

The curly-haired prince of parody, “Weird Al” Yankovic has forged a decades-long music career by turning popular earworms into comedic gold. Armed with an accordion and a wicked imagination, Yankovic pokes fun at hit songs—but he always asks for the artist’s permission. “Most artists look at it as a badge of honor or a rite of passage to get their Weird Al song parody,” he says. His fourteenth and latest studio album, *Mandatory Fun*, has been his most successful to date. With hits like “Tacky,” a riff on Pharrell Williams’ “Happy,” and “Word Crimes,” a grammar-based take on Robin Thicke’s “Blurred Lines,” Yankovic continues to challenge the parameters of parody. He arrives at the Kravis Center on June 4 for a high-energy evening of polka pastiches, costume changes, and multiple iterations of the one-and-only Weird Al. Tickets start at \$22. (561-832-7469, kravis.org)

You started playing the accordion as a child. Why did the instrument appeal to you?

I don’t think I was begging my parents for accordion lessons, but I shared the same surname with Frankie Yankovic, who was well known at the time as America’s Polka King. Because my name already had an association with the accordion, I think my parents thought there should be at least one other accordion-playing Yankovic in the world. So they started getting me lessons. I think my first lesson was the day before my seventh birthday. I took lessons for three years, [and] that is my formal musical training.

How did “weird” become part of your name?

That was in college. My sophomore year, I took a shift at the college campus radio station, and most of the DJs had some sort of wacky air name—like there was the Sheriff and the Captain and Macho Mike. I played sort of weird music during my shifts, and I thought, “Okay, Weird Al—that works.” And it just kind of stuck.

What are some tips for writing parody songs?

It’s got to be funny for the whole song. I try not to go with an idea that basically is over after you hear the first joke. There’s got to be enough potential there where you can still be saying funny things in the second verse and the bridge and the third verse. It can’t peter out after the first chorus. Picking your target is also important, because you want to find a song that’s mainstream enough that people are familiar with it. Here’s another thing: Even if people aren’t familiar with it, it should be funny. It shouldn’t be dependent on whether you’re familiar with the source material. Those are two big things.

ROBERT TRACHTENBERG

Insider



getting
weird
WITH WEIRD AL

WHICH LEGENDARY MUSICIAN
CONSISTENTLY REJECTED WEIRD AL'S
PARODY REQUESTS? FIND OUT AT PALMBEACHILLUSTRATED.COM/WEIRDAL

Insider

SUMMER fun

Don't fall victim to summer languor. Instead, fill your days with new experiences, exciting events, and the latest literature.



On Stage

The team behind the *PBI* Award-winning Brewhouse Gallery has established the next great hangout—and it's right next door. **The Kelsey Theater** opened in Lake Park earlier this year following renovations partially paid for by online crowdfunding. Located in the former home of the Mos'Art Theatre, the venue hosts musicians, comedy shows, and indie films, just to name a few, and will be rocking all summer long. "The beauty of our theater is versatility," says

founder A.J. Brockman, who sees The Kelsey as the next step toward building a thriving arts district in Lake Park. (561-328-7481, thekelseytheater.com)

BLOCK PARTY

Season may be over in South Florida, but that doesn't mean West Palm Beach's **Northwood Village** has turned into a sleepy hamlet. Throughout the summer, the downtown neighborhood will host events that showcase its eclectic personality. On June 11, head out on an ArtWalk and take a guided tour of Northwood's galleries and shops. Then, on June 15, return for some food on the go as part of the area's Food Truck Roll-In. Top off the month with Art Night Out on June 24. From 6-9 p.m., craft vendors, live music, and street-side artists takeover Northwood Road for a no-holds-barred expression of creativity. (northwoodvillage.com)



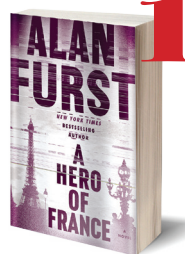
GO FORE IT

There's no shortage of miniature golf courses in the area, but one conceived by golf royalty is hard to come by. This summer, the **South Florida Science Center and Aquarium**

will open its Conservation Course, an 18-hole mini-golf course designed by Jim Fazio and Gary Nicklaus. The sons of two local golfing icons, Fazio and Nicklaus created the course for serious golfers and children alike. Each hole caters to the theme of conservation and is inspired by an animal or plant found in the Everglades, resulting in the perfect combination of education and fun. (561-832-1988, sfsciencecenter.org)

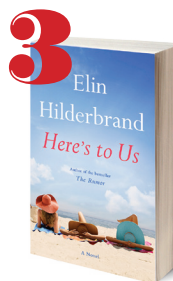
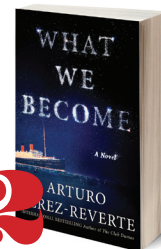
Book Club

One of the greatest things about summer is finally having time to catch up on reading. Here, the staff at **Classic Bookshop** in Palm Beach shares a few new releases they can't wait to crack open. (561-655-2485, classicbookshop.com)



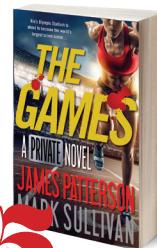
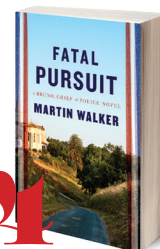
1 **A Hero of France** (Random House, \$27) by Alan Furst
Available: May 31 **Synopsis:** Set in 1941, this thriller centers on French Resistance member Mathieu as he helps British airmen return home.

What We Become (Atria Books, \$28) by Arturo Perez-Reverte
Available: June 7 **Synopsis:** This historical novel traces the forbidden love of Max and Mecha, whose paths cross many times over the course of 30 years.



3 **Here's to Us** (Little, Brown and Co., \$28) by Elin Hilderbrand
Available: June 14 **Synopsis:** A classic summer read, *Here's to Us* follows three former wives of a late celebrity chef as they reconcile their differences and share stories about their common lost love.

Fatal Pursuit (Knopf, \$26) by Martin Walker
Available: June 21 **Synopsis:** An installment in the Bruno, Chief of Police story, *Fatal Pursuit* sees Bruno investigating a pair of murders in a French village.



5 **The Games** (Little, Brown and Co., \$28) by James Patterson
Available: June 27 **Synopsis:** The sixth book in Patterson's *Private* series, *The Games* chronicles investigator Jack Morgan's return to Rio de Janeiro to provide security for the 2016 Olympics.

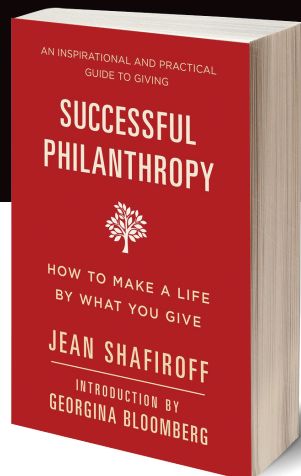
Some Enchanted Evenings: The Glittering Life and Times of Mary Martin (St. Martin's Press, \$28) by David Kaufman
Available: July 12
Synopsis: Kaufman lifts the curtain on the life of one of Broadway's brightest stars.



Insider

GIVE BACK

There's an art to giving, and **Jean Shafiroff** is a philanthropic artist. A fixture on both the New York and Palm Beach philanthropy scenes, she shares her insight into charity in her new book, *Successful Philanthropy: How to Make a Life by What You Give* (Hatherleigh Press, \$15). Shafiroff has forged her own philanthropic path through her work with organizations like the New York Women's Foundation, the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services, and the American Cancer Society, and she believes personal passions should shape one's approach to giving. Featuring an introduction by Georgina Bloomberg, *Successful Philanthropy* looks at how modern giving means a donation of not just money but also of time and knowledge. Shafiroff outlines small and big ways to become an effective philanthropist, from signing up as a volunteer to tips for starting a charitable organization. (jeanshafiroff.com)



HERSKOWITZ WITH HER SON BLAKE

How Sweet it is

SPEECH PATHOLOGIST AND PASTRY CHEF VALERIE HERSKOWITZ HAS FOUND A WAY TO MAKE CHOCOLATE EVEN SWEETER. IN MAY, SHE OPENED THE CHOCOLATE SPECTRUM BOUTIQUE AND ACADEMY IN JUPITER WITH THE GOAL OF SELLING DELECTABLE CONFECTIONS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY HELPING THOSE WITH AUTISM AND OTHER DISABILITIES. AN AUTISM ADVOCATE AND SPEECH SPECIALIST FOR MORE THAN 30 YEARS, HERSKOWITZ BEGAN TRAINING IN PASTRIES IN 2010 AND BECAME A CERTIFIED CHOCOLATIER IN 2013. AS SHE CULTIVATED THESE TASTY HOBBIES, SHE FOUND HER SON BLAKE, WHO HAS AUTISM, WANTED TO BAKE AND CREATE AS WELL. IN AN EFFORT TO HELP BLAKE AND OTHERS LIKE HIM, HERSKOWITZ HELD CHOCOLATE-MAKING CLASSES IN HER HOME AND SOLD THE GOODS ONLINE. NOW, SHE'S EXPANDED TO A STOREFRONT AND IS OFFERING EVEN MORE OPPORTUNITIES TO THOSE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS. PATRONS AT THE CHOCOLATE SPECTRUM CAN PICK UP ARTISAN CHOCOLATES OR ENJOY PASTRIES, BEVERAGES, AND COFFEES IN THE CAFÉ, NAMED CLAYTON'S CAFÉ IN HONOR OF A SOUTH FLORIDA YOUNG MAN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS WHO DIED OF EPILEPSY AT 18 YEARS OLD. IN ADDITION TO WEEKLY CHOCOLATE-MAKING CLASSES, HERSKOWITZ HAS ALSO STARTED A YEARLONG VOCATIONAL PROGRAM TO TEACH STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES ABOUT CHOCOLATE PRODUCTION, BAKING, BEVERAGE PREPARATION, AND OTHER RESTAURANT SERVICES. HERSKOWITZ HOPES THIS WILL HELP THOSE WITH AUTISM AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS FIND EMPLOYMENT AT THE CHOCOLATE SPECTRUM AND ELSEWHERE. (954-980-0134, THECHOCOLATESPECTRUM.COM)

Children First

Palm Beacher Mari Frankel is committed to lending her voice to the voiceless. She advocates for children in Florida's privatized child welfare system as a board member for Adopt-A-Family of the Palm Beaches and, for the last six years, as a Guardian ad Litem, a state-trained volunteer assigned to help children navigate the court system.

"They have nobody to talk to," Frankel says. "They have case managers who are assigned to them, but their case managers have a lot of other cases. It makes the Guardian ad Litem program special, because you don't have that kind of caseload. You just have as many cases as you'd like to take, so you can spend a lot more time getting to know the child."

Troubled by the shortcomings she saw in the foster care system, Frankel decided to make a documentary—her first ever.



MARI FRANKEL

"My job as a Guardian ad Litem is to speak for the child," she says. "This is really the ultimate way to speak for these kids and to let them speak for themselves."

Foster Shock, a full-length documentary produced and directed by Frankel, premiered at the Palm Beach International Film Festival in April. It spotlights the experiences of many young men and women who have recently aged out of Florida's foster care system. Frankel also interviewed industry insiders and fellow advocates in order to not only address the system's shortcomings but also provide insight into how to make it better.

Frankel hopes *Foster Shock* will travel to other festivals and reach as many people as possible. She believes the film's message could energize viewers to become personally involved in the welfare of Florida's forgotten sons and daughters. (fostershock.com)