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## Nancy Padgett Biz Bits column 'It's A Wonderful Life' in the new-and-improved Punta Gorda



I lost **25 lbs** of stomach fat obeying this **1 rule**

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At this time of year, we can all become a little nostalgic and dwell on things past -- good and bad. I try very hard to have the "glass-half-full" attitude. With that in mind, let's rejoice in some of the very important events that have happened in the Punta Gorda area the past year.

Take a drive through Punta Gorda and marvel at the progress that can be seen. Stand in the parking lot of the proposed City Centre, where the new Hilton Gardens is planned, and pan the area. Look east and you will see the newly remodeled Dean's South of the Border -- what a great transformation! Continue left of Dean's and there is the beautiful new Wyvern Hotel with the pool on the top -- aren't we now "big time"! The hotel is framed on the north by Laishley Park with the latest venture of Smuggler's Enterprises -- The Crab House -- well under construction. Also under construction across the street is the Harbor Inn Resort. Then, you see the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center -- enough said.

Soon we can take the Harbor Walk from Fishermen's Village to Laishley Park. Continuing on the panoramic tour, your gaze must stop at the almost complete Sunloft ... we can't wait for the opening of all the new shops and restaurants! Adjacent is the impressive Wotitzky, Wotitzky & Ross law firm building. Cross the street and visit the historic courthouse and watch the construction of the new parking garage. All this and we haven't left downtown Punta Gorda! Don't forget to drive, or take a scenic boat tour through the Isles and a gander at the decorations and lights along the canals. The shops, restaurants and businesses downtown are also decorated to the hilt.

Many other exciting occurrences have happened and are in the planning stages -- we can now go up, up and away on one of TWO airlines that are flying out of the refurbished [Charlotte County Airport](#). How great is that? Also, just completed is the Gulf Breeze Apartments project. Take a drive down Cooper Street past the apartments and see the almost complete addition to the Operation Cooper Street Center, and at the south end of the street observe the new schools now open or soon to be completed.

We have much to be thankful for -- a beautiful place to live with wonderful weather and the greatest citizens and neighbors that anyone could ask for -- so when we feel a little stressed and/or tired, let's stop and smell the roses. After all, they do bloom almost year-round in our little corner of Heaven.

From our home to yours, have a blessed and safe holiday and let's look forward to a prosperous New Year.

[Return to Top of story](#)



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