



Longboat Key News

July 21, 2023

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InsideLook



*Does anyone buy the vision?
...page 7*



*Lido residence tops \$5.1 million
...page 9*



*Eight years in the desert
...page 13*



*Is that tractor trailer allowed?
...page 10*

Trio cited for poaching in Longboat Key waters

“We observed three subjects matching the complainant’s description near a red and white personal watercraft wading along the Jewfish Key sandbar.”

Multiple citations were issued against three men on Jewfish Key for the alleged poaching of marine life. According to Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), incident reports, Linh Ha, 51, of 3401 24th St. W., Bradenton, Loc Nguyen, 55, of 3230 44th Drive E., Bradenton, and Hai Nguyen, 51, of Rockford, Ill., were charged by Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) officers on July 1 at Jewfish Key, off Longboat Key. “The three individuals were identified to FWC officers

See Poaching, page 2

Sublime Serenity Kayaking Longboat Key
No matter if you choose paddleboarding or kayaking on your own or prefer one of the many varieties of tour groups, fishing kayaks, glass bottom kayaks, or tandem kayaks; they are all are experiences you won’t regret.



TRYLA LARSON
Guest Writer
tryla@lbknews.com

One of the most enjoyable things for me to do is kayaking. When I first started kayaking, I was not sure if I would enjoy it or not. I didn’t want to spend a lot of money on kayaks if I was only going to do it once or twice, so I found a couple of inexpensive ones on Facebook Market Place. They were very old and heavy. You had to flip them over and drain them after each use because they took on water. The bungee cords and seat straps were torn in several places and the paddles were rusty. They came in really handy during the Pandemic as it allowed my husband and me to get out and enjoy ourselves without being close to other people. We learned how to fish from our kayaks, weave in and around the mangroves of the Sister Keys, see all types of wildlife, get exercise, sunshine, and spend quality time together.

See Kayaking, page 14

NewsWorthy

Sarasota’s cultural heritage on display in City Hall

Sarasota’s cultural heritage on display in City Hall
This new exhibit focuses on the historic Sarasota School of Architecture. It includes models, renderings, reproductions, original blueprints, and archival photographs provided by Architecture Sarasota and Sarasota County Libraries and Historical Resources. As conceptualized and overseen by the City’s Public Art Program and the Historic Preservation Divisions, the project highlights how the Sarasota School of Architecture – which focused on post-war, Mid Century modern creations - had such a profound impact on the

See Heritage, page 2

County boosts arts funding

Sarasota County will fund 35 arts and cultural organizations \$3.2 in the coming fiscal year.

The funding is generated through the county’s bed tax allocated to help arts and culture organizations. Last year, the county provided \$1.75 million to 37 organizations, up from the \$1.67 million awarded to 34 groups recommended in 2021-22 by the Tourist Development Council and approved by the County Commission. The money will be awarded to many of the county’s largest organizations including Florida Studio Theatre, Mote Marine Laboratory, Sarasota Opera Association, Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall, The Ringling, Circus Arts Conservatory, Marie Selby Botanical Gardens and Venice Theatre. Asolo Repertory Theatre, Sarasota Orchestra, The Sarasota Ballet and Westcoast Black Theatre Troupe.

Sarasota School Board approves contract for new superintendent

Sarasota County’s new superintendent Terrence Connor officially began working on Monday after the school board approved his contract and he was sworn in by a judge. Board Chair Bridget Ziegler was the only member who voted against Connor’s contract. She supported another candidate, Charles Van Zant, who was backed by former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn. His contract stipulates he will make \$255,000 annually with an option to increase his salary next year.

See NewsWorthy, page 2

Locally-acquired malaria reported in Sarasota

State health officials have confirmed another case of locally-acquired malaria, bringing the total number of locally acquired malaria infections in the U.S. to eight since May.

The cases are the first to be acquired in the U.S. in 20 years. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said last month that locally acquired infections — those not linked to travel outside the country — constitute a public health emergency. The newest case was identified last week in Sarasota County, where all seven of Florida’s cases have been found.

Typical symptoms include fever, chills, headache, muscle aches and fatigue. Some patients also experience nausea, vomiting and diarrhea, according to the CDC. Symptoms typically appear 10 days to four weeks after victims are bitten by mosquitoes.

The Florida Health Department advised residents last month to use bug spray, wear long sleeves and pants and drain standing water.

Poaching, from page 1

by a vessel passing by stating they were keeping over the bag limit of shellfish,” according to the FWC report. “Upon performing a resource inspection, we found all three suspects to be over the allowable bag limit for marine life species (20 max per person/day) as well as over the bag limit for each species (2 per species/per person per day.) The subjects were in possession of 25 tulip snail, 24 crown conch, 9 fighting conch, 2 lightning whelk and 2 horse conch.”

Each man was charged with violation of the Florida Administrative Code Pertaining to Southwest Florida Shells-Harvest of Live Shellfish in Manatee County; Permitted Harvest of Shells which states: “A person may not harvest in Manatee County more than two live shellfish of any single species per day or possess in or on the Florida waters within Manatee County that are seaward of the mean high water line more than two live shellfish of any single species.”

They were also charged with Violation of Florida Administrative Code Pertaining to Marine Life-Recreational Bag Limit which says: “A person may not harvest in Manatee County more than two live shellfish of any single species per day.”

The FWC report states that at approximately 5:30 p.m. on July 1, officers were patrolling the area of Jewfish Key and received a report of three men taking excessive marine life from the north end of the sandbar.

Hai Nguyen was also found to have no saltwater fishing license and was issued a warning. According to an FWC press release, officers have received multiple reports since summer began of individuals harvesting marine organisms near Longboat Pass in the Jewfish Key area of Manatee County.

Heritage, from page 1

medium that is now widely recognized around the world. According to City of Sarasota Senior Planner Dr. Clifford Smith, the Sarasota School of Architecture was one of simplicity, of linear design and transparency by harnessing natural light. Architects Jack West and Victor Lundy used those tools to express themselves to create something entirely different and new.

“There’s an inherent elegance in the design. It tells a story, one that captures the cultural heritage of our great city,” Smith added. “This is part of what makes us unique. These architects were in tune with their surroundings.”

The Sarasota School of Architecture exhibit will be displayed in the City Hall lobby, 1565 First Street, through June 2024. The inaugural exhibit unveiled in November 2022 focused on Sarasota’s circus heritage and the Sarasota Colony Artists. Those pieces have now been relocated throughout City Hall and the SRQ Media Studio and are still available for public viewing.

The public is invited to an open house featuring a lecture program at 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 31 in Commission Chambers. Speakers will include Sarasota County Division of Historical Resources Manager Joshua Goodman, Architecture Sarasota President Morris Hylton III, and Sarasota County Libraries and Historical Resources Director Renee Di Pilato.

NewsWorthy, from page 1

A relocation reimbursement of up to \$15,000 and a yearly bonus not to exceed \$30,000 based on the board’s evaluation of his performance is also included.

The contract expires June 30, 2026, but can be terminated early by a majority vote.

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NOW PENDING SALE



LIDO KEY • 159 TAFT DR., #206 **\$2,699,000**
Just listed- This coastal contemporary home offers attractive one-level-living, an abundance of natural sunlight and boasts a full array of developer upgrades. Desirable end unit with 3 BR/ 3 BA. Only 18 unique owners, perfectly situated between Sarasota Bay and the Gulf of Mexico.

NEW CONSTRUCTION TO BE BUILT



WEST OF TRAIL - HIGHLY DESIRABLE LOCATION **\$8,299,000**
Waterfront location, this custom home is situated on a quiet cul-de-sac steps to Siesta Key. Offering nearly 5,000 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.

GULF FRONT NEW CONSTRUCTION



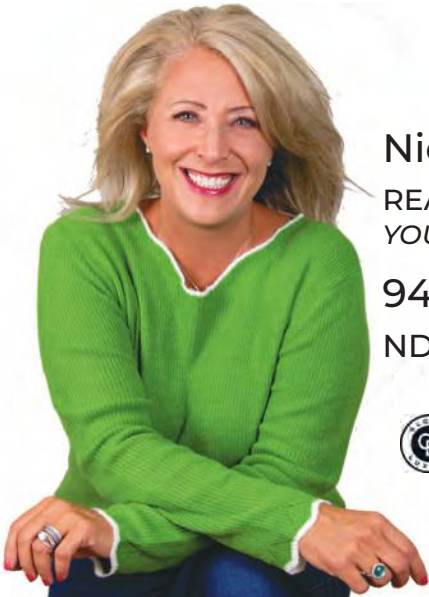
LONGBOAT KEY • 6489 GULFSIDE DRIVE **\$16,900,000**
Fabulous Gulf front lot offering nearly 100 ft. of sandy beach, this gorgeous DSDG Architect designed home is a rare find. Boasting almost 6,000 AC/SF, this spectacular home is custom built with the finest details throughout. Architect designed landscaped exterior and 4-car garage.

NOW PENDING SALE



SIESTA KEY • HIGEL AVE. **\$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 front property on one acre and offers a 2,000 SF roof terrace. Separate guest house and 8-car garage. No expense spared on this remarkable home.

I am looking for properties on Longboat and Lido for my buyers.
If you are thinking about making a move, let's chat.



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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.

Longboat Police recruitment & take-home vehicle program

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
 Wanted to provide an update on the Take Home Vehicle Program and Police Officer Recruitment.
 As of July 18, 2023 we have secured the nine (9) 2023 Ford Police Interceptors required to fulfill the needs of the Take Home / Assigned Vehicle Program.
 Five (5) of these vehicles are the Hybrids purchased from Desoto Auto Mall, approved by the Commission in June, and three (3) from a dealership in the State of Mississippi.
 We have two (2) 2023 Ford Interceptors being built by Bartow Ford, (one (1) was purchased in February pre-program,) the second we secured after program approval.
 At present we have (10) patrol vehicles, all marked, waiting emergency equipment and radios before they are in service.
 Hopefully the program will be fully implemented by before October 2023.
 Our recruitment efforts have gained momentum as a direct result of the Town Commission's actions increasing salary and benefits of the Officers. This action by the Commission has made the Town of Longboat Key very competitive in our market. We are seeing the results.
 As of July 20th, 18 of the 19 FY24 budgeted full time Police Officer positions have been filled. One Officer recruited from New York starts August 1, and an Officer from Indiana starts August 7th.
 We are also receiving applications from many qualified candidates who are presently scheduled for Oral Board Interviews and further processing. We hope to be fully staffed to the FY24 authorized full time staff of nineteen (19) on or before September 01.
 Additionally, we have been successful in hiring two Part Time Marine Patrol Police Officers (starting date pending background investigation and required drug/medical testing) both of

whom have extensive United States Coast Guard and law enforcement experience on the water. Both are Certified Police Officers in the State of Florida, and will be an additional road patrol asset when manpower needs require.
 George B. Turner
 Chief of Police, Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Police

To: Longboat Key Police Chief George Turner
 Great news George. The results are sure confirmation that the steps taken were the right ones!
 Howard Tipton
 Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Key Police Take-Home Vehicle Program

To: Longboat Key Police Chief George Turner
 All great news. Thanks, George. I also heard you were impressive at the Kiwanis breakfast this morning.
 Ken Schneier
 Mayor, Longboat Key

Longboat Key Police Take-Home Vehicle Program

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
 Fabulous job Chief, good call on your part to pursue this, and Tip to bring it forward.
 Gary Coffin
 Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

Bishop Bayou ferry

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
 Thanks for your time to chat about ferry/Bishops Bayou. I do not see a way to attach the Bishop Bayou historical photo .ppt via this town msg access. Could you email or text me an address that I can send to directly from my comcast address?
 Thanks for your time and interest
 Winnie Nelon
 Longboat Key

See Letters, page 6

A Longboat Key Landmark







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648 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Boater's dream property on oversized (19,994sf) rarely available cul-de-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.



\$6,295,000

5910 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Under Construction. This spectacular, 4,210 sq. ft., newly built 4BR/4.5BA, coastal contemporary waterfront home provides easy access to the Intracoastal Waterway, Sarasota Bay and Gulf of Mexico. Located on a three-quarter acre lot with 133 feet of frontage on a 125-foot-wide canal.



\$2,299,000

793 JUNGLE QUEEN WAY | LONGBOAT KEY

Two-story custom-built, canal-front 4BR/3BA featuring a private rooftop deck. Spacious open floorplan with 22' soaring ceilings. French doors lead to an expansive back porch and screened patio with a pool and spa.



\$1,995,000

1211 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #601 | LONGBOAT KEY

Stunning views of the Gulf of Mexico and Sarasota Bay in this 6th-floor condominium in Promenade. The desirable end unit features 2 bedrooms plus a den, all with full baths, abundant floor-to-ceiling windows and glass sliders to 2 balconies.



NOW PENDING!

\$2,995,000

830 TARAWITT DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Just three lots to the ICW from this over 2,500 sf, coastal 2015 built home. Living area and kitchen open to the patio and contemporary pool. The privacy of the second level offers two guest bedrooms with full bath, plus an extra lounge.



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524 HALYARD LANE | LONGBOAT KEY

Country Club Shores - WATERFRONT 100 ft. x 100 ft. buildable lot. Includes 2BR/2BA/1,668 SF home. Perfect location for new construction on 80 ft. wide deep water canal. Close access to Country Club Shores' beach access and the Longboat Key Club. Less than three miles to Saint Armand's Circle. Highly desirable location on north side of 80 ft. canal for southern exposure on pool and outdoor entertaining space. Seller commissioned design of 4,344 SF contemporary home and considers property as lot value. Plans available. Renderings reflect one possible build option; new home not included in the listing.



Front View

EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Ferry access

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Many thanks for your briefing at the LBK North meeting today. I would appreciate a few moments of your time to talk about considerations on Manatee County ferry access to the Whitney Beach shopping center.
Winnie Nelon
Longboat Key

Request from Longboat Key Community

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Thank you for attending our LBK North meeting today and providing updates on a number of LBK projects big and small. The amount of time you put in to serve our community is impressive and so very much appreciated.
Below is the email the Board of LBK North sent to the Manatee County BOCC. LBK North does not represent every homeowner on the north end and we can not possibly represent every individual or HOA group, but we try to reflect the general consensus among our Representatives. Therefore we felt it best, given the tight timeline, to draft the letter from the four LBK North Board members. Thank you and all of the Town Commission for working on behalf of the Key!
Maureen Merrigan
Longboat Key

Request from Longboat Key Community

To: Maureen Merrigan
It was my pleasure—now you must perform your end of the bargain and return to the Commission. Your North End organization is a model for good citizenship in both its goals and its conduct. I was just thinking about NATO and unanimity as someone on the call mentioned it. I guess there’s a Turkey in every group. I’ll keep you posted on Whitney Plaza developments.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Request from Longboat Key Community

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Well said, Ken, and thanks again for joining our meeting today.
Paul Hylbert
Longboat Key

Request from Longboat Key Community

To: Manatee County Commission
Our organization, LBK North, is a large community group consisting of 26 HOA / Condo associations on the North end of Longboat Key, all which completely reside within the Manatee (vs Sarasota) borders of Longboat Key. We have hosted BOCC District 3 and at-Large Commissioners at our monthly meetings.
It is with great enthusiasm that we write in support of Manatee County School District and the BOCC working together to establish an education-focused community facility for the residents on Longboat Key.
We understand you are reviewing a proposal for the County and School District to lease space in the Whitney Plaza Shopping center on Longboat Key in order to build out a facility which can support our community with programming and space for adult education, art classes, seminars, recreation and community meetings.
We strongly support this BOCC and School District initiative for several reasons:
There are a number of active community groups on the Key (Rotary, Kiwanis, HOAs, senior groups, environmental teams, beach volunteers, neighborhood associations), particularly on the north end, that do not have formal or adequate meeting space. This investment would immediately address this issue.
There are many education, arts and recreation programs currently offered “off island” (in Bradenton, Sarasota, Lakewood Ranch) that would love to have a presence on the Key and currently do not benefit from LBK resident attendance and support due to traffic.
The site provides a physical, visible Manatee County investment on the Key (something Sarasota has done with Bayfront Park and will do again, in a significant way, with the Town Center Library).
We have a strong, active group of community volunteers here that could help with programming, staffing, etc. Our group is more than willing to collaborate with your staff and the School District to contribute to the success of this project.
The location you are selecting anchors several businesses on the Manatee County end of LBK that would provide synergies (fitness, food, health, etc.) to this community space. There is also adequate parking on site - something that is a rarity on our Key.
As property owners, we / LBK provide a significant amount of tax revenue to the County and School District with a relatively low need for services (e.g., in 2022 we contributed \$14

million to the BOCC and \$17 million to Schools and have only 30-40 students).
While we are supportive of being, in your words a “donor community”, we do look to you to invest back in our community.
Manatee’s approach to lease space, and not build from the ground up, is an extremely cost-effective way to use taxpayer money to provide a high-quality facility and service with a relatively quick impact. As you are aware, Sarasota has set aside \$1 million of its fiscal 2023 budget to advance the planning and design for a state-of-the-art library facility at our Town Center, which they will ultimately build to completion.
The BOCC has done much in recent years to re-establish the relationships between our County and Town of Longboat Key. We ask that you approve and work with the School District to ensure funding for this project and to direct staff to work together with the Town of LBK and residents’ groups to ensure the programming and use of the building fully align to our community’s needs. Thank you for what we believe will be a worthwhile, much needed and visible asset for our County on Longboat Key.
Maureen Merrigan
Longboat Key

Budgets

To: Terry Gans
The irony here is that the headline budget increase is misleadingly high, largely due to the fact that over \$2 million of ARPA grants from the feds could be most efficiently used if passed through the General Fund before being allocated to capital projects (sea level rise and subaqueous line projects). Additional capital projects were pre-funded from reserves through the General Fund to facilitate equipment orders that will take longer than usual to deliver due to supply chain issues. These are timing issues rather than increased expense. This brings us to the heart of the matter, which is about a 15 percent budget increase, most of which goes to bring our pay scales for all employee classes in line with the “competition” (over \$1 million), and the balance of which reflects other increased costs due to inflation and the addition of 7 new employees. These will bring our headcount back to 2008 levels and reflect needs in police, fire, planning and IT, as well as an employee to be funded through the utilities fund and a grants administrator who should pay for herself by a multiple within the year.
You may recall that we adopted a material millage rate reduction last year, down to 1.99, and remain the lowest municipal millage in the region. We will continue to look for opportunities for further reduction while maintaining the level of service LBK expects and deserves.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Meetings in the past week

To: Longboat Key Commission
I will not remember these meetings by the time we return to Commission meetings in September, so here is a quick review:
Manasota League: The Manasota League is hosting a breakfast for all attending the Florida League Conference on August 12th. Please RSVP to Savannah if you plan on attending.
The FLC is doing a fast fly in October 17-18. The League will be assisting municipalities for travel expenses for fast fly in members.
In reports from others: the representative from Holmes Beach (Terry Schaefer) reported that the parking garage approved by House and Senate in Tallahassee is estimated to cost Manatee County \$45 million. There is no funding in the Manatee County budget or their capital plan for such a project. The parking garage legislation passed in Tallahassee is for a 1500 car facility. Holmes Beach is requesting a beach capacity report and to ask Manatee County to address the traffic volume that Manatee Avenue can handle.
Water taxi - The boats have arrived. Anna Maria has not signed a contract yet on the water taxi. Both Anna Maria and Bradenton Beach are asking for funding to deal with the need for ADA Piers. All municipalities have asked for costs to be economical enough to make them feasible for staff coming from the mainland to the islands.
The City of Bradenton has signed the agreement with the Water Taxi and the County has agreed to pay for Bradenton’s dock to be ADA compliant.
“Live Local Act” - the City of Sarasota is continuing assessing the impact this new legislation could have. Specifically, its impact on St. Armand’s Circle because the highest density within one mile radius can be used to determine density with this new legislation. That could mean as much as 200 units per acre. The Sarasota City Attorney interpretation of the legislation is different than that of the FLC attorneys. All of us must continue to monitor this legislation as it could paralyze St. Armand’s with density.
FYI - There are currently 138 “Party Houses” on Lido Key/St. Armand’s. Seventy percent of the properties on Anna Maria are rental units.
Sarasota Council of Government:
Our two items to share were the work that had been done on the budget - focusing on our investment in staff and capital improvements and the near completion of the stage at the Town Center.
North Port - dealing with mosquito issues and their budget is holding the millage rate steady.
City of Sarasota - Phase II of the Bay Project - a “Purple Ribbon Committee” is being created to start the work on replacing the Van Wezel. Currently the City has budgeted \$40 million for this project.

See Letters, page 8



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KeyOpinion

Are Americans buying Biden’s vision?

In about 16 months, we’ll find out if Biden’s vision and policies have sufficiently galvanized Americans to earn him reelection.

GREGORY RUSOVICH
Guest Writer
rusovich@lbknews.com

A leader’s primary responsibility is to present a compelling vision which garners support and builds public confidence. What is President Biden’s vision for America? Is his desired path for our nation aligned with the public’s preferences? Is the president uniting our nation around a core set of beliefs and shared values? Are his policies having a positive impact on the lives of Americans?

The performance of past leaders provides some insight. President Reagan had a clear vision. He viewed America as the world’s freedom-loving “shining city on a hill” and never wavered in his commitment to defeat Soviet communism. “We win, they lose” was Reagan’s accurate depiction of the Cold War’s eventual outcome. He also successfully achieved his long-stated goal to lower taxes and lessen regulation, which led to an economic boom. President Clinton’s vision was more pragmatic as it sought individual policy victories, frequently through collaboration with Republican leadership. Clinton’s successful passage of welfare reform, a balanced budget, and the signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement demonstrated his special ability to roll up sleeves and achieve meaningful policies. President George W. Bush, our most recent wartime president, rallied the country following the 9/11 attack on our homeland. All three former presidents won re-election.

In about 16 months, we’ll find out if Biden’s vision and policies have sufficiently galvanized Americans to earn him reelection.

One of Biden’s most impactful acts as president was to support and sign an additional \$1.9 trillion Covid Relief Bill in early 2021. But this massive expenditure immediately followed \$4 trillion already authorized for similar purposes over the preceding eight months. Concomitantly, his administration pressed the Federal Reserve to continue to increase the nation’s money supply. Still not satisfied with the government’s largesse, Biden and Congressional progressives fought hard for an additional \$5 trillion spendathon, which was subsequently reduced to a mere \$1.8 trillion. This unprecedented government spending binge, combined with a loose Federal Reserve policy, provoked the worst inflation since Jimmy Carter’s presidency. The surging inflation prompted significant interest rate hikes by the Fed, as it attempted to slow escalating prices.

As a result, Americans have been socked with high inflation and soaring interest rates. We now pay more for gas, groceries, homes, mortgages and virtually everything else.

Real wages also have failed to keep up with price hikes since Biden took office, rendering further economic hardship. The Biden economic vision: Expand government. Result: Higher inflation, punitive interest rates and less take-home pay.

On the foreign policy front, President Biden’s core strategies seem befuddled. Yes, the Administration is just in its efforts to defeat Vladimir Putin and help Ukraine. NATO also has galvanized in support of Ukraine, in part due to American influence. But consider the Afghanistan debacle. The Administration’s tragic and disgraceful Afghanistan surrender to the Taliban is an indelible stain on our country. The reckless withdrawal led to the needless deaths of 13 honorable service members and the wounding of many others. America also abandoned thousands of loyal Afghan supporters who watched our country turn its back on their courageous efforts.

Combined with continued appeasement to Iran and China, the Biden foreign policy portrays a dual personality. Show a semblance of strength against Russia; appease all others.

And what should we make of the Biden-Harris immigration and border strategies? It’s hard to argue that team Biden believes in anything other than an open border as it abolished many effective Trump-era border-protection policies upon entering office. Add to that its halting of both border wall construction and the Remain in Mexico policy, the ending of Title 42 and its significant mitigation of ICE enforcement. As of the end of May, 1.6 million migrant encounters already had occurred this fiscal year, and there have been well over 5 million since Biden-Harris took charge. Meanwhile, approximately 2 million “gotaways” — undocumented



RUSOVICH

immigrants who have slipped past overwhelmed border agents — have entered the country illegally.

These numbers are as jaw-dropping as the amount of fentanyl and other deadly drugs that have flooded through our porous border. In 2018, there were 67,000 drug-involved overdose deaths in the U.S. The fatalities mounted to 106,000 in 2021(the majority connected to fentanyl).

Vice President Harris (whose roles include Immigration Czar) continues to yammer about “root causes of the problem.” Perhaps the true cause for the current border crisis is actually the Biden-Harris Administration itself?

It is vital for our country’s leader to connect with the social fabric of the nation. We have witnessed the pinnacle of a culture war during the Biden presidency. This conflict is particularly perilous for America as cultural issues dig deep into our individual values, beliefs and ideals. The Administration has used its power, authority and bully pulpit to instill Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and LGBTQ+ initiatives throughout society. Most people simply want to be left alone, respect others, and go about their lives. President Biden has promised greater unity and less divisiveness. Perhaps he could actually keep his word and foster common ground in our country.

Right now, Americans are not buying into the Biden vision. An Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research shows that only 34% approve of the president’s handling of the economy; seven in 10 adults think economic conditions in the country are poor; and only 40 percent approve of his handling of foreign policy. A Reuters-Ipsos poll reports a 26% approval rating on Biden’s handling of immigration while CBS News shows that only 28 percent believe things are going well in our country.

Soon, Americans will need to ask themselves whether the Biden vision and strategies merit another long four years.

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

The City is assessing the “Live Local Act” (as discussed at the Manasota League).
Venice - Is considering an interactive Kiosk downtown and asked for feedback. They are also beginning a sister cities program.
Sarasota Memorial Hospital - Groundbreaking held for the New Research, Education Institute. They anticipate the millage rate holding steady and they are preparing to open 93-100 beds at the Venice Hospital.
County School Board - Terrence Connor to be sworn in (that happened July 17). His hiring was approved on a 4-1 vote with Chair Ziegler voting against. Pre-K programs are being expanded to full day. Hiring is an ongoing challenge.
Sarasota County - Millage rate remains same. Challenges in budget due to increase in prices and salaries. Smoking ban on beaches and public parks being put into action.
Thanks Ken for asking me to go to COG. They even feed you when you go there.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Seawater temperatures

To: Longboat key Commission, Sarasota City Commission
It’s not your imagination – it is really hot out there. Let’s put aside (for now) the causes of what we’ll be discussing here, and just focus on the outcomes – which is that our air and water temperatures are increasing.
For us to discuss temperature trends, it’s important to keep in mind the data sets upon which we can make conclusions. Any location with an airport (like Sarasota) will have a great data set on air temperature, because it is an important consideration related to the density of air, and thus on flight characteristics. I earned my pilot’s license back in 1998 (single-engine land) and never liked flying in the summer – the little planes (with their little engines) we rented struggled to get aloft on hot days, since hot air is less dense, and generates less lift at the same airspeed.
So what does our air temperature data conclude? That it is getting warmer over time. The plot below compares each month’s average air temperature to the average for that month for the period of 1901 to 2000. If any given month is spot-on average, the month shows up white. Cooler would be blue, and warmer would be yellow. Warmest still would be brown. As you can see, the prior century had a fairly even mixture of blues and yellows, with a few browns. Over the last 20 to 40 years, it’s mostly yellow and browns. We used to average about 2 to 3 freezing temperatures per year in Sarasota, but from 2011 to 2020, we had only 3 the entire

decade – the lowest amount of days with freezing temperatures over the 11 decades with such data. We used to start August days with temperatures in the 60s, every once in a while. But we haven’t had a single hour of a single day in any August month over the past 20 years lower than 70 degrees.
Warmer air ought to be related to warmer water as well, since the two are coupled (with time lags). Well, as shown below (from a 2022 report) the Gulf of Mexico is trending warmer over the past 20 to 40 years, matching the general pattern seen in our local air temperature data set. Keep in mind that the scale here is in degrees Celsius – roughly double the number and you have the Fahrenheit trend.
Getting closer to home, we recently had one of our consultants verify our preliminary conclusions about water temperature trends in Sarasota Bay. Their report found a mixture of results depending on location and month. In general, water temperatures in all five parts of Sarasota Bay were more likely to be increasing than stable, and no bay segment showed a decline in water temperatures, as summarized below.
Every bay segment showed increasing water temperatures (between 1970 and 2022) in the months of September and October, but no bay segment showed an increase in February. The southern part of Upper Sarasota Bay, Roberts Bay and Little Sarasota Bay had increasing trends in 9 of 12 months. Conversely, Blackburn Bay was the reverse, with no trends in 9 of 12 months. Even so, Blackburn Bay did not have any months with decreasing trends. A factor that comes into play here is that summer rains and stormwater runoff are typically cooler than our ambient water in the summertime, and this complicates the monthly temperature trends quite a bit.
Overall, however, our air is getting warmer, the Gulf of Mexico is getting warmer, and most of Sarasota Bay is also getting warmer. This matches up with our water level data (below) which shows that while our period of record rate of sea level rise is about 1 inch per decade, we’ve averaged 3 inches per decade over the past 20 years. We anticipate an additional 9 inches of sea level over the next 30 years. Why would warmer water be “higher”? The same reason why a hot air balloon lifts off the ground. Temperature is a measure of kinetic energy, and the more heat you add to a balloon (through the burners) the more energy the air molecules (mostly di-nitrogen gas) have. Which means they bump into each other more violently, and thus take up more “space” which means fewer air molecules per unit volume, which means lower density, which means the balloon goes up into the air. Similarly, warming water means more kinetic energy, meaning more collisions, meaning lower density, which increases the height of the water. Take a cup full of marbles and shake it (adding energy) and you’ll have fewer marbles remaining in the same volume of the cup (i.e., lower density) – same concept.

See Letters, page 11



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4241 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#302	1,660	\$2,199,000	3	2	1	93	\$2,000,000
1902 HARBOUR LINKS CIR Unit#16	2,180	\$1,500,000	3	3	1	8	\$1,500,000
4401 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#404	1,314	\$1,195,000	2	2	0	16	\$1,100,000
225 SANDS POINT RD Unit#7105	642	\$849,000	1	1	0	110	\$800,000
6750 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#176	846	\$650,000	1	1	0	0	\$650,000
2600 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#L-08		\$425,000				382	\$400,000
2600 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#L-12		\$375,000				27	\$350,000
217 GARFIELD DR	3,375	\$5,175,000	8	8	1	1	\$5,175,000
217 GARFIELD DR	3,375	\$5,500,000	8	8	1	1	\$5,175,000
1 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#74	1,389	\$950,000	2	2	0	79	\$950,000



217 GARFIELD DR



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526 BIRD KEY DRIVE
SOLD \$2,225,000



BIRD KEY
449 E ROYAL FLAMINGO DRIVE
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Send us your reaction: letters@lbknews.com

OnPatrol

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

July 14 Citizen assist

9:51 a.m.
Officer Miklos responded to Yardarm Lane in reference to a citizen assist regarding a complainant who said two men were digging in his yard. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with two men who did not speak English. Officer Miklos spoke to their supervisor via telephone who advised they were contracted by Comcast to replace main line and cables for the internet. The supervisor advised the men were on the public easement. Officer Miklos contacted the complainant and advised him that the workers were there contracted by Comcast and on the public easement. Case clear.

July 15 Juvenile problem

2:11 p.m.
Sgt. Puccio was dispatched to the Longboat Pass Bridge in reference to six juveniles jumping off the bridge into the water reported by the bridge tender. Upon arrival a check of both sides of the bridge by both road patrols and a check via the water was made by the marine unit which met with negative results. Sgt. Puccio made contact with the bridge tender who advised they had departed. Sgt. Puccio requested the marine unit stay in the area and conduct patrols in the event they return. Additionally, a Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Marine Unit was also in the area on patrol. Case clear.

July 16 Traffic citation

2:28 a.m.
Officer Ferrigine while on patrol observed a gray vehicle in front of him with Florida temporary tags. Officer Ferrigine conducted an NCIC/FCIC check and it came back to no driver's license assigned to the vehicle. Officer Ferrigine conducted a traffic stop in the 100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive and made contact with the driver. The man handed the officer a Mexican Identification card. The man said he was aware he was not allowed to driver with his Mexico ID card. The driver was issued a notice to appear and was advised to park his vehicle until his friend came to take control of it. Case clear.

July 17 Boating

12:21 p.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol, was dispatched to Sarasota Bay, north of the John Ringling Bridge, for a report of an overturned personal watercraft with two occupants in the water, attempting to upright the watercraft. Upon arrival, a good Samaritan had picked up the female occupant from the water with the male occupant attempting to upright the personal watercraft. Officer Connors pulled the marine vessel alongside the overturned watercraft and assisted the man with up righting the vessel. The watercraft appeared to have taken on water making it unstable. Officer Connors assisted the woman over to the marine vessel from the good Samaritan's vessel and continued to assist the man. Eventually, the man was able to get the personal watercraft stable enough and make its way to the 10th Street Boat Ramp. Officer



Connors escorted the watercraft and transported the woman without incident. Case clear.

July 18 Suspicious vehicle

12:15 a.m.
Officer Montfort while conducting a property check of the CVS Store, observed a vehicle parked in the rear of the business in an unlit area. Officer Montfort exited his patrol vehicle and observed the vehicle which was unoccupied and cold to the touch. In plain vehicle, Officer Montfort observed several grocery bags and construction tools in the back seat. The area was checked for any subject matching the description of the registered owner with negative results. Case clear.

Citizen assist

1:00 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier was flagged down for a citizen's assist at the 4000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in regards to the use of golf carts they drove in to get to Bayfront Park. Upon meeting the two individuals, they stated they were renting a house through AirBNB and as part of the agreement, they are allowed use of the homeowner's golf carts. They flagged this officer down because they were concerned that they were not supposed to operate the golf carts this far down Longboat Key. Registered owner of golf carts and AirBNB, was contacted and said she was aware that the golf carts were in use and said that she may not have explained thoroughly enough of where the renters can operate golf carts. The two made arrangements with a towing company.

Citizen dispute

3:05 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier responded to Longboat Club Road for a call of a disturbance. Upon arrival, Officer Ramsaier met with the complainant who stated the approximately 10 people who were on the beach who were not supposed to be there. Upon arrival, Officer Ramsaier met with the complainant who stated they were guests of a tenant. Case clear.

Suspicious person

11:19 p.m.
Officer Martinez was dispatched to Bay Isles Parkway in regards to a report of a suspicious persons. The complainant advised that she saw a man inside a tractor trailer and that she was unsure if the man was allowed to be there. The address stated that the complainant is an active construction site for Publix with multiple persons operating in the area. The complainant refused to make contact with law enforcement for further questioning. No criminal nature involved, no further incident. Case clear.

July 19 Trespassing

1:58 p.m.
Officer Martinson responded to Longboat Club Road on a call of trespassing. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson spoke with the property manager outside in front of the condominium building. The manager stated there was a woman approximately 40 years old, 5'5" tall, medium build with short black hair and wearing a turquoise top with a striped bottom swimsuit sitting on a private beach chair on their property. The manager said when she asked the woman to leave since she is not a resident or a guest, the woman said no one was using the chair and refused to leave. Officer Martinson then walked out to the beach and the woman was gone. Case clear.

Noise from land

5:41 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to Buttonwood Drive on a call of a noise complaint. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson saw a construction crew cleaning up a bunch of debris. Officer Martinson did not hear any power tools being used or any music being played. Officer Martinson spoke with a man who stated they are a window instillation crew out of Miami and were not aware of any of the Town's noise ordinances. The man was given a verbal warning. The man apologized and said they would be installing more windows tomorrow and will make sure not to work past 5 p.m. The construction crew was contracted by the window company. Case clear.

Suspicious incident

9:00 p.m.
Officer Smith was dispatched to the 3200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of subjects using white lights on the beach. Officer Smith made contact with the man on the beach and informed him of the town ordinance regulating white lights during turtle nesting season. Case clear.

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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 8

Since our average tidal range is about 18 inches, this means that by 2050, the average sea level will be about the same as what our average high tide is right now, and our average high tide in 2050 will be 9 inches stacked on top of that. This shouldn't trigger panic, but it is consistent with our local partners – and the State of Florida – joining with the Federal Government to continue to plan on a Sarasota Bay that will be warmer, with higher tides, over the next 30 years. If we don't plan on being able to accommodate that, then we will not be as resilient as we need to be, and our children and grandchildren will be handed a bay not nearly as healthy and beautiful as the bay that we can experience right now.

If you haven't lately – get out on the water! It's not that we don't have problems still in some places, but the water quality in the bay is as good as it's been at any time over the past few years right now. Don't take my word for it, look for yourself!

Dave Tomasko
Executive Director
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Seawater temperatures

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Director Dave Tomasko

Some interesting facts on our local temperature and sea level raise history. Yes, it is hotter than it has been. I remember covering our flowers in Florida in the winter and protecting our orange crop from freezes. Not so much anymore.

Mike Haycock
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Seawater temperatures

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Mike Haycock

Dave has a great skill of making something that can be very complicated something we can understand. He's going to be a tough one to replace when he retires from SBEP.

Cyndi Seamon
Longboat Key

Manatee Outreach

To: Longboat Key Commission

Since the north island community meeting yesterday, I have sent out two letters which are attached to the School Board and the Manatee County Commission. I have also heard back from Manatee County Administration regarding any additional details beyond the draft community center agenda item. What was shared was:

The County had negotiated a price for several options depending on size however staff was

never given direction on square desired footage.

The County will be responsible for the lease and build out and the School Board would operate and fund the operations.

I will forward separately the PowerPoint from yesterday's meeting which covered the known talking points that have been developed by the LBK north association group. The community meeting yesterday really didn't generate anything new.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Neptune crosswalk

To: Lawrence Brown

Thank you for reaching out. As I understand it, the RRFB decision was neither local nor regional, but rather was a determination from the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA"), and the FDOT cannot install more of these on roadways posted above 35-mph. The FDOT can improve existing ones on state roads and work to enhance safety, such as with more nighttime lighting, which is an undertaking FDOT is in progress now with most of the current mid-block crossings. FDOT is copied in case there is additional information they would like to share.

Isaac Brownman
Director Public Works
Town of Longboat Key

Neptune crosswalk

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman

Is there room on your calendar August 7-11 to meet briefly with me?

Lawrence Brown
Crosswalk Coordinator
The Neptune Condos

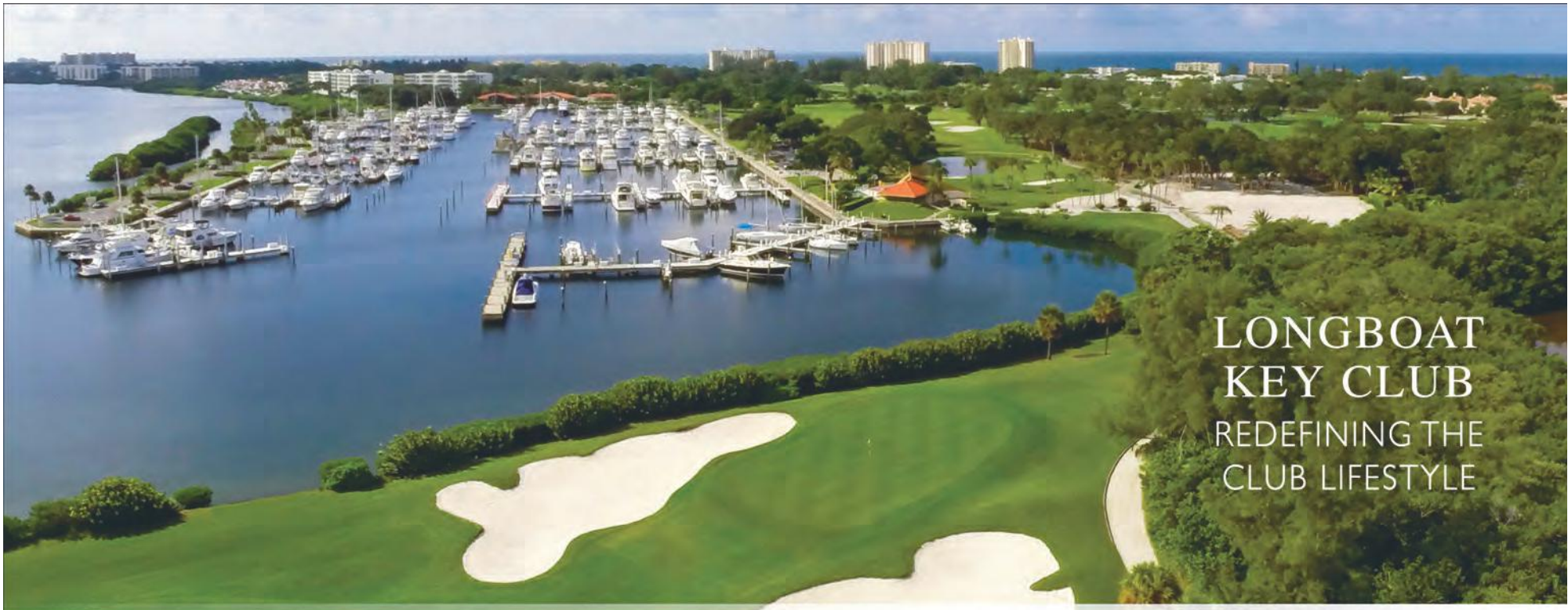
Neptune crosswalk

To: Lawrence Brown

Certainly, I have copied Julie Anderson with our Town Public Works office to help schedule that.

Isaac Brownman
Director Public Works
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 12



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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 11

Thank you for reconsidering ‘no-kill’ ordinance

To: Sarasota City Commission
Thank you for considering the harmful and dangerous unintended consequences of “no-kill” policies at animal shelters and for voting on July 17 to reconsider Proposed Ordinance No. 23-5490, “No-Kill Shelters.”
Our files are bursting at the seams with reports about humans and other animals who have suffered and died because of animal sheltering policies that sounded helpful on paper but were destructive in practice. Please let me know if PETA can provide additional information or be of any assistance. Thank you again for your hard work for Sarasota’s residents.
Teresa Chagrin
Animal Care and Control Issues Manager
Cruelty Investigations Department

Public Records Request

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
This is a Request for Public Records. The Request is for the following records:
Van Wezel’s future use study group, the ad hoc seven-member Purple Ribbon Committee: During its May 1 meeting, the City Commission discussed and approved the composition of the Purple Ribbon Committee, which will include two at-large citizen members; one member with expertise in architecture in the design of performing arts centers and re-use of large public structures and buildings; one with expertise in historic preservation; one with expertise in civil structural engineering; one with financial expertise in the field of the performing arts; and one with expertise in climate adaptation with experience in FEMA floodplain.
The Commission released a list of the Sarasota Residents on the Committee, and the non-residents on the Committee. Approximately 29 people were put on the Committee.
Please provide me with records showing the telephone numbers and email addresses of every member of the Committee. These are telephone numbers and email addresses that are related to and associated with their work on the committee.
The Public Records Act requires agencies to state the basis for any claim that requested records are exempt and to provide a statutory citation to the claimed exemption.
A requester has the right to a written statement explaining with particularity the reasons for a conclusion by the agency that the records are exempt.
If you refuse to provide this information, Chapter 119 requires you advise me in writing and indicate the applicable exemption to the Public Records Act. Also, please state with particularity the reasons for your decision, as required by Section 119.07(2)(a). If the exemption you are claiming only applies to a portion of the records, please delete that portion and provide photocopies of the remainder of the records, according to Section 119.07(2)(a).
This Request is made Pursuant to the Public Records Act, Chapter 119 of the Florida Statutes, and Article 1, section 24 of the Florida Constitution.
I request that this Request is fulfilled in electronic form; as attachment(s) to an email, or on CD.
Please provide the approximate cost, if any, to fulfill this Public Records Request in advance. I must approve of any estimated costs asserted in advance of any costs imposed.
Damian Panno
Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Debbie Trice
I am a Healthcare Professional (Registered Nurse) here in Sarasota, and I am reaching out for your help.
My condo incurred significant damage in Hurricane Ian. Water intrusion from an illegal lanai above me, and a completely compromised common wall caused a severe leak and mold into my unit below. It is 11 months later, and there is no end in sight to get me any closer to being able to make repairs to my home. Here is the detail:
The following documents are attached to this email:
· Timeline from September 28 th, 2022 (Hurricane Ian)-December 8 th, 2022: It is a lot of detail, but very important for you to review. After December 8 th, I was left with no other option than to retain a lawyer because the HOA continuously refused to look at the external wall, the common element, which is legally their responsibility. I was and am living in hazardous conditions, with no ceiling, walls or flooring in 60 percent of my unit.
· Water Test Obtained on May 24th only after going to mediation in March. Otherwise, this wouldn’t have happened.
· Pictures of the interior of my home and damage
At this point, I have had an attorney since December 2022, and have gone through my entire savings, in addition to withdrawing from my retirement and there is no plan to repair the common element wall, which needs to be done before repairs can be done to the interior of my home. Pending items before I can repair the interior of my home and where I need help

from the county to get this done. Please note that these are all supported by the water test:
1. The illegal enclosed lanai above my unit needs to be completed. The owner of that unit is working on that.
2. The window above me separate from the lanai needs to be replaced along with his window sill, which showed that it was also leaking into my home.
3. The cracks in the exterior common element wall need to be fixed and the wall needs to be waterproofed.
4. There is a foundation hole that needs to be repaired in the common element wall.
5. My window was determined to be leaking in the right corner. I have done my part and ordered the new window June 25th, which takes 8-10 weeks, so I’m waiting on that.
Once all of the above are done, I can then put my house back together with drywall, ceiling and floors replaced.
It’s almost a year, and I need help, especially since hurricane season is upon us again.
As you’ll see on the water test, the exterior wall is completely compromised and unstable.
Can we schedule a time to talk or can you direct me to someone in your office who can get involved. I will make myself available at any time!!!
Thank you in advance for your attention to this precarious and high-risk situation.
Kelly Roberts
Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Kelly Roberts
Thank you, Ms. Roberts, for reaching out to me. I have forwarded your email to City Manager Marlon Brown to follow up. After he lets me know how the City can help you, I will get back to you.
Debbie Trice
Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Debbie Trice
Thank you for getting back to me. I reached out to you in hopes you could help me figure out who in the state of Florida oversees HOA’s and Property management companies to see that they are doing what they are legally responsible to do. I have spent thousands and thousands of dollars just to have them look at the common wall (that they are legally responsible for) contributing to the water intrusion into my home. They ignored me for months and then even after I retained and was paying for a lawyer they ignored her.
Diane Kennedy has been aware of the situation here for months. My lawyer asked her for help months ago with no reply. I begged her on the phone recently with much push back she finally agreed to send someone out here. Her last email states she is “very busy”. Gary Belle also from the city told me she could help me. He has also been aware of the situation here. I have spent thousands and thousands of dollars just to get the HOA and property management company address this common wall. The retirement money I have taken out after my savings was depleted is quickly disappearing. I have been paying for a lawyer for 8 months. I can no longer afford a lawyer. My question to you is who can enforce the HOA and Property management company do what they are legally responsible to do? At this point this has become a dangerous situation with no end in sight. No plan for them to fix and waterproof this common wall. Again, who can help me?
Kelly Roberts
Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Sarasota City Clerk Lucia Panica
Thank you. We are in the process of issuing a notice of violations against the condo association. I will touch base with you on this tomorrow.
Lucia Panica
City Clerk
City of Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown
Whitney posted the Notice of Violation at the property at 1:31 p.m. today and Sally took the certified mail downstairs about 15 minutes ago.
Lucia Panica
City Clerk
City of Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Kelly Roberts
Diane Kennedy, Manager of Code Compliance, will be in touch to update you on the City’s efforts to resolve your problem.
Debbie Trice
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Home at 375 Bobby Jones Road

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Debbie Trice
Thank you for forwarding this matter to Mr. Brown. I appreciate it more than you know. Should I follow up with Mr. Brown and/or you? Forgive my persistence, but there is urgency to my request. Thank you so much for your help.
Kelly Roberts
Sarasota

Day Shelters

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

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See Letters, page 14

Eight Years in the Desert

Winemaker and wine cults tend to persist after their original reason for existence expires. We recommend taking a fresh look at the object of the cult before continuing to follow the crowd.

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

A wine cult builds a story around a winemaker, a wine, or both. A wine named 8 Years in the Desert has acquired a cult following. Its backstory features both a popular winemaker and a premier California wine.

We tasted the 2021 Orin Swift 8 Years in the Desert Zinfandel at 99 Bottles. Dillon behind the bar offered a small taste of this acclaimed Zinfandel at a happy hour price (\$15 per glass!). After our prior lavish praise of California Zinfandel, we could not resist. The sample from an open bottle (shielded from air by argon gas) tasted stale. A sample from a freshly opened bottle tasted better; we went with that. The hue of the wine in the glass appeared dark maroon and opaque. Although typical Zinfandel has a deep red hue, this glass of wine had the deeper shade of a French Bordeaux Malbec or a Rhône Mourvèdre, blending wines used in small proportions to deepen the color of paler wines. A bright red aura shining along the edge of the wine in the glass looked promising.

We asked about the 8 Years in the Desert on the label. The story goes that the winemaker signed a non-compete agreement precluding him from producing Zinfandel wine. This intriguing detail led us deeper into the backstory of the wine. The winemaker in question, Dave Phinney, during 2000 created the Orin Swift winery (Orin from his father's middle name and Swift from his mother's maiden name) and launched The Prisoner brand of red wine blends. Following the example of Rhône Valley red wine blends, Phinney's The Prisoner wines blended a varying selection of great old vine wines from his region, California: Zinfandel, Cabernet Sauvignon, Petite Syrah, Syrah, and Charbono. The combinations of these varieties made unusually intense and powerful wine with big jammy tastes and a singe of alcohol on the finish. All this came together at a time when that style of California wine was gaining in popularity.

Phinney knew the value of a distinctive label on a bottle of wine. He designed a label with an edgy etching by Goya of a prisoner in the Spanish civil war.

The packaging and the bold taste of The Prisoner earned Phinney and Orin Swift a legion of devoted followers. So much so that Chilean Huneeus Vintners saw fit to buy The Prisoner brand and a few minor league labels in 2010 for \$40 million. That sale included a non-compete agreement. Huneeus then sold The Prisoner brand to Constellation Brands for \$285 million in 2016; that same year, Phinney sold the Orin Swift winery to E. J. Gallo for \$300 million.

After the sale, Phinney has continued to work with Orin Swift as a consulting winemaker. He has polished the image of the California entrepreneur. His success gives him the freedom to live and work on the land. His bio and the images of his sleeves rolled up, work boots, padded vest, and blue denim jeans looks contrived as a merchandizing campaign.

The 8 Years in the Desert Label celebrates the return of Phinney and Orin Swift to Zinfandel wines after the non-compete expired. Prior to 2018, the 8 Years vintage included Petite Syrah and other varietals. The 2018- 2021 vintages source juice only from Zinfandel grapes.

More than one reviewer of the 8 Years in the Desert wine has said that the story behind the wine rivals the substance of the wine. The entrepreneur behind the wine has navigated a path around and between huge corporations and found a way to accomplish his goals while retaining his integrity. This story resonates with a generation encountering the same barriers and hoping for outcomes close to those Phinney has attained.

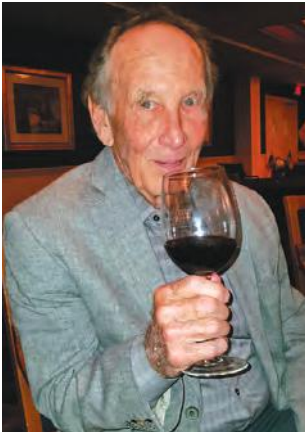
Our account of this story ends with a touch of irony. The 2021 8 Years in the Desert may have to wait another eight years in the bottle before it's ready to drink. It has astringent tannins

in the taste that overpower wild dark fruit aromas in the nose. It does not, to be frank, taste like a young Zinfandel. A great Zinfandel has very little residual sugar remaining after fermentation, and as a result an elevated alcohol percentage, yet it has a sweet dark plum and blackberry taste at first with flavors of cassis, anise, and black pepper on the finish. The 2021 8 Years in the Desert wine has a bitter taste at the start and only a promise of rich and savory tannins in the years ahead. It reminds us of a robust Bordeaux that tastes harsh early, though one would expect its tannins to soften during the next five years. One would hope that the 8 Years in the Desert will mature into a wine comparable to the great 2019 Ridge Pagani Ranch Zinfandel. In 2023, the 2021 Orin Swift wine falls short of a prototype of a Zinfandel, the 2021 Cline Ancient Vines Zinfandel from Contra Costa County in California. At a fraction of the cost, the Cline Zinfandel has all of the characteristics of a great Zinfandel already in place in 2023. We'll continue to follow the 8 Years in the Desert wine to see how it matures

Winemaker and wine cults tend to persist after their original reason for existence expires. We recommend taking a fresh look at the object of the cult before continuing to follow the crowd.

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 Orego 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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Sherry 'Nef' Price is a USPTR certified professional. She played at IMG and Division 1 College.
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Kayaking, from page 1

We have upgraded our kayaks since then. I now have a very lightweight inflatable Hobie iTrek and my husband has a lightweight hard case Hobie Mirage Lynx. They have both paddles and foot pedals and rudders. My husband's is a little fancier than mine as he can pedal forward and reverse, whereas I can only pedal forward. It is nice to be able to alternate between paddling and using the foot pedals, especially if the water is too shallow for the pedals.

I am strictly a daytime kayaker. However, one of my husband's favorite things to do is night fishing on his kayak. We were worried about him not being visible at night, so our daughter bought him some kayak lights. Now his kayak is all lit up and visible when he takes his night-time excursions.

It is great having our own kayaks. However, when friends and family come to visit, as they often do, we don't have enough kayaks for them. That is when we frequent our local kayak and paddleboard rental businesses. There are several to choose from. Here are a few of them, but certainly not all of them. Longboat Key Paddleboard and Kayak, <https://longboatkeypaddleboardandkayak.com> , Happy Paddler Kayak Tours & Ventures, <https://happypaddler.com/> , Kayak Jacks Paddle Sports, <https://kayak-jacks.com/> , Sea Life Kayak Adventures, <https://sealifekayak.com/> , Almost Heaven Kayak Adventures, <https://www.kayakfl.com/> , Kayaking SRQ, <https://kayakingsrq.com/> , Liquid Blue Outfitters, <https://www.liquidblueoutfitters.com/> , Paradise Adventures, <https://paradiseadventuresfl.com/> , Biotica Ecotours, <https://www.bioticatours.com/> .

Last week we had some out-of-town friends staying with us. They wanted to go kayaking, and we had plenty of locations to pick from. That day we choose to kayak in the mangroves on the south end of Lido Key. I am so glad we did, as it was a glorious day of fun and exploration. The ecosystem there is absolutely amazing. We saw Manatee, Dolphins, Starfish, beautiful birds, and so many crabs. We kayaked through wider streams and some narrow passageways. Some were with the tide and others were against the tide, but it didn't matter as there was beauty around every turn. I highly recommend it if you have not been there.

No matter if you choose paddleboarding or kayaking on your own or prefer one of the many varieties of tour groups, fishing kayaks, glass bottom kayaks, or tandem kayaks; they are all are experiences you won't regret. Nothing compares with getting outdoors and being one with nature. As Nike says, "Just Do It!"



Letters, from page 12

Good morning. The following is the information for the day shelters that are open in City and County for the individual's experiencing homelessness:

The Resurrection House- located in the Rosemary District at 507 Kumquat Ct. It is open Tues, Wed, and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

The Remnant Café- located in the County at 2895 Ashton Rd. They provide transportation from the City at 9th and Central and the SCAT transit station at Lemon and 2nd St. They will come to those locations as many times as needed to transport all individuals interested in attending. They are open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

On Sundays, there are several churches in the area that offer services for them to attend if interested. There are also community AA/NA meetings available on Sundays that provide community support and beverages.

Selby Library is frequented by several of the individuals as they can go there to read and relax in the hours that they are open Mon-Sat.

Lastly, services are offered to these individuals through the Homeless Outreach Team and The Salvation Army. If they are willing to work towards a housing plan, they can be in The Salvation Army at any time while they are in the programs available there.

Please let me know if you need further information.
Deidre Jones

Coordinator of Homeless Response
City of Sarasota

Programs for businesses

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

I just had excellent meeting with Melanie Lavender and Dan Sidler of the Sarasota Chamber of Commerce, and Scott Carpenter of the Small Business Development Corporation. They gave me an overview of the current programs aimed at assisting small businesses and start-ups in Newtown. They indicated, however, that no program exists for those who aren't far enough along to take the first step – or to even know what the first step is. We did some brainstorming and came up with a possible first step for ourselves.

Convene a "committee" of interested parties to clearly define the objective and develop a plan. The people to invite as interested parties, besides ourselves, include Wayne Appleby (representing the City), Richard Harris or Carlos Yancy (representing the Newtown CRA Advisory Board) and Mary Butler (representing the Newtown Business Council). Ideally, the committee will propose a program that can be jointly sponsored by these organizations.

Initial thoughts on a program for the community included a community meeting at RL Taylor to get input on the types of businesses and services residents would like to see in Newtown and an opportunity for potential entrepreneurs to try out their ideas with the audience. A subsequent program would be to introduce potential entrepreneurs to the first steps in turning their ideas into a real business. (These thoughts are just a starting point to trigger ideas from the "committee.")

A key objective of all of us is to "get things started." Working together, we are more likely to succeed. I hope you will support this effort.

Debbie Trice
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Parking in Burns Court vicinity

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

Sorry for the delay. I have been trying to reach out to 243 S. Orange parking lot owners. Left numerous messages and no response.

However, to Commissioner Trice's point below, I reached out to The Exchange, and they are interested in having a conversation. Honestly, it's closer to the heart of Burns Court

and a better option.

Please let me know how you would like me to proceed with pursuing The Exchange and the possibility of utilizing their lot after hours.

Broxton Harvey
Parking General Manager
City of Sarasota

Parking in Burns Court vicinity

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

Driving down Orange, I noticed an office parking lot at 243 S Orange (just north of Center for Architecture). Wondered whether Burns Court Cinema and other evening/ weekend venues could make a deal with business owner for off hours usage. (Trying to identify "underutilized" parking locations where shared usage may be possible.)

Debbie Trice
Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Lido Beach Boat Races

To: Sarasota City Commission

Why in the world would the City of Sarasota give someone permission to sell food and alcohol in the Lido Beach parking lot on 4th if July weekend? The city gets a percentage of sales (15%?) from the beach concession, so not only is the City basically screwing over the concession operator, you're also costing the city money.

I hope someone from the city isn't going to give me the nonsensical answer that they think it's a benefit for the public to have this. I worked at the concession for a number of years, when the races were far more popular, and the concession has no problem meeting the food and beverage needs of race fans. Since the first time the race was held off of Lido Beach, the city never allowed any vending at Lido on race day, and, I believe, a city ordinance prohibited any vendors, except for the official licensee, west of the coastal construction setback line.

Last year, this was done with no notice to the concession operator, who had put on extra staff and food supplies. It appears to me that section 23-3.6(b) requires City Commission approval for a special event vendor in a public park. When was this permit approved by the City Commission?

Also, will city ordinance Sec 16-61 - Prohibition on offering single-use drinking straws and 16-58 Prohibition on polystyrene products be enforced? (Including the event VIP area on the beach.)

Also, Sec 23-5 prohibits any merchandise sale or commercial activities on the public beach, with the existing concessionaire being the only exemption. I don't see anything in that ordinance that allows exceptions for merchandise sales permits on the beach, (that happened last year) by special permit.

Dan Kriwitsky
Sarasota

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Sarasota City News

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