

Appointments

■ **The Jewish Family and Children's Service of the Suncoast, Inc.** has selected **Heidi Brown** as its new CEO. Brown,



Heidi Brown

formerly the CEO of Aviva (previously Kobernick-Anchin-Bender-son), has a history in the social and human services fields. On board Feb.

1., Brown will lead a team of 86 full-time and 27 part-time staff members, 25 contractors and 473 volunteers at Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS).

In her new role, Brown will focus on growing collaborative community partnerships, increasing the range of services offered and working to raise the visibility of the organization. A former breast cancer survivor, she has a unique perspective and will work proactively on streamlining and increasing services offered to cancer survivors and their families as part of JFCS' new Cancer Support and Wellness Program. Brown holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from The State University of New York and a master's degree in social work from the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

While at Aviva, Brown is credited with providing strong, visible leadership among staff and throughout the community, building a new executive team and establishing collaborative partnerships, increasing services and strategically repositioning the organization with a board-approved new branding initiative.

■ **Venice's Rev. Elizabeth Turk**, owner of **RomanticVows.com**, has been honored with one of the wedding industry's most prestigious honors – **the WeddingWire Couples' Choice Award® 2017 for Officiating services**.

The annual awards program once again this year recognized RomanticVows.com in the top 5% of WeddingWire's wedding professionals who demonstrate excellence in quality, service, responsiveness and professionalism. Winners are determined solely based on reviews from real newlyweds and their experiences working with RomanticVows.com.

Rev. Turk opened ForeverInYourHeartsEulogies.com in Sarasota last year. Info: 941-773-6336.

■ The law firm of **Ferguson, Skipper, Shaw, Keyser, Baron & Tirabassi, P.A.**, has announced that **Alisa M. French** has joined the firm's Tax Department as an associate attorney. Previously she was a summer associate at Burr & Forman, LLP, in Orlando, and she was a judicial intern at the Second District Court of Appeal and the U.S. District Court for the Middle District of Florida.

French received Bachelor of Arts degrees cum laude in Criminology and Anthropology from the University of Florida in 2012, and

her Juris Doctor degree cum laude from Stetson University College of Law in 2015. She obtained her Master of Laws degree in taxation from the University of Florida Levin College of Law in 2016. She was admitted to The Florida Bar in October 2015.

■ One of Sarasota's oldest law firms, **Kirk Pinkerton, PA**, welcomed **Elisha Robertson** as an associate attorney at its Sarasota-



Bill Robertson and Elisha Robertson

based office. She joins her father, Bill Robertson, CEO and personal injury attorney, at the prestigious law firm. At Kirk Pinkerton, the sixth-generation attorney will practice law and assist the firm's practice areas, including personal injury, divorce and family law, civil litigation, labor and employment law and real estate.

The father-and-daughter duo is continuing the legacy and tradition started by Bill Robertson's great-grandfather and grandfather, who opened their practice in Sarasota in 1925. "It is heartwarming and gratifying to have Elisha continue our family's legal legacy," said Bill Robertson, a longtime Sarasota attorney with over 30 years of experience.

Prior to joining Kirk Pinkerton, the Sarasota native worked as a legal intern at the Legal Aid Service of Broward County in Plantation, Fla. There, she represented underprivileged children in the child dependency and delinquency division. Elisha Robertson also served as a public policy intern for the Children's Campaign, Inc. in Tallahassee.

She earned her Juris Doctor from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale and graduated with her bachelor's degree in English from the Florida State University. She is a member of the Florida Justice Association, Sarasota County Bar Association, The Florida Bar and the American Bar Association.

Nonprofit News

■ This past January, **The Library Foundation for Sarasota County** surpasses its \$500,000 goal to create a new **Children's Literacy Endowment**. The Children's Literacy Endowment will fund early literacy programs for children in need in Sarasota County forever.

The endowment will fund the 700 children currently enrolled in the Imagination Library program, which provides a new book each month mailed to the home of eligible children from birth to 5 years, and allow 300 additional children to join the program in 2017. Along with the free monthly

book, parents receive suggestions on how to read to young children and an invitation to visit the public library. The Children's Literacy Endowment will also provide funding for new literacy programs.

Library Foundation Board members **Pat and Bob Gussin** kicked off the campaign in December, 2015, with a leadership gift of \$100,000. The Observer was the media partner for the Children's Literacy Endowment Campaign, creating and donating space for 30 full and half page ads throughout 2016. The Venice Gondolier Sun ran many of the ads as well. **Rick and Nancy Moskovitz** saw the ad and provided a second leadership gift. **The Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation** extended a capping grant opportunity of \$50,000 if the Library Foundation raised \$450,000 by December 31, 2016. A gift on New Year's Eve put the campaign over its goal.

In total, 198 donors supported the Children's Literacy Endowment Campaign. The Library Foundation Board of Directors led the way, contributing 32% of the total dollars raised. Additional leadership donors include **Betty Jean and David Bavar**, **the Catlin Fund at the Community Foundation of Sarasota County**, **2016 Giving Challenge**, **Baltimore Orioles**, **Bladel Foundation**, **Getzen Family Charities**, **Huisking Family Foundation** and **Tom and Suki Swepston**.

Accolades

■ **Gloria Musicae**, Sarasota's professional chorus, has announced that former Gloria Musicae Singers' apprentice **Sophia Masterson** is



Sophia Masterson

the winner of its **2016 Barbara Diles Apprentice Scholarship**. Masterson, who is 18 years old and a vocal performance major at Carnegie Mellon University, will receive \$1,000 to be used towards tuition and/or private coaching to further her vocal training.

The scholarship fund was created in 2015 in memory of singer and Gloria Musicae board member **Barbara Diles**, an avid supporter of the musical arts and of young artists. The scholarship benefits current or previous Gloria Musicae apprentice singers between the ages of 16 and 22, who are chosen via audition each season to perform with the 32 professional singers that comprise Gloria Musicae.

During her time in the Sarasota-Manatee area, Masterson performed with the Gloria Musicae Singers, Sarasota Opera, Manatee Players, and the Sarasota Voice Academy.

■ **Sheriff Tom Knight** presented several awards during a ceremony January 26 to recognize employees who demonstrated exemplary service to the community.

Lieutenant Joseph Giasone received the Life Saving Award for providing critical, lifesaving aid to a fellow member of the sheriff's office.

On October 14, 2016, Lieutenant Giasone was out to lunch with Sergeant Michael Dumer, retired Sergeant Kevin Pingel, Sergeant Scott Mruczek, and Investigative Aide Andy Kearney. Food became lodged in Sergeant Dumer's throat making it difficult for him to breathe. Lieutenant Giasone and Sergeant Mruczek quickly realized that Sergeant Dumer needed the Heimlich maneuver. Lieutenant Giasone rendered aide and thanks to his swift action, Sergeant Dumer was saved.

Deputies Michael Schermock and Tracy Murtaugh received the Life Saving Award for their efforts in bringing a man back to life after he overdosed on heroin. Deputy Murtaugh was first on



Deputies Michael Schermock and Tracy Murtaugh

scene on October 16, 2016, when she noticed that the male patient, although receiving compressions from a roommate, was unconscious and not breathing. Deputy Murtaugh administered her naloxone auto-injector and continued the compressions. Deputy Schermock soon arrived and prepared a rescue bag and provided rescue breaths to the patient until fire department personnel responded. Deputies Murtaugh and Schermock directly contributed to the man's second chance at life.

Deputy Michael Nickerson received the Life Saving Award for his efforts toward saving the life of an overdose patient on September 5, 2016. Upon his arrival at the residence, Deputy Nickerson initiated lifesaving measures by administering one dose of naloxone followed by CPR. Because the first injection had no effect, Deputy Nickerson administered a second dose of naloxone and continued CPR until responding paramedics arrived. The Sarasota County Fire Department confirmed that without care shown by Deputy Nickerson, the patient would have died.

Deputies Patrick Schurr and David Miller are also recognized with the Life Saving Award for their efforts to save the life of a man who overdosed on heroin. The patient's sister called 911 after she found her brother unresponsive and laying in the front yard. Deputy Schurr was first on scene and aided the patient's sister with CPR and compressions. The patient's sister then informed Deputy Schurr that the patient had a history of heroin use. Deputy Schurr deployed his naloxone and continued compressions. While the victim remained unresponsive, Deputy Miller was next on scene and administered a second dose of the drug. The patient's condition began to steadily

improve eventually reaching consciousness by the time the Sarasota County Fire Department arrived. Deputies Schurr and Miller are credited with being integral to the survival of the patient.

Deputies Brian Bercaw and Christian Murphy received the Heroic Achievement Award for successfully intervening in a man's attempt to end his life with carbon monoxide poisoning. Deputies Rizzo, Baker, Murphy, and Bercaw responded to the home on October 10, 2016, after receiving a 911 call for help. When they arrived, deputies heard a loud noise from the garage and saw smoke pouring out. As Deputies Rizzo and Baker attempted to breach the garage from the outside, Deputies Murphy and Bercaw made entrance into the home where they found the victim lying unresponsive on the floor of the garage, next to a vehicle with its engine running. Deputies Rizzo and Baker breached the garage door so that Deputies Murphy and Bercaw were able to slide the victim below the door to safety. The victim regained consciousness as paramedics arrived. Deputies Murphy and Bercaw successfully stopped the victim's attempt at suicide.

Real Estate News

■ Realtor **Angeles Radford** has joined the Sarasota office of **RE/MAX Alliance Group** She has 10 years of local real estate experience with Keller Williams and



Angeles Radford

Coldwell Banker, serving an international clientele.

Radford said she joined RE/MAX Alliance Group "to continue to grow and expand" her career.

Fluent in Spanish, she three times earning membership in the International Diamond Society in Coldwell Banker Manatee. She has experience with first-time buyers, new construction, short sales, and all types of residential properties. Radford is a Certified International Property Specialist (CIPS) and Short Sales and Foreclosure Resource specialist (SFR).

■ **Blake and Corinne Gillett** have joined the sales team at **RoseBay International, Inc.**

Corinne is a native of Switzerland where she was director of human resources for a company in the health insurance industry. Blake is a graduate of NYU and formerly owned a legal messenger service in Hawaii. After relocating to Sarasota they formed a property maintenance company serving property owners at Villagio Condominiums. They are experts on condo living will now maintain a sales office at Villagio. ☎

Send You're News to:
westcoastwoman@comcast.net

You can now find this column on our web site. Visit us there at:
www.westcoastwoman.com