

COURIER

DELIVERING BUSINESS ESSENTIALS TO NTA MEMBERS

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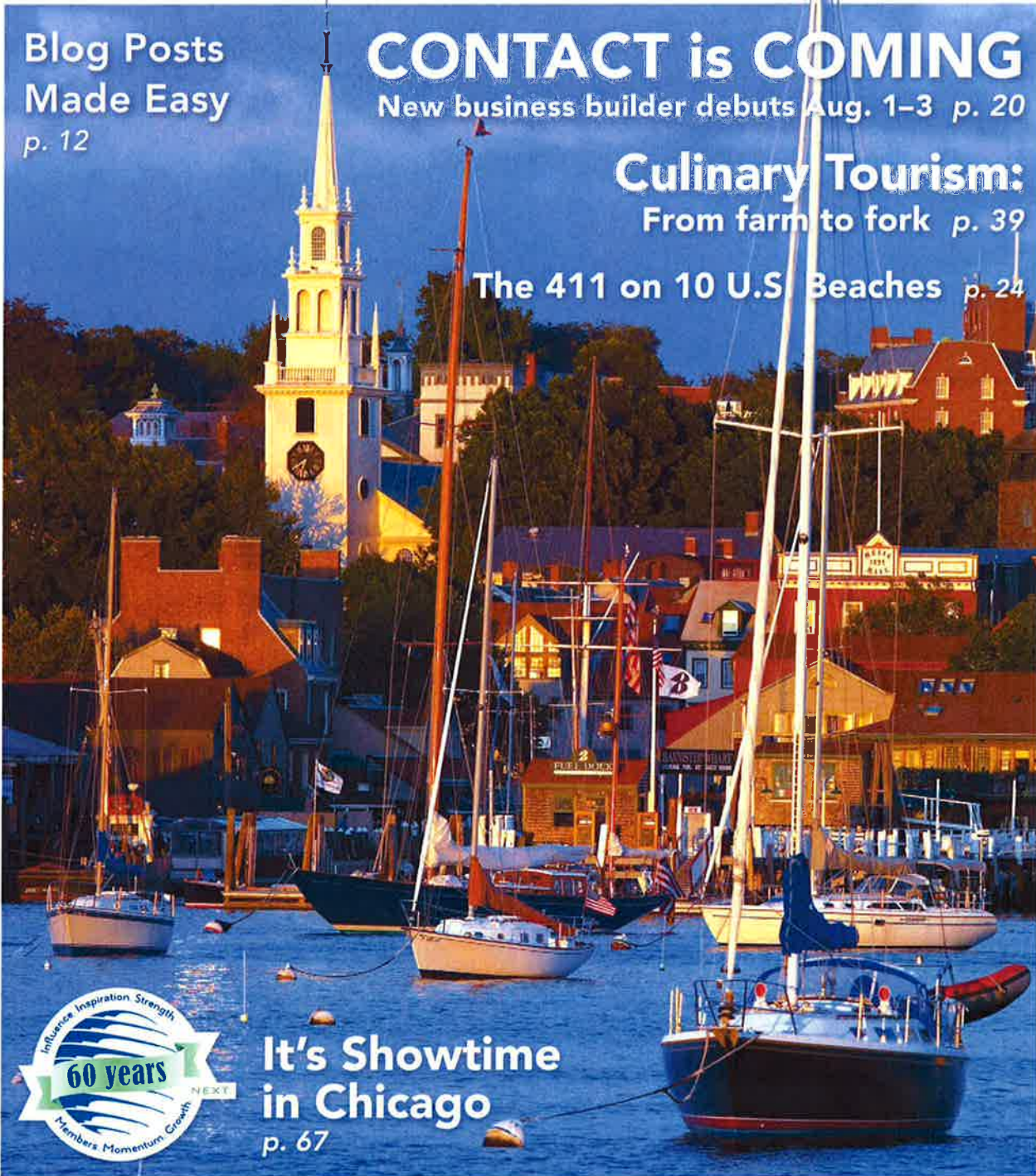
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THE 411 ON 10 TOP U.S. BEACHES



By Pat Henderson

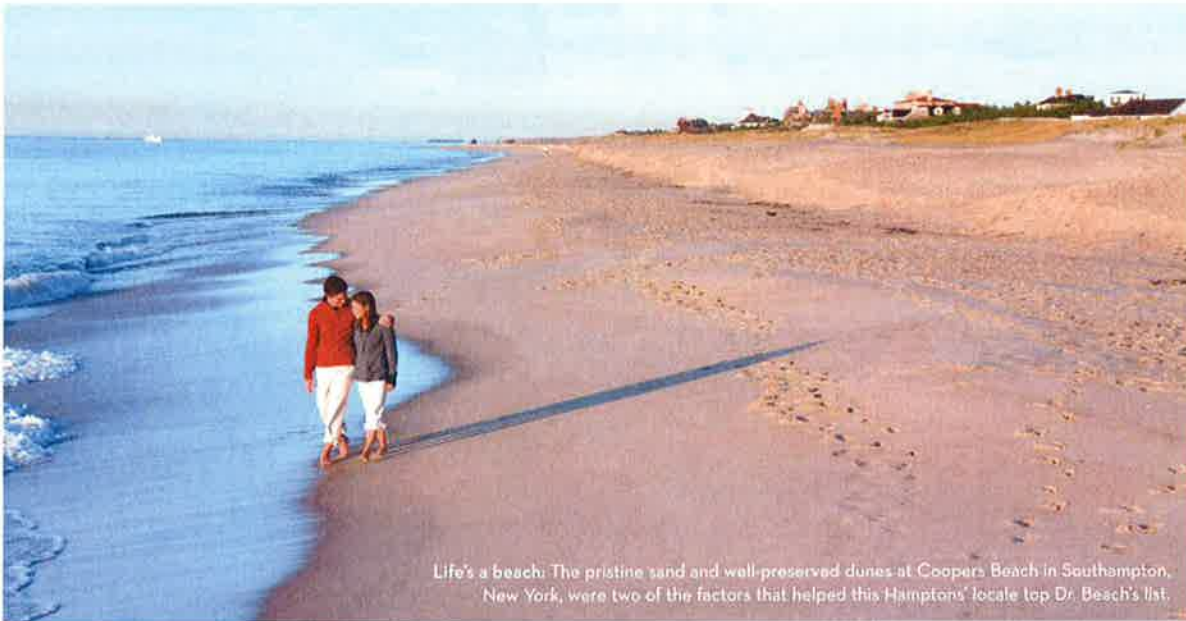
Tired of sitting behind a desk all day? Looking to make a career change that gets you out more? If so, how does this job description sound to you? “Wanted: Motivated and curious individual to research, visit and rank beaches across the United States.”

Although answering such an ad isn't exactly the way Dr. Stephen P. Leatherman got his start in the beach-ranking business, it is an apt descriptor of a passion that has helped him earn the nickname, Dr. Beach. The good doctor first produced his list of top 10 U.S. beaches in 1991 after evaluating more than 650 beaches, and the notoriety that's followed over the past two decades now makes the release of his annual findings a highly anticipated event.

Leatherman scores each beach on 50 criteria, ranging from water and sand quality to safety and environmental

management. His rankings go hand-in-hand with his day job—as a professor and director of the Laboratory for Coastal Research at Florida International University in Miami.

His latest list includes East Coast beaches in Florida, Massachusetts, New York, North Carolina and South Carolina as well as stretches of sand along the Pacific Ocean in California and Hawaii. This article presents those 10 beaches as well as information on top restaurants, festivals, and attractions and tours provided by local tourism professionals.



Life's a beach: The pristine sand and well-preserved dunes at Coopers Beach in Southampton, New York, were two of the factors that helped this Hampton's locale top Dr. Beach's list.

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