News from around Sarasota Bay. View this email in your browser

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BAY REFLECTIONS

News from the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

October 2020

Check Out Our Featured Stories

- SBEP Welcomes New Executive Director, Dr. David Tomasko
- Your Boating Behavior Can Be a Lifesaver
- Volunteer for the 2020 Seagrass Survey
- Sarasota Dolphin Research Program Celebrates 50 Years
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SBEP Welcomes New Executive Director Dr. David Tomasko



The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program (SBEP) is announcing a transition in leadership following the retirement of SBEP Executive Director Mark Alderson, who has served in the position since SBEP's inception in 1989. On November 9, 2020, Dr. David Tomasko will join SBEP as Executive Director.

Dr. Tomasko brings more than 30 years of experience in water quality assessments and the development of science-based natural resource plans in the Gulf of Mexico and international locations. He holds a Ph.D. in biology from the University of South Florida, a Master of Science in marine biology from the Florida Institute of Technology, and a Bachelor of Science in biology from Old Dominion University. Dr. Tomasko joins SBEP from Environmental Science Associates (ESA) in Tampa, FL.

"I am looking forward to working with SBEP to build on their long-standing efforts to protect and restore the health of Sarasota Bay," said Dr. Tomasko. Together with local stakeholders and policy makers, we can secure a healthy and resilient bay for residents and visitors, as well as for future generations."

Mark Alderson will embark on his well-earned retirement in December after a career of public service in the name of the environment. In his 30-year career with SBEP, Mark led multiple successful habitat restoration projects, directed the creation of the Gulf Coast Heritage Trail, supported the development of public outreach and education programs, and alongside the SBEP partnership was honored with a 2009 Gulf Guardian Award from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for historic seagrass recovery in Sarasota Bay.

Please join SBEP in thanking Mark Alderson and welcoming Dave Tomasko!

Your Boating Behavior Can Be a Lifesaver



What's better than a day out on the water? Our local bays, inlets, sandbars, and Gulf waters offer plenty to explore and enjoy. With the coronavirus pandemic limiting activities outside the home, it's no surprise that more boaters are taking advantage of our beautiful waterways. Unfortunately, scientists have noted a simultaneous uptick in human-caused marine mammal injuries and fatalities. When we are on the water, it's important to remember we are guests in the home of turtles, dolphins, sharks, rays, manatees, birds, and the many other species that live in and rely on the bay. The actions we take on the water can save lives in more ways than one.

Read More >

Volunteer for the 2020 Seagrass Survey



2020 Seagrass Survey

November 6th - 15th

Flexible hours on your own schedule!

*** Independently survey with your family/close friends- NO public interactions required!**

- Is the seagrass in Sarasota County healthy? Join the survey to find out!
- Free T-shirt and lunch for registered survey volunteers.
- Snorkelers with wading skills, kayaks, or motorized boats needed!
- Students can earn community service hours.
- Social distancing while still having fun!

Register today at:
2020-SeagrassSurvey.eventbrite.com

For more information:
941-861-5000 or **visit scgov.net** (keyword seagrass).

Sarasota County

SARASOTA BAY ESTUARY PROGRAM
www.sarasotabay.org

Follow us
@SRQCountyGov

Sarasota County prohibits discrimination in all services, programs or activities. View the complete policy at www.scgov.net (keywords ADA).

Created by Sarasota County Communications 42219

Help us make this a zero-waste day and bring your own reusable water bottle!

The Sarasota County Seagrass Survey returns this year completely socially distanced and more convenient than ever! This annual citizen science event helps environmental managers collect information about what's going on with Sarasota County's crucial seagrass habitats. Volunteers don't need to be scientists and don't need a boat to participate!

- You pick your team
- You pick the date and time to survey (November 6th - 15th)
- You pick your survey zone

- We supply the gear - cleaned and ready to go! (At least one member of your team will need a mask and snorkel.)

Learn More & Register for the Seagrass Survey >

Sarasota Dolphin Research Program Celebrates 50 Years

Did you know that Sarasota Bay is home to the world's longest-running study on a wild dolphin population? The Chicago Zoological Society's Sarasota Dolphin Research Program (SDRP) began studying bottlenose dolphins in Sarasota Bay in 1970. The group's research has led to many discoveries about the bay's bottlenose dolphins and their estuarine habitat. From SBEP, congratulations and thanks to SDRP on their 50th anniversary!



Four long-term resident Sarasota mothers and their calves. Three of these mothers, and their calves, would likely not have been available for the photo if not for interventions by the SDRP and collaborators. Credit: SDRP

"Long-term study is crucial for understanding the lives of members of long-lived species such as bottlenose dolphins, and for being able to detect trends in populations relative to changes in their environment. The expertise of the SDRP has been employed to benefit endangered cetaceans around the world." - Dr. Randy Wells, SDRP Senior Scientist, Program Manager

Read More About the Sarasota Dolphin Research Program >

Learn about more dolphin discoveries in SBEP's interview with Dr. Wells of SDRP



Bite-Size Bay News



Turtle Sculptures Serve as Teaching Moments

"Two unique turtle sculptures will soon greet beachgoers at Siesta and Venice Public Beaches. The thoughtfully designed turtle sculptures have been created to hold plastic and aluminum recyclables, serving not only as collection spots but also educational opportunities to highlight the problems caused by marine debris."

Read More About the Turtle Sculptures >

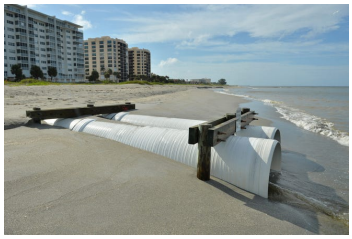


363 acres at headwaters of the Myakka River in Manatee County will be preserved

"The Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast announced Wednesday the permanent protection of 363 acres at the headwaters of the

Myakka River in Myakka City. Seven creeks converge into one river, the Myakka, at the newly named Myakka Headwaters Preserve."

Read More About the Myakka Headwaters Preserve >



Venice City Council approves new fee to pay for water quality improvements

"The Venice City Council approved a plan that will streamline the way fees are assessed for stormwater management, as well as establish a new fee that will collect funds to pay for at least $3 million in stormwater identified by city engineers to raise water quality."

Read More About Venice Stormwater Fees >



ICYMI: Seagrass Habitat Exploration Video

Celebrate our estuaries by learning about one of their key habitats and economic drivers: seagrasses! Watch as SBEP's Darcy Young and Sarasota County's Alia court take you up close and personal with different types of seagrass and the animals they support. Watch out for those feisty blue crabs!

Watch the Seagrass Video >

Climate Solutions Corner

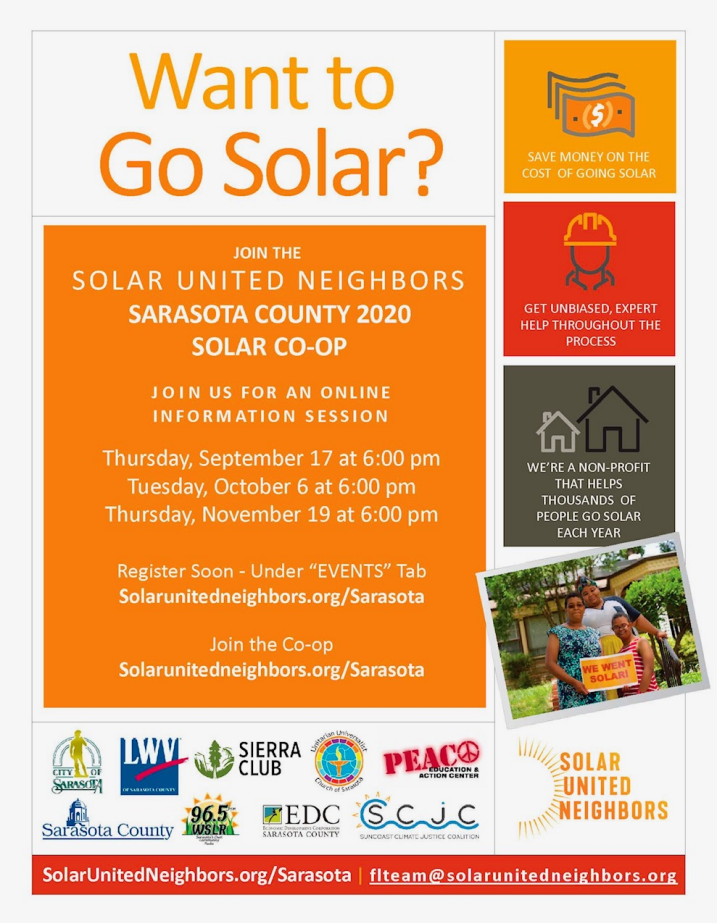
Climate change can exacerbate existing threats and pose new challenges to maintaining a healthy bay ecosystem. Check out these local initiatives for ways you can be part of the solution.

Sarasota
County
Solar Co-op

Open now - Dec 4, 2020

Imagine walking into a solar company's office with 50 or 100 of your neighbors and saying, "We all want to get solar. What kind of deal can you give us?"

That's a solar co-op!



"Happy to report that we have had solar since July 2019 and are super impressed with the system. This investment makes sense and cents! Highly recommend you sign up and take advantage of this opportunity."
- Rusty Chinnis, resident of Longboat Key

Learn More About the Solar Co-op >

City of Sarasota Community Canopy Program

Trees reduce CO2 (and your energy bill), filter stormwater, cool urban areas & provide habitat.

Order a FREE tree delivered right to your

door!

The City still has 80 live oak and bald cypress trees left!



Order Your Free Tree >

Free Home Energy Audits

FPL offers free energy surveys to help you with energy efficiency.

Schedule an FPL Energy Expert by calling: 1-800-DIAL-FPL (1-800-342-5375).



Schedule a Home Energy Audit >

Ringling Trail Survey

Open now - Nov 15th

The City of Sarasota is studying Ringling Boulevard for an easy and safe connection between the new Legacy Trail and Downtown's shops, offices, homes, and parks.

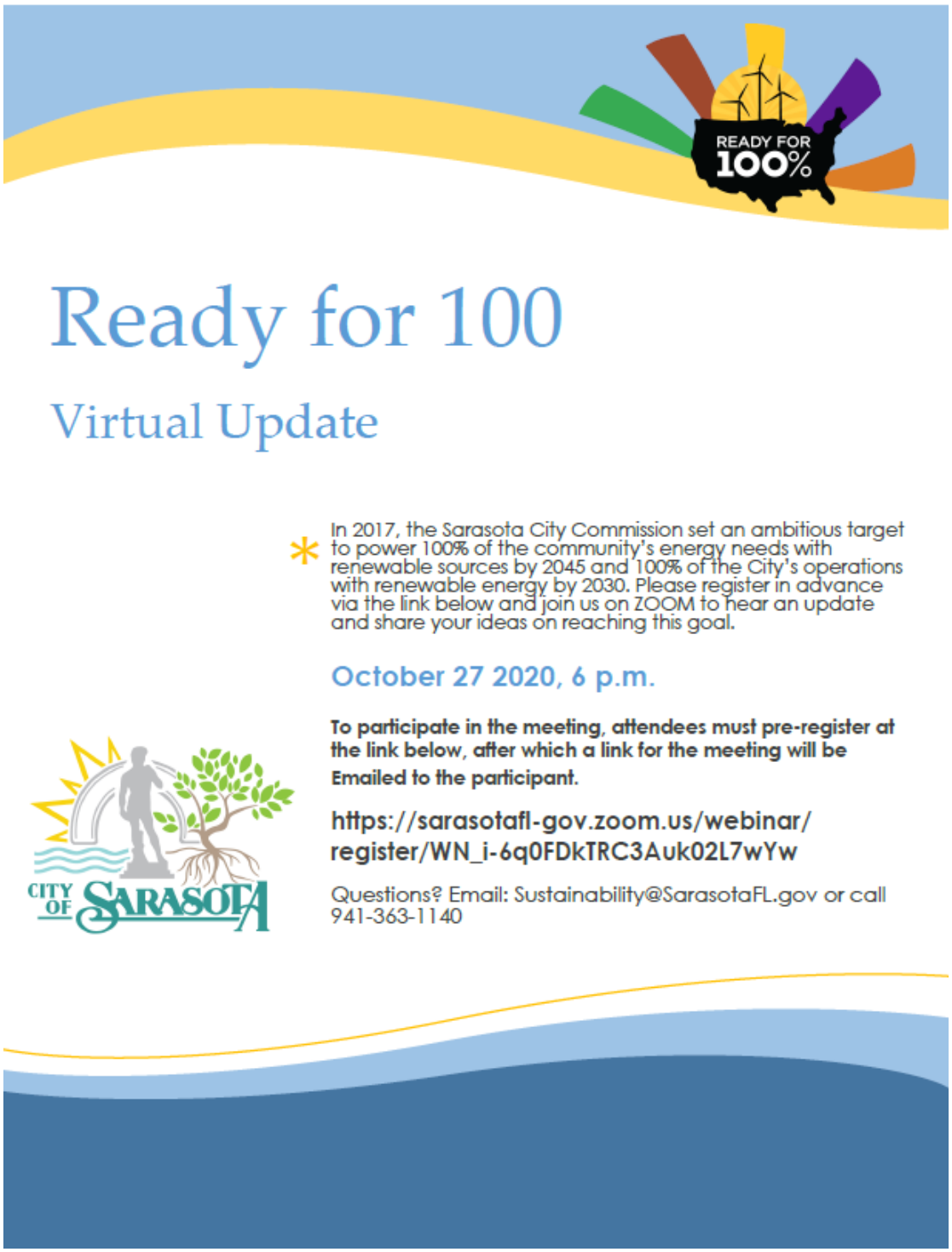
Share your thoughts about protected bike lane options.



Take the Ringling Trail Survey >

Classes and Virtual Events

City of Sarasota Ready for 100 Community Meeting



Register for the Ready for 100 Community Meeting >

15th Annual Sarasota County Sustainable Communities VIRTUAL Workshop

October 29, 2020



Register for the Sustainable Communities Workshop >

Check out TED talks from this year's featured speakers!

Dr. Cheryl Holder, "The Link Between Climate Change, Health, and Poverty"



Leyla Acaroglu, "Paper beats plastic? How to rethink environmental folklore"



William McDonough, "Cradle to Cradle Design"



Sarasota Bay King Tides Photo Contest

Submissions due Oct 31st

Voting November 2nd - 6th on Facebook



The King Tides are past us now, and photo submissions are due on Oct. 31st. Starting Nov. 2nd, we'll need your help to pick the lucky winners! Mark your calendar and get your voting hat ready!

Submit Your Photos By Oct 31st >

Vote for Your Favorite Photos Starting Nov 2nd >

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iCAR Workshop

Tech Fix: How can technology help us investigate, communicate and solve climate problems and foster resilience?

November 12th & 13th

9:00 AM - 4:45 PM

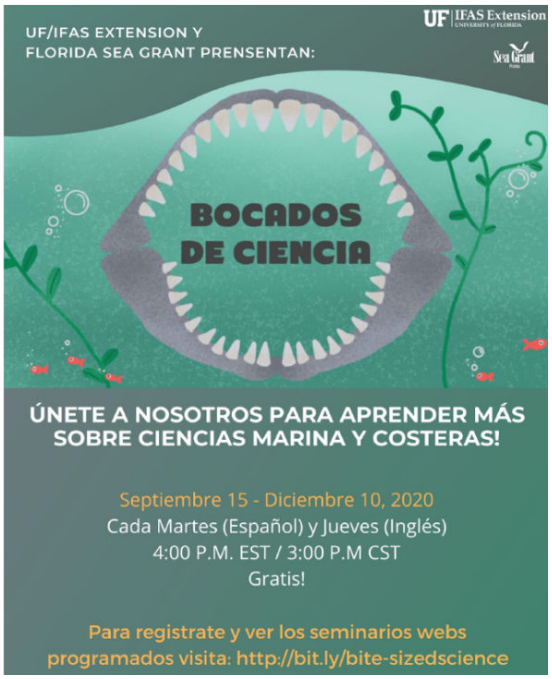


Register for the iCAR Workshop >

Florida Sea Grant: Bite Sized Science
Bocados de Ciencias

4PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays through December 10





Register for Bite Sized Science / Registrate para Bocados de Ciencias

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Florida Sea Grant Seafood at Your Fingertips LIVE

Wednesdays at 6PM

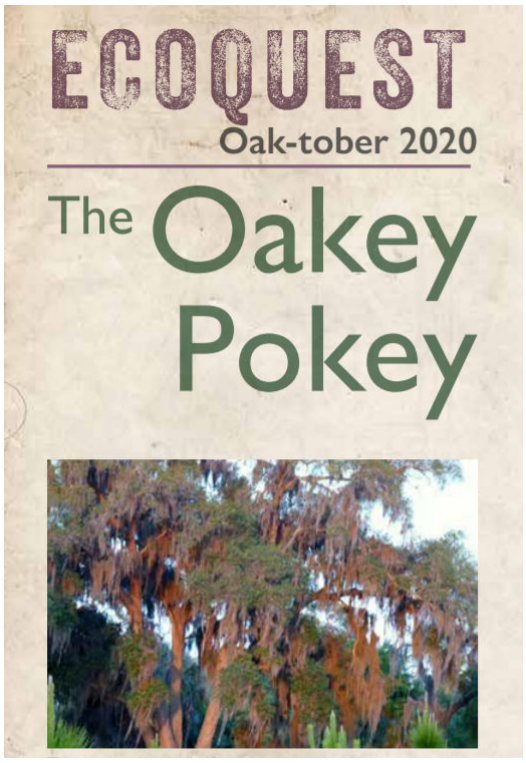


Join Florida Sea Grant for Facebook Live cooking demonstration videos with step-by-step guidance for selecting and preparing seafood. Viewers will learn about smart seafood choices, sustainable fisheries, and health benefits of eating seafood.

Upcoming demos include: shrimp scampi, coconut grouper nuggets with mango chutney, pesto pine nut trout bake, and seafood paella.

Watch "Seafood at Your Fingertips" >

Sarasota-Manatee EcoFlora Project



Each month, Sarasota-Manatee EcoFlora will announce a fun new challenge to help document the plants of Sarasota and Manatee Counties by taking and sharing photos via iNaturalist.

These EcoQuests challenge Floridians to become engaged citizens in the observation, study, appreciation, and conservation of the native flora and fauna of Florida, and understand the impacts to it by exotic species.

Learn More About the EcoFlora Project >

Upcoming University of Florida/IFAS Extension Webinars

Sarasota County

Manatee County

Jobs Board

- Energy Program Specialist: Sarasota Housing Authority & Sarasota County
- Environmental Specialist I: Parks and Natural Areas - Sarasota County
- Water Quality Manager - Charlotte County - closes November 6
- Executive Director, Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council – closes October 28

Water Reading from Around the Web

'GatorByte' to detect water quality less expensively – and at different places, times



"We can put these devices into the top of a watershed and allow stormwater flow to carry the GatorByte buoys downstream and essentially map the water quality in an urban watershed."

Read more from UF/IFAS >

Groundwork USA explores how decades of housing discrimination has led to extreme heat and flooding



"Communities across the country are using housing discrimination maps and data to combat the impacts of climate change."

Read more >

Request a (Virtual) Speaker from SBEP

SBEP staff members regularly speak to homeowner, neighborhood, and community groups and upper-level classrooms about Sarasota Bay ecology and restoration. Weekday and evening presentations are now being scheduled through winter 2020. Click the button below to request a speaker for your group.



Visit the SBEP website to schedule a speaker >

Share Tweet Forward

Bay Reflections is the quarterly e-newsletter from the Sarasota Bay Estuary Program.

The Sarasota Bay Estuary Program is dedicated to restoring the area's greatest natural asset - Sarasota Bay. We offer special thanks to our partners: Sarasota County, Manatee County, City of Sarasota, City of Bradenton, Town of Longboat Key, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection and the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Our office is located in the Federal Building in downtown Sarasota:
111 S. Orange Avenue, Suite 200W | Sarasota, FL 34236
(941) 955-8085 | info@sarasotabay.org

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