



**Louise Bruderle**  
Editor and Publisher

# just some thoughts

## This Month: Karen Bell



**Karen Bell**

*Photo by Evelyn England*

On a scrumptious afternoon in the first half of February, I and my photographer, Evelyn England, headed north to meet and photograph this month's West Coast Woman, **Karen Bell**. Yah, you probably know her — but you know her by proxy. The proxy being one of the best and most authentically Florida dining experiences in the area. We're talking the Star Fish Company Restaurant in Cortez, Florida.

While I wanted to talk about her career and learn Karen's story, I also wanted to know why their food is so good. But both questions can be answered at the same time.

They really care about details — it's local and super fresh seafood served non-fussy style and everything is made from scratch...that's her company's "mission statement." And it's what they serve not just at Star Fish Company Restaurant, but also at Star Market and at their newer restaurant Tide Tables.

Karen's companies are good stewards in ways you may not know. They have a zero tolerance drug policy, they fish legally and sustainably—she even helps with fishermen's housing. They respect her back. Karen is a third generation resident of Cortez, Florida—a place that's a living time capsule of Florida's past. I think you'll enjoy her story.

## It's WCW's 29th Anniversary!



**March 8 is International Women's Day** so how fortunate that March is also when WCW marks its Anniversary! Thank you for 29 wonderful years of covering this amazingly diverse and growing community.

Here are a few updates on some of the women we've profiled...

I spent a recent midday at Selby Gardens for the opening of their wonderful Chagall display. It's a beautiful, informative and clever exhibit that incorporates the painter's work as well as his environs. No, it wasn't exactly the French Riviera, but they did their best to make it appear so. Congratulations go to **Jennifer O. Rominiecki**, President and CEO of Selby Gardens, who recently marked her second anniversary as CEO there.

**Vickie Oldham**, whom we profiled in January, reached her goal of dedicating the historic markers in Newtown this past February 18. The Newtown Conservation Historic District unveiled the first 15 historic markers that mark the history of Newtown and Overtown. Great work, Vickie!



**Jennifer O. Rominiecki**



**Vickie Oldham**

## Sarasota Film Festival starts March 31



TWE received a record 500 film submissions from 37 countries. Last year they also had record attendance at TWE, screening 25

While there's a limited amount of info we can share about the Festival, we do have these news items. **Ringling College of Art and Design** student Tyler Mathis had his artwork selected for the Sarasota Film Festival. There will be three images representing the festival this year with a multi dimensional play on words; "See and Be Seen", "Sea and Be Seen" and "See and be Scene."

The annual **Through Women's Eyes Film Festival** (TWE) is back at Regal Hollywood 20 in Sarasota. TWE set record attendance levels last year. And for good reason — they present the best in new, groundbreaking films by established and emerging filmmakers from around the world. In 2016,

films — eight feature length and 17 shorts. The films were written, directed or produced by women and feature brave and heroic stories of extraordinary women.

The Gulf Coast Chapter of UNIFEM and Through Women's Eyes continues its partnership with the Sarasota Film Festival. TWE's films will be shown on April 1 and 2. Check WCW in April to see the complete film guide for TWE.

Together, TWE and SFF have 35 years of experience presenting domestic and international films that entertain, inform, challenge and inspire. Through this partnership, the two non-profit groups hope to again broaden and enrich the film festival experience for both filmgoers and filmmakers.

TWE is a volunteer organization and all proceeds from ticket purchases turn into donations to the US National Committee and UN Women. Ticket prices and film listings will soon be available at [www.throughwomenseyes.com](http://www.throughwomenseyes.com).

This year's **Sarasota Film Festival runs March 31 to April 9**. See more in next month's WCW.

## Betty Schoenbaum at WRC



**Betty Schoenbaum**

**The Women's Resource Center** is honoring philanthropist **Betty Schoenbaum** at its 2017 Renaissance Luncheon. Betty is being honored for her 30-year support of the center's legacy scholarship program for non-traditional women students.

"Betty Schoenbaum has been a wonderful supporter our scholarship program. She has shared how meaningful it is for her to support others in gaining an education," says Ashley Brown, president and CEO of the Women's Resource Center. "Her generosity has empowered hundreds of women to pursue a post-secondary education and enhance their lives and the lives of their families. Betty believes that the joy of giving is the joy of living. She lives by this credo and has positively impacted the lives of thousands of people in our community."

The WRC legacy scholarship program began in Sarasota in 1986 and serves non-traditional female students, many of whom return to school after years or even decades following high school graduation. The WRC has awarded more than 1,000 scholarships since the inception of the program. The event is Tuesday, March 21, 11:30 a.m., at Michael's On East. For tickets call 366-1700.

## Interested in Genealogy?

**ANCESTRY 101:** Learn how to get started in this addictive pursuit and find ways to build your tree quickly. Learn how to avoid common mistakes and stay on track. We'll look at ancestry.com but there will be an overview of other sources (free and paid) as well as DNA sites. If you like detective work and want to know where you came from — this course can be a good start. Great for those working on family stories.

**Course# GEN3000 Held on Tues., March 28, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.** To register: 941-361-6590 or go to [www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/ace/](http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/ace/).

## Want to Learn How to Write for Social Media and more?

**CREATIVE WRITING IN THE DIGITAL AGE:** This course will teach you how to write creatively and show ways that your writing can be applied to the digital world via blogs, word press and social media. Technology has transformed writing through its many new innovations: voice recognition software, e-publishing and writing and editing software. But it still takes solid creative writing skills. There will be instruction, but also exercises and classroom interaction and sharing.

**Course# LAWD1000. Wednesdays, March 1-29 (5 sessions). 6-8p.m.** To register: 941-361-6590 or [www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/ace/](http://www.sarasotacountyschools.net/schools/ace/).

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*We welcome your thoughts and comments on this column and on other columns and features in this issue. You can reach us at [WCWNewspaper@aol.com](mailto:WCWNewspaper@aol.com). We're on the web at [www.WestCoastWoman.com](http://www.WestCoastWoman.com).*