

BEACH REPORT

MONDAY Military    TUESDAY Education    WEDNESDAY Space & Science    THURSDAY Growth & Development    **TODAY Beach report**    SATURDAY Environment    SUNDAY Community feature

SATELLITE BEACH

**Visitors can see 'satellite' at Schechter.** In 1958, a new landmark towered above Satellite Beach: a satellite.

According to town historian John Fergus, three local men decided a tribute to the space race was in order. A satellite was constructed of sheet metal, measuring about 5 feet in diameter and on May 17, 1958, dignitaries gathered to see it "launched." The official countdown gave way to a small explosion from a stick of dynamite that sent huge amounts of talcum powder into the sky, simulating liftoff (although the satellite stayed where it was).

But the satellite was hammered by high winds, and in March 1959, "it came back down to Earth," Fergus said.

The community had the chance to see a replica of the famous satellite when a re-created version was hoisted aboard a float during the city's Founder's Day Parade this month. That recreation is on display at the David R. Schechter Community Center, 1089 South Patrick Drive in Satellite Beach. Call 773-6458

INDIAN HARBOUR BEACH

**Author to address university group.** The Brevard Chapter of the Brandeis University National Women's Committee will have its annual author luncheon at 11:30 a.m. at the Eau Gallie Yacht Club, 100 Datura Drive. The speaker is Lee Boyland, author of the "Clash of Civilizations" fictional trilogy about terrorism. Call 254-7460 or 255-3153 for reservations. \$30.

MELBOURNE BEACH

**Tour showcases historic homes.** The Brevard Heritage Council and the History Preservation and Awareness Board for the town of Melbourne Beach will partner to showcase area historic homes. The tour will begin at 10 a.m. at the Melbourne Beach Community Center, 508 Ocean Ave. Cost is \$10 in advance, \$15 the day of the event. Call 633-1456.

# Woman's charity aid lauded

## Kristen Malfara of M.O.R.G.A.N. gets grant, trip to 'Montel Williams'

BY SHAWNA S. KELSCH FOR FLORIDA TODAY

MELBOURNE BEACH — Thanksgiving came a week early to the Malfara family of Melbourne Beach.

On Wednesday, Nov. 14, Kristen Malfara answered the telephone at the nonprofit M.O.R.G.A.N. Project she runs and learned she had been selected as a finalist in a national competition that recognizes women for creating positive change in their communities.

Five women were selected from across the United States to receive \$20,000 grants.

They are all in the running for a yet to be announced final award.

"I started crying the minute she told me she was from the Charming Voices group, and I didn't stop for some time," Malfara said.

In addition to the grant, Malfara will be flown to New York in February for an appearance on the "Montel Williams Show," and a video documentary of the work she does in Brevard will be taped to air along with her appearance.

Co-sponsored by Disney, the award also earned her an all-expenses-paid "Dream Come True" four-day vacation to the Magic Kingdom in Orlando and a gift card for clothing at any of four stores owned by Charming Shoppes: Lane Bryant, Fashion Bug and Petite Sophisticate.

Malfara co-founded the M.O.R.G.A.N. Project with husband Robert Malfara in 2001 after years of dealing with the trials and tribulations of raising their son, Morgan, who was born with a rare genetic disorder.

M.O.R.G.A.N. stands for Making Opportunities Reality, Granting Assistance Nationwide.

The joys of caring for the bubbly, smiling little boy often were

outweighed by the difficulty of trying to make his life more comfortable or to get supplies for him.

Morgan suffers a debilitating and life-threatening strain of leukodystrophy, which means he cannot walk or speak.

"We know how hard it is to navigate through the various channels to provide simple life-enhancing care to our son and wanted to provide an avenue to help parents avoid some of the (hassles) we faced," she said.

Money raised by the organization through an annual fundraiser and at other events during the year is used to provide equipment and services to disabled children not covered by insurance.

"For example, we've given bath (apparatus) for paralyzed children, so they can experience the fun of a bubble bath and not have to be sponge-bathed for their entire lives," Malfara said.

Malfara was told that she had received "thousands" of nomination entries for the "One Voice Can Lead to a Chorus for Change" award, but two stuck out.

"The one from my mentor, Patti Daviau, who lives in Indianapolis, and the one from Sasha Byers of Satellite Beach," she said.

Byers, a language arts teacher at DeLaura Middle in Satellite Beach, met Malfara three years ago when she was searching for a local charity for her daughter to complete community service hours for school.

"When I met her, I was quickly aware of what a warm and genuine person Kristen is. . . . I was able to hear her story of her son Morgan and his serious illness, and I thought, 'This is a woman who doesn't focus on the limitations life may offer, but instead the possibilities that are waiting to be discovered to bring some good into the situation.'"



Shawna S. Kelsch, 2006 FLORIDA TODAY file

**Efforts honored.** Kristen Malfara, right, co-founded the M.O.R.G.A.N. Project to help families that struggle to care for children with disabilities. Malfara's son, Morgan, left, was born with a rare genetic disorder. Malfara has been named a finalist in a national competition that recognizes women for creating positive change in their communities.

After meeting her, Byers decided that Malfara's fundraiser, Turtle Splash, was an event the entire family should support, and they've done so each of the past three years.

Byers said her nomination was heartfelt and genuine and that she is happy she had some small role in the unfolding of this event.

"I know she will use it as an investment in the betterment of others' lives, and they will be blessed because of her," she said.

For more information, visit [www.themorganproject.org](http://www.themorganproject.org) or call 506-2707. ■

**"We... wanted to provide an avenue to help parents avoid some of the (hassles) we faced"**

Kristen Malfara



Bob Freeman  
Surf report

## Expect small but clean surf

Today

Surf will be shin- to knee-high with semi-clean conditions from an easterly breeze.

Saturday

Northeasterly winds will produce knee- to waist-high surf with semi-bumpy conditions.

Sunday

Expect surf conditions to be thigh-high and semi-bumpy from a southeasterly breeze.

Bob Freeman is a Cocoa Beach resident and surfer since 1966. He's a six-time winner of the Easter Surfing Festival and is the current Florida Legend's Surfing Champion.

	Wave height	
	Saturday	Sunday
Playalinda Beach	2' - 3'	2'
Water temperature	71°	72°
Cape Canaveral	1' - 2'	1' - 2'
Cocoa Beach	2'	2'
Satellite Beach	2'	1' - 2'
Indialantic	2' - 3'	1' - 2'
Melbourne Beach	2' - 3'	1' - 2'
Sebastian Inlet	2' - 3'	2'

FLORIDA TODAY staff

**SUGGESTIONS.** Contact Eric Garwood at 242-3759 or [egarwood@floridatoday.com](mailto:egarwood@floridatoday.com).

Nautical notes

Mothers of Preschoolers meets from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. the first and third Fridays of each month at Trinity Presbyterian Church, 638

South Patrick Drive, Satellite Beach. Meetings involve group discussions, crafts, speakers and projects. Call Jill Means at 757-8908.

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