cut flowers are non-negotiable, then donate them when the wedding is over to a retirement home or hospital to brighten someone else's day. Another important aspect to selecting flowers is to make sure they are in season. Otherwise, the flowers would have to be imported and added to the carbon footprint of your nuptials.

If you are having an outdoor wedding, the natural ambience of nature serves well as decorum. If you still want to create a more stylized look to your reception, use natural soy or beeswax candles or have a local artisan who specializes in recycled creations make your table centerpieces. Again, at the end of the reception, you can allow guests to take these items as additional wedding favors.

Gifts for the Happy Couple

In many cases you may already have most of the items traditionally given to the newlywed couple. If this is the case, you can request the guests donate to a charity in honor of your wedding. Should you need some appliances for your new home, make sure that you are registered for energy-efficient devices. Another item that makes a great gift is a starter set for creating an organic garden.

As you can see there are many ways to keep your wedding a green event and start a life as an earth aware couple. May your wedding celebration be a joyous and eco-friendly occasion and continue living the green dream. 🌍

Ask the Energy Expert “Energy Integrity”

by Scott Ranck

The second definition of integrity is, “The state of being whole or undivided.” That definition can be applied to many areas, but I like to apply it to energy use. This concept is extremely helpful to people to understand how best to conserve energy. Let me explain the concept.

To be whole or undivided in this case means the weather conditions, lighting conditions, temperature, humidity and water temperature that naturally occur outside your home are identical to what is happening inside your home. When inside your home is the same as outside your home, you have zero energy costs because there is “energy integrity.”

Whenever we decide to change the conditions inside by cooling the air or heating the water or having better lighting, it requires that we add energy to make those changes. The greater the difference the more the cost, so when we desire 70 degrees inside when it is 95 degrees outside, our electric bill will cost us more than when it is 85 degrees outside and we desire 78 degrees inside.

Engineers and energy people can actually calculate exactly how much energy is supplied to raise your water temperature from 70 degrees to 120 degrees or to lower your homes temperature 15 degrees. The main thing for the average homeowner to know is that the greater the gap the greater the cost. The more you and I narrow the gap, the less our energy costs will be.

Here are a couple simple things to do that will help you.

Get a cooking thermometer, and check your hot water temperature at any faucet. If it is above 120 degrees, turn the dial on your water heater down to the setting that is highlighted.

Use ceiling fans while rooms are occupied so that you can bump your thermostat setting up to 78 degrees. Each degree warmer that you set your thermostat during the cooling season will save you 4-7% on cooling costs.

Limit how many lights you have on by remembering this simple energy integrity lesson. The more you reduce the gap between the conditions inside your home and the conditions outside your home, the lower your costs. 🌍

Scott Ranck is the Conservation Program Coordinator & Energy Specialist for Florida Public Utilities. Feel free to e-mail any energy-related questions or comments to Scott at sranck@fpuc.com.



GOING GREEN



Monster Mosquitoes?

Protect Yourself This Summer!

by Mandy Nolen



The media has been abuzz about the impending invasion of gallinippers-quarter-sized and unusually aggressive mosquitoes. Mosquitoes can be extremely annoying, but in addition to the itching and inflammation of their bite, mosquitoes carry diseases, such as malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, eastern equine encephalitis (EEE), West Nile encephalitis, dog heartworm and many others. Protecting yourself and your family from these pests isn't just about comfort; it's about protecting them from disease. But now that we know these giant mosquitoes are coming to town, what are we supposed to do about it?

Your first priority should be preventing mosquitoes from breeding around your home. To do this, empty standing water from flower pots, bromeliads, buckets and barrels; change the water in pet dishes and replace the water in bird baths weekly; drill holes in tire swings so water drains out; and keep children's wading pools empty and on their sides when they aren't being used. If remembering to drain or replace water is difficult, you can also make a solution of one cup dish soap mixed with one gallon of water and pour into places with standing water. This solution is environmentally sensitive and still potent enough to inhibit the development of eggs.

When you know you will be outside in an environment that harbors mosquitoes, make certain you take measures to protect yourself. Be sure to wear long sleeves and pants if possible and to use an effective mosquito repellent. An effective mosquito repellent should have 15-30% deet in it.

According to Consumer Reports, the three most effective repellants are: Off Deep Woods Sportmen II (30% deet); Cutter Backwoods Unscented (23% deet); and Off Family Care Smooth & Dry (15% deet). It is also important to avoid sunscreens with insect repellent in them because sunscreens are intended to be reapplied, and if these products are reapplied too many times you can build up unnecessary high levels of repellent on your body.

If your efforts at preventing and repelling mosquitoes are not adequate, then you should consider hiring a pest control professional. There are several measures that a professional pest control provider can take to help eliminate mosquitoes. If your home has a considerable amount of landscaping, mosquitoes may be taking refuge in your plants during the day. Mosquitoes love dark, moist places to spend their days, and inside a nice hedge is just the right place. A foliar spray for mosquitoes will eliminate this hiding place. If you have a small pond with fish, mosquitoes may be laying their eggs in the water. A professional will be able to treat the water with an insect regulator that is safe for fish. Lastly, some pest control companies offer Mosquito Eliminators, which are devices similar to a fly light. The Mosquito Eliminator has a light to attract the mosquitoes with a sticky strip inside to trap them. Mosquito Eliminators are discreet, and, unlike traditional mosquito lights, do not "zap" or make any ominous noises. 🌍

For your free evaluation on how to protect your family from mosquitoes, contact Nozzle Nolen by going to www.nozzlenolen.com or calling (800) 226-6536.

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Is the Manatee Our “Canary in the Coal Mine”?

by Richard Hawkins

It has been the practice of humans for a long time to observe plants and animals for signs of impending hazards or evidence of environmental threats. One of the early warning devices once used by miners was a caged canary. The little songbird was a sentinel. Since they are more susceptible to environmental hazards than humans, the canaries would perish quickly when exposed to dangerous gasses that could work their way into mines. This would alert miners to exit immediately.



The State of Florida’s official marine mammal, the manatee, may be trying to give us a warning. The Florida Manatee is endangered, and there are only a few thousand remaining. Shockingly, after just four months, this year has set a record for manatee deaths. In fact, nearly 600 have perished, and, unlike other years, boat collisions are not the primary cause.

Scientists have reported that the fatalities are tied to toxic algae blooms that kill the mammals outright and to oxygen-depleting algae that is killing thousands of acres of sea grass that the “seas cow” grazes on. There have also been recent reports of a string of deaths of bottlenose dolphins, pelicans and several species of fish. Then again, I think we all have heard about our dying reefs.

The cause of these recent severe events seems to be tied to agricultural and urban runoff, particularly fertilizer. The nutrients feeding the algae are coming from phosphorus, nitrates and sulfates, primarily from commercial agricultural sources. So, since we know the cause, we should be able to find a solution, right? The fact is that setting clean water standards that would limit the amount of pollutants entering our water would be a heavy burden on our state’s economy. It would be detrimental to our current form of food and food products production and could negatively impact the employment of thousands of Floridians.

When I first came to this state in 1974, I marveled at the crystal clarity of Silver Springs, the mermaid show at Weeki-Wachee and the abundance of life off our shores. In a few short decades, I have witnessed the effects of our

our shores. In a few short decades, I have witnessed the effects of our short-term thinking on the water supply to which both nature and humanity depend.

Change is never easy. While we see the impact on nature from our actions, we cannot see the ultimate effect that they will have on us, and certainly not on the generations of those that will follow. Every year that we continue on the short path of profits with limited investments in our future, we are making it more costly in the long haul.

Localecopia is an advocate of sustainable agriculture. Food production can certainly be done with a smaller environmental footprint and a willingness to work with nature, not against it. The best chance for change is through your choice of products. Choosing sustainable or organic products can really make a difference. It may cost a little more, but it is an investment in our future.

There are not many canaries remaining. We can’t get out of the mine, so we had better clean it up! 🌍

Localecopia is a nonprofit organization based in Palm Beach, Florida focused upon bringing businesses, producers, educators and government organizations together for the purpose of lessening our carbon footprint by supporting local product consumption, helping operations better utilize waste and bringing together individuals to help achieve sustainable business practices. For information about Localecopia, please visit

www.localecopia.org



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Meet the Team...



SHARON QUERCIOLI

Co-Founder & President

Named 2011 Woman of the Year by the Northern Palm Beach County Chamber of Commerce, 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, bookmarks 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.



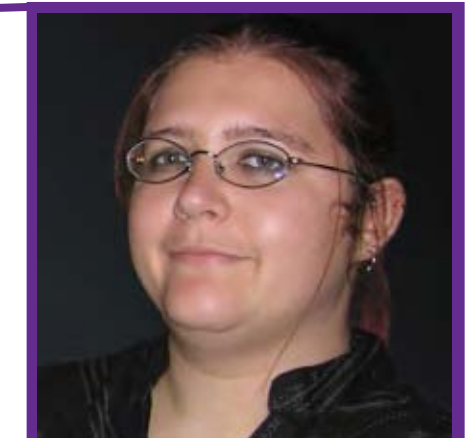
GLENN SWIFT

Co-Founder & Editor-in-Chief

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.

SANDRA FRENS

Art Director



Sandra is a talented graphic designer who earned her Bachelors of Fine Arts from Florida Atlantic University. For more than a decade, she has worked as an independent designer and freelance artist specializing in painting, drawing, digital design, and photography before settling into Sprouts!, Inc. as the Creative Director. Now she is applying her vast artistic knowledge and creativity as the Art Director for Our Wonderful World.

"A good graphic artist understands the elements and principles of design, but an exceptional artist (of any kind) has to be able see how they come together in all the objects that compose the world around us. Remember: everything in our world (even the natural world) has been made by an artist."

Meet the Team...



SEAN REED

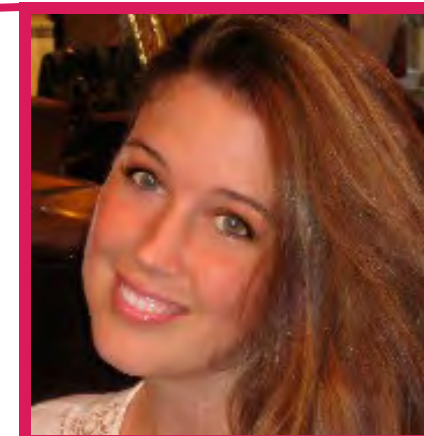
Webmaster / IT Coordinator

Sean is an information technology expert and photographer based in Palm Beach, FL. He is a graduate of the University of South Florida with a degree in Management Information Systems. Prior to graduating, he held positions as Senior Photographer and Online Editor for the University's campus newspaper, The Oracle.

With over a decade of experience in the information technology field, Sean has a long list of clientele for his IT consulting agency and holds a position of prominence in numerous organizations, including ArtiGras, the Northern Palm Beach County Chamber of Commerce, Sprouts! and Our Wonderful World.

TERESA VANDYK-MARSHALL

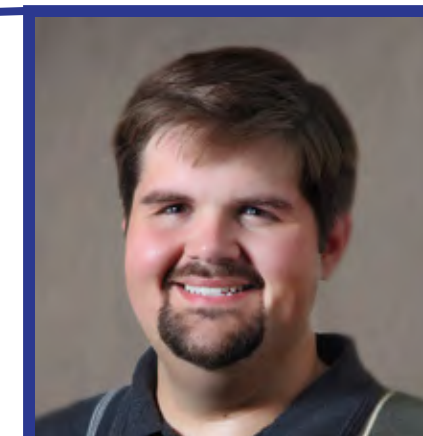
Contributing Columnist



Teresa Vandyk-Marshall is a columnist for Our Wonderful World Media as well as a Senior Quality Consultant with Florida Power & Light (a leading clean energy provider). Having spent over nine years writing for the company, this Palm Beach Gardens resident currently specializes in communications within Quality Management and has written a multitude of educational references for the company. Representing FPL, she provided helpful tips on energy conservation that all energy users can view at www.FPLConnect.com. In her private time, she and her husband, James, are passionate organic gardening enthusiasts, nature lovers and Sustaining Members of Bok Tower Sanctuary and Gardens in Lake Wales. "It is very important to me to actively support a team bringing a healthier, more sustainable and more beautiful tomorrow to our Earth and to our children."

ROBBY ANTONIO

Photographer



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."

KRISTIN PURCELL

Operations Manager



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."

The Archive







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