

QUARTERLY LIST OF COMMUNITY PROBLEMS WITH ILLUSTRATIVE RESPONSIVE PROGRAMMING

October 10, 2021

The attached report summarizes CW 34's on-air response to the area's most important concerns, as determined by the station's active Ascertainment Report. The Ascertainment was derived from interviews with approximately 100 area community leaders. These interviews determined what most needs to be addressed by our station's efforts toward resolution of such problems in our broadcast field.

The information has been compiled by our Public Affairs Department, and program input has been garnered from our entire range of programming possibilities.

The report has been assembled by our Programming Department to be placed in the Public File on the above date and covers the broadcast period beginning July 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021.

**HEALTH
CRIME ISSUES
EDUCATION
OTHER ISSUES**

EDUCATION

DESCRIPTION

DATE/TIME

Monday 07/12/2021
CW34 News @ 9:30am
30 Minutes

Cost of Textbooks

"I thought it was going to be exciting, but then it happened, and it wasn't."

Virtual learning and all that screen time turned out not be much fun for sisters Maddie and Annabelle Martinez of Wellington.

"Sometimes my eyes hurt, and it's weird, then you'd look up and you'd be like. whoa"

"Did you feel like you were spending a lot of time in front of the laptop?"

"Yeah I got a lot of headaches."

Jen Martinez could tell her daughters were struggling when it came time to take what they had learned on screen and bring it into the classroom.

"When my kids returned to school in person and they'd take tests on paper, it wasn't translating from computer to paper. To be able to see and then go through what they're learning is helpful for all of us as a family."

Everything students use to learn, digital and hard copy, fall under the broad category of instructional materials and the people in charge of those budgets in Martin, St Lucie and Indian River Counties tell CBS 12 News that students are not ready to succeed without physical textbooks.

School districts across the state have spent millions on materials for the new English curriculum that starts next month. And a lot of that money went to textbooks students can write in and keep.

School districts could save money if they went all digital for the new language arts materials. For instance, just looking at Secondary school 6th through 12th grade, the new English books -which do come with digital copies - cost 153 dollars per child. The digital -only version costs just 70 dollars.

So, for a school district like St. Lucie county, with 20 thousand secondary school students, they would save almost one point seven million dollars.

But district officials say, even if they went 100% digital, that money would be spent elsewhere in the budget, not go back to taxpayers.

Wednesday 07/14/21
CW34 News @ 12:00PM
30 Minutes

Palm Beach County Superintendent of Education Resigns

Come October this building behind me will have new leadership after Doctor Donald Fennoy's short three years at the helm.

Last fall the teacher's union called for Dr. Fennoy's firing. The unions said it had zero confidence in him, citing a pattern of failed leadership, lies and deceptions.

Dr. Fennoy has defended his decisions as the district's leader.

So, the search is on to find someone to lead the nation's tenth largest school district.

School board vice-chair Karen Brill says she's surprised Dr. Donald Fennoy is resigning but says they have a strong team in place to choose the person who will replace him.

"I think what it means is we will be able to continue the way we have. Dr. Fennoy has put together a very strong cabinet and so we have people who can step in and help us move forward."

Brill said they hope to have a new superintendent to replace Fennoy before he leaves in October. She says they should do a nationwide search. Dr Fennoy's last day will be October 11th.

Thursday 7/15/2021
CW34 News @ 09:30pm
30 Minutes

School Board Meeting on Masks

Now behind me is Martin County School District's bus depot. It's located in Stuart, on South Dixie Highway, away from Indiantown and when it comes to response time during an emergency that is a concern. At the Department of Transportation, drivers are always on standby in case of an emergency and students are evacuated at school.

Indiantown Mayor Janet Hernández, "Emergencies happen, and any emergency can happen at any time."

But if one of them is at a school out west in Indiantown, drivers must travel more than 20 miles.

Indiantown Mayor Janet Hernandez says without traffic that's a little over 30 minutes, but with heavy traffic the commute could take an hour or even longer.

"It boils down to a public safety issue. If we do have to evacuate the whole school how would you do it effectively with like a school bus not being nowhere near?"

School board members took up that very issue Tuesday night. Board member Marsha Powers led the discussion.

"We need buses there in the event of an emergency park there in a secure place at a Indiantown Middle School behind a locked fence."

In Martin County every campus has a plan thank you to Marjorie Stoneman Douglas etc. That there is a method by which that school would be evacuated, and I don't want to give the public the wrong impression that we have an eminent danger and we have a real safety issue.

Powers says it took school bus drivers nearly 2 hours to get to students after a recent gas leak prompted an evacuation in Indiantown.

The district eliminated the Indiantown bus depot several years ago.

Officials say it was a financial decision. Now In a letter of concern, village leaders are asking the county to reinstate that property.

School board members plan to discuss this concern in the coming weeks. They're also looking at other schools.

Thursday 7/29/2021
CW34 News @ 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Lunch Lady Shortage

For the kids not taking one of these to school every day-the food service staff are vital in a student's school day-making sure they get through the line in time to eat a nutritional meal before their next class.

While lunch ladies are important, a lot of them left during the pandemic when kids weren't on campus.

There are 100 to 160 positions open in lunchrooms throughout the county.

Staffing Agency Spur is trying to fill those gaps for the school district.

The agency does all hiring virtually-so applicants can fill out all forms online and do interviews on the phone instead of interrupting their summer vacations.

Spur is offering signing bonuses for the first 50 hires.

They're also offering medical and dental support.

"Palm Beach County's school system is a premier place to work in the community. So, if you're looking for flexibility and those hours, maybe you have children in the school district and want to match up with their hours, it's a great opportunity,"

If you're interested in the job opportunities in the district-we have a link on CBS 12 dot com, and a heads up-applicants must pass an FBI background check to be hired. Once the school year starts-the district will evaluate the flow of lunchrooms to see if they need to continue hiring.

Monday 08/02/2021
CW34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

DeSantis Executive Order on Masks and Schools

At a 'free to choose' rally Friday, Governor Ron DeSantis promises there will be no lockdowns, school closures, and no mandates in Florida.

Despite experts predicting Florida is on track to break daily covid-19 case records, set back in January which topped more than 19-thousand a day, DeSantis plans to sign an emergency executive order directing the State Department of Health and Department of Education to give parents the right to decide if they want to mask up their kids this fall.

The governor citing it falls under the parents' bill of rights – which he signed into law last month.

It's certainly not fair to force parents who don't believe the mask are good for their kids, to force them to send their kids in mask. So, this way families can make the decisions that are best for their families.

In Martin, Indian River and Okeechobee Counties the Governor's order will not change operations because masks were already optional, and neither district has plans to reverse that.

Sitting down with CBS12 News this week, the new Palm Beach County Interim District Superintendent said he is not ruling out a fall mask mandate yet.

"I'd like to ditch the mask. I'd like to have a normal...things to be as normal as possible but we have a responsibility."

But the proposed executive order does not sit well with the Martin County Teachers Union – which says in part – it's ironic lawmakers who support local control are doing the opposite.

They would like to see each local school district have the right to make their own decision.

The Palm Beach County Classroom Teachers association and local teachers are on the same page.

CTA's position is that the Governor has no such authority.

Justin Katz of CTA says it's also unclear if the governor has the right to enact that type of order.

According to the Palm Beach Post, the county school board is seeking legal advice about whether that's constitutional or not in Florida.

Monday 8/05/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00 pm
30 Minutes

Palm Beach County School Masks

With each day— Palm Beach County hurtles closer toward the start of school and in the background, the delta variant cases climb

Putting on Masks in on everyone's minds.

In a special meeting, school board members asked about mandatory masking for the upcoming year.

But the interim superintendent is saying the district won't go against the governor's new executive order that pledges to pull state funding from districts that require masks.

In palm beach county, that would mean losing an estimated 600 million dollars.

School board member Alexandria Ayala sent a letter to the Federal Department of Education – asking for their help in dealing with Governor DeSantis.

"We're really between a rock and a hard place. We want everyone to be safe, but we can't risk losing the tools that get us there."

The Governor – meanwhile - believes his executive order protects parents' choice, especially now, after President Biden told DeSantis and Governor Greg Abbott of Texas to "get out of the way" of health officials.

Some school districts are challenging DeSantis, in Leon County, the Superintendent asking the state to allow a temporary mask requirement - saying several school aged children there are hospitalized with covid-19.

It's an urgent plea - unlikely to sway a Governor who promises Florida will be mandate free.

Thursday 08/15/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Lack of Remote Learning

Interim superintendent mike Burke is reacting to the news on MSNBC.

"The Governor has got to take responsibility for establishing the ground rules we're operating under".

In quarantine, students will miss out on the classroom.

Remote learning is no longer an option, across the state, after it was phased out by the Department of Education. This letter from the district to principals – obtained by

CBS 12 news – says students will instead get “make up work” to do on their own. Most students still have their district -issued laptops – many purchased when the pandemic hit.

But - there are other, expensive tools to teach kids at home - *not* being touched.

Most classrooms now have smart boards and cameras - left dark. They can't be used for quarantined kids - unless there's agreement with the teachers' union, who says the school district hasn't approached them. Then -- there're these massive towers

Last year - we first reported on the districts high flying plan - using these to drop Wi-Fi into underprivileged homes. Partly - to help with remote school.

James Gavrilos, with the education foundation, helped pay for a lot of this equipment and he believes while brick and mortar is getting the focus now remote learning still has a place.

“Remote learning has to be part of the equation. It's not going away.”

Monday 08/30/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Federal Mask Lawsuit

Governor DeSantis' administration is on the offensive. Pushing ahead with fining schools mandating masks. In this statement, Florida's education commissioner says his agency will begin "withholding funds" and targeting school board member's salaries in Broward and Alachua counties.

That's despite a Tallahassee judge ruling any statewide ban on mandatory masking in schools is against the law.

The Governor is vowing to appeal.

“Ultimately, we're just trying to stand with the parents. A lot of parents, they know their kids in terms of the health. The parents' bill of rights has said this is your right here.”

Charles Gallagher is one of the attorneys who is suing DeSantis.

But, even with that ruling those school boards are still in the crosshairs.

One state official telling CBS 12 News, fining Broward and Alachua counties was set in motion Thursday, before the judge's decision.

Adding they're the ones following the law, not the school districts.

And those districts, like Palm Beach County are still facing funding threats.

The state even sending this letter the Palm Beach County School District.

In the letter, officials announced an investigation into the districts mask mandate.

Giving administrators until Wednesday to back down, and allow parents to opt kids out of masking,

It was sent the same day that judge ruled actions exactly like this, were against the law.

The district is showing no signs caving.

School board chair Frank Barbieri telling us he's not concerned about the state's threats

Monday 09/13/2021
CW34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Palm Beach County Special Education Teachers

"It was very nerve-racking"

Tina Trujillo's son Charlie is starting his senior year at palm beach central high school. Both are grateful virtual learning is over, but for a kid with down syndrome getting back into a school with over three thousand students isn't a walk in the park either.

"It was scary. But the ESE teachers have been unbelievable."

ESE stands for exceptional student education that's what the state of Florida calls special ed. Data acquired by CBS12 News from the Palm Beach County school district shows more than 120 ESE teachers left the district last year. Compared to 86 the year before and just 63 the year before the pandemic. 66 more either retired or passed away, leaving the district with 180 openings for various ese teacher positions that's almost one per school.

Just as concerning, are the many unfilled paraprofessional positions these are the people who provide personalized help for ESE students. They may go with them to the bathroom, monitor them while they eat, or calm them if they get over-excited.

Sue Davis Killian is with the gold coast down syndrome association.

"It's entry level, like restaurants, and they're having trouble finding workers. Paras quit because they were concerned for their health and it wasn't worth the amount of pay."

Some of those positions are getting filled right now, according to Edwin Michel, who's in charge of recruitment and retention in Palm Beach County Schools. But he is worried about being so short-staffed.

"We are always concerned. We don't sleep on these vacancies at all. This is always a moving target it's not just the start of school."

While Tina says Charlie has all the help he needs at Palm Beach Central. She's hoping more people will answer the call and help fill these positions that are so important to these children.

"For an ESE teacher, it's very taxing but they're greatly needed. I would hope any who left, would return."

Thursday 09/15/2021
CW34 News @ 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Dress Code Battle

"I've gotten dressed coded so many times for stupid things like oh your jeans can't have so and so many rips."

High school senior Lauren Belt is tired of being in trouble for what she wears. Ripped jeans are just one of many items regulated by Palm Beach County School's dress code. Other rules established by the school board include no clothes that are "sexually suggestive" like crop tops.

"I mean, it is Florida. It is hot,"

And the length of skirts and shorts also regulated. A common theme Lauren finds in the dress code: rules are geared at girls, not the guys.

"They will be able to wear gym shorts or a regular white tank top and will be fine. But if, God forbid, we wear the same thing, we will get sent to the office for it,"

Lauren feels like the current dress code is outdated and sexist. That's why she's trying to get it changed with a petition she started online that has hundreds of signatures and comments from students agreeing with her.

"I started talking to the other girls and they're like, 'yeah, this is just ridiculous,"

On the school board's website-it's outlined the purpose of the rules is to prevent distractions on campus. Lauren and her friends argue it's more distracting for them to continuously be pulled out of class and sent to the office.

"To find something that fits the dress code nowadays is close to impossible. You go to Macy's, every jean is going to have some type of rip in it,"

The current dress code was originally adopted in 1998 and was most recently updated in 2013. According to a spokesperson from the district-there are no current plans to change it again.

The district is aware of Lauren's petition.

Thursday 09/22/2021
CW34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Martin County Schools drop a grade

Martin county went from an "A" district to a "B" this past year. This is the first time the district dropped a letter grade since the 2015-2016 school year. Because of the pandemic year, districts had the option to not receive letter grades. So only the formula to do so was given out, unless the district requested a letter grade

In Martin County, despite dropping a letter grade, the Chief Academic Officer says the results might not be 100% accurate because some students didn't take the tests and others didn't take the testing seriously because they knew it didn't count.

In Indian River County, more than 50 percent of schools fell a letter grade.

In St Lucie county, about 75% of schools would receive a C or lower this year.

The district plans to help each student bring up their scores. Although these scores aren't totally representative of the students within each district, they do shine a light on the impact of the pandemic and remote learning.

Each district now has work to do to help students catch up.

HEALTH

DESCRIPTION

DATE/TIME

Friday 07/09/2021
CW 34 News @ 11:00PM
30 Minutes

Sugar Cane and Health Scares

Florida is the largest producer of sugarcane in the country and the glades region is central to that production sugar is the top employer in town. But now some residents have joined together in a class action lawsuit saying the traditional practice of burning, is making them sick.

Matthew Moore is an attorney at Berman Law Group, "They just know that from October through April and now they're extending into May, that they have to keep their kids inside. Whenever they get smell that first acrid taste of smoke, they have to stay indoors."

Matthew Moore is the lead attorney on the class action lawsuit claiming sugarcane burning is affecting people's health.

"The doctors talk about how people in the Glades come to them in September and October because they know they're about to have respiratory issues for the next six months."

Michael Brauer, an internationally recognized expert on air quality and its impact on human health, says anyone living in a community where sugarcane is burned could be exposed to harmful pollutants, even if you're only exposed during the burning season.

A spokesperson for the US sugar corporation tells CBS 12 News the air quality in the glades follows the clean air act saying, quote 'the Glades communities enjoy some of the best air quality in the state of Florida based on overall air quality in Palm Beach and Hendry counties.'

The government does have one sensor here in Belle Glade monitoring air quality all year long.

But it's the only one out here. During an independent investigation Pro Publica and the Palm Beach Post partnered to test the air quality in the region to see whether this government-run air sensor misses any harmful pollutants. They used their own sensors and have reported the single air monitor doesn't always account for short spikes in pollution that occur during a burn.

U.S. Sugar says the air monitor in Belle Glade is effective and accurate and criticized the post/pro-publica effort -saying: "the story relies on data from amateur-grade air monitors they stuck in a Pahokee resident's yard, not professionally set up or following the protocols outlined by the EPA."

Meanwhile after overcoming numerous challenges to his suit - Moore is now gearing up to face these companies in court and though burning is an efficient and time-tested method for harvesting sugar... Moore says these companies must find a more environmentally responsible method - like mechanical harvesting.

Monday 07/12/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Pfizer Booster

As vaccination rates drop and covid-19 cases rise in Florida, will the vaccinated need more protection later this summer?

Pfizer says the fully vaccinated will need a third shot 6 to 12 months after their second dose.

Federal health agencies say it's too early to tell.

Dr. Kleper de Almeida is an infectious disease specialist at JFK Medical Center in Atlantis.

He says the initial information about the m-r-n-a vaccines-Moderna and Pfizer-suggested much longer immunity from covid-19 than traditional vaccines.

"Time will tell us whether the immunity persists in folks that have received the vaccine. That's where the issue is where this request from Pfizer and Moderna to give folks boosters.

Pfizer says they are trying to stay ahead of the virus and its variants. The booster would defend against the rising delta strain, which is responsible for more than half of the new covid-19 cases in the last 2 weeks.

"We know that the delta variant has increased transmissibility and it is currently surging in pockets of the country with low vaccination rates.

In a joint statement from the National Institute of Health and the Centers for Disease Control, they said the focus should be on the unvaccinated. It points out, that quote "virtually all covid-19 hospitalizations and deaths are among those who are unvaccinated"

Adding Americans who have been fully vaccinated do not need a booster shot at this time.

"I think we should temper the recommendation with confirmation from the federal authorities, suggesting that yes, the population needs to be revaccinated. At this point, it is premature."

Friday 07/30/2021
CW34 News @11:00pm
30 Minutes

Covid Wars

Tonight – Governor Ron DeSantis, getting the last word, issuing this executive order, aimed at stopping mask mandates in schools.

A counterpunch to a new mask mandate for Broward County Schools that is challenging the Governor who vocally opposed any new covid-19 regulations. Teachers' unions are fired up and getting readying for a possible legal battle/

A new state law championed by the Governor that prevents any mask mandates or other covid-19 protocols outside of county and city buildings and DeSantis' critics are now taking aim.

Agriculture commissioner Nicki Fried, Democrat Candidate for Governor said, "Right now our local governments are handcuffed."

State Representative Omari Hardy, Democrat candidate for Congress said, "He should register as a lobbyist for covid-19 because it would appear, he's doing everything in his power to let this virus spread unchecked".

Meanwhile cases are climbing and clogging testing sites like this location in Lantana.

This used to be the largest covid-19 testing site in Palm Beach County at Ballpark of the Palm Beaches. Everything was broken down a few months ago and its vacant now, even though covid-19 cases are higher today in Florida than they were the day this testing site opened in 2020.

The Department of Health told us rather than reopening testing their priority is growing the state's flattening vaccination numbers.

Wednesday 08/04/2021
CW 34 News @
11:00pm
30 Minutes

Doctors and parents on Masks.

One local doctor is speaking out about the nightmare health professionals are facing and says it's unfair of the Governor to stop schools from requiring masks especially when younger students still can't get vaccinated.

"We're seeing ICU's getting filled, and we're having to open new covid-19 wards back in the hospital again. This is like déjà vu all over again from last year. It's frustrating."

Infectious disease specialist Dr. David Dodson of Good Samaritan Medical Center gives us a glimpse of just how bad the spike in covid-19 cases is in our area, and how it's shattering hospitalization records. He is deeply concerned to hear the Governor is barring school districts from requiring masks just days before children begin the school year.

"A state mandate like this is illogical, it's against CDC guidance. It's very heavy handed. It's not right."

"For a state to outlaw that, is ridiculous. And I think local municipalities should just go ahead and force their own mask rules."

With the highly contagious delta variant spreading quickly, Dr. Dodson says it's a set up for an outbreak in classrooms adding, pediatric cases are spiking and it's only going to get worse when school starts.

"If you have a bunch of kids together who are unvaccinated, and we know kids spread the virus pretty well, although they don't get so sick, thank God, we're going to see increased cases."

As mother and middle school art teacher Jennifer Gardner prepares her lesson plans, she feels extremely anxious days before seeing her students face to face next week.

"Masks are our only option. It really upsets me that we've been mandated not to have that option of requiring masks for our students."

Other than getting your vaccination if eligible, Dr. Dodson highly recommends school leaders do what they can to avoid transmission.

Thursday 8/12/2021
CW 34 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Natural Antibodies vs Vaccine

"I had shortness of breath. My energy was down for a few days. And I lost my sense of taste and smell for a little bit."

Remington Howell had a case of covid-19 a few months ago. To avoid getting and spreading the virus again – he's wearing a mask and social distancing. But he's not planning on getting the vaccine.

When I heard about the delta, that kind of worried me. But I try to be just clean and safe and do the natural remedies. It's worked so far

The 23-year-old believes his naturally occurring antibodies from his prior infection will be enough to keep him healthy.

"I feel like if I do what I'm doing, I can avoid it."

But more and more, public health experts are recommending people like Remington reconsider.

We posed this question to Howard Forman, a physician and professor of Public Health at Yale Medical School, "If someone has recovered from covid-19, do they still need the vaccine?"

His answer?

"The evidence is fairly strong that even if you've been previously infected, vaccination reduces your risk of hospitalization and illness if you get a full vaccination panel after that."

He says a new study put out by the CDC last week makes a compelling case for everyone to get vaccinated, even if they've been previously infected.

This study followed about 250 adults in Kentucky that had antibodies from a prior covid-19 infection. Some got the vaccine, some didn't. Among the unvaccinated – the odds of getting covid-19 again were much higher. Researchers found they were more than two times more likely to get covid-19 again, compared to those who were fully vaccinated.

"There's no question that prior infection mediated immunity does confer protection, but it seems now we have more and more evidence that vaccination significantly augments that protection and that we should be advising people to get vaccinated even if they've had prior covid-19 infection."

While this evidence won't convince everyone, researchers hope more people will get the vaccine protection, as more contagious variants spread.

Monday 08/30/2021
CW 34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Circuit Court Mask Mandate Decision

"We have the facts on our side, the law on our side."

Celebrating today's ruling are the lawyers who sued the governor and won. A judge in Tallahassee overturned an executive order governor DeSantis issued this summer, banning school districts from implementing mask mandates.

This parent in Boca Raton testified in the trial and spoke about safety concerns for her ten-year-old twins.

"They basically asked me if I felt safe sending my children to school and I said I did not without mask mandates. It only takes one child to affect others."

The judge ruled school districts do have the authority to issue mask mandates – and that governor DeSantis exceeded his constitutional authority when he issued his executive order and threatened to pull funding from schools that go against him.

"The defendants under this law do not have authority for a blanket ban on mask mandates. They simply do not have that authority."

The governor's argument was that mask mandates are not effective. A judge disagreed.

"The evidence clearly demonstrates that the recommendation by the CDC for universal masking represents the overwhelming consensus of scientists and medical doctors."

He went on to say that the governor lacked the emergency powers when he signed his executive order because he let the emergency lapse. The judge also found that the newly passed "parents bill of rights" in Florida does not prohibit mask mandates.

Individual liberties and parental rights, he says, do have limits, especially when it comes to decisions that impact the health of others.

Monday 09/03/2021
CW 34 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

St Lucie County Covid-19 Update

County leaders say this wave of infections is more concerning. Especially among children.

Since the first day of school over 700 students and nearly 200 staff have tested positive. The ongoing spread of the virus in schools, at hospitals, and across St. Lucie County is described by local government officials as a health crisis.

Today transmission is high. At the latest county covid-19 update. The Health Department said new cases are breaking records. Over nine-thousand cases were reported in August. The highest counts are among people 12 to 19-years-old. The school district on the defense.

Fighting five variants now circulating the county.

The most contagious and the most harmful is the Delta Variant. It's sending students home and worse, to the hospital where patients are pushing medical providers to the brink.

"During the delta variant surge there are far more hospitalizations and I should note that over the last 3 days, we've lost 9 patients to covid-19 and I extend a heart-felt sympathy to their family and friends."

This from the CEO of Cleveland Clinic Robert Lord and drops his head as he delivers difficult news.

Despite the significant surge the school district tells CBS12 new, campuses will remain open. The Chamber of Commerce says its members are being hit hard by the virus.

St. Lucie County Administration reports 60% of their staff are either sick or quarantined. That's impacting utilities and other county services like this library which is

closed due covid-19. But the county is putting up a fight to track, treat and terminate the virus.

At this new walk-up testing site in Fort Pierce
The health department is averaging 300 tests a day and there's a daily average of 175 infusions at this antibody treatment center.

Monday 9/13/2021
CW 34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Looking to Israel for help with the Pandemic

"We can and we will turn the tide of covid-19."

President Biden is anxious, like all of us, to get out of this pandemic and to do that, he and his top health advisors are looking.

Dr. Anthony Fauci said. "When you look at the Israeli data and they are about a month or so ahead of us in every aspect of this."

At the beginning of the year, the vaccination rollout started out much more quickly in Israel than in the U.S. Dr. Ran Balicer is chair of Israel's covid-19 National Expert Advisory Panel.

"By the end of May, Israel thought it was out of the woods."

But even with a vigorous vaccination campaign a dual threat arrived this summer, the delta variant posed a challenge to the vaccine, at the same time the Israelis say protection from the vaccine has started to wane over time becoming less effective.

Cases in Israel are now higher per capita than in the U.S. and that made Israel move quickly, they started administering booster shots August first.

In the U.S., the FDA and the CDC still reviewing boosters.

"Up until the booster shots, Israel waited for the FDA and for the CDC to chime in, but you guys just did boosters without the FDA and the CDC chiming in."

"I think there was a different level of urgency felt in the two countries. Decisions by the FDA have been made, and we could have followed them. But in the situation that we were at, it was obvious that action was needed urgently. Decisions need to be made."

Balicer and other Israeli health officials are in constant contact with U.S. health officials sharing their data on covid-19 after boosters.

Now while hospitalizations are skyrocketing in the U.S., the number of severe cases in Israel has plateaued recently and per capita deaths in Israel are lower than in the U.S., offering a glimpse of what could happen in the U.S. if certain steps are taken.

It's not just the boosters that are different. There are no paper vaccine cards here, instead electronic vaccine passports 'tav yarak' in Hebrew - are electronic and

have a QR code. Restaurants scan it and ask for an ID to make sure it's really you before letting you in.

Other rules also much stricter in Israel than in many parts in the U.S. Masks have to be worn indoors and at large gatherings, university students must be vaccinated, or test negative every few days, and same for school teachers and staff.

Monday 09/27/2021
CW 34 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Covid-19 Latest

Some progress in the U.S.'s fight against covid-19. Average daily cases are at a low not seen since early August but, the battle is far from over.

"Funeral homes are out of storage. Our hospitals are out of storage. It's just become quite a mess." Dotti Owens is the Ada County, Idaho coroner said.

About 64-percent of eligible people in the U.S. are now fully vaccinated, according to the CDC. While some Americans have already had a third shot, more than 70-million eligible Americans have yet to roll up their sleeves for the first time.

"We're seeing people not getting vaccinated even though vaccines will save their life."

"It's really unfortunate at this point because the data are so clear, the evidence is so overwhelming."

Health officials say getting a potentially life-saving shot should not be a political issue.

"This isn't Democrat or Republican. This is life and death and when have we gotten to the point where we are so determined to either be a red state or a blue state, versus saving lives."

CDC director Dr. Rochelle Wilensky says the booster shots will help, but they won't give the U.S. the upper hand on the virus.

"Infections among the unvaccinated continue to fuel this pandemic resulting in a rising number of cases, hospitalizations and deaths."

CRIME

DESCRIPTION

DATE/TIME

Monday 07/12/2021
CBS 12 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Crime Escalates

Week after week, it's the story that won't go away. The murder rate in America's cities is escalating at an alarming rate. Now, more evidence that voters even in the most democratic cities want action. A reality laid bare in a primary race for mayor in New York City, where the democratic nominee expected to win in November spent more than two decades as a police officer himself and ran a campaign vowing to support police officers and be tougher on crime

"We can't be so idealistic that we're not realistic. Cities are hurting across America and New York personifies that pain."

Also, laser focused on the issue of crime are Washington Republicans in congress. Standing in stark contrast to the defund the police message that became popular among some groups during the racial justice protests of 2020.

"While President Joe Biden has enjoyed approval ratings above 50 percent, republicans appear to be homing in on the issues in which he scores lowest. Crime being one of them but also his response at the southern border also continuing to reignite culture wars including issues surrounding race."

To understand why look no further than these numbers:

54 percent - the suburban voters who backed Joe Biden in 2020 versus 45 percent, those who backed Hillary Clinton in 2016, a group that strategists see as swingable and hope to swing back to the red column.

President Biden taking note and publicly backing more and not less funding for police.

Also, just days ago, meeting with Chicago mayor Lori Lightfoot and vowing to send resources to Chicago to help

A war over safety and messaging already playing out in America's cities with questions about how it will play out at the polls next November.

Friday 07/23/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00 PM
30 Minutes

Deputy Involved Shooting

Deputies saying it happened here at this intersection, just as the workday was ending.

What people here described as a quiet neighborhood-- rocked with gunfire in broad daylight.

According to the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, a tactical unit tried to pull over a man they believe had drugs and was tied to an undisclosed murder.

The man, investigators say, opened fire.

Witnesses tell CBS 12 news they heard multiple shots fired as children. some we met, played steps away.

Chief Frank de Mario with the sheriff's office says his deputies' shot back but didn't hit anyone including their suspect. The sheriff's office says he then ran to a nearby apartment complex and when deputies arrived, they discovered he'd taken his own life.

Investigators sharing this photo of the man's gun resting between his lifeless legs at the scene.

Tuesday 07/27/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00 PM
30 Minutes

Remembering Adam Walsh

Callahan Walsh tells me at the time of his brother's disappearance in 1981, there were no Amber alerts, no hotlines for parents to call. Cops didn't even start looking until 48 hours after because they thought he was a runaway. His brother's murder is part of the creation of the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children headquartered right here in Lake Park and their work to saving children is far from over.

It's been a long journey for the Walsh family since the murder of 6-year-old Adam forty years ago. Pictures of the smiling child wearing a red cap and holding a baseball bat circulated across America – after he was abducted at a Hollywood mall in Broward county. And on July 27, 1981, his severed head was found in a canal near Vero Beach.

There were clues and suspects, but not arrests. His case went unsolved for years.

"My parents never sat me down on the couch one day and dropped this bomb on me. I just always knew I had this brother, a brother that I never met."

Adam's brother Callahan Walsh grew up seeing firsthand the pain of losing the brother he never met and how it can bring about meaningful change making it their life mission to protect children as much as they can.

In 1984 his parents help create the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children. A 24/7 organization.

"We helped recover over 360,000 missing children since our inception."

"It completely changed the way we deal with how search for kids, what we do in the aftermath after they've been recovered."

"We train law enforcement we train health care professionals, and without the work that's been done in the national center because of Adam, this world wouldn't be a safer place for children."

Now he helps run the center, based in Lake Park.

"Not only are we looking for missing children, we're helping fight exploitation and preventing future victimization as well. Sex trafficking is ripe in this country, and fighting that"

After watching his father John Walsh and law enforcement track down more than 16-hundred fugitives and bring home more than 60 abducted children alive on the show Americas Most Wanted for 25 years, he decided to join his father on the same mission.

"Capture some of the worst of the worst criminals America has to offer, and now I am honored to join him in co-host his new show "in pursuit."

The Adam Walsh child protection and safety act became law 15 years ago today, creating a National, comprehensive system for sex offender registration in hopes to protect the public, especially children.

"I'd like to think that Adam is up there looking down on us, smiling proud of all the work that his parents and his family have put in over the years."

The journey to bring home mission children nationwide alive isn't over.

In 2008, Hollywood police announced they were convinced Adam was killed by convicted serial killer Ottis Toole after he confessed to the gruesome crime, but then recanted before dying behind bars in the mid-90s.

Tuesday 8/03/2021
CW34 News @ 11:00PM
30 Minutes

National Night Out

Chief Nathan Osgood says the heightened crime in the area is not just in riviera beach – it's also in neighboring cities.

The effort to strengthen neighborhood connections to fight back criminal activity is stronger than ever – but there's still a lot of work to do.

Vendors pack their items, law enforcement put their gear away.

The one opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances...postponed due to weather.

"This is our one chance what we get to talk to them."

Riviera beach police chief Nathan Osgood says this is their chance to change the culture of the community and police relations --- as gun violence in the area he sworn to serve and protect surges.

This was their chance to give people insight into what's being done to combat it.

"We got to come together as a community to put this put this problem to rest."

"We don't want if you see something, say something to be a cliché. Right now, it's starting to become a cliché because people are not talking to us. "

Not far from here is where someone had stood outside this bedroom window during the night and open fire, murdering 7-year-old Dexter Fergusson in his bed sleeping.

Weeks later and no one's been arrested.

It's just one of the dozens of unsolved homicides in the area.

As loved ones are still holding out hope – that justice will be served and while the annual national night out at bicentennial park has been postponed, the spirit of the event and the work on safeguarding the streets never stops.

Friday 8/06/2021
CW34 News at 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Massage Therapist Arrested

"I've had massages here many, many times and I've had massages by him and not even close to anything inappropriate."

Elizabeth Chulock has been a customer at Bao Foot Spa for the past 5 years. She finds it hard to believe that 51-year-old Qui Vanh Yoong, a massage therapist, would do anything like what he's being accused of.

"I've been massaged by him several times. He's amazing. I'm sad. I think it's for some reason the client was disgruntled, and I think it's terrible"

Boynton beach police say on august 5, a woman came into bao foot spa on West Boynton Beach Blvd for a 30-minute massage. She claims Yoong touched her breast and sexually assaulted her manually. The woman told police she was shocked and scared. And very shortly after that, got dressed and walked out.

No one at Bao Foot Spa would comment on the allegations against Yoong. And no one answered when we knocked on the door at Yoongs address. But another customer of the spa also tells CBS 12 News, they've only had positive experiences there.

Thursday 8/26/2021
CW34 News at 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Infant dead of Fentanyl Overdose

That one-year old girl was discovered right here in front of this door unresponsive. Her cause of death is fentanyl intoxication. Her parents are now behind bars. The Palm Beach County State Attorney says this is a crisis and he gave us update on what they're doing to get it off the streets.

Murder charges filed against the parents of a one-year-old who died from an apparent fentanyl and cocaine overdose last month.

In this newly released report, the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office says 26-year-old Charquez Giles and 36-year-old Latonia Clemons are now behind bars after the girl was dropped off on the doorstep of a family home along North Dixie Highway in Lake Worth Beach. The relative took the child to the hospital where she later died.

"It is heartbreaking to see anyone die of an opioid overdose, especially when it's a child."

During the pandemic Palm Beach County State Attorney Dave Aronberg continues fighting the fentanyl epidemic. He established a task force and is arresting not only corrupt treatment centers but those who sell the deadliest kind of opioid out there...fentanyl...a powerful, cheap synthetic painkiller.

"We had helped clean up the drug treatment industry in Palm Beach County and it has led to a dramatic drop in opioid overdose deaths, but because of the rise in fentanyl and the increase social isolation from covid-19, we've seen those numbers tick up."

Aronberg says fentanyl is the cause of 95% of opioid overdoses right now.

"With new laws placed in Florida we are now able to charge manslaughter or even murder to the drug dealer that sells the drug that the end user dies from."

Cindy Singer's lost her beloved son in 2015 to fentanyl.

"It's something we hear every day unfortunately. We decided we weren't going to sit idle anymore and were going to try to make a difference."

Singer and her best friend Staci Katz are moms helping those in recovery find a place to live and a job. They also provide rides to jobs through their non-profit organization.

"Unfortunately, we've met so many families in Palm Beach County that have either lost their children like I have or children who are in recovery and battling like Staci's son."

As the cheap painkiller sweeps the area, they want to reduce the number of deaths by offering a helping hand.

"If we help one, we help many. It's a ripple effect and we do this in memory of our son and in honor of Staci's son whose struggling."

Wednesday 9/08/2021
CW34 News at 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Deadly Weekend

Jensen Beach High School is on high alert today after someone wrote a threatening note-saying kids would be shot. An unknown author wrote "note to self: on September 8th, bring a gun to school" and then listed nine names of intended targets.

Several of those students on the list have been identified but not everyone since only first names were written. The sheriff is taking the threat seriously with deputies and K9's on campus since there are no metal detectors.

A teen we talked to says he still feels fine coming to school today after the long weekend.

"I don't think anything is really going to happen. I think it's just all a scare and I think with all of the police presence, it's going to die down,"

Jensen Beach's principal sent out a robo call to parents last night, reassuring them that students would be safe. The sheriff's office is still trying to find out who made the threat. If they're caught-they could be arrested and charged with a felony.

Wednesday 9/22/2021
CW34 News at 9:00am
30 Minutes

Shooting in Boynton Beach

The effort to find Brian Laundrie is picking up after the preliminary results of an autopsy were released, Gabby Petito's death is ruled a homicide. A final autopsy will reveal exactly how the 22-year-old was killed, but Brian Laundrie is considered a person of interest in the crime.

Laundrie's parents say he went hiking in a nearby wildlife reserve more than a week ago. They say they picked up Brian's mustang, and then waited several days to report him missing.

Authorities set their sights on that nature reserve for their preliminary search days ago and they're still pressing on - combing through swampy, muddy, and sometimes dangerous terrain.

Commander Joe Fussell, "Terrain is very difficult. About 75% of it is underwater, and other areas that are try, we're trying to clear."

But days have gone by with no results.

Now - with Brian seemingly vanished into thin air, law enforcement has come under fire for not keeping a closer eye on him. Despite mounting criticism, investigative experts say hindsight is 20/20, and when Brian disappeared, Gabby Petito was a missing person, not a murder victim.

Monday 9/27/2021
CW34 News at 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Police in the Front line of Covid-19

Health officials tell me officers are on the front lines as well and their work constantly exposes them to coronavirus. It took the life of a local officer over the

weekend. City Mayor Keith James has directed all flags to be lowered at half-staff to honor his life.

Covid-19 has been the number one killer of law enforcement this year and last year according to an organization that tracks line of duty deaths called "officer down memorial page." To date the site reports 180 officers died from the coronavirus this year.

Over the weekend – another heartbreaking passing to be added to the list. West Palm Beach police announced its second covid-19-related death in the department, officer Anthony Testa.

His vehicle now decorated with flowers in his honor. Flags at city buildings lowered at half-staff.

Last month – Officer Testa was escorted from an area hospital to the airport then flown to Cleveland Ohio to receive advanced care using a special life-support machine. None were available in Florida at the time.

Officer Testa had worked for the department since 2017 and served as a combat medic in the U.S. Army.

We personally met Officer Testa back in May after he received honorary medals for saving lives at shooting scenes. Body camera footage shows Testa using his own medical supplies on top of the standard kits provided. His work made all the difference since officers typically arrive to a scene before paramedics.

At least 7 South Florida Law Enforcement Officers died this year due to covid-19. Over the weekend, West Palm Officers participated in a softball tournament to raise money for the families left behind.

OTHER ISSUES

Thursday 07/01/2021

**CBS 12 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes**

Surfside Building History

Morabito Consultants have posted this message on the front page of their company website. Inundated by media calls- the company has hired a public relations firm and this statement expresses sympathy for the victims and their families, then briefly explains their work at the Champlain Towers south:

"We completed our inspection and provided our report to the condominium association on oct. 8, 2018, detailing our findings and recommendations. At that time, we also provided the condominium association with an estimate of the probable costs to make the extensive and necessary repairs. Among other things, our report detailed significant cracks and breaks in the concrete, which required repairs to ensure the safety of the residents and the public."

The statement says there will be no further comment.

Going deeper into Morabito's website, the company takes great pride in a project they were involved with in Sarasota. In fact, the company says it received a prestigious national award for their work at the Dolphin Condo Complex built in 1973.

In 2010, Morabito inspectors found support columns in the parking garage were failing. Sarasota officials ordered everyone in the building, 130 people, to evacuate until the problem could be fixed. Morabito consulting came up with the plan that took five years to complete. By the time residents could return in 2015, it had cost them millions

"What happened to our building 11 years ago was an economic tragedy. But that pales in comparison to this human tragedy."

Jim Toale is now president of the Condo Association at the Dolphin:

"Our thoughts and prayers and hearts go out to the families of Surfside."

From Sarasota- we go to Baltimore. this historic tower called Gibbons Hall was built in 1873 on the campus of Notre Dame of Maryland University. Thirty years ago, the University was updating the tower. They hired Morabito consultants to make recommendations about repairs.

The University later sued Morabito, claiming their assessment was flawed. Court documents reveal, the University brought in different experts who were concerned that Morabito had missed potentially serious problems.

Morabito had failed to calculate properly the increase in live loads associated with the change in occupancy of the building. As a result of the increase in loads, the truss system was overstressed.

The second set of experts also detected "significant movement internal to the building"

Morabito won in court but it's important to note: the court ruling ruled on their contract not whether the trusses were over-stressed, and the question of building supports is again front and center for the Champlain Towers south.

In Morabito's 2018 assessment of the towers, they discovered significant cracking in the stucco exterior façade at the mortar bed joint between the top of the concrete floor slab and the first block masonry course. Morabito consulting does not see this crack as a source of water infiltration.

One expert calls this part of the report from Morabito a serious concern. He says this indicates a serious structural defect and that Morabito should have investigated further.

Friday 07/02/2021
CBS 12 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Surfside Day 10

Authorities say they made the decision to demolish the remaining portion of the condo building as early as Sunday after consulting

Governor Ron DeSantis held a press conference and stated, "Taking the building down, given the fact that the storm is coming and given the fact we were going to have to do this anyways is the prudent thing to do."

As search and rescue teams go through the pile of debris and concrete at the condo building in Surfside that collapsed last week, experts plan to use explosives to bring down the rest of the 12-story building that still stands.

"The fear was that the hurricane may take the building down for us and take it down in the wrong direction on top of the pile where we have victims." Charles Burkett, Surfside Mayor said today.

Officials say getting rid of the remaining structure is the best option.

Officials say the death toll now stands at 24 with 124 people unaccounted for. Search and rescue teams are battling grueling heat and humidity, combing through the rubble at Champlain Towers South in Surfside, hoping that by some miracle they may still find someone who's alive.

"Is it realistic to think that there may be still live people in the rubble somewhere after so many days? You cannot wear this patch and be on that rubble pile day in and day out working tirelessly without an unwavering faith that what you're doing is leading towards that overall goal of finding someone alive."

The Governor says the state will pay all the costs of demolishing what's left of the collapsed building. A relief to local officials who are pouring lots of money, time and effort into dealing with this seaside disaster.

Tuesday 7/06/2021
CBS 12 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Latest of Champlain Towers

Families and friends, in mourning, last night at this tennis court turned memorial in Surfside. Those here, facing unspeakable loss, now in the grips of yet another problem.

Surfside's Mayor, Charles Burkett, telling CBS 12 News condo collapse victims are now in crosshairs of identity thieves, hoping to steal and exploit the names of those lost in the Champlain Towers rubble.

That didn't surprise Eva Velasquez, with the identity theft resource center. Velazquez tells us tragedies like Surfside making headlines across the globe often attract cyber criminals combing through news stories and social media for the names and ages of victims. Those clues then matched those with stolen information for sale on the dark web, allowing thieves to open bank accounts, take out loans – and wreck other financial havoc.

This targets people who are grieving and not necessarily thinking about identity theft. But experts say there are some things you can do; you should promptly notify the IRS, social security administration, and financial institutions like banks and credit card companies of your loved one's death. Ask for and check their relatives credit reports. And write the obituary with care. Believe it or not, identity thieves comb thru those remembrances for information to use, like birth dates.

Keeping an identity safe after death, yet another burden in surfside already brought to the brink.

Thursday 7/22/2021
CBS 12 News @ 9:00am
30 Minutes

Surfside One Month

This town of five-thousand used to pride itself as a quiet, close knit spot on the coast, but now this beautiful beach town bustles with people from all over the world, trying to help in the aftermath of tragedy.

"It's not about more, it's about better. It's not about quantity, it's about quality,"

In 2006 Charles Burkett became the mayor of Surfside, a small town of only five thousand people, but now people all over the world recognize his face and name. The

collapse of Champlain towers south on an early Thursday morning in June not only put Surfside's name in headlines, but it meant this small-town government would be in the middle of a global tragedy.

John Healy, captain of the Surfside Police Department said, "We're a small police agency. We only have 31 police officers."

"They've worked 24 hours a day, seven days a week, non-stop and they're still working,"

Burkett has been mayor on and off over a decade and while he never expected this spotlight on surfside, he knew his town would come together if they ever needed to.

"The entire community has stepped up, and just basically kind of exhibited the behavior we knew was always there. Love, compassion, caring, dedication, resilience."

As for the future of Surfside-Mayor Burkett anticipates a closer community-trying to bring comfort to those affected by the collapse.

"It's been the best of times and the worst of times. Everyone has stepped up to do their part. We knew it was in them but now we know it's in them. Because they've proven it. And they've proven it to the world."

Another change moving forward throughout South Florida, more building inspections to make sure this type of tragedy never happens again.

Monday 8/02/2021
CBS 12 News @ 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Employees at Publix mask up again

These will be going back on employees today at Publix stores like this one and across Florida. Masks will be required for all employees regardless of their vaccination status.

The decision came after the CDC just released guidance that people in areas of high transmission risk wear face coverings while in doors.

Private businesses can require staff and visitors to mask up, but it's their choice. For public schools, however, it's a different case.

On Friday the Governor signed an executive order that gives the State Education Commissioner the power to defund school districts that mandate masks. Most school districts in South Florida are mask optional come fall.

Counties and cities across the state are instituting mask mandates that apply only within municipal buildings, but not to businesses and other places outside of the county's direct control.

Publix also said in a statement they encourage but do not require workers to get vaccinated. As far as customers having to wear masks, they are still deciding on that.

Friday 8/20/2021
CBS 12 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Henri Latest

As Henri moves north towards New York and New England, Long Island lifeguard Matthew Weeks is sounding the alarm about the dangers of swimming in the ocean.

"It's very unsafe. People that think that they can swim through this, they cannot. Rip currents are going to pull you out."

The National Weather Service says life-threatening storm surge up to five feet is expected for parts of coastal New England, and Long Island, New York.

"We are in the proverbial calm before the storm. And it is misleading as to how serious this situation could be."

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, who leaves office Tuesday amid scandal, says he's deploying 500 National Guard members to help with the storm.

Utilities said power outages could last a week or even more, while warning customers to stay away from downed power lines.

"Grab some water just to have it around the house. Those batteries, in case you lose electricity, a little extra ice in case you lose power for the refrigerator."

Reminding New Yorkers of the devastation super-storm Sandy brought nearly nine years ago, Cuomo is urging people to take it seriously.

"We've seen this movie. We don't need to see it again. Act responsibly."

Fierce winds and potentially dangerous tidal surges are forecast as far east as Cape Cod, Massachusetts and as far west as the New Jersey Shore.

Tuesday 8/31/2021
CBS 12 News @ 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Hurricane Ida

Using boats and helicopters, rescuers are **still** searching for people stranded by Ida's flood waters along Louisiana's gulf coast.

"The ceiling in every room caved in and it was, it was unbelievable. Four feet of water just came rushing in."

Cell phone video captured a hospital evacuation of about 100 patients. Inside of one the transfer vehicles, they were stacked three rows high.

Overall, the storm that made landfall as a category four hurricane Sunday was a test of the region's flood defense system, fortified after Hurricane Katrina.

For the most part, it held, but the region's power grid did not.

"This was a 400-foot transmission tower, after Ida, it's a pile of rubble. It's one of the reasons the power is out in the New Orleans metro area. Hospitals, gas stations, and supermarkets are all trying to run on backup generators."

The storm knocked out more than 2-thousand miles of transmission lines.

Louisiana's governor says 25-thousand utility workers are making repairs and more crews are on the way. But it could be weeks before power is restored.

"I can't tell you when the power is going to be restored. But what I can tell you is we're going to work hard every single day to deliver as much assistance as we possibly can."

Thursday 9/07/2021

CBS 12 News @ 9:00am

30 Minutes

Surf Therapy

First-time surfers spend most of their time tumbling in the white-water, but with each wipeout, these 10 Southern California healthcare workers are washing away pandemic stress.

Nurse Daniel Chmielewski works 12-hour shifts at Torrance Memorial Hospital.

"It's been exhausting physically and mentally. I catch myself thinking about work and the patients and you know, what we could have done better."

His prescription today?

Surf therapy.

Therapist and surfer, Kevin Sousa, is leading the session

"We're constantly projecting to the future what may or may not happen. And that's where our anxiety lives, but when you're paddling through a wave? You are right here, and you are right now."

Wipeouts are soon followed by smiles and cheers and before long, these new students are starting to become... Surfers.

"I just got done from working three 12-hour shifts, but I didn't think about that at all."

Turns out the rough ocean can calm the mind.

Monday 9/11/2021
CBS 12 News @ 12:00pm
30 Minutes

Bradley's Saloon Open

Here on the clematis side of ER Bradley's it looks like straight up ruin, with ash everywhere and burnt up furniture. But what you can't see on the Datura side of the restaurant is a fully intact bar, seating area, and even kitchen.

West Palm Beach fire crews were able to contain this blaze coming from the patio section of Bradley's. Today they're back on the scene investigating what exactly caused the fire. Despite the mess-Bradley's is serving food and cocktails today-to the relief of regulars.

The restaurant had been closed for pest fumigation-a situation that has witnesses speculating if that caused the fire.

Because of the fumigation, the restaurant had been closed this week-meaning thankfully no one was inside when the fire broke out.

Wednesday 9/27/2021
CBS 12 News @ 11:00pm
30 Minutes

Champlain Towers Investigation

"Now we all want a beautiful place in which to live, but we need to prioritize, and what Surfside taught us was, engineering and repairs first, aesthetics second."

Fred Hadley lives in century village, west of Boca Raton. Thirteen years ago, when he moved in, he was charmed by community living. The pools. The tennis courts.

He still loves those amenities, but now he's mad. Because he says condo management are not preparing for the detailed safety inspections and likely mandatory repairs which are certainly coming in the wake of the tragedy in surfside.

For instance: Fred points to these flower beds in front of his building on Cornwall Drive. Beautiful, he admits, but they cost thousands of dollars a year to keep up. Last month, he suggested the condo board use that money to hire an expert to assess whether their cash reserves are enough to pay for repairs that might be needed.

"And it was shot down. The president of our association turned to the community's manager and said, 'do we need to do this? How are our reserves?' and the community association manager, who is not a licensed reserve specialist said, the reserves inside century village are in fine shape, and he's not qualified to make that determination and nor am i, nor is the board of directors, nor is the management company who works for us, only a person licensed by the state of Florida."

Fred knows Palm Beach County officials are in talks to require re-inspection every 10 years for buildings built before 1982. Like century village. If inspectors find problems that need to be fixed right away, that means money. In a hurry.

“The people at Champlain Towers south were hit with a 38 thousand dollar per unit special assessment which is a serious impact for people living in a ritzy ocean front property, it would be a disaster here.

A disaster for folks like Joan Johnson. Joan lives in one of the other Five thousand seven hundred units in century village. Many of those that live here, like Joan, are retired and must be careful with their finances. A special assessment could easily climb into the thousands. If it does, Joan says she’d have to leave the condo she’s called home for year.

Joan pays about 600 dollars a month in condo fees. Some of that goes to the recreational facilities, some to building maintenance. After Surfside, she wants to know exactly what goes where. And says for a few months, the recreational budget could go on the back burner.

Within Century Village, there are 16 associations among the more than 100 buildings. Fred and Joan’s association isn’t doing a reserve study, but others in the community are and some might impose special assessments, some might not.

The good news is, century village isn’t anywhere near the ocean. So, the buildings here likely won’t have the same degree of corrosion as the condo in surfside. But that doesn’t mean there won’t be problems that need fixing after 40 plus years. Last month in Miami, an 8-story building was deemed unsafe and had to be evacuated.

Fred tells the i-team some associations in Century Village have ordered field survey reports. The same kind of detailed engineering inspection Champlain Towers south had done in 2018. That doomed building ultimately ignored the recommendations for repairs in that report.

But Fred says that information by itself is only one piece of the puzzle. He says he and his neighbors deserve to know what’s coming so they can prepare to pony up the money or find somewhere new to live.

Commented [A01]: