

# Bridging the Gap ends with a bang

Anna Maria Island was bustling last weekend as Bridging the Gap came to an end following the reopening of the Anna Maria Island Bridge. The activities began Friday with artsHOP, a series of openings at the Island's art galleries. Then came the Key Royale Golf Tournament, a progressive Realtor open house, a concert at the Community Center, an arts and crafts festival at Holmes Beach City Hall field and the Bridge Street Market on Saturday.

While Bridging the Gap, sponsored by The Anna Maria Island Sun, is over, it may not be dead. The Manatee County Tourist Council talked about making it an annual occurrence and many of the event sponsors are considering reruns next year.

If it did anything, Bridging the Gap brought the Island business community together to make the best out of a potentially bad situation, the six-week closing of the bridge. While the closing was not as disastrous as some feared, it could have had a bad effect on the businesses out here if it had continued past the deadline.

Whether we Bridge the Gap next year or just see some of the events return on their own, the Anna Maria Island Sun will be there to cover all the fun of living on Anna Maria Island.



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Clockwise starting above: Dawn Wash, of Darren Wash Contracting, and Karen LaPensee wait at LaPensee Plumbing for people on the progressive Realtor tour to arrive. The tour included open houses and companies that serve home construction and remodeling. Pam McMillen won a blue ribbon at the Manatee County Fair for her basketry, on display at Island Gallery West in Holmes Beach. Barb Brockschmidt, of Holmes Beach, won the Islandwide Karaoke Contest sponsored by Rotten Ralph's restaurants. Brockschmidt won \$220 and a free recording session. Second place went to Brittany Lazaar (pictured), who won dinner for two at the Anna Maria City Pier, courtesy of manager Dave Sork. Dolce Little views art work entered in the Women's Contemporary Artists' juried fall exhibition at The Studio. Vintage Seminole Indian clothing is on display at the Island Historical Museum.



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