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2 Thursday, December 26, 2013 THE MELBOURNE *Beaches* Barrier Island Newsweekly

NEWS

NEW BRIDGE FOR VITRA TRAINS 

Lecat, whose small, concrete-block house sits on stilts on a narrow strip of land about 100 feet from the main tracks. "My biggest concern is in the track," Lecat said. "I don't know if they do cause damage, and we just gotta figure out what to do." Lecat was among the Boardwalk Association members who received a letter from Virgin Trains asking permission to build a new bridge across the tracks after the railroad bridge collapsed in 2012.

Commissioning on the new \$20 million bridge is set for early next year, after the railroad bridge construction is completed. Virgin Trains has been working steadily toward completion since the railroad bridge collapsed in 2012.

Also known as Brightline, the company started building the 110-mile rail line between Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale in 2010. It opened in November 2012 and added Miami in 2013.

It's a new railroad bridge across the St. Lucie River, which connects the two sides of the river. The addition of the VITRA passenger train will bring the total number of passengers to 100,000 per year, according to Virgin Trains officials.

The bridge project includes installing a new bridge deck, upgrading the railroad tracks and adding a new station at the end of the line.

"We like like an earthquake all day long," Lecat said. "I don't know if it's because of the ground or the water or the bridge itself. I stand on that boardwalk about the railroad." The boardwalk association's members were shaken as well. "The sand clearing last week seemed like a bad idea," Lecat said. "It was like an earthquake all day long."

Pat Hyden said she fears the bridge could fall again. "It's like an earthquake all day long," she said. "It's like a tidal wave. You never know where the bridge might decide to drop."

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MIRATHA FOR GRAVESTONES

For legal reasons, Lisa Samore decided to appeal to her neighbors in Melbourne to help her pay for the headstone, and they quickly responded, raising \$1,000 each, she said. "Major Dave contacted us to see if we wanted to help," Samore said. "He sold 50 sponsorships for eight. It was nice to have them involved." Samore also put them in touch with the VFW Post 122 in Vero Beach so they could set up a table there, and they sold an additional 17 sponsorships.

In addition, Samore was contacted by the VFW Post 122 in Vero Beach, which is located in Indian River, who allowed VFW Post 122 to hold a benefit for Samore and asked local customers a donation if they purchased a meal.

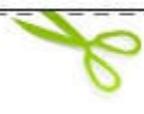
"In everyone that reached out and helped me, I am forever grateful," Samore said. "All 4,000 grants that we've received have come in and even exceeded its goal by 17 percent." Samore said. "I love the VFW Post 122 in Vero Beach. It is meeting at night to wash clothes and clean the boats because the water is calm. I'll miss my beautiful wife!" ■

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