

PORT ST. LUCIE ST. LUCIE WEST TRADITION Hometown News



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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 12



STAR STUDENT

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

STUDENT 7



PETS OF THE WEEK

We have two pets who are searching for their forever home

PETS OF THE WEEK 4



CATCH OF THE WEEK

This mangrove snapper was caught in Treasure Coast waters by this young visitor from Massachusetts

CATCH 11



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Tea with the Royals



Sevin Bullwinkle/staff photographer

The 'Pretty Princess Tea Party' was held at the Port St. Lucie Park and Recreation Community Center on Wednesday, March 6. Children two years of age and older dress up as princesses to meet with princesses from 'Princess Enchantment' for stories, tea time, snacks, sing alongs, dancing and crafts. Here, four-year-old Jaylah Klaffer struggles with Allison Baldino, 3, to retain possession of her wand.

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."

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Carwash approved

Planning Department fails to win requirement on "solid" concrete wall for rear of carwash

By Donald Rodrigue
For Hometown News

PORT ST. LUCIE – The City Council voted 3-0 March 11 to approve a special exception use and the site plan for a full-service carwash along a busy section of Port St. Lucie Boulevard, rejecting a Planning Department condition for a "solid" poured concrete wall along the rear perimeter of the property.

The Planning & Zoning Board had previously debated in early February whether to support granting the special exception use, a requirement for the placement of a fully automatic carwash in a General Commercial Zoning District. During that meeting, the applicant's representative, Brad Curry of Engineering Design & Construction, described a disagreement between the sound consultant he hired for a noise analysis, Ron Moulder & Associates, and one chosen by the Planning Department -- Siebein Associates -- as a "battle with acoustic consultants." The conflict arose from the two acoustical engineering firms using different methodologies: Mr. Moulder utilized the dBA rating system [A-weighted decibels], while Siebein used C-weighted decibels -- referred to as dBCs -- and wanted the former figures converted to its choice of methodology.

Former Planning & Zoning Department Director Patti Tobin referred to the disagreement as "a stalemate" that would probably only be resolved after construction of the 4,380-square-foot carwash at 229 Southwest Port St. Lucie Blvd.

"They [Siebein Associates] were looking for additional information, and we didn't get that," she said Feb. 5. "His [Mr. Curry's] feeling is that he can meet it [the sound ordinance], and the only way to get it moving was to present it to the City Council with the assurance that if there are noises that exceed the noise ordinance, then they will have to deal with it, whether it's at CO [certificate of occupancy] or after CO."

Principal Planner Holly Price spoke during both hearings and emphasized the

See CARWASH, page 8

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