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SUNSHINE POST

CREDIT UNIONS 05 THANKSGIVING 08 SPORTS 10 LIFESTYLE 15

On a brisk morning in 1909, a group of French-Canadian textile workers filed into the basement of St. Mary’s Church in Manchester, New Hampshire

We find this season perfectly captures what we strive to share in every issue: stories that warm the heart, celebrate community, and shine light on the quiet strength

Fort Lauderdale/Fort Myers, FL – An unforgettable experience awaited the German directors of DARIA US Consulting when they traveled to Florida

Sunshine Post Recipe of the Month: Classic Thanksgiving Meal Menu



See more on page 10 →

Letter From the Editor

As the golden hues of the autumn sun settle in and the evenings invite us to slow down, November offers that rare blend of reflection and renewal — a time to look back with gratitude while stepping forward with purpose. Here at The Sunshine Post, we find this season perfectly captures what we strive to share in every issue: stories that warm the heart, celebrate community, and shine light on the quiet strength that surrounds us.

SUNSHINE POST HERO OF THE MONTH

Do you know someone who makes our community a better place?



A neighbor, a volunteer, a mentor or just someone whose kindness inspires others? We at Sunshine Post would love to share their story.

Nominate your Hero of the Month today and help us shine a light on the people who truly make a difference.

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Let's celebrate the everyday heroes among us together.



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A Season of Gratitude and Growth

As the golden hues of the autumn sun settle in and the evenings invite us to slow down, November offers that rare blend of reflection and renewal — a time to look back with gratitude while stepping forward with purpose.

Here at The Sunshine Post, we find this season perfectly captures what we strive to share in every issue: stories that warm the heart, celebrate community, and shine light on the quiet strength that surrounds us.

This month marks our second issue, and with it, the growing rhythm of something truly special – a publication dedicated to positivity, progress, and people. Our team has been touched by the support and enthusiasm that met our first edition, and we’re inspired to continue building a space where kindness, creativity, and connection take center stage.

In this issue, we initiate our “Hero of the Month” series by spotlighting the Cornerstone Community Foundation – a group whose tireless work uplifts lives and fosters hope. Their story is a reminder that real heroism often unfolds quietly, in service to others. We also turn our attention to mental health awareness, emphasizing the importance of caring for our emotional well-being as the days grow shorter and routines busier.

For history lovers, our ongoing Credit Union History Series dives deeper into the origins of community finance. A journey through time that highlights cooperation and trust as the foundations of local prosperity.

Following our latest Business Talk feature, we continue our work with the Daria US. Their connection to the Florida Panthers, who are starting the season with remarkable momentum, adds a spark of excitement to the fall landscape.

And of course, no November would be complete without a touch of Thanksgiving tradition. From a cherished recipe passed down through generations to reflections on gratitude in modern life, our Culture section invites you to gather around the table — in spirit, if not in person – and savor the comfort of togetherness.

Whether you’re catching up with us over morning coffee, during a quiet fall evening, or somewhere between the bustle of work and home, we hope this issue feels like a pause, a moment to breathe in warmth and optimism.

Thank you for inviting The Sunshine Post into your world. Together, we’ll keep celebrating what makes our communities bright – the people, the stories, and the small acts of sunshine that keep hope alive.

With gratitude and light,
Rouven Zietz, Editor-in-Chief, The Sunshine Post

Each issue is an invitation to pause, reflect, and find gratitude — a reminder that hope and progress begin in everyday moments.

Sunshine Post

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Hero of the Month: Dr. Amy Trout and the Cornerstone Community Foundation – Building Hope, One Conversation at a Time

In a quiet office in Fort Myers, the phones at Cornerstone Community Foundation ring for reasons that matter deeply. On the other end is often Dr. Amy Trout – founder, psychologist, consultant, and community advocate – answering with calm reassurance. “Every call begins with me,” she says. “Because sometimes the first voice a person hears can be the start of healing.”

Dr. Trout’s approach to mental health blends professional expertise with genuine compassion. After decades in higher education and organizational consulting, she recognized a persistent gap: people wanted care that respected both their emotional realities and their deeper values. Out of that need, Cornerstone Consultants was born – and from it, the Cornerstone Community Foundation, a nonprofit arm dedicated to making mental health services accessible for everyone in Southwest Florida.

“We offer care that’s both clinical and compassionate,” Dr. Trout explains. “Our model is rooted in evidence-based practice, but equally in humanity and dignity.”

What began as a small counseling practice has evolved into a multifaceted organization offering therapy, leadership consulting, community training, and outreach. Through the foundation, Cornerstone provides scholarships for those who cannot afford counseling, ensuring that cost never becomes a barrier to care. “If someone needs help, we help them,” she says simply.

That philosophy extends well beyond therapy rooms.

The foundation regularly hosts free community events, including post-hurricane trauma workshops and “Faith and Mental Health” conferences that bring clinicians, pastors, and residents together for open conversations about hope, stigma, and resilience. “It’s not about preaching,” Dr. Trout emphasizes. “It’s about creating a bridge between the clinical and the spiritual – a safe space where people can ask real questions and know they’re not alone.”

Cornerstone’s team now includes over fifteen clinicians with diverse backgrounds – from medicine and business to education – all united by a shared commitment to personalized, client-centered care. “We don’t believe in formulas,” she says. “We meet people where they are. Everyone deserves to be heard and respected for who they are.”

That belief has inspired innovative new programs, such as employee wellness plans that companies can offer to staff and their families for ongoing, affordable counseling. “Mental health affects performance and productivity,” Dr. Trout notes. “When employees feel supported, everyone benefits – it’s compassionate, but it’s also smart leadership.”

Still, the foundation’s deepest focus remains on children and adolescents – a passion that grew from personal experience. When Dr. Trout’s own family faced the challenges of finding mental health care in Florida, she discovered the system’s long waiting lists and high costs. “Children will never wait,” she insists. “If a child needs help today, we make it happen. Their worlds are too fragile for delay.”

That commitment often stretches resources thin. “Our biggest challenge is funding,” she admits. “The need has grown faster than our ability to meet it.” Yet, true to the Cornerstone name, the or-



Photo courtesy of Dr. Amy Trout

ganization has been built on generosity. Local churches, businesses, and individuals have joined in, sponsoring sessions, donating materials, and volunteering their time. Each contribution, Dr. Trout says, “helps us say yes a little more often.”

The Foundation’s impact ripples through the community in quiet but powerful ways – from families rediscovering connection, to organizations healing after burnout, to neighbors finding renewed strength after disaster. “Transformation happens when people feel safe enough to be honest and hopeful enough to try something new,” Dr. Trout says. “Whether it’s two people or twenty, change begins in that safe space.”

Looking ahead, Dr. Trout envisions expanding Cornerstone’s reach through additional locations, school partnerships, and online communities that connect people to both professional support and one another. “We want to shrink the gap between those who need care and those who receive it,” she says. “When we care for each other – in families, workplaces, and communities – we all rise together.”

Despite the organization’s growth, one thing hasn’t changed: the heart behind every call. “Sometimes all it takes is one person saying, ‘I’ll walk with you,’” Dr. Trout reflects. “That’s what we’re here for – to remind people that there’s always hope, and they never have to face the darkness alone.”

“We offer care that’s both clinical and compassionate — rooted in evidence, but equally in humanity and dignity. Because healing doesn’t start with treatment plans, it starts with being seen, heard, and understood.”

Transformation happens when people feel safe enough to be honest and hopeful enough to try something new.

by Anna Winston

The Kindness

Generosity doesn’t always come wrapped in grand gestures. Often, it’s the quiet choices — made with heart, close to home — that ripple the farthest.

In this space, we explore meaningful ways to contribute right where we live, work, and belong. This month, we take a closer look at one such opportunity — a gesture that has the power to sustain life itself.

When every drop matters

There are moments in life when every minute counts — and sometimes, so does every drop. In urgent situations, a blood donation can mean the difference between life and death. But the power of giving doesn’t end there. Every day, people living with chronic illness, blood disorders or cancer rely on the generosity of others. For them, each donation is a quiet promise: You are not alone.

Many feel uneasy when it comes to the topic — and that’s okay.

But once you understand how much hope, strength, and life can flow from just one donation, it’s no longer about the blood. It’s about the good behind it. A donation is a silent act of kindness. It costs you nothing — and yet, for someone else, it might mean everything.

We want to show you why giving blood doesn’t just save lives — it’s a quiet form of solidarity. And how surprisingly easy it is to become part of something truly life-giving.

One gift, many lives

Blood may look like a simple red liquid — but it’s actually made up of several important parts, each

with a specific role in keeping us alive and well. When you donate, your blood is carefully separated so that each part can help exactly where it’s needed.

Red blood cells (erythrocytes) carry oxygen throughout the body. They’re often used in emergencies — after accidents, surgeries, or during childbirth. White blood cells (leukocytes) support the immune system and are essential for patients fighting serious infections or undergoing cancer treatment. Platelets (thrombocytes) help the blood to clot and are especially important for people with bleeding disorders or those recovering from chemotherapy.

Because each part can be used separately, a single blood donation may help save the lives of three or more people. For each of them, your gift means far more than you’ll ever know.

You don’t have to wear a cape to be a hero

Donating blood is more accessible than many people think. If you meet a few basic requirements, you may be eligible to make a difference in someone’s life.

In Southwest Florida, you must generally be at least 17 years old (or 16 with parental consent), weigh at least 115 pounds, and feel healthy and well on the day of donation. A valid photo ID is also required.

Some situations may mean you’ll need to wait before donating — for example, if you’ve recently had a tattoo or piercing, certain vaccinations, or are taking specific medications. In other cases, a recent illness, travel to certain countries, or a history of certain medical conditions might result in a temporary or

Mobile & Community Drives

Flexible options: mobile units and scheduled drives in your neighbourhood
Lee Health Blood Mobile – A mobile donation unit travelling across the region. Call (239) 3432333 for schedule and details.

OneBlood “Big Red Bus” Mobile Drives – Visit the website to find upcoming drives or book a mobile unit at your location: oneblood.org [oneblood](https://oneblood.org).

Community hosted drives – many local organizations, churches, schools, or shopping centers host blood drives in cooperation with Lee Health or OneBlood. It’s always worth asking if your local church or school is hosting one.

permanent deferral.
If that applies to you, don’t worry — your chance to make a difference will come. After a short waiting period, you can still become a vital part of this life-saving effort.

The truth is: most people are medically eligible to donate blood — and yet, far too few actually do. That’s why every new donor is so important.

And while one donation already has great impact, regular donors are the real backbone of the system. You can give whole blood every eight weeks — and by making it a habit, you become a consistent force for good in your community.

Where to donate blood

In your community, there are fixed centers to donate and mobile units that make giving accessible. Whether you look up a nearby location or wait for a local drive in your neighborhood, there’s almost always a way to take part.

For an overview of nearby donation sites — both permanent and mobile — check the info boxes included in this article.

Every donation holds a quiet kind of power. It’s a reminder that hope is something we can offer each other — one person, one act at a time. If you’ve ever wondered whether something small can truly matter, let this be your answer.

By J. Heartley

Location	Address	Phone
Cape Coral Hospital Blood Center	636 Del Prado Blvd, Cape Coral, FL 33990	(239) 4242400
Lee Memorial Hospital Blood Center	2776 Cleveland Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33901	(239) 3432333
Summerlin Crossing Donation Center	15880 Summerlin Rd, Suite 113, Fort Myers, FL 33908	(239) 3432333

Fixed Donation Centers Permanent sites for blood donation in Southwest Florida



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Credit Unions Across the Ocean: How Immigrants Built a Movement in the United States

On a brisk morning in 1909, a group of French-Canadian textile workers filed into the basement of St. Mary’s Church in Manchester, New Hampshire. The air was thick with the smell of wool, tobacco, and boiled coffee. Many had worked the overnight shift at the Amoskeag Mills, one of the largest textile factories in the world. Their calloused hands and weary faces told the story of twelve-hour days, low wages, and the constant worry of how to feed their families.

But that morning, something extraordinary was about to happen. Guided by Alphonse Desjardins, the French-Canadian journalist and reformer from Québec, the workers launched St. Mary’s Cooperative Credit Association—the very first credit union in the United States. Their initial savings totaled just \$100. Yet to the families huddled in that basement, it was more than money. It was a lifeline.

“Here,” one worker reportedly said, “we help each other, not the moneylenders.”

It was a small start, but it lit a fuse. From Manchester, the idea of credit unions spread across immigrant communities in America like wildfire. Germans, French Canadians, Irish, Italians, Poles, and later Latinos and others—each wave of newcomers found in credit unions a way to build stability, dignity, and hope in a country that often treated them as outsiders.

Why Immigrants Needed Their Own Banks

Turn-of-the-century America was not exactly rolling out the red carpet for immigrants. Whether in New England’s mill towns, the mining camps of Pennsylvania, or the bustling neighborhoods of Chicago, newcomers often faced discrimination from mainstream banks. Credit was scarce for those with broken English, strange last names, or no collateral.

Banks catered to established businessmen. Loan sharks catered to everyone else. And immigrant families, caught between the two, often found themselves drowning in debt.

Credit unions filled that void. They were accessible, community-based, and operated on trust rather than prejudice. For many immigrants, walking into a cooperative bank where clerks spoke their language and understood their struggles felt like stepping into a sanctuary.

The Franco-American Pioneers

The French Canadians were among the first immigrant groups to establish credit unions in the U.S. Beyond Manchester, credit unions sprouted in mill towns across New England, wherever Franco-American families clustered. These institutions were often linked to Catholic parishes, with priests acting as advisors or leaders.

The format was familiar: parishioners pooled their savings, small loans were issued to families, and profits were recycled back into the community. But the impact was profound. Families used credit union loans to

buy homes, pay medical bills, and launch small businesses—each loan a quiet act of upward mobility.

For Franco-Americans, the credit union was more than financial. It was cultural. The *caisse populaire* system they had inherited from Québec was both practical and symbolic: a way to maintain identity while adapting to American life.

Germans, Poles, and the Cooperative Tradition

Germans, too, brought with them a cooperative mindset. Many immigrants from Central Europe were already familiar with the ideas of Friedrich Raiffeisen and Hermann Schulze-Delitzsch, the pioneers of German credit cooperatives.

In Midwestern cities like Milwaukee and Cincinnati, German immigrants carried those traditions into new credit unions, often tied to workers’ associations or cultural clubs. These credit unions were disciplined and

thrifty, reflecting the German ethos of *ordnung*(order) and mutual responsibility.

Polish immigrants followed a similar path, creating parish-based credit unions in places like Chicago, Buffalo, and Detroit. For Polish families, often toiling in the most dangerous industrial jobs, these credit unions provided not only financial relief but also a sense of community amid the challenges of assimilation.

Italians and the Fight Against Loan Sharks

Perhaps no group faced greater hostility from mainstream banks than Italian immigrants. Arriving in massive waves between 1880 and 1920, Italians were stereotyped as untrustworthy and were often denied credit outright.

This exclusion left them at the mercy of loan sharks, who thrived in Italian neighborhoods. The going rate could be 20 percent interest per week—a trap that turned a shoemaker’s need for \$10 into a nightmare of mounting debt.

Credit unions offered an escape. Italian-American leaders, sometimes linked to mutual aid societies, began establishing cooperatives where small savers could build security. In Boston’s North End and New York’s Little Italy, credit unions became quiet revolutions.

Stories abound of families who used credit union loans to escape the grip of loan sharks, buy a first horse-drawn cart,

or set up a tiny grocery. These small acts of financial liberation laid the groundwork for Italian families’ steady climb into the American middle class.

A Movement Spreads

By the 1920s and 1930s, credit unions had spread well beyond their immigrant strongholds. But the DNA of the movement remained immigrant-driven: small, local, and deeply personal.

One could walk into a credit union in a Polish parish in Buffalo, hear confessions in Polish one night and deposit savings the next morning. Or step into a Franco-American credit union in Maine, where the teller might be a cousin or neighbor. Or join an Italian cooperative in Providence, where the loan officer knew not only your credit score but also your mother’s spaghetti recipe.

These institutions thrived on intimacy and trust. For immigrants facing discrimination outside, the credit union was a rare place where their identity was an asset, not a liability.

The Great Depression: A Turning Point

The immigrant roots of credit unions proved especially vital during the Great Depression. As banks collapsed by the thousands, immigrant families often turned to their local credit unions to survive.

In many towns, credit unions were the only financial institutions still standing. Their cooperative model, grounded in prudence and community oversight, allowed them to weather the storm more effectively than profit-driven banks.

Immigrant credit unions distributed emergency loans, kept families afloat, and provided a sense of stability amid chaos. By the mid-1930s, Congress took notice, passing the Federal Credit Union Act of 1934, which allowed credit unions to be chartered across the country. The movement, once tucked in immigrant neighborhoods, now had federal legitimacy.

Stories from the Neighborhoods

The history of immigrant credit unions isn’t just institutional—it’s deeply human.

- In Cleveland, a group of Slovak immigrants used their credit union to help members buy sewing machines. Dozens of women became seamstresses, stitching their way to economic independence.
- In Chicago’s Polish neighborhoods, parish credit unions financed not only homes but also cultural festivals, reinforcing identity in a new land.
- In New England’s Franco-American towns, credit unions funded community halls, schools, and small theaters where French language plays kept cultural traditions alive.

These were not faceless transactions. Every loan carried a story: a family escaping debt, a child sent to school, a dream of citizenship made possible.

A Living Legacy

Today, many of America’s largest credit unions can trace their lineage back to those immigrant beginnings. Institutions that now manage billions in assets started as shoebox operations in parish basements. The values remain the same: one member, one vote; service to community over profit; financial inclusion as a mission rather than a slogan. For immigrants, those early credit unions were more than financial institutions. They were acts of resistance, resilience, and reinvention. In the face of exclusion, they built their own doors to opportunity.

Setting the Stage for the Next Chapter

This series began with the story of how credit unions emerged in Germany and Canada. Now we’ve seen how immigrant com-

munities in America adapted those ideas, turning them into lifelines in mill towns, city parishes, and immigrant neighborhoods.

In the next installment, we will explore how the movement leapt from immigrant basements to the national stage—how lawmakers, reformers, and ordinary citizens shaped the Federal Credit Union Act and propelled the cooperative spirit into the American mainstream.

But even as we turn to the national story, it’s worth remembering: credit unions were not born in Washington boardrooms or Wall Street towers. They were born in church basements, union halls, and corner groceries—places where immigrants gathered, pooled their pennies, and decided that together, they could build something stronger than they could ever build alone

By FTF

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When Strategy Meets Sunshine: Daria US and the Art of Building Connection

There are mornings in Florida when the light alone can change your state of mind. Downtown Fort Myers awakens slowly, the air still carrying the warmth of the Gulf.

Beneath the palms, just a few blocks from the Caloosahatchee River, the headquarters of Daria US begins to stir. Inside, coffee cups clink, doors open, and a sense of anticipation fills the air. It is not a typical business morning: directors have flown in from Germany, plans have been made for months, and the company is about to take another step in its young yet strikingly confident journey. For several days, the city will become the stage for a rare kind of corporate gathering – part strategy summit, part celebration of community. Christian Bühner, Gabriele and Andreas Lehner, Juliane Löser, Tereza Hartkop, as well as Andreas Walter, Phil Hills and Anja Terbrüggen – the all-star team is not just here to

meet; they are here to shape the next chapter of a transatlantic success story.

A Company in Motion

Daria US is not a household name yet. But within its community, it already represents something powerful: a blend of entrepreneurial precision and human warmth, of European discipline and American openness.

“Growth alone is never our goal,” says Co-Founder Frank Rahlf, as he welcomes the directors together with Co-Founder Patrick Lauber to the first morning session. “Our task is to create connection – between people, between ideas, between continents.” The company’s recent milestone – reaching 1,000

members – is not announced with champagne, but with quiet pride. For Daria, numbers matter only insofar as they reflect shared effort and integrity. “It’s not a finish line,” one director remarks, “it’s the beginning of something much larger.”

That “something larger” unfolds in long strategy meetings where flipcharts fill quickly, but also in the moments in between – the laughter, the handshakes, the silence of mutual understanding. The team’s work, it seems, is guided less by competition than by a collective sense of purpose.

Bridging Two Worlds

At the heart of Daria’s philosophy lies a dual identity. On one

hand, it carries the unmistakable traits of German corporate DNA: structure, reliability, and meticulous attention to detail. On the other, it embraces the spirit of Florida – open, spontaneous, and brimming with optimism. The Fort Myers summit becomes a meeting point for these two worlds. “It’s like translating between two temperaments,” says one participant. “Germany gives us focus. America gives us wings.”

This transatlantic dialogue is visible in everything: the agenda, the branding, even the atmosphere. The directors’ roundtable alternates between English and German, and yet no one seems lost in translation. The company’s guiding motto – “Zum Wohle aller Beteiligten,” or “For the benefit of all stake-

holders” – bridges the linguistic gap effortlessly. It is not a slogan but a principle, and one that carries moral weight. In an era when corporations are often judged by quarterly results alone, Daria positions itself as a company of conscience, committed to sustainability, fairness, and transparent communication. “We don’t chase the market,” Rahlf says quietly. “We build relationships that outlast it.”

Strategy with a Human Face

Inside the Fort Myers headquarters, the sessions are intense. Charts outline future growth in the United States, projections of new partnerships, and digital platforms for members



Photos courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC



Photos courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

worldwide. Yet behind the spreadsheets is a striking sense of humanity. Every discussion, it seems, eventually returns to a single question: How do we serve our people better? That focus on people – employees, partners, clients, and communities – shapes the entire strategy. The Daria model integrates sustainability not as a department, but as a mindset. Profit, they argue, must not come at the expense of values. “Success without responsibility is just noise,” says one executive. “What we’re building is a culture that endures.” In practice, that means developing business models that consider long-term social impact, supporting local initiatives, and maintaining radical transparency within the network. “Trust is our real currency,” adds another.

Moments of Celebration

Still, strategy alone cannot explain the emotion that permeates the summit. Evening falls, and the Florida sky turns violet over Fort Myers. The directors trade their notebooks for team jerseys – not metaphorically, but literally. Daria has organized a private evening at the Florida Panthers’ Amerant Bank Arena, one of the region’s most storied venues. For a moment, the ice belongs not to professional athletes but to this visiting team of business minds. Their names flash across the arena’s main screen; the mascot joins them for photos; laughter echoes through the rafters. “Goosebumps,” one participant says simply. “A magic moment.” It is more than a diversion – it’s a ritual of gratitude. Daria believes that leadership requires joy, that community grows through shared experience, and that celebration is not indulgence but investment. In those moments, the distance between Florida and Germany feels almost irrelevant.

The Spirit of Tampa

Some days later, the team travels north to Tampa, where another experience awaits. Inside the Buccaneers’ famous “Pirate Ship” VIP suite, the atmosphere hums with energy. Cameras, cheerleaders, and fans fill the stadium. For the Daria team, it is a study in American spectacle – and in team dynamics. “Football here is not just a sport,” says Maximilian von Garnier, former national player and one of the event’s hosts. “It’s a philosophy – strategy, trust, and courage in motion. In that sense, it’s not so different from business.” Von Garnier, who helped orchestrate the evening, is praised for his empathy and leadership. “He reminds us that enthusiasm is contagious,” Rahlf later notes. “And that every success begins with someone believing in it first.” The team’s appearance on the stadium screen draws cheers and smiles. For a company still relatively young in the US, it is both symbolic and affirming: a public moment of recognition that mirrors its quiet achievements behind the scenes.

The Human Factor

Behind all the planning, Daria’s directors often return to the same word: *Verbindung* – connection. It is the thread running through every conversation, from the boardroom to the arena. Connection is what keeps a global team aligned, what turns corporate goals into shared missions, and what gives business its soul. “Our members from Germany take this energy home with them,” one manager reflects. “They return not only with plans but with renewed belief – that our values still matter, and that collaboration can create something extraordinary.” This belief is not romantic idealism; it’s strategy in its most human form. When people feel part of something larger, their creativity multiplies. When they trust their leadership, innovation follows naturally. In a business world increasingly driven by algorithms and analytics, Daria’s approach feels almost radical in its simplicity: it bets on people.

Leadership, Redefined

If there is a lesson from Fort Myers, it is that leadership today is less about hierarchy and more about orchestration – bringing together diverse strengths and giving them rhythm. Daria’s directors understand this instinctively. They speak less about control and more about trust, less about targets and more about meaning.

In the final session of the summit, Rahlf takes a moment to thank his team. “What we’ve built here is more than a company,” he says. “It’s a bridge – between continents, between people, between what is and what could be.” The applause that follows is warm, not perfunctory. For a few seconds, the room feels less like a conference space and more like a family gathering.

The Road Ahead

From Fort Myers, the journey continues to Miami – the city adding a new layer to the story. Meetings turn into friendships, and business cards into promises. At every stop, one truth becomes clearer: when Daria arrives, it never feels like just another corporate event. It feels like a moment suspended in time — a reminder that in the rush of business, what endures are the relationships we build and the values we live by. As the sun sets over Florida’s Gulf Coast, the directors gather for a final photo. The light is golden again, almost symbolic. The smiles are genuine, the pride unmistakable. “This,” one of them says quietly, “is what makes it all worthwhile.” A Company That Leads by Connection In a world of disruption and relentless change, Daria’s story offers a counterpoint – a narrative of steadiness, empathy, and conviction. Its growth is not driven by aggression, but by alignment. Its leadership is not defined by dominance, but by collaboration. The company’s motto, *Zum Wohle aller Beteiligten* – For the benefit of all stakeholders – may sound idealistic. Yet in practice, it has become a blueprint for how modern organizations can thrive: through responsibility, respect, and the courage to act differently. Perhaps that is the real strategy Daria has crafted – not just a business plan, but a culture. One that believes success is sweetest when it is shared. And as the last delegates depart Fort Myers, one senses that something has indeed been built here – not just another milestone achieved, but a connection that will outlast the moment.

By Anna Winston



Photos courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

35th Annunal American Sand Sculpting Championship on November 20th - 24th re- turns to Estero Island - Fort Myers Beach.

Event Details

- ▶ November 20th - 24th
- Tickets will be available for:
- ▶ Single Tickets 5\$
- ▶ Family tickets for a Group of six 25\$



Photo: Pixabay

“Where art meets the ocean — every wave tells a story, and every sculpture fades, yet its beauty remains in memory long after the tide is gone.”

Each year, thousands of visitors gather on Estero Island - Fort Myers Beach to witness one of the most extraordinary events on this island. From towering castles to intricate creatures and-bending abstract designs, each sculpture is a temporary masterpiece shaped by skill, imagination, and elements. The whole event is full of activities such as live sculpting demos and family friendly activities for example a sand zone for kids. Also some good live music, food vendors/trucks and sunset showcases. It is a celebration of creativity for all ages.

The championship features two major categories such as solo master sculpture where the artist create sculptures with nothing but sand and water in a s... time. In the second category Duo & Team Competitions the artist build sculpture that can stretch over 10 feet tall and 20 feet wide. The artists are judged by experts on technical difficulty, originality, artistic impression and overall impact.

You should not miss this extraordinary event because: The Tide will wash it away but you will never forget what you saw. *By Miley, Sunshine Post Editorial Team*

What Is Thanksgiving? More Than a Meal, It’s a Feeling

For most Americans, Thanksgiving is more than just a holiday — it’s a feeling. More than just food or history — one of gratitude, connection, tradition, and togetherness. It’s the warm chaos of family, the flavors of heritage, and the joy of shared moments.

Every year, on the fourth Thursday of November, families across the United States gather to celebrate a day rooted in history but lived through laughter, food, and connection. It unofficially kicks off the holiday season — but more importantly, it’s a rare invitation to pause. To go slow and to remember what and who we’re thankful for.

In our Italian American family, we stick to tradition but make it our own. Thanksgiving starts early. The Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade — a famous New York City tradition with giant balloons and marching bands — plays in the background while the kitchen comes alive.

The table fills up fast with the roast turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes. There’s our family’s red sauce filled with meatballs, sausages, and braciole. Cornbread, sweet potato casserole, green bean casserole, cranberry sauce and deviled eggs our Irish neighbor John brings every year. No one remembers when that started — but it wouldn’t be Thanksgiving without them. Our German neighbor adds her homemade German chocolate cake, which somehow vanishes before the pumpkin pie is even sliced.

The dog begs under the table. Kids play backyard football. Nonna is yelling from the kitchen. American football plays on



Photo: Pixabay

TV. Cousins stay up way too late. My husband tells stories — the kind that the whole table bursts into laughter. Uncle Tony falling asleep on the couch with his annual “gravy hangover”. And someone always goes for seconds.

It’s noisy, it’s delicious, it’s chaotic — and it’s ours.

It’s a little Italian, a little German, a little Irish — and a whole lot of love. Everyone brings a piece of their heritage, their story — and it’s all welcome at the table. That’s what makes it 100% American.

A Brief History of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a unique American holiday. It began in 1621, when English Pilgrims and members of the Wampanoag tribe shared a harvest meal in what is now Massachusetts — a gesture of peace and shared survival after a harsh winter.

In 1863, during the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln declared Thanksgiving a national holiday in hopes of uniting a divided nation.

And today, hundreds of years later, we still gather. Just in bigger houses, with louder families, more football and maybe a few more casseroles.

While Thanksgiving is widely

celebrated, it’s important to note that not all Americans observe it in the same way. Some view the day as a time of remembrance and reflection rather than celebration.

A Shared Holiday, Celebrated in Many Ways

Our family spends Thanksgiving just like this — loud, full, joyful. With turkey and gravy, cousins and chaos, and neighbors who became family.

But not all Thanksgiving tables look the same. Across the U.S., some families spend the day volunteering at soup kitchens or delivering meals to the elderly. Others open their homes to friends or even strangers who

might otherwise be alone. Some celebrate “Friendsgiving,”^{xxx} a newer tradition where people gather with close friends instead of family — creating new customs that reflect the lives they’ve built.

That’s the beauty of Thanksgiving — it may be rooted in American soil, but it grows differently in every home. So, for anyone wondering what Thanksgiving really is — it’s home. Not just a place, but a feeling.

And for that, we give thanks.
By S. Mehalick



Photo: Pixabay

Whats happening? The Sunshine Post Event Calendar

Searching for the next big party or perhaps a sophisticated soirée? Look no further! The Sunshine Post Culture Department has all the latest tips on where to go, who to see and what to do in and around Fort Myers. Enjoy!

Fort Myers Boat Show
Centennial Park, Fort Myers

Over 500 boats to explore from 130+ manufacturers.

galatiyachts.com

November

13
16

Paint Party - Day of the Dead
Swamp Cat Brewing Co.

GUided painting session, creative experience and first drink included!

integrity1stgroupswfl.com

November

01

StoneCrab Fest 2025
Local seafood with an island vibe

Live music, delicious stone-crab, local business and craft vendors.

visitfortmyers.com

November

09

Ben Folds & A Piano Tour
Barbara B. Mann Performing Arts Hall

Major concert event with Ben Folds and special guest Lindsay Kraft. One of the larger indoor live-music productions this month! bbmannpah.com

November

20

American Sand Sculpting Championship (34th annual)

Large Celebration on the beach – ideal if you want a relaxed, scenic day with something unique. fortmyersbeach.org

November

20
24

Send Us Your Event Recommendations!

info@sunshine-post.com



Photos courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

DARIA US Holding Celebrates NHL Season Opener with the Florida Panthers

Fort Lauderdale/Fort Myers, FL – An unforgettable experience awaited the German directors of DARIA US Consulting when they traveled to Florida in early October. What began as an ordinary business trip quickly turned into an extraordinary surprise event, organized by Maximilian von Garnier, Director of DARIA US Sport Events.

Luxury Ride to the East Coast
Departing from the DARIA headquarters in Fort Myers, the board and directors set off in the compa-

ny’s own stretch limousine toward Florida’s east coast. Their destination: the Amerant Bank Arena in Fort Lauderdale, home of the Florida Panthers. It was there that the NHL 2025/2026 season opener took place. The two-hour drive was filled with laughter, anticipation, and excitement – the perfect prelude to an unforgettable evening.

A Family-Like Atmosphere in the DARIA Business Suite
Upon arrival at the arena, the guests were warmly wel-

comed to the exclusive DARIA Business Suite by suite attendant Roberta. Known as the “heart and soul” of the suite, she is beloved for her kindness and professionalism. Now entering its second season as an official suite partner of the Florida Panthers, DARIA US Holding has built a close and friendly relationship with the staff on-site – it truly feels like coming home.

This sense of connection mirrors the shared journey of both organizations: Around three years ago, both DARIA US Holding and the Florida Panthers began their rise

Fascination NHL: Modern-Day Gladiators Launch the 2025/26 Season

As the puck drops on the 2025/26 campaign, the National Hockey League began yet another thrilling chapter in its storied history. The NHL remains the undisputed pinnacle of world hockey — a league where tradition meets global reach, and speed meets spectacle.



Photo courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

This season preview looks back at the unforgettable highlights of last year, breaks down the league’s structure and heritage, and peers ahead to what promises to be another unforgettable ride. Along the way, we dive into some hard facts and dazzling figures — from top scorers and megastar salaries to iconic arenas and legendary franchises.

The NHL: A Century of Evolution
Founded in 1917 with just four clubs, the NHL has grown into a 32-team powerhouse — 25 based in the United States and seven in Canada. The league is divided into two conferences, the Eastern and Western, each home to three divisions:

- Eastern Conference: Atlantic, Metropolitan, and a newly expanded Eastern division
- Western Conference: Central, Pacific, and a corresponding Western division

Every team plays an 82-game regular season before the top contenders clash in the Stanley Cup Playoffs — a grueling test of stamina, skill, and mental toughness. To preserve parity and fairness, all teams operate under a salary cap, forcing general managers to balance ambition with discipline.

Over the decades, expansion has transformed the NHL landscape. The arrivals of the Vegas Golden Knights and Seattle Kraken signaled a new era of growth and excitement, showcasing how the sport continues to captivate fans far beyond its traditional northern strongholds.

Season 2024/25: Records, Rivalries, and History in the Making
Last season delivered everything hockey fans could ask for — drama, milestones, and moments for the ages.

- Nikita Kucherov topped the scoring charts with 121 points (37 goals, 84 assists), earning the Art Ross Trophy.

- Leon Draisaitl captured the Maurice “Rocket” Richard Trophy with 52 goals, cementing his reputation as one of the game’s most lethal finishers.
- Defensive stalwarts like Ryan McDonagh and perennial superstar Connor McDavid dominated other statistical categories.
- And then came history: Alex Ovechkin, at 39, shattered Wayne Gretzky’s all-time goal record by scoring No. 895 — becoming the greatest goal scorer in NHL history.

Stanley Cup Playoffs 2025: Panthers Reign Supreme Again

The postseason served up another high-octane spectacle. In a repeat of the previous year’s final, the Florida Panthers once again met the Edmonton Oilers — and once again, the Panthers triumphed, taking the series 4–2.

Game 4 was pure theater: Edmonton erased a 0–3 deficit and stole the win in overtime on a Leon Draisaitl strike. But Florida slammed the door in Game 6, dominating 5–1 behind Sam Reinhart’s four-goal masterpiece.

With back-to-back Stanley Cups, the Panthers have solidified their status as one of hockey’s rising dynasties — fast, fearless, and built to last.

The Road Ahead: What to Expect in 2025/26

This season has all the ingredients for another classic: fierce battles, breakout stars, and razor-thin margins.

Under the constraints of the salary cap, front offices have had to be both creative and ruthless, balancing star power with roster depth.

Fans are watching closely to see which rookies can handle the grind, win hearts, and perhaps announce themselves as the next McDavid or Draisaitl.

Off the ice, the NHL is now a multibillion-dollar

to success. Since then, both have been unstoppable. They share the same core values – teamwork, loyalty, and acting “for the benefit of all involved,” the guiding principle of DARIA.

A Surprise with Symbolic Power

As the guests entered the suite, the first surprise awaited them: each found an official Florida Panthers jersey embroidered with the DARIA logo and the number 25. The excitement and joy were palpable. A first-class catering experience followed – from filet and sushi to chicken wings and pizza – leaving nothing to be desired.

Hockey, Emotion, and Goosebumps

After the festive start came the official NHL opening ceremony. The Stanley Cup was presented, the championship banner raised to the rafters, and, as tradition dictates, the American national anthem was performed while veterans were honored. The German guests were deeply moved by this display of patriotism and respect – a touching and memorable moment.

The following game turned into a true thriller: the Florida Panthers defeated the Chicago Blackhawks in a close 3–2 victory. Midway through the excitement, another surprise arrived – the Panthers’ mascot “Stanley” appeared in the suite, delighting everyone with his energy and humor. Even event organizer von Garnier hadn’t been certain until the last minute whether this visit would be possible.



Photo courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC



Photo courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

“The season opener of the Florida Panthers was the perfect start to a new DARIA US sports season. Our 15 enthusiastic ‘Darianers’ truly rocked the Amerant Bank Arena – hockey, emotion, and pure energy! A huge thank-you goes out to Reece Anderson, Director of Partnership Development at the Florida Panthers, for his outstanding collaboration and organization. A special highlight were the custom-designed Panthers jerseys featuring the DARIA logo, beautifully arranged and waiting for us in our suite – as well as the unforgettable group photo on the ice after the game. Just a few days earlier, Reece had visited us at the DARIA US headquarters in downtown Fort Myers, where he gave an inspiring presentation and presented us with two large, original signed photographs of Panthers captain Aleksander Barkov. These unique pieces will receive a place of honor at our headquarters. This strong partnership has only just begun – and we are confident that DARIA and the Florida Panthers will celebrate many successes together in the future. We’re already looking forward to our next joint ‘Powerplay’ event!”

Maximilian von Garnier, Director of DARIA US Sport Events

A Grand Finale on the Ice

Just when everyone was preparing for the ride back home, Maximilian von Garnier unveiled the evening’s highlight: the entire DARIA team was invited onto the ice after the game. The Panthers’ staff rolled out a red carpet especially for the occasion – a moment that gave everyone goosebumps. Standing where the action takes place, under the arena’s new video cube, the team captured a series of impressive group photos – lasting memories of a truly special night filled with emotion, pride, and unity.

An Event in the Spirit of the DARIA Philosophy

This event was far more than a sports outing – it was a celebration of DARIA’s core values: top quality, collective success, and genuine togetherness. Once again, DARIA US Holding proved that its guiding principle, “Always act for the benefit of all involved,” is not just a slogan but a way of life.

By John Heinrich

enterprise. Teams invest heavily in their arenas, technology, and fan experiences — while the league continues to expand its global footprint.

In November 2025, the Pittsburgh Penguins and Nashville Predators will play two regular-season games in Stockholm, a sell-out months in advance and proof of the sport’s deep roots in Europe.

New streaming deals and global partnerships are driving record revenues and unprecedented visibility. Yet at its core, hockey remains a game of sweat, steel, and split-second brilliance — the ultimate test of will and skill.

Who will rise? Who will stumble? And who will lift Lord Stanley’s Cup when the dust settles next June? The answers, as always, will unfold on the ice.

The Olympic Pause: Stars Return to the World Stage

For the first time in twelve years, the NHL’s biggest names will return to the Olympic Games.

The league will pause its season from February 6–24, 2026, to allow players to compete at the Winter Olympics in Milan and Cortina d’Ampezzo — a long-awaited decision celebrated across the hockey world.

Expect to see Connor McDavid (Canada), Leon Draisaitl (Germany), and Auston Matthews (USA) headline a tournament destined to become a global showcase of elite talent.

For Germany, it’s a golden opportunity to build on their remarkable silver medal from 2018.

Some owners remain wary — injuries, fatigue, and a condensed post-Olympic schedule loom large. With no reduction in the regular season, teams will face a string of back-to-back games once play resumes.

Still, the mood around the sport is overwhelmingly positive. “This is a win for hockey,” said Draisaitl. “Everyone wants to see the best against the best — and the Olympics are the biggest stage there is.”

By the Numbers

- Highest Player Salaries (2025/26)
- Kirill Kaprizov, Minnesota Wild — \$17 million
 - Leon Draisaitl, Edmonton Oilers — \$14 million



Photo: Pixabay



Photo courtesy of Daria US Holding LLC

- Nathan MacKinnon, Colorado Avalanche — \$12.5 million
- Bell Centre, Montréal Canadiens — approx. 21,000 seats
- Scotiabank Arena, Toronto Maple Leafs — approx. 19,800 seats
- United Center, Chicago Blackhawks — approx. 19,700 seats

- Most Valuable Franchises (USD)
- Toronto Maple Leafs — \$4.25 billion (Reuters)
 - New York Rangers — \$3.65 billion (Reuters)
 - Montréal Canadiens — \$3.30 billion (Reuters)

Tradition Never Dies

When it comes to heritage, few sports can match the NHL’s living legends. The Montréal Canadiens, with a record 24 Stanley Cups, remain the game’s ultimate benchmark. The Toronto Maple Leafs, one of hockey’s oldest and proudest clubs, boast a fan base that spans generations. And the Boston Bruins and Detroit Red Wings — both members of the famed “Original Six” — stand as cornerstones of the league’s identity. Together with the Chicago Blackhawks, New York Rangers, and Canadiens, these six franchises form the heartbeat of hockey tradition — a link between past glory and the promise of what’s to come.

The Spirit of the Game

As the 2025/26 season unfolds, one truth endures: the NHL remains a theater of courage, passion, and spectacle. Every shift, every save, every goal adds to a century-long narrative of excellence and emotion.

So lace up, fans — the gladiators of modern hockey are back. The lights are bright, the ice is perfect, and a new chase for the Stanley Cup has just begun.

By John Heinrich

Freedom – The Inner Decision, Not the External Permission

Freedom – The Inner Decision, Not the External Permission Freedom doesn’t start at the airport. It starts in the mind.

Many believe freedom means doing whatever you want. But real freedom is more than independence – it’s the inner ability to choose with awareness. Not because it’s allowed, but because it feels right.

Freedom isn’t expressed in words – but in choices.

Free is the one who takes responsibility – for what they think, feel, say, and leave unsaid. Free is the one who no longer waits for external approval to live their truth. Freedom takes courage. Because it removes the excuse of being a victim of circumstance. Freedom makes you visible – with your light and your shadow.

When freedom is missing, the outside world takes control.

If you don’t use your inner compass, someone else will steer for you. You can see it when people make themselves small, even though their longing is greater.

When safety is placed above truth.

When decisions are avoided – out of fear of being wrong. But not deciding is also a decision. And often the one that costs the most.



Photo: Envato Elements.

The Gift of Lived Freedom

Those who live in freedom are not reckless – they are clear. Not rebellious – but upright. Freedom allows us to be ourselves. Without a mask. Without external permission. And it invites others to do the same.

Societal Insight

A society that longs for freedom must

find the courage to carry self-responsibility. Freedom is not a state to consume – it is an attitude to embody. The more people begin to choose consciously rather than react instinctively, the more a new field arises: A field of clarity, determination – and inner independence. Reflection: Where are you still waiting for permission, even though you already know what to do? And how would your life look if you were truly free inside?

By Angelique Soularys

“The freedom of man does not lie in his ability to do what he wants, but in his ability not to do what he does not want.”

– Jean-Jacques Rousseau



Photo: Pixabay

Hidden Sparks – Pets Looking to Shine

Every month, we shine a little light on two amazing animals – once again from the Cape Coral Animal Shelter – who are waiting for a home of their own. Each of them has a story, a spark, and a heart ready to belong. Some have simply gone unseen for too long; others just need the right person to recognize the beauty and spirit they already carry inside. They may be waiting in quiet corners now, but each one carries a light that’s ready to shine.

At the shelter, care doesn’t end when the adoption papers are signed. For every adopted animal, adopters receive a voucher for a free post-adoption exam to be used within 30 days at the shelter’s affordable care clinic – a place that continues to provide compassionate support long after the first meeting. Because finding a forever home isn’t only about love; it’s also about the shared commitment that keeps that love strong – from both sides.

Maybe one of these furry faces will capture your heart today.
By J. & J. Heartley



JINGLE (BUSTER)
Jingle (Buster) is a 5–7-year-old male. Jingle is a friendly and outgoing pup who absolutely adores people and thrives on making new friends wherever he goes. Whether it’s a wag of his tail or a gentle nuzzle, he’s always eager to spread a little canine cheer. Trust us—once you meet him, you won’t be able to resist his charm and lovable personality.

Jingle is a little extra special because he does have some medical needs that require extra care and more frequent vet visits. That just means he needs an adopter who’s as dedicated to him as he’ll be to them. To ensure he finds the perfect match, all applications must be submitted before meeting him, and his adoption will need to be approved by the executive director and medical team.

If you’re ready to give him the love and care he deserves, he can’t wait to meet you! Jingle has been with us for over 630 days, and his adoption fee is \$65—making him a truly special boy who’s more than ready for his forever home.

MOO
Moo is a 3–5-year-old female—a gorgeous, chunky tuxedo girl with a big personality to match. This lovely lady enjoys the finer things in life: a cozy spot to lounge, a few feather wand toys to chase, and a sunny lanai where she can watch the world go by.

She gets along with other cats if they respect her personal space, but she’d also be perfectly content being the queen of her own castle. Moo is currently working on getting her girlish figure back, but don’t worry—she takes her exercise in stride (especially when feathers are involved!).

She absolutely loves her people, lounging by the window, and of course—snacks! If you’re looking for a cat with charm, confidence, and plenty of personality, Moo might just be your perfect match. Moo has been with us for over 90 days, and her adoption fee is \$70—making her a lovely little lady ready to rule your heart and home.



Photos courtesy of Cape Coral Animal Shelter

Hours of Operation:

Tuesday & Thursday:
12:00–5:00 pm

Friday through Sunday:
12:00–4:00 pm

Monday & Wednesday:
Closed

Cape Coral Animal Shelter
325 SW 2nd Avenue
Cape Coral, FL 33991

More information and all adoptable animals at: www.capecoralanimalshelter.com

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Revolutionary: How AI Can Transform Your Day

Artificial intelligence is not science fiction – it hasn’t been for a long time.

More and more people are using AI tools to master everyday challenges – from week-end trips, to what’s for dinner, to budgeting. In this series, powered by the insights of our tech team and seasoned AI connoisseurs, we will show you how you too can benefit from this technology.

What’s your everyday AI Question?

Whether it’s a recipe, travel dilemma, or practical tip, send us your most used

info@sunshine-post.com

Subject: “AI Prompt Submission”

DID YOU KNOW?

The best AI prompts are specific!
Specificity = Better

Instead of: “Help me cook”
Try: “Quick 30-min dinner for 4 with chicken”

Mental Health Support Finder

„I’m feeling overwhelmed and need local mental health resources in Fort Myers. What free or low-cost support options are available through organizations like Cornerstone Community Foundation?“

- AI suggests:
1. Cornerstone’s 24/7 Crisis Hotline: 941-720-5014
 2. Free support groups at Community Cooperative
 3. SalusCare walk-in crisis services
 4. Virtual counseling through BetterHelp partnerships

Thanksgiving Planning Assistant

„Help me plan a Thanksgiving dinner for 8 people in Cape Coral with a tropical Florida twist. Include a timeline and feature local seafood.“

- AI suggests:
1. Gulf shrimp stuffing with cornbread
 2. Key lime pie instead of pumpkin
 3. Timeline: Start prep 2 days ahead
 4. Local farmers market shopping list

Sand Sculpting Festival Guide

„I want to attend the Fort Myers Beach Sand Sculpting Festival with kids. What are the must-see activities and best times to avoid crowds?“

- AI suggests:
1. Arrive early morning (8-9 AM) for fewer crowds
 2. Watch master sculptor demos at 10 AM & 2 PM
 3. Kids’ sand sculpting lessons near pier
 4. Bring sun tent and water shoes

Pet Adoption Match Helper

„I work full-time and live in a Cape Coral condo. What local shelter dogs would be a good match for my lifestyle?“

- AI suggests:
1. Gulf Coast Humane Society senior dogs program
 2. Lee County Domestic Animal Services small breeds
 3. Consider fostering first through All About Pawz
 4. Adult dogs over puppies for work schedule

TECH QUOTES OF THE DAY

„AI won’t replace humans — it will unlock human potential we didn’t know existed.“

Reid Hoffman, Co-founder of LinkedIn

„The question isn’t whether AI will change your industry, but whether you’ll be one of the people leading that change.“

Andrew Ng, Co-founder of Coursera

Caricature of the Month: November

“Life Can Be Colorful, If You Let It”



Sunshine Post Recipe of the Month: Classic Thanksgiving Meal Menu

1. Roast Turkey with Herb Butter

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 whole turkey (12–14 lbs), thawed
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tbsps fresh rosemary, thyme, and sage (chopped)
- 1 lemon (halved)
- 1 onion (quartered)
- 4 garlic cloves (crushed)
- Salt and pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 325°F (165°C).
2. Mix herbs into softened butter. Loosen turkey skin and rub herb butter under skin and over the bird.
3. Stuff cavity with lemon, onion, and garlic. Tie legs together.
4. Roast ~13–15 minutes per pound (about 3–4 hours for a 14 lb turkey), basting every 30–45 minutes.
5. Internal temp should reach 165°F (74°C) at thickest part of thigh.
6. Let rest 20–30 mins before carving.

2. Creamy Mashed Potatoes

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs russet potatoes, peeled and cut
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup sour cream
- ½ cup butter
- Salt and pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Boil potatoes in salted water until fork-tender (15–20 mins).
2. Drain, mash with butter, milk, sour cream.
3. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

3. Sweet Potato Casserole

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups mashed sweet potatoes
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ tsp cinnamon

Topping:

- ½ cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup flour
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 3 tbsps melted butter

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Mix casserole ingredients. Pour into baking dish.
2. Mix topping; sprinkle on top.
3. Bake at 350°F for 30–35 mins until

5. Cranberry Sauce & Gravy

Cranberry Sauce: Simmer 12 oz cranberries with 1 cup sugar and 1 cup water for 10–15 mins.

Gravy: Use turkey drippings, flour, and broth to make a rich, seasoned gravy.

4. Classic Stuffing

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 loaf day-old bread, cubed
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- ½ cup butter
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 2 tsp poultry seasoning
- Salt & pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Sauté onion and celery in butter until soft.
2. Mix with bread cubes, broth, and seasoning.
3. Bake at 350°F for 30–40 mins until golden.

6. Pumpkin Pie

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (15 oz) can pumpkin purée
- 1 (14 oz) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ginger, ½ tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 unbaked 9-inch pie crust

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. Mix filling ingredients and pour into crust.
3. Bake 15 mins at 425°F, then reduce to 350°F and bake 35–40 mins until set.
4. Cool and serve with whipped cream.

Enjoy a perfect dinner for Thanksgiving!
By S. Mehalick, Sunshine Post Editorial Team



We Want to Hear from You!

Your voice matters. At the Sunshine Post, our new Letters To the Editor section is a space for readers to share opinions, spark conversations, and respond to the stories shaping our community.

Whether you want to comment on a recent article, highlight a topic that deserves attention, or simply share your perspective – we welcome your thoughts.

Send your letter (up to 250 words) to editor@sunshine-post.com. Please include your full name, city, and a contact number for verification.

Join the conversation and let your voice be part of the community dialogue!

DARIA

dreams come easy



INVEST IN YOUR DREAMS

