

LOCAL BUSINESS

Q&A WITH ROBIN GANZERT, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF AMERICAN HUMANE

For American Humane CEO, it's always about the animals

By Susan Salisbury
For The Palm Beach Post

When Robin Ganzert, CEO and president of American Humane, is asked at a cocktail party what she does in her role, she pauses before answering because it's a huge question.

"I can talk about an elephant one moment and a chicken the next moment," Ganzert said. "I protect animals all over the world, all species, not just your dog and cat."

After becoming the leader of the nonprofit devoted to protecting animals from abuse, neglect and harm 10 years ago, one of the first things Ganzert did was to open a Palm Beach office.

"I had been working in and out of Palm Beach for years with Pew Charitable Trusts and Wachovia philanthropy. I knew there would be people interested in serving our mission. We also needed a rescue cache here, a truck and volunteers, due to hurricanes. We needed to expand our rescue efforts," Ganzert said.

In 2019 American Humane, headquartered in Washington, expanded its Palm Beach office, more than doubling its staff to 10 and moving to a larger space at 251 Royal Palm Way.

Palm Beach is now its southern headquarters. It added a government relations department, staff



"For more than half a century, American Humane has been first to serve animals in Florida," says Robin Ganzert, president and CEO of American Humane. [PHOTO PROVIDED BY AMERICAN HUMANE]

to oversee expanding efforts in protecting companion animals around the country and the world, conference and event space and a base of operations for local rescue work.

"For more than half a century, American Humane has been first to serve animals in Florida, rescuing, transporting, sheltering, feeding and providing food and medicines to our best friends in their worst times," Ganzert said.

Its mission is global. Last year Ganzert spent a month in Africa and two months in China. The group also has certified animal representatives in Australia where massive wildfires have been killing and harming animals since last fall.

Ganzert has grown American Humane to a \$52 million revenue base from a \$9 million revenue

See GANZERT, D2

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NEWSMAKERS & SHAKERS

AVA PARKER

Ava Parker is President of Palm Beach State College. She is the first female president in the history of the institution, which opened in 1933 as Florida's first public community college. Before joining Palm Beach State in 2015, President Parker was executive vice president and chief operating officer at Florida Polytechnic University. She also served for more than a decade on the Florida Board of Governors of the State University. President Parker earned her B.A. and J.D. degrees from the University of Florida. She currently serves as a Board member of the Chamber of Commerce of the Palm Beaches.



LOCAL NEWSMAKERS

MEDICAL

Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center has appointed **Denise Kvapil** as its new chief nursing officer. Kvapil will be responsible for managing and coordinating the daily operations of Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center's nursing departments.

Before landing her role with Palm Beach Gardens Medical Center, Kvapil was the vice president of patient care and chief nursing officer for Carepoint Health System-Christ Hospital in Jersey City, N.J.

Kvapil earned a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing from Rutgers University in Newark, N.J. She then earned her Masters of Science in nursing from South University. Kvapil served in the United States Marines from 1986 to 1992 where she rose to the rank of E-4 corporal.



Denise Kvapil



John C. Randolph

LEGAL

Jones Foster announced that attorney and shareholder **John C. Randolph** recently received a Proclamation of the Mayor of the Town of Palm Beach, Gail Coniglio, in honor of his 40 years of service to the town.

Randolph focuses his practice in matters relating to municipal and administrative law, land use, and zoning. He started his service to Palm Beach in September 1979 and has worked with a total of 40 elected officials, six town managers, and six mayors. Randolph's involvement in the community includes his leadership role as chairman and a founder of the Palm Beach Fellowship of Christians and Jews. The organization is dedicated to promoting fellowship and understanding among all religions and

FOR MORE LOCAL NEWSMAKERS, SEE D2



People toss coins as koi swim alongside the sculpture "Florida's Soul" by Jaume Plensa on the lower level at the Aventura Mall. [SCOTT MCINTYRE/NEW YORK TIMES]

Aventura Mall goes all in with brick-mortar bet

Miami-Dade shopping mecca is among one of the country's most successful

By C.J. Hughes
The New York Times

Some retailers have turned to extras like virtual-reality headsets and touch-screen mirrors to give shoppers an experience they can't get online.

Aventura Mall, a shopping complex between Miami and Fort Lauderdale, is using a nine-story slide.

The double-chute tower, which began offering rides in 2017, invites children and adults to grab hold of mats, rocket around corkscrew turns and whoop 93 feet down.

In emphasizing low-tech entertainment over cutting-edge gadgetry, Aventura is betting that brick-and-mortar retailers can beat online vendors without having to play their game. The mall's owners, Turnberry Associates and Simon Property Group, have also installed whimsical sculptures, a terrace-lined party venue and carnival-style games of chance.

And as unlikely as it is for a 37-year-old property filled with chain stores to be at the forefront of anything, Aventura may have stumbled on a winning formula. With nearly a 100% occupancy rate, according to Turnberry and



In a \$214 million expansion completed in 2017 an airy 315,000-square-foot wing illuminated by a 347-foot-long skylight was added at Aventura Mall. The sculpture and public seat "Veiled in a Dream," by Wendell Castle sits near the food court. [SCOTT MCINTYRE/NEW YORK TIMES]

outside analysts, the mall is widely considered one of the most successful in the country, which may be particularly notable as store closings mount.

Sears and Kmart, which have the same parent company, have shut down about 3,500 stores in the past 15 years, and will soon close 100 more, according to a November announcement. Macy's has announced more than 100 store closings since 2016, and Toys "R" Us liquidated all of its U.S.

locations, about 800, in 2018. And this month, Pier 1 Imports said it would close about half its stores, or 450, as it weighed bankruptcy.

Despite the struggles that physical stores face, the number of enclosed malls in the country has grown, clocking in last year at 1,170, which was higher than at any point in the last 50 years, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers, a

See MALL, D2

Thief steals \$145,000 from pot-cash courier

The Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A man stole \$145,000 in cash from a marijuana money courier's unmarked van at a Southern California gas station after the driver collected the proceeds from several dispensaries, authorities said Friday.

Because the U.S. government still outlaws marijuana, even in legal states like California, it is mostly an all-cash business because of federal banking laws.

Santa Ana police released surveillance footage

See THIEF, D6

MORE LOCAL BUSINESS PEOPLE TO WATCH

LEGAL

Day Pitney LLP has announced that attorney **Tasha K. Dickinson** will join the firm in its West Palm Beach office as a partner in the individual clients department. She joins from Jones Foster P.A., where she served as the private client services practice group leader.

Dickinson's practice focuses on highly developed estate planning and estate/trust administration. Dickinson

has extensive experience with complex wealth preservation strategies, planning and charitable



Tasha K. Dickinson

also represents fiduciaries in complicated estate and trust administration matters.

The addition of Dickinson

marks the firm's seventh new hire in Florida since the firm's merger with Richman Greer in January. Day Pitney LLP has offices in Boca Raton, Delray Beach, Miami and West Palm Beach.



Jason Fagnano

Domnick Cunningham & Whalen, a national civil litigation law firm, has welcomed attorney **Jason Fagnano**, who

has been elected to the board of directors of the Palm Beach County Justice Association. The election took place on Jan. 9 at the PGA National Resort & Spa in Palm Beach Gardens.

Before joining Domnick Cunningham & Whalen, Fagnano was an assistant state attorney for the 15th Judicial Circuit. As a prosecutor, he conducted over 40 jury trials and was a member of the Domestic Violence Elimination specialty unit. Fagnano previously served on the PBCJA

Young Lawyers Board and is presently a member of the Florida Justice Association Young Lawyers Board. His work at the Office of the State Attorney was recognized with an Exemplary Service Award in 2014. Fagnano's main areas of practice involve representing personal injury victims, nursing home abuse and medical malpractice.

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GANZERT

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base. Her book "Mission Metamorphosis," which tells the story of transforming the nonprofit to make it mission-focused and effective and efficient from a donor standpoint, is scheduled to be released in June by Greenleaf Book Group of Austin, Texas.

American Humane is best known for protecting animals in film and television through its "No Animals were Harmed," program. It also protects farm animals, animals in zoos and aquariums around the world and supports the nation's veterans and military animals through an array of programs such as Pups for Patriots.

American Humane impacts 1 billion animals a year through its certification and auditing programs.

Ganzert is the author of the book "Animal Stars: Behind the Scenes with your Favorite Animal Actors," published in 2014 by New World Library.

American Humane has an efficiency ratio of 91 cents of every dollar spent on programs, which has earned it Charity Navigator's highest four-star rating, a top-rated charity designation with an A rating by both the American Institute of Philanthropy's CharityWatch and Great

Nonprofits, and the gold seal level from GuideStar USA.

Name: Robin Ganzert

Job title: President and CEO, American Humane

Hometown and where you live now: I was born in Jacksonville. Now I split my time between West Palm Beach and Washington, D.C.

Family: I have three smart, talented, and hardworking kids: Aidan, Jocelyn and Robert. And I have two adorable, loving fur babies: Daisy and Mr. Darcy.

Education: I earned my bachelor's and MBA from Wake Forest University. After that, I earned my Ph.D. from UNC Greensboro.

Career: I started out as the assistant dean of finance and administration at Wake Forest University before I joined Wachovia Bank, where I worked as the senior vice president and national director of Philanthropic Strategies. After that, I joined the Pew Charitable Trusts as their deputy director of Philanthropic Services. Nearly a decade ago I joined American Humane as president and CEO.

About your nonprofit: Founded in 1877, American Humane is the nation's first national humane organization. We are first to serve, whenever and wherever animals are in need of rescue, shelter, protection or security. Many recognize us from our iconic No Animals Were

Harmed film and television certification program. But we have a wide array of programs — sending animal first responders to the scenes of natural disasters and cruelty cases, helping bring retired military working dogs back home, and training service dogs for veterans diagnosed with post-traumatic stress (PTS) or traumatic brain injury (TBI).

What distinguishes your nonprofit from other nonprofits doing similar types of work? American Humane's programs have a global impact — we are the largest certifier of animal welfare in the world.

First paying job and what you learned from it: I got my first paying job when I was 11, working as a baby sitter. I prepared for success at that age by getting my CPR certification. That job taught me a lot about preparation, responsibility, and money management.

First break in business or in the nonprofit sector: I began working at Wake Forest as their internal auditor.

How your nonprofit has changed: American Humane has broadened its focus to animals in need around the world — animal protection knows no boundaries.

What are some of the biggest challenges? There is just not enough time in the day to reach all the animals in need. In addition to this,

we are doing international work that requires an understanding of how we can shift cultural values for the protection of animals.

Best business book that you have read: I love reading, but over the past year I've spent quite a bit of time working on my own book, "Mission Metamorphosis," which will be published this spring. I may be biased, but I highly recommend keeping an eye out for it.

Best piece of business advice you have received: When I started at American Humane, I was given a sterling piece of advice — stick to the mission and remember it is always about the animal. That has helped hone our programmatic success and inform our business decisions. It's a useful reminder to cut through the noise and focus on what is important and essential.

What you tell young people about your business/nonprofit: If young folks are interested in working at a nonprofit, I remind them to stay focused on the mission.

Many successful people learn from failure. Do you have a failure you can share and what you learned from it? During an event we hosted on Capitol Hill, with veterans diagnosed with both PTS and TBI in attendance, we were put in lock down during an active shooter situation. It was a hectic, stressful situation, fraught with danger.

Ultimately, we got through that day and put in place different protocols for how we bring veterans with PTS to The Hill.

What do you see ahead for Palm Beach County? I see incredible growth for Palm Beach County. This past year, while monitoring Hurricane Dorian, it looked like Palm Beach County was going to be hit. Luckily, that didn't happen. But we are committed to preparing for future disasters that affect the region and being an integral part of the first responder capabilities for this county for animals.

Power lunch spot: Surfside Diner, Palm Beach. Everyone is there, and they have the best french fries in town!

Where would we find you when you are not at the office? Palm Beach County is a beautiful place to live, and I enjoy every moment that I'm here. When I'm not at my desk you can usually find me walking my dogs down the Intracoastal or doing Pilates. And if the week was particularly stressful, I enjoy some much-needed rest in my backyard by the pool.

Favorite smartphone app: InstaCart — I love having my groceries delivered. It is a great way to get more time for other important things.

What is the most important trait you look for when hiring? Loyalty to mission and integrity.

MALL

From Page D1

trade group. Some malls have gone out of business and have even been demolished, but others continue to take their place, according to the trade group, suggesting that the death of the mall has been exaggerated, as Aventura can bear out.

"If any mall did as well as Aventura, their owners would be very happy," said Steven Henefeld, a Miami retail broker with Colliers International, who is not affiliated with the property. "And when all you ever hear about are malls going dark, Aventura really is an anomaly."

Aventura is not the only mall that is bucking trends. Other large, luxury-focused properties seem to be weathering the retail apocalypse equally well. One is Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, the largest mall in the United States at 3.1 million square feet. Others are South Coast Plaza in Costa Mesa, California; the King of Prussia Mall near Philadelphia; and Fashion Show in Las Vegas, which all have healthy vacancy rates of less than 3%, said Kevin Cody, a senior consultant at CoStar, which provides analytics on commercial real estate.

At Westfield Century City in Los Angeles, customer visits rose 93% from 2017 to 2018 after a \$1 billion renovation, according to Placer.ai, a company that analyzes foot traffic using cell-phone data.

Anchored by department stores like Nordstrom, Bloomingdale's and J.C. Penney, and featuring the long halls lined with smaller stores that have characterized mall design since the 1950s, Aventura in some ways seems to be a typical shopping destination.

But the property has not been shy about investing in its infrastructure, and has grown by about 50% in size since 1983. Today, it offers 2.5 million

square feet of stores, making it the ninth-largest enclosed mall in the country, according to CoStar.

Aventura's third expansion, a \$214 million undertaking completed in 2017, added an airy 315,000-square-foot wing illuminated by a 347-foot-long skylight.

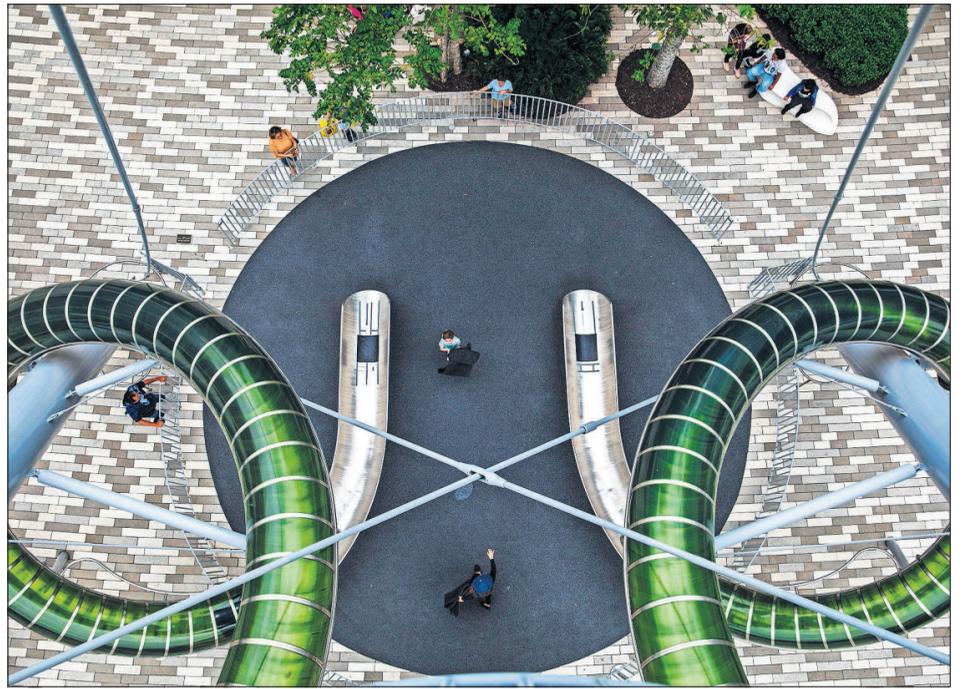
That an old mall could offer newly built storefronts was appealing, said Kenny Minzberg, a vice president of Psycho Bunny, a clothing company that had been selling mostly online before choosing Aventura for its first physical store. The 1,600-square-foot outpost, which opened in 2018, is near stores for Warby Parker and Casper Mattress, other retailers that began life on the internet.

The expansion also made over an existing food court, giving an upscale polish to a mall staple. Now called Treats Food Hall, the eatery sells lobster rolls, Cuban food and pizza. Nearby is a ceviche restaurant, a barbecue joint, and Tap 42 Craft Kitchen and Bar, which, in an un-mall-like arrangement, has outdoor seating and serves drinks past midnight. Two hair salons, two nail salons and a Tesla dealership are also in the mix.

Turnberry "continues to evolve and innovate about how a mall should be in the 21st century, which is beyond just a destination for shopping," Minzberg said.

Art, inside and outside, seems to help, including figurative sculptures resembling huge heads by Ugo Rondinone, a sculpture of a strolling girl by Donald Baechler and that curvaceous slide, from Carsten Höller.

Events are also part of the equation. A sleek, third-floor event space that can be rented out for up to 700 guests for weddings, fashion shows and art exhibits opened last year. Every Saturday and Sunday, the mall hosts a farmers market in an atrium. A train show, with a miniature model of the mall, takes place around Christmas. Violin ensembles play. And there's also the usual mall staple,



Aventura Mall's nine-story double-chute tower slide invites children and adults to grab hold of mats, rocket around corkscrew turns and whoop 93 feet down. The sculptural slide was designed by Carsten Höller. [SCOTT MCINTYRE/NEW YORK TIMES]

a movie theater.

Vendors get in the act. Last month, the fashion company Tory Burch introduced a game in a nearby hallway with a tall, brightly colored peg board that wouldn't look out of place on a carnival midway. It drew long lines all month, Turnberry said.

"I think human beings are social creatures, which is why they go to Starbucks even when they can make coffee at home," said Jackie Soffer, chief executive of Turnberry, who added that even die-hard online shoppers needed to get out once in a while.

Aventura, which receives about half of its 30 million annual visitors from South America, is not immune to the problems affecting other retailers. A Sears store closed in 2017 and is now being redeveloped as Esplanade at Aventura, a 315,000-square-foot, open-air retail project from Seritage Growth Properties, a real estate investment trust spun out of Sears Holdings. Its first phase, which will have many restaurants, is expected



Shoppers pass the "Walking Figure" statue by Donald Baechler at the Aventura Mall. The mall has not been shy about investing in its infrastructure and is widely considered one of the most successful malls in the country. [SCOTT MCINTYRE/NEW YORK TIMES]

to open this year.

A bigger blow could come if Macy's and J.C. Penney were to shutter their Aventura stores, depriving the mall of a pair of anchor tenants, brokers and analysts say.

But overall, the property, which shoppers praise for its ample parking — more than 9,000 spaces, many in garages near front doors — seems to be

doing well for the Miami area, where the retail vacancy rate is 3.6%, according to CoStar. The national rate is 4.7%.

"They have done a real good job about not making this seem like a boring strip mall out in suburbia," said Alex Rudolph, a partner of Tap 42, which opened at Aventura in 2018. "This mall is just different."