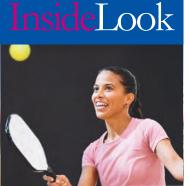
## Longboat Rev Rews Serving Longboat Key, St. Armands, Downtown Sarasota & Anna Maria Island FREE

December 15, 2023



*Pickleballers* 

take a shot

...page 4

\$5.2 mill buys

LBK canal front

...page 9

# Longboat's St. Mary, **Star of the Sea Parish** celebrates 50 years

St. Mary had Masses first celebrated in a youth center and then a firehouse on the north end of the *island between* 1969 and 1973.

The first celebration took place Dec. 8, 2023, the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. This is the actual date of the establishment of the Parish on Dec. 8, 1973.

Mass was celebrated by Father Robert Dziedziak, St. Mary Pastor,



and concelebrated by Father Phillip Schweda, Administrator of St. Bernard Parish in neighboring Holmes Beach, and who also previously served as Temporary Administrator and Parochial Vicar at St. Mary, Star of the Sea. Following the Mass, a 50th anniversary luncheon was held in the Parish Hall. A 50th anniversary dinner is scheduled to take place Feb. 23, 2024.

During the luncheon, Father Dziedziak led everyone in prayer, first praising God for the blessings and gifts He bestows on the Parish community.

We thank you Lord for all of the people who came here at the very beginning, in 1973, who built up this Parish Church as a wonderful community of believers. We thank you God for Father (Edward) Pick and Msgr. (Gerard)

State officials are looking at locations for a future Florida Museum of Black History, and Sarasota

See News Shorts, page 15

## **The New Year's Resolution Longboat market**

In 2013 there were 29 residential listings priced at \$3 million or higher. Whereas, in 2023 there are 89 residential listings priced \$3 million or higher.

#### **TRYLA LARSON Guest Columnist** tryla@lbknews.com

Every year we make New Year's resolutions. Some we stick to and some we don't, and some don't even last more than a day. However, our delightful island, Longboat Key, has kept its resolution to make our real estate investments profitable over the past ten years. In 2013 the average residential sales price on Longboat Key was \$730,000.00. In 2023 the average residential sales price is \$1,662,880.00. That is a gain of more than doubling your investment in a ten-year period. Not too shabby! If we dissect the average residential sales price chart over the last ten years you will notice that the overall upward trend did not happen every single year. There were a few years that the average residential sales price was lower than the preceding year's average. I know you are wondering why. There are a lot of contributing factors and parts to the equation that can determine real estate prices. See LBK Market, page 15

\$1,600,000 \$1,400,000

See St. Mary, page 15

NewsWorthy Sarasota brings back New Year's Pineapple drop

The Sarasota New Year's Eve Pineapple Drop is returning for the 24th year to ring in 2024.

The event starts at 1 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 30, with events and activities going until 10 p.m. But the celebration picks right back up on Sunday, New Year's Eve, from 1 p.m. until 2 a.m. on Monday.

The New Year activities will take place in downtown Sarasota along Main Street and Lemon Avenue. They include a carnival, outdoor live performances and, of course, the traditional New Year countdown with fireworks over Sarasota Bay after the huge glowing pineapple drops.

The event is free. The carnival rides will require tickets, which can be bought for \$1.50 or in sets of 20 for \$30 or 50 for \$60.

### Sarasota eyes **future Black History Museum**

Campus and core values ...page 6



Case of the missing ladder ...page 10



# NewsWorthy

#### Library to Pop Up on LBK

Sarasota County Pop Up Library now available on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm (December 5th and 19th) in the back parking lot of Town Hall. You can get a library card and borrow or place holds on books, music, audiobooks, movies, use mobile hotspots, Launchpads and more at the Pop-Up Library or ask for tech assistance, database instruction or make other inquiries.

#### North end beach work

New Pass Groin Tightening Project contractor mobilization is underway this week. Some of the rock is ready to ship to the Overlook Park staging area. The existing rock will be removed to place geotextile material, and then existing and new rock materials will be re-placed in order to lessen leaking sand through the groin. The work is expected to be completed in January 2024.

#### **Bayfront Park Dog Park – K9Grass Artificial Turf Project.**

A donation funded a pilot project to install K9Grass artificial turf in 75% of the large dog park. The grass is popular with dogs, residents and guests and the Town has started a fundraising campaign to complete the last 25% of the large dog park, and completely cover the small dog park with the same product. The goal of \$175,000 will fund full conversion of both dog parks. Donations are being accepted through the Longboat Key Foundation, PO Box 8297, LBK, FL 34228 or www.LBKFoundation.org.

#### No car haulers on GMD

Car Haulers are not allowed to load/unload along the Gulf of Mexico Drive corridor. (Not allowed in the center turn lane and not in the right of way). They are allowed to load/unload on Bay Isles Road across from Mediterranean Plaza as long as they don't block driveways, or

park in a no parking zone. Trucks delivering construction and landscaping materials directly to a site must also unload in a safe and legal manner!

#### FDOT Crosswalk work continues on Longboat Key.

FDOT is under construction of their crosswalk safety upgrade project. Included are Country Club Shores mid-block pedestrian crossing; Bayfront Park mid-block pedestrian crossing; near Banyan Bay Club; near Companion Way; and South of Broadway Street. The new crossing south of Broadway Street and the lighting upgrades near Banyan Bay Club and Companion Way are expected to be complete in February 2024, and the new Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (PHB) at Country Club Shores and Bayfront Park are anticipated in March 2024.

#### The Utilities Undergrounding Project continues

Phase 2 has nearly all properties energized with final transitions planned to occur during December. Phase 3 Gulf of Mexico Drive feeders from Ace Hardware to Neptune Avenue are energized. Conversions are in progress for the transformers coming off of those feeders. Phase 4 switching requests and authorizations through FPL will occur once Phase 2 is complete.

#### Rental registry program on Longboat

The Town's Residential Rental Registry requirements has been in effect since October 1. The program is for any Residentially Zoned Property that rents for less than 6 months. Owners or vacation management companies will now, along with applying for a Business Tax Receipt (BTR), need to register their rental with the Town and meet the various requirements including having a life/safety inspection, and publishing proof of Certification in all future advertising. For further information contact Code Enforcement by phone at 941-316-1966 or by email at codeenforcement@longboatkey.org.





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\$15,000,000

Modern marvel overlooking New Pass in Lido Shores! Step into this tropical escape through the hidden courtyard that connects the three-bedroom main home to the secluded, two-bedroom guest house with an expansive sundeck, 60-foot wet-edge lap pool lined with royal palms and unique fire bowls, as the perfect introduction to a contemporary masterpiece.



Boasting all the amenities required for luxury living, this SMART home's inspired style highlights spectacular water of Mexico from just about every room of the nearly 6,600 squarefoot interior.







Stacked glass sliders create a seamless transition to outdoor living, opening to the glass-railing terrace, summer kitchen, built-in grill, and spiral staircase that leads down to the waterside hot tub. Boaters will appreciate the deep-water dock with multiple lifts.

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WEST OF TRAIL - HIGHLY DESIRABLE LOCATION \$8,995,000 Waterfront location, this custom home is situated on a quiet cul-de-sac steps to Siesta Key. Offering nearly 5,350 AC/SF, with an open concept floor plan, highly desirable finishes and touches, and 4-car garage, you will be impressed. Work with builder direct to create your dream home.



LONGBOAT KEY · 6489 GULFSIDE DRIVE \$16.900.000 Fabulous Gulf front lot offering nearly 100 ft. of sandy beach, this gorgeous DSDG Architect designed home is a rare find. Boasting almost 6,000 AC/SF, this spectacular home is custom built with the finest details throughout. Architect designed landscaped exterior and 4-car garage.



\$16.995.000

Currently under construction and scheduled to be ready Fall 2023, this breathtaking 8,964 AC/SF residence is one of a kind, designed by DSDG. Gulf one acre and offers

house and 8-car garage. No expense spared on this remarkable home.

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# EditorLetters

Longboat Key News and Sarasota City News encourages Letters to the Editor on timely issues. Please email to: letters@lbknews.com or mail to PO Box 8001, Longboat Key, FL 34228. We also print letters sent to Town Hall that address Longboat Key issues. We reserve the right to edit.

#### Pickleball commissioner meeting

To: Editor

I attended the Township Commissioner's Meeting on 12/4 and during the "Public to be Heard" shared the following:

Last year I participated in various meetings and discussions regarding the increased popularity of pickleball on Longboat Key. I appeared with two other retiree advocates in order to provide perspective on the growth of the sport and the challenges that we faced with the limited number of courts available. That committee has run its course and today I speak only as an individual.

The basic message last year was the sport was growing and that more courts were needed. That remains true today.

Pickleball in the U.S. has grown in one year by over 150% with 37 million who have played the sport last year. We have more resident and visitor players coming. At this point, I believe there are more people playing and wanting to play pickleball than tennis on our Key. Let me hurry to add that I am respectful of the long history of tennis on the Key and am supportive of our Public Tennis Center. That said, I believe that the Commissioners, Town Manager have the opportunity to act now, not years from now, to address the lack of courts at Bayfront.

There is good news for all who use Bayfront Park. Our Town Manager and our Director of Public Works have created and secured a substantial amount of new parking, well done!

But can't we do better? A year ago, I suggested that we should re-purpose the asphalt tennis courts into 6 additional permanent full time pickleball courts, giving our community a total of nine courts. These asphalt tennis courts are rarely used. Why should dozens of people be forced to sit by empty or rarely used asphalt courts? Even more insulting, while waiting to play



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pickleball participants see tennis pros sneak on to provide private tennis lessons. This practice is prohibited, but occurs, nonetheless.

Why can't pickleball residents and visitors get a modicum of the support that our "sister" sport tennis gets? In fiscal year 2020 about \$80,000 was budgeted for pickleball improvements but only half the money was spent, the balance was credited back to the general fund. Why can't we celebrate this activity which requires no administrative oversight, no scheduling issues, requires small capital requirements with minimal maintenance costs compared to the millions of dollars of Township support necessary for the Public Tennis Center. The allocation of monetary and real estate assets is significantly out of balance as to the levels of support the Township provides to Pickleball participants versus Tennis players.

I encourage the Township to allocate 100k of the proceeds from the St Regis settlement which is designated for Recreation towards the immediate construction of 6 permanent pickleball courts. Those folks who wish to play tennis have the wonderful and lavishly subsidized tennis center facility to utilize.

Dave Levine

Longboat Key

#### **Pickleball Issues at Bayfront Park**

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams

I wanted to voice my opinion about the domination of Bayfront Park by Pickleball players, so I am sending this email in hopes that it will be seen by all commissioners.

The reason why I wanted to write to you is that I am unable to provide my dog Bubbles (our 7.5 pound Chihuahua) with her "best life experience" during high season because of Pickleball players at Bayfront Park.

Bubbles loves to socialize with other dogs by running around with them at the dog park in the morning when there are several dogs to chase. Bubbles is fearless and sight impaired so she needs more than one target dog because she chases by smell. Bubbles is a hit with other dog parents because she tends to bounce off other dogs in a very entertaining way, and because she weighs so little, nobody gets hurt. Lots of laughter and Bubbles visits with all the pet parents receiving lots of attention. Bubbles has a great time and comes home to sleep after being at Bayfront Park with the other dogs. This entire experience lasts about 30 to 40 minutes and I return home with what I am sure is a five star dog park experience for Bubbles if she could vote.

Everything above is only possible one or two days out of seven during high season, because I can't find a parking space due to the significant number of Pickleball players that park and wait to play for extended periods of time while sitting on benches waiting for a court to be open. I then have to drive to Durante Park and walk where Bubbles has no dog socializing opportunities. I'm glad I have the option to go to another park, but the purpose of having a dog park is so dogs can be in a controlled environment where they can be off leash. Leashes are required at Durante Park. No dog chasing for my little Bubbles between January and April.

It would be great if there was a scheduling system so that Pickleball players could be considerate to the users of the park for the other amenities (Kayaking, Basketball, Dog Park/Walking, Picnicking, Fishing, ShuffleBoard, and there are more).

I have talked to the Pickleball crowd about scheduling and they refuse to consider such a thing. They say "that's not how this game works" and other nonsense that means they intend to ignore the problem they create. They remind me of myself trying to convince my parents that "none of my friends' parents make them clean their room" when I was in Jr. High School. It was a foolish argument when I was a kid, it's a foolish argument now. When you have a limited resource with demand that is greater than supply, scheduling is an efficient way to serve all customers.

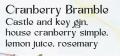
Striping the Tennis Court for Pickleball Made the Problem Worse: I am sure the intent of striping the tennis court for Pickleball was to provide excess capacity for the demand, but this resulted in more cars parking because the Town of Longboat Key increased the capacity for Pickleball and therefore increased the parking density by Pickleball players sitting and waiting. I believe this increased the likelihood that Bubbles does not get to use the dog park at Bayfront Park.

Bayfront Park is a mixed use park that serves many purposes (including electric vehicle charging). This means that at any given time, many Park users can enjoy amenities simultaneously. I hope the town commission considers this and makes decisions to serve all park users when considering requests for a single-use lobby such as Pickleball players.

Steven Miesowicz

Longboat Key

See Letters, page 7



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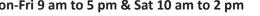
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370 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #432 | LONGBOAT KEY Delight in scenic views of Sarasota Bay in this custom-designed 4-bedroom, 4.5-bathroom PENTHOUSE in the gated resortstyle Tangerine Bay community on the southernmost tip of Longboat Key. the spacious condominium features soaring ceilings, skylight, great room with gas fireplace, marble gallery for displaying artwork, and private gated courtyard. All bedrooms are ensuite. Sliding glass doors in the primary suite and great room open to a tiled terrace where you can start your day with a cup of coffee while watching the sunrise. An additional west-facing terrace boasts stunning sunset views.



511 SPINNAKER LANE | LONGBOAT KEY - SOLD AT LIST PRICE Gorgeous 4BR/5BA, canal-front home in Country Club Shores, offering expansive open spaces and seamless indoor/outdoor living. New composite dock with jet ski and 30,000 lb. lift, with direct access to the ICW. SOLD \$3,495,000





#### 648 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Boater's dream property on oversized (19,994 sf) rarely available culde-sac end lot with a 320-foot seawall located in Sleepy Lagoon, on the north end of Longboat Key. This location offers fantastic panoramic views of Bishops Bayou and the ICW. Situated on nearly a half-acre lot is a 3-bedroom, 4,157-SF home, which could be renovated or removed creating a build site for an incredible custom home.

# KeyOpinion

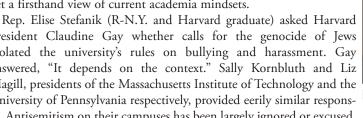
## Time for the campus to return to core values

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs have also exacerbated the rot. The noble goal of seeking equality by providing equal opportunity for all has been replaced by a meritless equity drive.

#### **GREGORY RUSOVICH Guest Writer** rusovich@lbknews.com

It is clear that something has gone terribly wrong at many American colleges. Far too many educators denigrate Western culture, trample freedom of expression, and deploy an authoritarian progressive ideology throughout their campuses.

Last week alone, three university presidents were on full display before Congress defending dangerous antisemetic behavior at their schools. Their testimony provided a rare opportunity for the public to get a firsthand view of current academia mindsets.



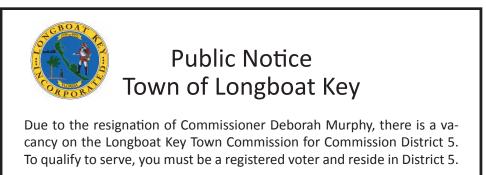


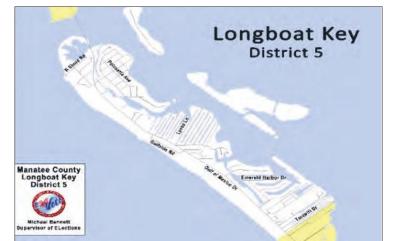
President Claudine Gay whether calls for the genocide of Jews violated the university's rules on bullying and harassment. Gay answered, "It depends on the context." Sally Kornbluth and Liz Magill, presidents of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Pennsylvania respectively, provided eerily similar responses. Antisemitism on their campuses has been largely ignored or excused.

RUSOVICH

The subsequent progressive response to the fallout centered around the critical need for free speech on campuses. This was a comical defense considering the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) rankings of free speech rights on U.S. college campuses. This year Harvard, that supposed bastion of intellectual curiosity, received the lowest score ever recorded: 0 out of a possible 100. Harvard was dead last in the annual listing of college rankings, scoring an "Abysmal" rating of 248 out of 248. It appears that the University of Pennsylvania was unable to stifle freedom of expression quite as effectively as Harvard, given its ranking of 247 out of 248.

Harvard and many other universities selectively deploy punishment for far less innocuous words or conduct considered to be harassment or abuse. According to an insightful column by Stefanik in the Wall Street Journal, Harvard undergraduate students are warned that cishet-





ted District 5 electors are encouraged

erosexism, fatphobia, and "using the wrong pronouns" qualified as "abuse" and perpetuated "violence" on campus. So, it's no problem to call for the genocide of the Jewish people; just don't dare refer to a classmate using the wrong pronoun. Penn alumni also

have recognized that school's double standards. Marc Rowan, the CEO of Apollo Global Management and



mega donor to Wharton (part of Penn's university system) helped organize the ultimately successful effort to oust President Magill. Rowan told CNBC, "...Microaggressions are condemned with extreme moral outrage and yet violence, particularly violence against Jews ---antisemitism — seems to have found a place of tolerance on the campus, protected by free speech."

But, to quote FIRE Legal Director Will Creeley, "It's hard to see these schools present themselves as bound by these promises of free expression when they are very happy to ignore them or violate them in other instances." From canceling speakers to threatening dissenting professors to weaponizing Title IX, many colleges have trampled the right of free speech.

Those who follow free speech trends agree on the widespread abuse. "The track record of these schools is terrible, absolutely terrible," said Nadine Strossen, professor of law emerita at New York Law School and author of "Free Speech: What Everyone Needs to Know." The hypocrisy is blatant.

Beyond clamping down on freedom of expression (except when one calls for the genocide of Jews), many colleges have become centers of Anti-Western venom. Distorting the past, rejecting objective reality, and breaking down tradition, religion and structure is all part of the current academia playbook. And condemning Israel as oppressive and characterizing the nation as just another "colonizer" is wholly consistent with the Neo-Marxist ideology permeating many faculty lounges. As Rabbi Shmuel Reichman told Fox News Digital, "Israel is the left's worst nightmare — it's a religious democracy."

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion programs have also exacerbated the rot. The noble goal of seeking equality by providing equal opportunity for all has been replaced by a meritless equity drive. The race card is regularly deployed on cue, whenever equity is challenged. Nicole Hannah-Jones, author of the discredited 1619 Project (which falsely claimed that America was founded by enslaved persons in that year) expectedly headed to CNN to make her tiring point. On the effort to oust Gay, she said, "Well, it's racist. I mean, no one has produced a shred of evidence that shows that the sole qualification that President Gay had was that she was a Black woman. That's insulting. It defies logic." NAACP President Derrick Johnson sounded even more ludicrous attempting to defend Gay. "Attacks on her leadership are nothing more than political theatrics advancing a White supremacist agenda," he said.

And studies spotlight the professoriate's clear bias against conservative students and the few remaining conservative faculty members. A 2021 report for the Center for the Study of Partisanship and Ideology found that a staggering one in three conservative graduate students or academics has been disciplined or threatened with discipline for their views. Meanwhile, 75% of conservative academics in the U.S. and Britain say their departments are a hostile environment for their beliefs. Over 90% of Trump-supporting academics wouldn't feel comfortable sharing their views with a colleague, and 85% of their Democratic colleagues agree that Trump

letter of intent to Trish Shinkle, Town Clerk, at the address below. The deadline to submit your resume and letter of intent is 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Friday, January 12, 2024.

The Town Commission will hold a Special Meeting on January 22, 2024, at 11:30 a.m. at Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road, to appoint a qualified District 5 elector to fill the vacancy. The individual appointed will be sworn in at the January 22, 2024, Special Meeting. This position will be filled by the person appointed by the Commission to serve until the March 2025 General Municipal Election, in accordance with Article II, Section 8, of the Town Charter.

Documents should be sent to the attention of Town Clerk Trish Shinkle, 501 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key, FL 34228, or can be e-mailed to tshinkle@ longboatkey.org.

supporters should stay silent.

It's time for alumni and donors to demand that their alma maters return to their original missions and core values. Board members must show some spine and make changes. And parents should carefully assess their kids' college choices. We are losing our universities to a clique of ideological zealots, foretelling huge ramifications for our future. Time to stop the rot.

## Got an opinion? WE WANT TO HEAR IT! letters@LBKNews.com

Trish Shinkle, Town Clerk Published: 12-08-2023, 12-15-2023, 12-22-2023, 12-29-2023

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# EditorLetters

#### Letters, from page 4

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

There is an article on page 1 of the Gulf Coast section of today's Sarasota Herald Tribune entitled, "Resort that destroyed mangrove site penalized" describing a substantial monetary penalty and restoration order imposed by the FDEP on a property owner who clearcut mangroves. If we are not going to assume responsibility on Longboat Key for policing the destruction of mangroves and other environmental transgressions, a decision with which I agree, I think we need to create a process by which we uniformly press FDEP to do the job in a timely fashion and follow up until the remedy is completed. This should apply to Longboat Landings, Jewfish Key and any other problem areas, especially when discovered and reported by our own environmentally active citizens. Thanks.

Ken Schneier Mayor Town of Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Allen has shared that he will pull together on a quarterly basis FDEP activities on LBK relating to mangrove violations and their current status and outcomes. The amount of time it takes to process a case (resource issue) and the outcome will be helpful to better understand how we might approach our delegation and/or the Florida League of Cities (FLC) to consider possible policy changes. Any other information points pertinent to the conversation are welcome. I am familiar with the property on the St. Lucie River. It was a Club Med property for decades and recently was sold. The new owners appear to be the culprits.

Howard N. Tipton Town Manager Town of Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton Good plan. It may help if owners know the Town is watching as well. Thanks. Ken Schneier Mayor Town of Longboat Key

#### Weekend Storm

To: Longboat Key Town Commission

Looks like this Tropical Storm or whatever you want to call it this Saturday Night into Sunday will hit us here on LBK once again - 2 to 4 feet above normal at the Sunday 2 a.m. high tide creating Coastal Flooding, we just got our house put back together \$40,000 later from Idalai. I would recommend that at the end of Russell where the Bay Access is that you dump truck loads of sand/dirt/rip rap/ sand bags (or whatever would create a BERM) , get the Corp of Engineers if you have to place a sand bag wall in place .... between the Berm that the city allowed in front of the house at the end of Russell/Broadway and the house that has an elevated lot at the end of Russell, the city needs to build that up so that gap between those two elevated pieces of land is not a locomotive pathway for water coming from the bay like it was for Idalia. The water pours through that low lying area and right straight down Russell. I would suggest somehow closing the drain tubes from the bay so that water from high tide does not back up through the tubes and up through the street drains. Short window to react to this storm but to do nothing is a mistake as well. Enough is not being done and most of us in the worst flood area of the village have had enough. Also, when the streets are full of water and into our yards it would be extremely helpful to have LBKPD keep traffic off the village streets as they do not go slow and push water up into our homes - we do not need any looky-looks or truck vendors driving through! They should talk to anyone that wants to enter the village when the water is in the streets and instruct them how to drive!

Also , as a side note to the recent Commissioner Meeting - it would be much more cost effective and create a safer environment and slower speeds to put in much more affordable speed bumps (like the ones around St Armands) than the proposed "circles" .... these will be driven right over and hardly influence the speeds on Broadway. "Their" argument will be that said "speed bumps" are ugly .... so is this truly a "safety concern" or a needless beautification ploy that is not the most effective way to reduce speeds on Broadway? I feel you have been bamboozled into spending dollars less effectively than optimum.

Chris Udermann

Longboat Key

#### **Exclusive to Bradenton Area EDC Investors**

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams

As a Bradenton Area EDC investor, you are receiving an exclusive preview of our latest Monthly Minute-ish video. In this installment, Sharon and Max highlight the Bradenton Area EDC's economic impact and take a look ahead at the team's focus for 2024. It's a year in review and a look ahead from your EDC, which leads economic development for the nine communities that make up the Bradenton Area on Florida's West Coast. The video goes wide soon, but we invite you to like and share any time! Wishing you and yours a very happy and healthy holiday season!

Elizabeth Cordes

Director of Investor Relations

Bradenton Area Economic Development Corporation

#### **Recommendation for Commission replacement**

To: Longboat Key Commission

I am writing to highly recommend James Haft for the North End district replacement. He is my long-standing neighbor so I know him well. I know him as a thoughtful, energetic and caring citizen of Longboat Key. He is bright and industrious and would be a very valuable asset to the Commission. Jim's family preceded him here at Lands End so he has history. He's full of ideas and cares about preserving the Key. I hope you give him your consideration.

Ann Roth Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

There is an article on page one of the Gulf Coast section of today's Sarasota Herald Tribune entitled, "Resort that destroyed mangrove site penalized" describing a substantial monetary penalty and restoration order imposed by the FDEP on a property owner who clearcut mangroves. If we are not going to assume responsibility on Longboat Key for policing the destruction of mangroves and other environmental transgressions, a decision with which I agree, I think we need to create a process by which we uniformly press FDEP to do the job in a timely fashion and follow up until the remedy is completed. This should apply to Longboat Landings, Jewfish Key and any other problem areas, especially when discovered and reported by our own environmentally active citizens. Thanks.

Ken Schneier

Mayor

Town of Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Allen has shared that he will pull together on a quarterly basis FDEP activities on LBK relating to mangrove violations and their current status and outcomes. The amount of time it takes to process a case (resource issue) and the outcome will be helpful to better understand how we might approach our delegation and/or the Florida League of Cities (FLC) to consider possible policy changes. Any other information points pertinent to the conversation are welcome. I am familiar with the property on the St. Lucie River. It was a Club Med property for decades and recently was sold. The new owners appear to be the culprits.

Howard N. Tipton

Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

This article supports my "cost of doing business" comment. I also want to clarify my agree-See Letters, page 8

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# **Editor Letters**

#### Letters, from page 7

ing with the last email. I agree we need to follow the current cases on Longboat Key, see how long they take to resolve, and if the "restitution" is sound and a deterrent before deciding not to have Longboat Key take over enforcement. Either way I believe an educational initiative should be pursued.

**Rusty Chinnis** 

Longboat Key

#### Mangroves

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

I agree. My experience has been that the FDEP is responsive and does the best they can. The real issue in my opinion is that the legislature isn't giving them the resources they need to do their job in a timely manner. As far as the substantial

I agree. My experience has been that the FDEP is responsive and does the best they can. The real issue in my opinion is that the legislature isn't giving them the resources they need to do their job in a timely manner. As far as the substantial monetary penalty goes, I need to be convinced. I can only go by the penalty that Medallion Homes (Aqua) was fined for a massive violation that would never have been enforced without hours of work and letters from Suncoast Waterkeeper. They were fined \$8,500.00, a cost of doing business for them.

I think both an educational and enforcement initiative are necessary.

I am in the process of creating a draft environmental guide for realtors that can then be communicated to potential homeowners.

Case in point: A property on a canal on Longboat Key lined with a thirty-five-foot stand of mangroves was listed in the MLS with the line, "Mangroves will be removed." This statement signals to a naive client that mangroves are not desirable, are in effect, a liability. This is a perfect case for understanding and communicating how the environment is actually an asset. Consider the following: When trimmed by a reputable company.

1. The laws protecting mangroves are followed, while the view is actually enhanced.

2. The shoreline is protected from storms and subsequent erosion.

3. The maintenance is minimized.

4. The "Eye Appeal" created, enhances the value of the property.

5. The cost of seawall construction (when allowed) and subsequent maintenance is avoided.

Please pay attention to the timing and subsequent fines for Longboat Landings and Jewfish.

**Rusty Chinnis** Longboat Key

#### **Pilot Program**

To: Longboat Key Commission FYI. Thank you for your feedback and support. Howard N. Tipton Town Manager

## Longboat Key Rews Sarasota City Rews

Town of Longboat Key

#### **Pilot Program**

To: Longboat Key Town Employees

Good afternoon! We know from both the citizen surveys and the recent employee survey that traffic during season is the number one headache. While there are no magic solutions to solve the peak traffic issues, there are some adjustments that we can experiment with to see if it makes it a little better.

The attached document explains the proposed to change in operating hours for Town Hall, PZB, and Public Works (although many in Public Works already work an earlier schedule). These changes do not impact Fire, Police, Tennis Center, the majority of Public Works, or the Town Manager's

Office. The goal is two-fold: 1) to maintain or enhance customer service levels and 2) improve drive time for employees and the public. This pilot will run from January 2nd through April 30th and we'll evaluate how it has worked to achieve those two goals.

Thank you for your support and if you have any questions, please let your Director or me know.

- Howard N. Tipton
- Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

#### **Pickleball Issues at Bayfront Park**

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams

See Letters, page 11



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| Address                            | Sq. Ft. | List Price  | Bed/Bath/Half Bath |   | Half Bath | Days On Market | Sale Price  |
|------------------------------------|---------|-------------|--------------------|---|-----------|----------------|-------------|
| 531 GOLF LINKS LN                  | 3,967   | \$5,199,000 | 5                  | 5 | 2         | 77             | \$5,200,000 |
| 511 HARBOR GATE WAY                | 3,304   | \$2,999,000 | 3                  | 3 | 1         | 53             | \$2,795,000 |
| 3542 FAIR OAKS LN                  | 3,134   | \$2,695,000 | 4                  | 3 | 1         | 21             | \$2,695,000 |
| 3607 FAIR OAKS PL                  | 2,339   | \$1,549,000 | 3                  | 2 | 0         | 1              | \$1,650,000 |
| 2525 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#6B     | 1,491   | \$1,600,000 | 2                  | 2 | 0         | 237            | \$1,550,000 |
| 2295 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#45     | 1,235   | \$799,000   | 2                  | 2 | 0         | 9              | \$800,000   |
| 1955 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#G6-409 | 933     | \$749,900   | 2                  | 2 | 0         | 4              | \$749,900   |
| 3155 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#237    | 680     | \$690,000   | 1                  | 1 | 0         | 31             | \$685,000   |
| 549 SPANISH DR N                   | 1,072   | \$445,000   | 2                  | 2 | 0         | 0              | \$415,000   |



531 GOLF LINKS LN

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# OnPatrol

The following are actual police reports as written by Longboat Key Police Officers. They are edited for length, punctuation and to protect privacy.

#### **Dec. 8 Damage to property**

#### 1:08 p.m.

Officer Ferrigine responded to the 6400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of damaged property. Upon his arrival, Officer Ferrigine met with the complainant who stated a white truck parked on her lawn in the rear of her property and tore up her grass and possibly broke a sprinkler. There were no signs of the vehicle in the area. The complainant stated she was intending to repair it at a later date. Case clear.

#### Boat

3:09 p.m.

Officer Pescuma while on marine patrol, observed a disabled pontoon vessel adrift. The boat was identified as a rental. The operator was able to get the engine started and did not require any assistance. Case clear.

#### **Dec. 9**

#### Noise

11:53 p.m.

Officer Ramsaier responded to the 7100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a noise complaint of music coming from a unit. Upon arrival, Sgt. Butler made contact with the owner of the unit who complied and turned down the music. The man was observed to be intoxicated and was verbally warned of the Town's noise ordinance. Case clear.

#### **Dec. 10**

#### Boat

10:13 a.m.

Officer Pescuma while on marine patrol with Officer Connors, observed a sailboat run aground south of Buttonwood Harbor. Officer Pescuma and Officer Connors made contact with the sailboat and found that there were two people on board with no injuries. The sailboat owner stated they were aground from the previous night and going to wait for high tide. The owner stated he has a commercial assistance on their behalf. No marine unit assistance required. Case clear.

#### Car following

#### 11:55 a.m.

Officer Ferrigine responded to the 400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a reckless driver. Upon his arrival, he located a gray Porsche SUV speeding through the parking lot of the restaurant. Officer Ferrigine made contact with the driver of the Porsche who advised she believed the black vehicle behind her was following her. The woman stated the black vehicle kept following her and honking the horn. Officer Ferrigine made contact with the driver of the black vehicle who stated he thought the driver of the Porsche was under the influence. The driver of the Porsche did not appear to be under the influence she was just scared of the black vehicle that kept following her. Case clear.

#### **Dec. 11 Citizen assist**

#### 2:52 p.m..

Officer Smith responded to the 2100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a burglary. Upon arrival, Officer Smith met with the complainant in the parking lot as she explained she had just been dropped off and had two packages waiting for her in the lobby. She said she retrieved one of her packages and taken the package, her purse, and suitcase to the unit. She





said she went back to the lobby to get her other package, and upon her return, her package, her purse and the suitcase were gone. Officers returned to the unit and there was a security camera at the entrance of the unit. The complainant explained that there had been an orange ladder on the outside porch and it was now gone. While the complainant was attempting to get access to the security camera, Officer Smith went down to the parking lot to canvas the area. While out in the parking lot, Officer Smith observed only one orange ladder and it was on the outside porch to one of the units. Officer Smith made contact with the property manager and was informed that the orange ladder had not moved from the unit in approximately one month. Officer Smith requested that they make a check of the unit and the property manager indicated that work

had been conducted in another unit. Upon entry into the unit, the complainant's items were located. Upon investigation, the complainant had accidentally entered the unit believing it was her unit and left her belongings and then went back to get the second box and returned it to the unit and left her belongings. She believed a lot of other items had been stolen.

### **Dec. 12** Citizen assist

#### 8:59 a.m.

Officer Maple was dispatched to Bayport Way for a citizen's assist call. Upon his arrival, he met with the complainant who said had just returned from out-of-town last night and is experiencing low water pressure to her kitchen sink. Complainant stated she believes the housing complex's maintenance worker has been harassing her and broke her kitchen sink faucet while she was out of town. The complainant contacted housing complex manager to discuss options and was awaiting her arrival, which did not happen prior to Officer Maple's departure. Officer Maple saw the low pressure to the kitchen faucet during the complainant's demonstration. Pressure did not match the output from other faucets int eh residence but no signs of tampering or a faulty faucet was evident. Sediment was witnessed coming from the kitchen faucet but actual cause of reduction in flow would need to be conducted by a licensed plumber as relayed to complainant. Case clear.

#### **Dec. 13**

#### Boat

#### 8:11 a.m.

Officer Connors was dispatched to the area of Greer Island for report of a vessel operating inside the buoy line. Prior to arrival, Officer Connors spoke to the complainant via phone. She advised that a fishing vessel was operating in the area of Greer Island, inside the buoy line, in the swim zone. Officer Connors informed the complainant that there is no designated swim zones on Longboat Key and the buoys are "Slow Speed, Minimum Wake to Shore." Officer Connors educated the complainant and no further police assistance was needed. Case clear.

#### **Suspicious incident**

#### 3:44 p.m.

Officer Mathis was dispatched to Broadway in reference to suspicious incident. The call screener advised to give the complainant a phone call. Officer Mathis called the complainant and she explained that a woman had been at her property and made her way to both restaurants at the north end. The complainant further explained that the woman told staff at both locations was being kicked off the island. The complainant asked that no law enforcement respond to the property because she was not there and she just wanted to make law enforcement aware of the woman's tactics. Officer Mathis did not observe the woman at the restaurants, he checked the area and was unable to locate the woman. The complainant also advised the woman called and texted her but could not provide any contact information. Case clear.

#### **Dec. 14**

#### 3:55 p.m.

Officer Mathis was dispatched to Longview Drive in reference to a suspicious mail. Upon his arrival, Officer Mathis met with the complainant who explained that she had checked the

941.953.1835

mail earlier and opened one of the envelopes. The envelope was addressed to a man. Officer Mathis contacted the sender of the letter and advised them of the situation. The sender advised that the address would be corrected and for the complainant to return to sender any other mail she may get from them. Case clear.

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# **Editor Letters**

#### Letters, from page 8

I wanted to voice my opinion about the domination of Bayfront Park by Pickleball players, so I am sending this email in hopes that it will be seen by all commissioners.

The reason why I wanted to write to you is that I am unable to provide my dog Bubbles (our 7.5 pound Chihuahua) with her "best life experience" during high season because of Pickleball players at Bayfront Park.

Bubbles loves to socialize with other dogs by running around with them at the dog park in the morning when there are several dogs to chase. Bubbles is fearless and sight impaired so she needs more than one target dog because she chases by smell. Bubbles is a hit with other dog parents because she tends to bounce off other dogs in a very entertaining way, and because she weighs so little, nobody gets hurt. Lots of laughter and Bubbles visits with all the pet parents receiving lots of attention. Bubbles has a great time and comes home to sleep after being at Bayfront Park with the other dogs. This entire experience lasts about 30 to 40 minutes and I return home with what I am sure is a five star dog park experience for Bubbles if she could vote.

Everything above is only possible one or two days out of seven during high season, because I can't find a parking space due to the significant number of Pickleball players that park and wait to play for extended periods of time while sitting on benches waiting for a court to be open. I then have to drive to Durante Park and walk where Bubbles has no dog socializing opportunities. I'm glad I have the option to go to another park, but the purpose of having a dog park is so dogs can be in a controlled environment where they can be off leash. Leashes are required at Durante Park. No dog chasing for my little Bubbles between January and April.

It would be great if there was a scheduling system so that Pickleball players could be considerate to the users of the park for the other amenities (Kayaking, Basketball, Dog Park/ Walking, Picnicking, Fishing, ShuffleBoard, and there are more).

I have talked to the Pickleball crowd about scheduling and they refuse to consider such a thing. They say "that's not how this game works" and other nonsense that means they intend to ignore the problem they create. They remind me of myself trying to convince my parents that "none of my friends' parents make them clean their room" when I was in Jr. High School. It was a foolish argument when I was a kid, it's a foolish argument now. When you have a limited resource with demand that is greater than supply, scheduling is an efficient way to serve all customers.

Striping the Tennis Court for Pickleball made the problem worse: I am sure the intent of striping the tennis court for Pickleball was to provide excess capacity for the demand, but this resulted in more cars parking because the Town of Longboat Key increased the capacity for Pickleball and therefore increased the parking density by Pickleball players sitting and waiting. I believe this increased the likelihood that Bubbles does not get to use the dog park at Bayfront Park.

Bayfront Park is a mixed use park that serves many purposes (including electric vehicle charging). This means that at any given time, many Park users can enjoy amenities simultaneously. I hope the town commission considers this and makes decisions to serve all park users when considering requests for a single-use lobby such as Pickleball players.

Steven Miesowicz Longboat Key

Sarasota-Manatee County MPO Board meeting, he asked for details regarding FDOT RRR projects located in Longboat Key with shared use paths. I mentioned to him that we had recently seen several trail project funding sources and that I would share them with you (FDEP Trail Funding). The City of Winter Haven has trails through downtown through the Trail Towns program (Trail Town Program | Florida Department of Environmental Protection). You likely know of all of these programs but I thought that I would share them with you.

Abra Horne

Environmental Administrator

District 1, Environmental Management Office

#### **James Haft**

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

I wholeheartedly endorse Jim Haft to fill the position of Town Commissioner.

I have known Jim for many years as a resident of Lands End. As President of our Homeowners Association, I have worked with Jim who serves as a Director on our Board. He consistently offers good advice and demonstrates sound judgment. He is willing to tackle difficult problems. As an example, building on work done with LBK North, Jim has collaborated with the LBK Police department, looking for solutions to the noise problem created by boaters at the sandbar.

I believe the Town Commission would be fortunate to have Jim Haft. He would be an effective and competent Town

Commissioner. Lucia Uihlein President Lands End Association

#### Suncoast Waterkeeper Weekly Results

To: Manatee County Health Department Terri Stripling Thank you for inviting us on discussions for potential sample design for source tracking / testing Suncoast Water Keepers may undertake in Palma Sola Bay Waters. Please include us when you set up a video conference call to discuss sample design.

The Florida Department of Health - Manatee has years of Florida Healthy Beaches data on the northwest side of and on the southeast side of the Palma Sola Causeway. We have permitting data onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems installed in the watershed that dates back to the 70's and may be useful information for developing a sample plan. Our partners at Manatee County Natural Resources also may have useful water quality information. The suggestions by Dr. Tomasko appear to be relevant and useful in design development.

Thomas Larkin Environmental Manager Florida Department of Health

#### See Letters, page 12



### **Pickleball Issues at Bayfront Park**

To: Steven Miesowicz

Thank you for your email regarding parking problems at Bayfront Park. As you have experienced, parking has been an ongoing problem there due to the volume of pickleball players using the park. I have heard from users of the rec center, as well as people who store their kayaks/canoes/SUPs that they struggle to find parking at Bayfront.

The town is expecting to add some additional parking (near the Frontier building) when an agreement with Frontier is finalized. We are hopeful that this will alleviate some of the parking problem, but it may also result in "build it and they will come". The town will continue to monitor the parking situation and we encourage you and others to give us your feedback, especially as we head into season. Bubbles sounds like a real charmer - I hope you will be able to park easily and continue to enjoy the dog park together!

Debra Williams

Commissioner

Town of Longboat Key

#### **Possible Trail Programs**

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman Recently, I spoke with Vice Mayor Mike Haycock. At the

# **Editor Letters**

#### Letters, from page 11

#### Suncoast Waterkeeper Weekly Results

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission

Suncoast Waterkeeper has received a small amount of private funding to do this work. However, we are still looking for a lab with horses as part of their sequencing profile. The good news is the company that Dr. Tomasko has had good luck with has horses listed as one of its targets. Unfortunately, we likely only have enough initial funding for 1 round of samples. If anyone is interested in weighing in on the sample design, I am open to your suggestions. If you want to be involved, please let me know and I will set up a quick video conference.

David Tomasko

**Executive Director** 

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

#### Suncoast Waterkeeper Weekly Results

To: Manatee County Health Department Terri Stripling

We might be able to move some funds around - I'll see. But if so, we'd like to make sure that if anyone else does this, it makes sense to do this in a coordinated fashion. Also, I think a couple of features of any potential work might include the following:

Samples collected more than once

Source ID samples matched with enterococci sampling

Samples collected on both east and west side of the causeway, north and south of the cause-



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#### way

Samples should quantify the sources, not just "present or absent" because if a non-human source is 50 percent of the bacteria, that could be a lot different than finding a non-human source is 5 or 0. Percent.

While in the private sector, I used a firm called Source Molecular to help us find if humans were the primary source of bacteria in a number of locations. In some locations, we did indeed find evidence of human fecal material, which came from a combination of homeless encampments (Miami River and Cocohatchee River) but also dogs (Charlotte County). In other locations, we did not find evidence of humans or dogs as a source, and our conclusion was that elevated levels of "fecal coliform bacteria" were in fact coming from decomposing grass clippings.

I was very happy with the work we got from those folks - it was timely and useful and followed all relevant criteria. I have not financial ties to them, I was just impressed with their work - What is Microbial Source Tracking? - LuminUltra

If this group - FDOH, Manatee County and others wish to pursue this, let me know and we'll be happy to move forward.

I would, however, first ask if anyone else has done any similar work? If so, what was found? David Tomasko

Executive director

Sarasota Bay Estuary Director

#### Suncoast Waterkeeper Weekly Results

To: Manatee County Health Department Terri Stripling

We might be able to move some funds around - I'll see. But if so, we'd like to make sure that if

North side of Palma Sola Causeway continues to have mostly elevated values. Good candidate for some source ID work, I would think.

Dave Tomasko

**Executive Director** 

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

#### James Haft for commission

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

I wholeheartedly endorse Jim Haft to fill the position of Town Commissioner.

I have known Jim for many years as a resident of Lands End. As President of our Homeowners Association, I have worked with Jim who serves as a Director on our Board. He consistently offers good advice and demonstrates sound judgment. He is willing to tackle difficult problems. As an example, building on work done with LBK North, Jim has collaborated with the LBK Police department, looking for solutions to the noise problem created by boaters at the sandbar.

I believe the Town Commission would be fortunate to have Jim Haft. He would be an effective and competent Town Commissioner.

Lucia Uihlein

President

Lands End Association

See Letters, page 15



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# WineTimes

## **Holiday Spirits, Wines and More**

In the rush of this holiday season, we cannot ignore the suffering of Ukrainians, Israelis, and Palestinians. We must share our bounty with innocents caught up in these conflicts.

#### S.W. and Rich Hermansen **Guest Writers** wine@lbknews.com

As the holiday season unfolds, spirits, wines, beer, and specialty food purchases have two important roles. Gifts of alcoholic beverages and specialty foods continue both in stores and on-line, although the age demographics of purchasers and recipients appear to be changing.

Prestigious red wine brands, high-end Bourbons and other whiskeys, dessert wines, and fortified brandies, aperitifs, digestifs, and cordials continue in purchases by and for older age groups, while Gen Z adults (born after 1996) prefer Tequila, Vodka, and red wine. Millennials (born 1980 - 1995) prefer Vodka. Sparkling wine sales peak before Christmas and before New Year's Eve across all groups. Gifts aside, purchases of alcoholic beverages for family gatherings, parties, and other events drive sales up during the days preceding Christmas and New Year's Eve. The average price paid per beverage increases prior to these holidays, with sparkling wines leading the way. Buyers seem willing to upgrade selections during the holidays. Even so, sales of hard seltzers, pre-mixed cocktails, non-alcoholic or lower alcohol wines, and non-alcoholic cocktails and beer are increasing faster than sales of traditional alcoholic beverages.

Holiday gifts for Gen Z and Millennials seem a good way to introduce them to small quantities of premier versions of their favorites. The Avion Silver Tequila (\$38) has a clean and smooth taste that brings out the flavors of the blue agave plant, in the asparagus family, from which Mexican distillers produce Tequila. Or perhaps a more whimsical gift of Mescal, made from agave other than the blue variety, replete with a worm at the bottom of the bottle. The La Penca Mezcal (\$38) with two worms, distilled from the Salmaina variety of agave, has an earthy and smoky taste. The Avion Tequila and the La Penca Mezcal work best when served as small shots and sipped instead of mixed in Margarita's or the like. The more flexible Milagro Tequila (\$24) works well whether sipped or mixed.

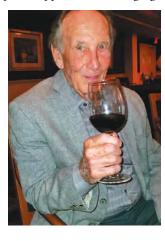
Vodkas come in many different flavors and infusions. A superior Vodka when chilled in a freezer can be sipped or mixed. Icelanders distill the plain and clean Reyka brand (\$24) using imported European potatoes and purify the final product by filtering it through volcanic rocks, of which Iceland has plenty. Recipients of a gift of this Vodka who know about it will appreciate it, and those not familiar with it will quickly learn to enjoy its reffined texture.

Younger adults who enjoy red wines often prefer intense dark fruit tastes with high alcohol by volume. With intense and astringent flavors of red currants, cranberries, pomegranate, and black plums and a 15.5 ABV, the 2021 Cline Ancient Vines Mourvedre (\$16) makes interesting gifts for the younger set.

Spirits and wine gifts for older adults do not usually change much from year to year. Connoisseurs of aged Bourbon, Scotch, Brandy, Port, Sherry, and Madeira have cultivated their tastes over time. The same goes for those who collect and age in the bottle French Bordeaux, Burgundy, Rhône Valley; Italian Piedmont and Tuscan; and California Cabernet Sauvignon. Better to give something first rate yet unusual. What the Australians call "stickies", dessert wines, such as the Stanton & Killeen 12 Year Old Classic Rutherglen Muscat (\$38 500 ml) from Victoria and the 2022 David Franz Sticky Botrytis Semillon from the Barossa Valley, tend to be hard to find in the States, adding to their allure to connoisseurs. Compared to the famous Chateau D'Yquem 2015 Premier Grand Cru Sauternes (\$310 375ml) from Bordeaux, the stickies offer distinctive and more affordable pleasures.

Champagne and other sparkling wines continue as popular holiday gifts as well as a welcome opening act for holiday receptions, parties, dinners, and other social events. Prices of Champagne, sparkling wine fermented in the bottle (Methode Champenoise) in the Champagne region of France) typically exceed the prices of sparkling wine produced the same way in regions outside Champagne (called "Crémant" instead of Champagne). The acclaimed Dopff au Moulin Crémant d'Alsace (\$23) from Riquewihr, France, will substitute for ordinary Champagne costing more than \$50 a bottle. Your guests will not be disappointed.

Whether an event has hors devourers only, a buffet, or a seated meal, pairing one wine to





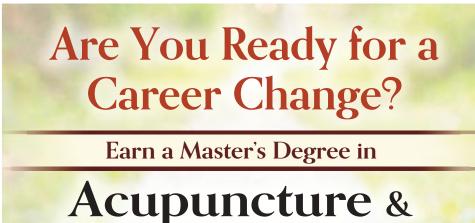
consultant in a wine shop will be able to help you select wines to complement your menu.

In the rush of this holiday season, we cannot ignore the suffering of Ukrainians,

Israelis, and Palestinians. We must share our bounty with innocents caught up in these conflicts.

S. W. Hermansen has used his expertise in econometrics, data science and epidemiology to help develop research databases for the Pentagon, the National Institutes of Health, the Department of Agriculture, and Health Resources and Services. He has visited premier vineyards and taste wines from major appellations in California, Oregon, New York State, and internationally from Tuscany and the Piedmont in Italy, the Ribera del Duero in Spain, the Barossa Valley and McLaren Vale in Australia, and the Otego Valley in New Zealand. Currently he splits time between residences in Chevy Chase, Maryland and St. Armand's Circle in Florida.

Rich Hermansen selected has first wine list for a restaurant shortly after graduating from college with a degree in Mathematics. He has extensive service and management experience in the food and wine industry. Family and friends rate him as their favorite chef, bartender, and wine steward. He lives in Severna Park, Maryland.







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#### Letters, from page 12

#### **Longboat Key Transit**

To: Manatee County Commissioner Kevin Van Ostenbridge

Kevin: I understand the final approval of our all-island transit program is on your agenda for January 9 and that implementation can be expected by the end of January. I hope you can confirm this is true and will let me know if there is anything we can do to facilitate or expedite. This will be an excellent end to a tough four-year journey. I've heard nothing new regarding Whitney Plaza and continue to look to you for advice on how to move this plan forward. Thanks and Merry Christmas.

Ken Van Ostenbridge

Commissioner

Commissioner

Manatee County Commission

#### House Bills for Dredging and Beach Renourishment

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Have a look at SB 0608 and HB 0163 which appear to propose new requirements for dredging and beach renourishment plans.

Ken Schneier

Mayor

Town of Longboat Key

#### NewsWorthy, from page 1

County is gunning for the spot.

Sarasota was among a handful of areas around Florida, including St. Petersburg and St Johns County, pitching their location to the Florida Museum of Black History Task Force.

"To the civil rights movement and beyond, Sarasota's African-American community has played a vital role in shaping the city we see today."

Shantel Norman is with Visit Sarasota County. She pitched Sarasota to a nine-member task force, appointed by Governor Ron Desantis, to provide recommendations for a future Florida Museum of Black History.

She said the city has a deep history with the struggle for beach integration during the civil rights era

"Sarasota is on the US Civil Rights trail, right up there with iconic sites, such as the Edmond Pettus bridge, and Ebeneezer Baptist Church. Sarasota is the southernmost site on the trail. Why? Because of our beach desegregation story."

Locations will be evaluated according to factors including historical significance and demographics.

The next committee meeting is January 12th.



#### St. Mary's, from page 1

Finegan, and all other priests who have served here. We pray for all of those forefathers who were part of this wonderful Parish and who have gone before us, we hope and pray that they are enjoying their eternal life in the Father's Kingdom."

Father Dziedziak also called upon the Heavenly Father to inspire the faithful of St. Mary, Star of the Sea with the Holy Spirit to serve His people to the best of their abilities.

The prayer concluded with Father entrusting all to the care of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who was honored on that day, before everyone joined in praying the "Hail Mary."

St. Mary, Star of the Sea had humble beginnings, with Masses first celebrated in a youth center and then a firehouse on the north end of the island between 1969 and 1973. The needs of the faithful were then administered by priests from St. Bernard Parish in Holmes Beach.

When it became a Parish, St. Mary, Star of the Sea was in the Diocese of St. Petersburg. Bishop Charles McLaughlin presided over the Parish dedication Mass Dec. 8, 1973, with Father Pick named as the first Pastor. The current Parish church was dedicated in 1978 and the hall, now named after Father Pick, was dedicated in 1991.

Following Father Pick's retirement in 2008, Msgr. Gerard Finegan was appointed second Pastor, serving until 2019. Father Dziedziak was appointed as third Pastor in 2020.

#### LBK Market, from page 1

One factor is the number of homes sold for more than \$3,000,000.00.

For example, the average residential sales price for 2017 was \$840,000.00 and had 24 listings priced \$3,000,000.00 or higher. Whereas 2016 had a higher average residential sales price of \$891,091.00 and had 39 residential listings priced \$3,000,000.00 or higher.

Also, the year after, 2018, had an average residential sales price that started creeping back up with \$804,782.00 as the average residential sales price and had 29 residential listings at \$3,000,000.00 or higher.

Overall, the number of residential listings priced at \$3,000,000.00 or higher have also dramatically increased over the past ten years as prices have increased.

In 2013 there were 29 residential listings priced at \$3,000,000.00 or higher. Whereas, in 2023 there are 89 residential listings priced \$3000,000.00 or higher.

Personally, I can only see this number getting higher as buyers and homeowners tear down older and smaller homes to build bigger and more expensive homes.

In real estate, some say that price is determined by the three L's, location, location, location. Well Longboat certainly has that covered as well. Life on Longboat Key is priceless.

Of course, there are other factors that determine sales prices are our weather that year, interest rates, the stock market, tides, the number of sales under \$500,000.00, and how bad the winters were up North. Even the uncertainty of an election year can sometimes skew the numbers.

All that being said, the island lovers who are dedicated to living in our very own piece of paradise have certainly come out ahead. Our island has not let us down.

All statistics, dates and numbers were provided by Steller MLS on December, 11, 2023.



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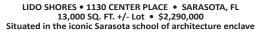


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