

PLANNING A TRIP?
 'Touring with the Townies' features reader-submitted photos from travels. Let's see how many places we can go! Send in your picture or questions to newsfp@hometownnewsol.com

TOWNIE 10



STAR STUDENT
 This week's student of the week is a beast on the mat

STUDENT 2

PETS OF THE WEEK
 We have two pets who are searching for their forever home

PETS OF THE WEEK 7

CATCH OF THE WEEK
 This mangrove snapper was caught in Treasure Coast waters by this young visitor from Massachusetts

CATCH 9

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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What a Farmer's Market find!



Sevin Bullwinkle/staff photographer

Open every Saturday morning, the Fort Pierce Jazz Society Craft Market and the Downtown Farmer's Market of Fort Pierce offered live entertainment, crafts, food, fresh local produce and plants on Saturday, March 9, on the waterfront in historic downtown Fort Pierce. Here, six-year-old Gavin Brennan finds the essential alligator's head.

City jumpstarts workforce housing ordinance

Fort Pierce gets ball rolling on workforce housing with approval of ordinance to interface with future land trust

By Donald Rodrigue
 For Hometown News

FORT PIERCE – The City Commission approved the initial ordinance March 4 that will pave the way for workforce housing through the future establishment of a nonprofit community land trust to coordinate funding for infill development.

City Building Official Paul Thomas said in the summary describing the proposed ordinance that it would “regulate the infill of affordable residential housing” and recommended approval.

“The ordinance also allows for the city to enter

into an agreement with a community land trust, which would oversee the establishment of affordable workforce housing that would remain affordable into perpetuity,” he said. “In addition, the community land trust would revitalize lower income neighborhoods by introducing new construction, enabling pride of home-ownership and increasing the affordable housing options for the citizens of Fort Pierce. We should be all be very happy: We’re quickly moving towards actually achieving the goal of having workforce housing and affordable housing here in the city.”

Building Dept. Coordinator Shaun Coss then provided commissioners a brief overview of the proposed ordinance, emphasizing that it was an initial ordinance applying strictly to housing constructed in conjunction with a community land trust to be founded in the near future.

“This one issue should be looked at as the foundation block for future upcoming ordinance
 See HOUSING, page 4

Teacher receives prestigious invitation

Creative Arts Academy instructor tours the Indiana facilities of historic American instrument fabricator

By Donald Rodrigue
 For Hometown News

ST. LUCIE COUNTY – The educational division of the historic Conn-Selmer concert and marching band instrument manufacturer invited music teacher Andrew Gekoskie of the Creative Arts Academy of St. Lucie to form part of a select group of VIPs to tour the company's national facilities and share ideas with its employees.

Mr. Gekoskie said he was thrilled to take part recently in the all-expenses-paid trip to the Elkhart, Ind. plant of what he called “the last made in America band instrument companies.”

“I was very honored to be selected as a Conn-Selmer VIP, and it was quite unexpected,” he said. “Not only do they make great instruments, but their focus on music education and helping directors and students worldwide is extra special.”

Before seeing the company's employees at work in February, the native of Shamokin, Penn. had assumed the musical instrument industry had become automated like the automobile industry.

“I was absolutely amazed that all instruments are handmade,” he said. “I was expecting to see robots and automation, but this is not the case. The wonderful people who work and care about their work are true artisans. Their pride in their work -- their excellence -- was amazing to watch and experience.”

Mr. Gekoskie was accompanied by five other music teachers from across the nation: two from Texas and one each from Ohio, Virginia and Alabama. The group collaborated regarding methods and current music education practices as part of their experience.

“We worked with designers and man-

See TEACHER, page 3