

# INSIDER

By Skye Sherman



## SPOTLIGHT

### *Stirring the Stoke*

West Palm Beach resident **Mary Glazier** started teaching surf lessons while between jobs last March. When she began posting time slots specifically for women, wannabe wave riders took note. She has now taught more than 400, with some traveling from as far as Orlando and Homestead to learn from her.

“I realized that the few women I surf with on a regular basis only knew how because a dad, brother, boyfriend, or husband had taught them,” Glazier explains. “Although I adore the men I’ve surfed with over the years, it frustrated me that most women’s bridge to this incredible hobby is through a man, and that this lifestyle is not as accessible to women.”

Glazier’s connection to the sport is a deep one. “I learned to surf

when I was 12 after my brother, who was also a surfer, passed away,” she shares. “At the time I couldn’t process it all, but I knew I wanted to connect with him in some way, so I went out and taught myself on his board. I didn’t progress much in those beginning years; it was just a therapeutic and scenic experience that I was not good at.”

She learned from every wipeout, eventually getting good enough to teach others. A typical one-hour lesson for first-timers includes some ocean/swell education, a warm-up on the sand, then paddling out and “falling until you don’t.” She typically hosts her sessions in Palm Beach but follows the swell around the county, posting weekly time slots on her website and Instagram based on the wave forecast. ([gurferylady.com](http://gurferylady.com))



LEISURE



## CRUISE Control

As the saying goes, “The two happiest days in a boat owner’s life are the day they buy the boat and the day they sell it.” That’s because boats, for all the fun they entail, can be time-consuming and costly to maintain. But with **JetRide**—a boat club with locations in Stuart, Jupiter, Tequesta, West Palm Beach, Boynton Beach,

and Pompano Beach—members get all the perks of owning a boat with none of the downsides. There’s no trailering, cleaning, or fixing, just setting off for time on the water then paying for whatever fuel you used. Best of all, each JetRide location has an extensive selection of boats and Jet Skis. ([jetride.com](http://jetride.com))

### 3 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT BOATING IN PALM BEACH COUNTY

**TOP SPOTS:** Take a boat out from the public West Palm Beach City Docks off Clematis Street for access to the Intracoastal Waterway, or depart from Harbourside Place in Jupiter to be near numerous waterfront eateries, including Guanabanas, 1000 North, U-Tiki, and Square Grouper Tiki Bar.

**ROOM TO ROAM:** Recreational boating is allowed along the county’s 47 miles of shoreline, and there are four major inlets that connect the Intracoastal to the Atlantic Ocean.

**BOATING SAFETY:** In Florida, those born after 1988 are required to have a boater’s permit, but the test can be taken online in most cases and is free.

## Galloping to Give Back



Nancy Batchelor is a modern-day Wonder Woman. Beyond her roles as a competitive equestrian and top Miami real estate agent, Batchelor is a passionate philanthropist, giving back to the community through a foundation founded by her late father-in-law, George Batchelor. His son Jon (Nancy’s husband) is a board member of **The Batchelor Foundation** ([tbfinc.org](http://tbfinc.org)), and the two work in tandem to continue George’s legacy of benevolence.

While the foundation contributes to more than 600 charities focused on health, animal welfare, environmental, and educational matters in underprivileged communities within Florida, Nancy’s personal favorite initiatives involve equines. “I’ve been horse crazy my whole life and I rode as a kid,” she shares.



Nancy and Jon have a home at Aero Club in Wellington, and when she’s not show jumping, Nancy dedicates her time to organizations such as **Give Back for Special Equestrians** ([givebackeq.org](http://givebackeq.org)), an all-volunteer nonprofit that provides therapeutic horseback riding for disabled children and veterans. Equine-facilitated therapies can benefit those facing physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges. In addition to increasing one’s self-esteem, riding can help with muscle coordination, range of motion, balance, and even communication. “I’m passionate about what horses can do for people,” says Batchelor.

## Q&A

# FANTASTICAL Florida

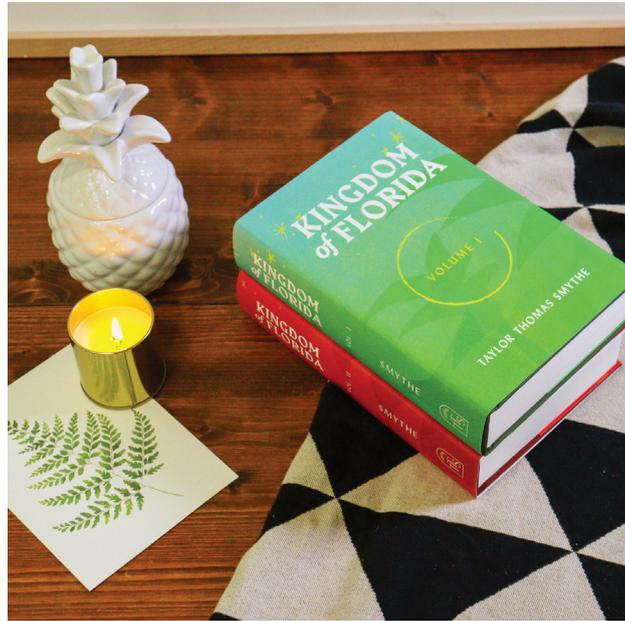
*Local author Taylor Thomas Smythe creates a fantasy world at once wild and glimmering with familiarity*

The fecund verdancy of South Florida is ripe for tall tales, and that's exactly what inspired West Palm Beach author **Taylor Thomas Smythe** to pen fantasy reads for the whole family. His *Kingdom of Florida* series is akin to *The Chronicles of Narnia* but with decidedly Floridian leanings. It follows the adventures of a group of South Florida youngsters who discover a parallel land of magic, strange creatures, and an evil prince.

"It starts out as a fairly lighthearted tale, but there's a deeper mystery bubbling up below the surface, which plays out over the course of the series," Smythe says.

*Guardians of the Willow*, the seventh and final book in the series, was released last fall. His first installment, *The Golden Alligator*, won a silver medal in the 2021 Florida Authors & Publishers Association President's Book Awards and was a finalist in the 2021 National Indie Excellence Awards.

The series makes a great family read-aloud, but Smythe is also recording audiobooks of all seven installments; so far, two are available



ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALICE WALLER

through the Mandel Public Library of West Palm Beach's Hoopla app. "The process of recording is somewhat laborious, but I enjoy discovering the voices of different characters," he says. "I always wonder if the way I hear the characters in my head matches how readers hear them."

Smythe's next series, *Magic City Wonders*, blends paranormal fantasy and science fiction in 1980s Miami, following a group of individuals who

discover they have supernatural abilities. "Think *Miami Vice* meets *X-Men*," he adds.

Smythe is a graphic artist by trade and recently launched his own design business, The Prime Floridian. Below, *PBI* gets a peek into the creative mind of this sun-dappled storyteller. ([kingdomofflorida.com](http://kingdomofflorida.com))



### **PBI:** How did your Floridian upbringing inform the series?

**Smythe:** As a West Palm Beach native, I have a deep affinity for the Sunshine State, but it wasn't until I left for graduate school in the Midwest that I began to truly appreciate my home state. I wanted to explore and develop a story world different from the typical medieval European setting. From there, I began to flesh out a story involving children from a historic West Palm Beach neighborhood who find their way through an old house into a parallel world.

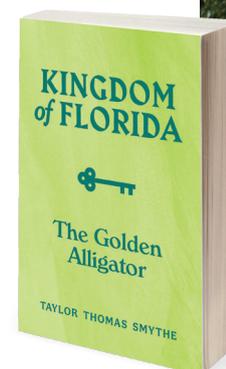
### **Tell us about your writing process.**

My process almost always starts with a single idea—a name, phrase, or image. From there, I spend time generating as many ideas as I can in an outline before I begin

working. I credit an annoying internet outage for actually giving me the push to start writing the first book.

### **What did the journey to publishing look like?**

As a child, I made little "books" by taping sheets of printer paper inside cardboard. As a teen, I created a regular newsletter I'd send to a few of my friends. When I finished writing the first draft of *The Golden Alligator*, I decided I would publish it independently. I wanted to have creative control, ensuring it captured the classic book feel I had envisioned.



**AUTHOR TAYLOR THOMAS SMYTHE CREATES MAGICAL WORLDS CENTERED AROUND FLORIDIAN FANTASIES.**