



## **HOGMANAY Is On Its Way**

One of the holidays I most miss from my native land, Scotland, is Hogmanay aka Dec 31<sup>st</sup>. The day starts early as revelers take to the streets leading up to the stroke of midnight, when madness prevails.

But it is a kind of madness that you truly have to be part of to understand it. There are no preset parameters. People simply welcome in the New Year with old and new friends, leading to the time-old tradition of “first-footing” – simply described as making your way to each other’s homes to toast the arrival of a New Year.

Often you would “drop by” to find the front doors wide open, a spread of “toasting” Scotch ready to enjoy but no hosts, as they were already on their way to “first-foot” their neighbors and friends.

The night inevitably goes into the very wee hours and ends when you return home to enjoy a plate of “stovies” – a prepared pot of potatoes, onions and ham that has formed a stiff consistency, perfect for a carb high and to soak up the excesses of the night before.

Very few Scots remember Hogmanay itself in the belief that, when you do it all over again the following year, it’s fresh and new, all over again.

Living in Florida now, it’s perfect to enjoy the Hogmanay traditions; simply five hours earlier with the time change, so that you can start at 7 pm PG time and still be heading to bed as the clock strikes midnight! Whatever your traditions for this coming Saturday night, we all need to be optimistic for the start of a New Year, in the hope it will be better than the one we just closed on.

2022 was a very difficult year for so many in our area, but, once again, our community spirit prevailed and we are on our way to a renewed strength that makes our part of paradise such a unique one.

2023 gives us an opportunity to strive for even better things for our community.

## **MEMBERSHIP**

Give your business or a friend's business the gift of membership this year. Be part of a vibrant and effective group of entrepreneurs, whose purpose is to support, advocate and assist you in all aspects of your business operation, regardless of location.

Memberships are very affordable and give you opportunity to promote your business to a very large in person as well as online customer base. Call Tara on 941-639-3720 for the simple process of becoming our newest member and see where the path takes you!

## **HOLIDAY HOURS OVER NEW YEAR**

Our office will be closing at noon on Friday December 30 and re-opening on Tuesday January 3 at 9 am to allow our staff to enjoy the New Year festivities with their families.

I am so very proud of the team we have: Tara, Lissa, Hazel, Stephanie and Donna give their all to their Chamber work. Their professionalism, energy and support are evident to all who interact with them. From the bottom of my heart, Thank You and "Have yourselves a very Happy 2023."

## **VALUABLE INFORMATION**

We continue to send out emails to our database groups, alerting them with valuable information about resources, progress and which businesses are open for business. If you want to be added to receive this list, please send your email address to [chamber@puntagorda-chamber.com](mailto:chamber@puntagorda-chamber.com) and you'll be added. We'll also be happy to direct you to additional assistance that we are aware of that is being offered to our community residents and businesses.

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