



Longboat Key News

August 1, 2025

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Area market threshold is passed as Longboat record sale tops \$30 million

The real significance of the transaction is the immediate infusion of confidence and excitement in the luxury market in Sarasota and the islands.

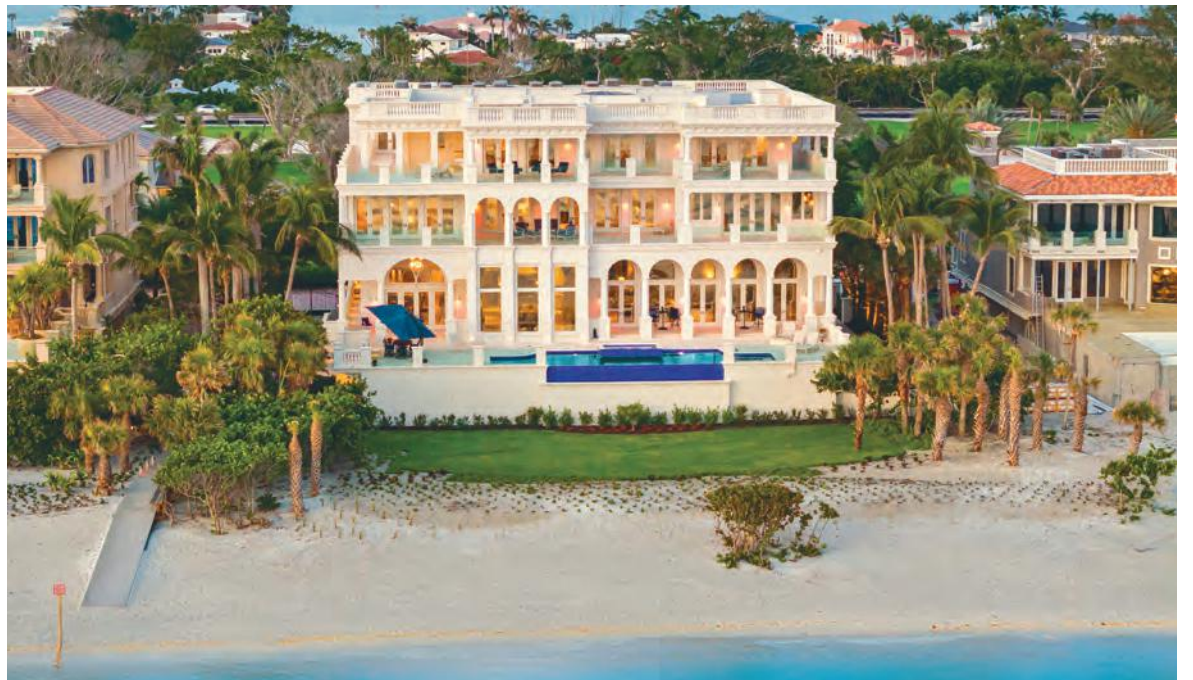
STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

A new market threshold has just been passed and a record set with the \$30.3 million sale of a 19,300 square-foot estate on South Longboat Key.

And while the opulence of the home is impossible to overstate, the real significance of the transaction is the immediate infusion of confidence and excitement in the luxury market in Sarasota and the islands.

"The recent sale of the property at a competitive price point underscores the resilience and vitality of our local market," said buyer's agent Judy Kepecz-Hays following the sale last Thursday.

The home, located on 145 feet of Gulf-front beach behind the gates on South Longboat Key at 845 Longboat Club Road, sold in 25 days after being listed for \$35 million.



In fact, the property brought six showings and the buyers acted quickly and decisively as interest mounted as they went from ini-

tial showing to executed contract within one day.

Originally from Indiana, the buyers already own property in Sarasota

and had been considering Longboat Key for some time.

"They fell in love with the home

See Record, page 2

Body of drowned woman found on South Longboat beach

Longboat Key Police are investigating a death on the beach Thursday evening near the Longboat Key Club.

Police spokeswoman Tina Adams says the body of an elderly woman was found on the beach about 6:30 p.m. The elderly woman died after a reported drowning in Longboat Key Thursday evening. The Longboat Key Police Department was dispatched to the reported drowning at 220 Sand Point Road around 5:46 p.m.

Arriving at the scene, responders found CPR in progress on an elderly woman, but the woman was pronounced dead at the scene by paramedics.

Officers are continuing to investigate this incident as a death investigation.

Hart's Landing opening stalled

Harts Landing, a longtime fishing and waterfront spot in Sarasota, remains heavily damaged nearly a year after being hit by a hurricane.

The bait shop is set for demolition, and the piers are broken and unusable.

Although funding is available, rebuilding is stalled due to a complex approval process involving the Florida Department of Transportation, the City of Sarasota, and other agencies.

"It's heartbreaking and infuriating that it's going so slow," said Sherman Baldwin, the operator of Harts Landing. "I'm not blaming anyone, but the process is holding things up."

Reopening could take up to five years, or may not happen at all.

Plans for the rebuild include hurricane-resistant features, floating docks that can be removed before storms, and raising the site by 13 feet to reduce flood risk.

Leona Helmsley's Lido Key hotel meets end

The Sandcastle Resort on Lido Beach in Sarasota was built in 1953, and is now being demolished.

The hotel was long ago purchased by New York hotel magnate Leona Helmsley. When Helmsley died in 2007, though, she left her dog named Trouble the hotel and \$12 million.

But, Trouble the dog died in 2011, and the money he received was added to a family charitable foundation.

And like many older, ground-level beach hotels in the area, The Sandcastle was heavily damaged by Hurricanes Helene and Milton. Crews from J.P. Services of Sarasota began demolishing the hotel last week and will take several weeks to complete.

Leona Helmsley was a brash, high-powered New York businesswoman who owned hotels and real estate. She was known for battling Donald Trump.

New York writers dubbed Helmsley the "Queen of Mean." Her famous quote is "We don't pay taxes. Only the little people do."

The property is now owned by the Ocean Properties, which is approved to build a new luxury resort on The Sandcastle property.

Mote busy with complex aquarium move, opening

Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium is moving soon to the Mote Science Education Aquarium (SEA) at Nathan Benderson Park.

Mote's long-standing plan in preparation for the new facility has included a period of time where operations at Mote Aquarium on City Island would transition to focus efforts on animal quarantine and transfer, as well as staff and volunteer training for Mote SEA operations.

July 6 was the final day that the Mote Aquarium on City Island was ticketed and available for general public admission.

The following day, July 7, all operations at Mote Aquarium on City Island started the transition to dedicated preparation and support for the opening of Mote SEA.

It's important to note that no Mote Aquarium staff will be furloughed due to this transition.

There are two primary controlling forcing functions that will determine the final opening date.

The first is Mote SEA exhibits' water chemistry and critical life support microbial dynamics.

A majority of the themed habitats at Mote SEA include "shotcrete" and paint. It's critically important that those habitats are removed of all soluble components, which is

See Mote move, page 2

Record, from page 1
immediately,” Kepecz-Hays says. “They loved it and within a few hours we had it under contract.”
The buyers are long-standing customers of Judy and wish to remain anonymous. Judy added that the couple plans to keep the home as is, inspired by Italianate styles, emphasizing decorative ceiling frescoes and ornate details.
The sale tops last year’s sale at Longboat’s St. Regis Residences, which until now held the record for the most expensive residential sale in Sarasota County when it closed at \$21,244,000 last year.
Judy hopes the sale serves as a catalyst to bring confidence to property owners in the region.
“Such transactions help establish new market benchmarks, attract serious investors and generate renewed interest in our beautiful area,” Said Judy Kepecz-Hays.
Built in 2005, Serenissima last sold in 2020 for \$16.5 million—then a record-tying price for Sarasota — to James and Laura Rogers.
The home is situated in Regent Court, a collection of a handful custom mansions tucked between the Islandside golf course and the Gulf of Mexico on the very South end of Longboat Key.
Kepecz-Hays, in her earliest years selling real estate, worked at the ARVIDA sales office, which was then located next to the Charthouse Restaurant more than 40 years ago. She then sold units at the emerging South Longboat condominiums including L’Ambiance, Sanctuary and all along the beach front as the island was developed. Since then and a generation of customers later, Judy leads a team consisting of her son, Steven, as well as Realtor Leah George.
For Judy, as well as the buyers of the Serenissima, the hope is the market soon eclipses this latest record. For listing agent Richard Polese, the sale continues his success in the luxury market.
And for the community of homeowners and those looking to some day sell their home or investment, the shattering of Sarasota’s price ceiling could not have come at a better time.



Kepecz-Hays



Mote move, from page 1

done through a process known as leaching. This process can vary in the time that it takes to complete.
While Mote’s staff are monitoring the leaching process daily, part of this exercise is simply waiting for the water chemistry to stabilize. Once that occurs, critical life support microbial communities are inoculated into exhibit life support systems and must become stabilized before multi-cellular animal inhabitants of the exhibits are introduced.
The second forcing function is animal quarantine, transfer and acclimation. The health, safety and welfare of all animals under Mote’s care is the top priority. Mote is accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums and follows animal transfer protocols adopted as best practices across peer institutions. Following a quarantine protocol for each animal and upon subsequent transfer to Mote SEA, all newly resident animals will be closely monitored for veterinary acclimation signals. Until such time that all animals have fully acclimated to their new habitats, Mote SEA will not open for general admission.

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The new canaries in our coal mine

Magical thinking won't help us this time. It will be much harder to feed us if the insects are gone. The insects are at risk. Which means we're at risk.

MATTHEW EDLUND
Guest Columnist
news@lbknews.com

People hate insects. They bite, snap, sting, and kill. Perhaps the most hated animal on the planet is the mosquito, despised for bringing malaria, dengue fever, sleeping sickness and a host of other fatal and disfiguring diseases. The most frightening sci-fi film monsters from “Alien” to “Starship Troopers” are giant, intelligent insectoids. Whether it’s the ticks bringing Lyme Disease or the vicious black flies of the north woods, lots of us would be happy to see insects gone.

The problem is, we might be, too.

Insects are a large part of the animal biomass of our planet. They are crucial to our survival in many ways, particularly as pollinators. People are vaguely aware than pollinating bees, necessary to so many of our crops, have been dying or disappearing in large numbers. They are less aware than many other insects are pollinators. Without these pollinators, crops don’t grow.

And they are disappearing, too. A recent study out of northwest Germany from the Krefeld Entomological Society found that in the period of 1989 to 2013, the biomass of insects fell 76%. That was in special nature reserves. In an agricultural part of Germany that has been peaceful, stable, and without major economic or political incidents for many years.

The insects are at risk. Which means we’re at risk.



MATTHEW EDLUND



Krefeld

The Krefeld Entomological Society has been studying, collecting, researching insect populations since 1905. It has tens of millions of specimens set out in a former school. Most of the Society’s members are amateurs, though some have obtained honorary doctorates for their work. They did not set out to surprise the world.

But they were surprised when traps set in 1989 in nature reserves – protected areas of woodlands, meadows, forests and marsh generally adjacent to farms and sometimes fallow lands of farms themselves, demonstrated massive declines in biomass populations through 2013. So they checked many sites, 63 all told. They checked them in summer and winter, at expected peak and depressed population times.

And the numbers kept coming back virtually the same.

Many different species were affected. In peak summer populations, the overall decrease was 82%.

The decrease worried farmers for at least two reasons – their standard pollinators were in severe decline, and they did not want to be blamed for the decline. Indeed, as there is very little data on insecticide use, it is had to know what is causing the general insect disappearance. Many fingers have been pointed at land use. If agriculture spreads over areas without sufficient nature reserves, insects that cannot travel far may quickly die. Others, like aphids, may increase in number to take their place. That can explain why recent studies show level but stable overall insect biomass in southern England, compared with a 2/3 decline in Scotland over a similar period. When an area is already highly populated and developed, low populations may not decline a whole lot more.

Except the kinds of insects necessary to human and animal life will.

Insects are a very important part of the food supply of diverse animals. Insects kill many pests that human despise. And moths, butterflies, and flies may be as important for pollination as bees, whose marked decline is increasingly blamed on the behavior changing effects of neonicotinoid insecticides.

The bigger problem is that we don’t know really know why insect populations are declining so rapidly.

The Human Ecosystem

It’s hard to understand what losing three quarters of a population does to the world. So try this experiment: a three quarters population decline in the United States from 1989 to 2014.

The decline would not be completely even. Sparsely populated areas like central Nevada

might not see the precipitous declines that occur in large cities. But if we were to extrapolate from the insect data, the largest part of the decline would occur in the first 13 years.

Imagine your hometown with three quarters of the population gone. Who would be the pediatricians? The hairdressers? Who would teach the few children left?

With these kind of population shifts, “downsizing” would not automatically create smaller, functional communities. The basic glue of the economy and society would be gone. The most likely result would be chaos.

Indeed, such catastrophic population decreases have only occurred in modern times as the result of near genocidal wars. But even conflicts like WWII did not produce anything like the devastation now going on in animal populations.

And humans are very mobile. If areas are still ecologically sustainable, humans move in, often from far afield. Devastated Germany and Russia saw their populations expand following the war.

That is not happening with animal populations worldwide. Many species are going extinct, disappearing altogether.

So for us, the insects are the canaries in our coal mine. Indeed, canaries are probably suffering – populations of German birds are way down, too. In 1948 there were about 2.5 billion people on Earth. Now there are more than three times as many. Our industrial and food footprints are much longer.

Magical thinking won’t help us this time. It will be much harder to feed us if the insects are gone.

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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.

Florida Recovery By The Numbers

To: Longboat Key Town Clerk Trish Shinkle
Please see the Florida recovery By-the-Numbers for Debby, Helene, and Milton in English below. Attached are English and Spanish. Feel free to share with your stakeholders.
Marisa Allen
Intergovernmental Affairs Specialist/Private Sector
Federal Emergency Management Agency

Qualities to consider

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission
As you know, I have recused myself from the selection process for the new Director, and do not think it is appropriate for me to comment on any particular applicant, just like my predecessor didn't chime in on my application.
However, I do think that there are a few characteristics that are worth paying attention to. First off, you need someone with passion, because this job is more than a 40-hour-a-week one. You need someone who not only cares about the bay and its future, but also, in my opinion, someone who knows what we've gone through over the last few years. You don't necessarily have to have worked for the SBEP to know about our recent and hard-fought improvements in water quality – and a 19% increase in seagrass coverage. After all, I didn't work for the SBEP when I was hired. But I knew about the bay's problems and what needed to be addressed. In my opinion, you would be well served by hiring someone who knows about our water quality improvements. How they happened, who did what to make it come about. How did we document the problems, identify the solutions, and – very importantly – document the recovery? Someone who knows about Numeric Nutrient Criteria and TMDLs and such, because those things will affect your local governments, if the bay's health starts to slip away from us.
We may need to revise and refine our approach over the next few years, but I don't think we have to reinvent the wheel. We are one of the only ecosystem-scale recoveries in the state of Florida, and if an applicant didn't know how that happened, then I think you could waste time and potentially lose some of these gains over the past few years. For example, why did we focus on wastewater when the majority of our "Total Nitrogen" loads were from stormwater runoff? If someone has no clue about that important topic, then maybe you're hiring someone who needs to learn on the job, or maybe you'd hire someone who has no clue about how our approach was structured, or why it worked out so well.
Next, I think you need someone willing to tell you, elected and appointed officials, things that you might not want to hear. Recently, we've had a lot of good news on the bay's recovery. But that's because this community faced the problems that we had a few years ago, rather than ducking them. Back in 2020 and 2021, I told you that I thought we could fix the bay's problems in a few years, but I also told you that I thought you only had a few years to do so. You responded in a way that allowed us to have the quick recovery that I thought was possible. But if you hired someone who was scared of telling you the truth about the status of the bay, or the problems that would arise with permitting a new Midnight Pass, or the fact that the State's oversight of mangrove trimming along El Conquistador Boulevard was lacking, etc. then I think you'd be ill-served. Someone who doesn't think that their job is to make you happy, but to make you informed, would be my recommendation.
Lastly, I think that you need to have someone that the staff wants to work for. You folks interact with our staff a handful of days per year. And I can guarantee you that while we mostly get along very well – and we certainly get our work done promptly – there have been times when each person was unhappy with a decision I made. That's okay – because while that's not fun, it's not an everyday event. I don't know how you'd do this, but you might want to

consider a way to ask staff what they think of applicants – because the last time around, two staff members told me that they would have quit if the Board had picked one of the applicants who were interviewed.
I'm available for any questions or comments, in general, about the qualities that I think you should look for, but I really do like the model that George W. Bush had after Obama was elected, it was one of respect for the position, and no public criticism, even when W had serious reservations about policies.
Thanks for your consideration of these thoughts, and your support for this program, and I look forward to our last meeting – September 12!
Dave Tomasko
Executive Director
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Extension Request and Questions regarding Request for Information

To: Florida League of Cities Chief of Legislative Affairs Casey Cook
I think you are right unfortunately- guess we can ask the DOGE people if they consider overtime for these reports something they can reimburse towns and cities for? See you in Orlando.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Extension Request and Questions regarding Request for Information

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I agree with you 100% and have told the DOGE office as much. This is a political stunt and, if anything, makes cities less efficient by forcing us to dedicate already over-worked staff to meaningless information requests...all while cities are putting their budgets together! I'm frustrated just like you, but I don't think we're going to see this end until after the next legislative session and maybe all the way until Nov. 2026. Give me a call if you want to discuss any of this.
Casey Cook
Chief of Legislative Affairs
Florida League of Cities

Extension Request and Questions regarding Request for Information

To: Florida League of Cities Chief of Legislative Affairs Casey Cook
We are a small community and the FL DOGE requests with short time frames for answers put tremendous pressure on our Finance Department. Are we going to continue to face this instead of taking care of our citizens?
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 5

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Extension Request and Questions regarding Request for Information
To: Department of Government Efficiency Jason Puwalski
Thank you for the additional week to respond to this request. The File is attached along with backup support for each question, just in case our interpretation of the questions is different. Let me know if you need anything further.
Susan Smith
Finance Director
Town of Longboat Key

Extension

To: Susan L. Smith

I apologize, I missed your request for an extension. All other jurisdictions are facing other deadlines, so it would not be fair to offer an extension on that basis. Given my delayed reply and your staffing vacancies, we are granting the Town of Longboat Key an extension to July 28, 2025.

Jason Puwalski
Department of Government Efficiency
Executive Office of Governor Ron DeSantis

Lights at 5231 and 5211 GMD

Hi Bryan,
This is about the 8th time I have sent this photo with the lights showing from probably the parking lot. These white lights show through between 5231 GMD and 5211 GMD. I would really appreciate some feedback if you have spoken to these properties about the lights showing onto the beach at the waterline. Thanks for your help.

Terri Driver
Longboat Key

Road change

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Since Finance is dealing with providing massive amounts of info to FL DOGE, and we are down a couple of staff in that department I can't imagine they have time or staff to analyze costs of changing the name of GMD - nor do I think businesses have this as a priority since most businesses on GMD are still doing landscape and repair work from the hurricanes. In our key responsibilities - health, welfare and safety of our community this would be down the list.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Road change

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
I know you're away but wanted to keep you current.
George Reenstra
Longboat Key

Road change

To: Florida Senator Victoria Brill, Florida House Rep. Andrew Parker

I wanted to keep you both updated on my position for changing Gulf of Mexico Drive to Gulf of America Drive on Longboat Key. I have a meeting with the town manager Howard Tipton on July 31. After that meeting I'll better understand any road blocks.

I have spoken to the Longboat Post Master, he simply needs direction from Sarasota and Manatee county did not feel once that direction was given that he would have any issue.

I feel now I need help from your offices, not sure how to contact the right players regarding the Post Office nor how I move this forward with the legislature for approval.

This project looks to be totally Florida controlled. I am in Florida till Sept then in Europe for all of September, gladly meet at your convenience. I am told, but not confirmed the town council is addressing this subject in September. Any thoughts , direction or support from your office would be greatly appreciated. I'm willing to put my complete effort on this project but do not know the path.

George Reenstra
Longboat Key

Public meeting notice

To: Martin Hyde
Thank you for your email. Our notice to the public states the following verbiage that the special meeting would start immediately following the conclusion of the workshop. I have attached the notice for your reference. We have been doing it this way for some years now. If I can be of further assistance please let me know.
Shayla Griggs
City Auditor and Clerk
City of Sarasota

Public meeting notice

To: Sarasota City Mayor Liz Alpert
I came to city hall to join the public meeting to discuss the millage which was advertised

locally for 5pm.

I was told you'd already had the meeting which can only be for your convenience and arguably to avoid public input.

I'd like to know what legal basis you have for bringing forward a public meeting by several hours without notice?

It's simply not good enough to say it was discussed in your earlier workshop as nobody should have to follow along to be sure to not miss important meetings.

Martin Hyde
Sarasota

Follow Up

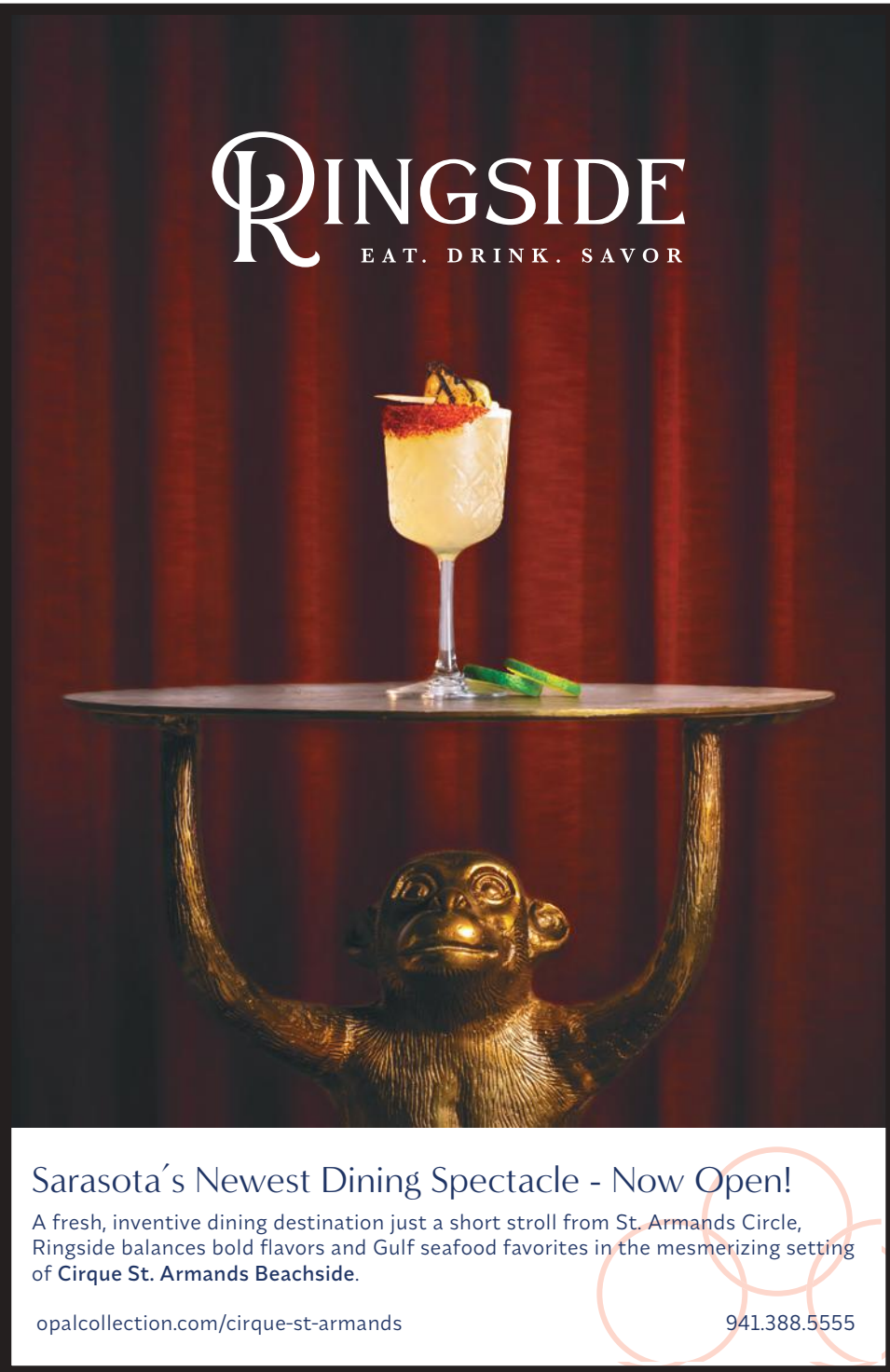
To: Sarasota City Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
Good morning Pat, thanks for your reply. Looks like things are moving slower than I expected.
Re benches for the trolley stops see my email from last night regarding funding them with advertisements. Also, I was not aware they are temporary stops.
On Bayfront there are signs missing at two street crossings, Main Street and Ringling, both important streets for visitors. Should not take long for replacements.
Regarding the expensive solar panels on Ben Franklin, maybe they are not a good idea given our frequent hurricanes.
Steve Helpern
Sarasota

Follow Up

To: Sarasota City Mayor Liz Alpert
Dear Liz, thanks for reply. Suggest benches at all the trolley stops maybe with advertisements which would easily pay for their costs. Perhaps engaging a company to sell the advertising and install and maintain the benches with income to the City. Hopefully the other problems are corrected.
Steve Helpert
Sarasota

Follow up

To: Stephen Helpern
 Sorry for missing your email of June 29. Some of the repairs from the hurricane are waiting for FEMA reimbursement. If we do the repair before it is authorized by FEMA, we lose our opportunity to be reimbursed for the costs.
 As far as a bench for the trolley at Lido Beach Pavilion, there has not been a discussion about it, but there are no benches at any of the other trolley stops that I am aware of.
See Letters, page 6



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Letters, from page 5

The other items, I will need to have the appropriate staff respond with where we are regarding them. I have copied the interim city manager and the deputy city manager. If you haven't heard from anyone within a week or so, let me know.

Liz Alpert
Mayor
City of Sarasota

Follow up

To: Sarasota City Mayor Liz Alpert

Hello Mayor Alpert, it been 3 months since we talked and corresponded re my concerns below. Sadly to say most of the problems continue. Still no benches at the Beach Pavilion for Trolley riders. The City will not be placing benches at temporary trolley stops as the program

is not part of the County transportation master plan and has no permanent funding source at this point. There are missing street signs on Bayfront, our signs team is replacing them as they are funded and produced. There are deplorable conditions of the St Armands speed humps, our Engineers are working with FDOT to replace these with permanent concrete speed humps, this was a temporary fix facilitated through FDOT when they were initially installed and damaged and missing solar panels on the expensive new light fixtures on Ben Franklin. These repairs will cost over \$913,141 we are awaiting approval from the federal highway authority to make repairs as this requires their approval.

Given the importance of Bayfront and St Armands this is extremely difficult to comprehend since the last hurricane was 9 months ago. Many of the repairs related to the 3 hurricanes and one major flooding event last year will take over a year to two years (or longer) to fund, permit, and complete. Most of the larger projects on the Bayfront require permitting through FDOT or FDEP who have much longer procurement processes to work through.

Perhaps the City is waiting to fix things until after the current hurricane season so money can be saved by not making repairs twice if there are damages this year. That is not the case.

PS. I am copying Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch who I gave corresponded with and has been very helpful in the past.

Stephen Helpern
Sarasota

Follow Up

To: Sarasota Mayor Liz Alpert

Mayor Alpert, Following up on our conversation after your very interesting LKRA presentation this morning below are the items I mentioned plus a couple more.

- a bench or two are needed at the Beach Pavilion BayRunner Trolley stop.
- the speed humps in St Armands Circle are in deplorable condition- see picture
- sand from the hurricane surge needs to be removed along the West side of Ben Franklin by the parkway. The worst accumulations are across from the new Cirque St Armands hotel - see picture
- many of the solar panels for the new lights along Ben Franklin need replacement or adjustments
- the traffic light at Sunset and Ringling needs retiming. Way too many red lights and delays and traffic backups leaving the Ringling Bridge with very few pedestrians crossing.
- many of the green lighted street signs which were damaged during the storms are still missing along Bayfront by Main Street and Ringling Blvd.

Enjoyed talking after the meeting and awaiting follow ups.

As I mentioned I have been here for almost 6 years and when I grew up in NYC most hurricanes came up the east coast and now they come up the Gulf coast after what I was told no meaningful storms for 100+ years.

Steve Helpern
Sarasota

BEACH VIBES? Check

PRIME LOCATION? Check

HIGH END RENOVATIONS all completed in 2025? Check, Check & Check!



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See Letters, page 8

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

Water issue

To: Sarasota City Clerk Shayla Griggs
Thank you all so much for looking into this! In correspondence with the Yoga Studio owners, apparently the property owner’s plumber said they applied for a permit with the City. I guess that is not accurate, but thank you for looking into this and for the timely communications! Thanks again and have a nice weekend.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
Just spoke with “Ray”. He’s been working with Aqua Plumbing since Monday to get the leak fixed. I informed him of Larry’s comments.
Verne Hall
Utilities Director
City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota City Utilities Director Verne Hall
Could you please have someone call “Ray” back and let him know about the comment from Larry please.
Pat Robinson
Deputy City Manager
City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
Just saw this. They absolutely can have this repaired as an emergency and apply for the permit within 24 hours.
Larry Murphy
Building Official
City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
I don’t see any pending permit applications for this site. I have included Mike, Macy and Larry here to see if they know anything about this.
Lucia Panica
Development Services Director
City of Sarasota



Water Issue

To: Sarasota City Development Services Director Lucia Panica
Could you advise if there are any permit applications pending at this location?
Patrick Robinson
Deputy City Manager, City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
Our investigation reveals Utilities received a call from a person named Ray who said he had a leak at 1501 2nd Street. When staff investigated the site there was no sign of a leak. Further investigation revealed that Ray was aware that the leak is a private side issue on the service line feeding the building. It is not related to Utility infrastructure. Ray shut the water off to the building at the meter (which he is not authorized to do) without telling Utility staff what he did. Utility staff would not have shut the water off without speaking to the staff at the Bikrim location.
A Utility tech went to the site today as a follow up and spoke with Bikrim staff. They are aware of the situation and from their understanding Ray is waiting for a permit to do the work. If this is an emergency, which it certainly seems to qualify, he could have worked with DS to do the repair with an emergency permit or receive the permit post construction.
Verne Hall
Utilities Director
City of Sarasota

See Letters, page 12




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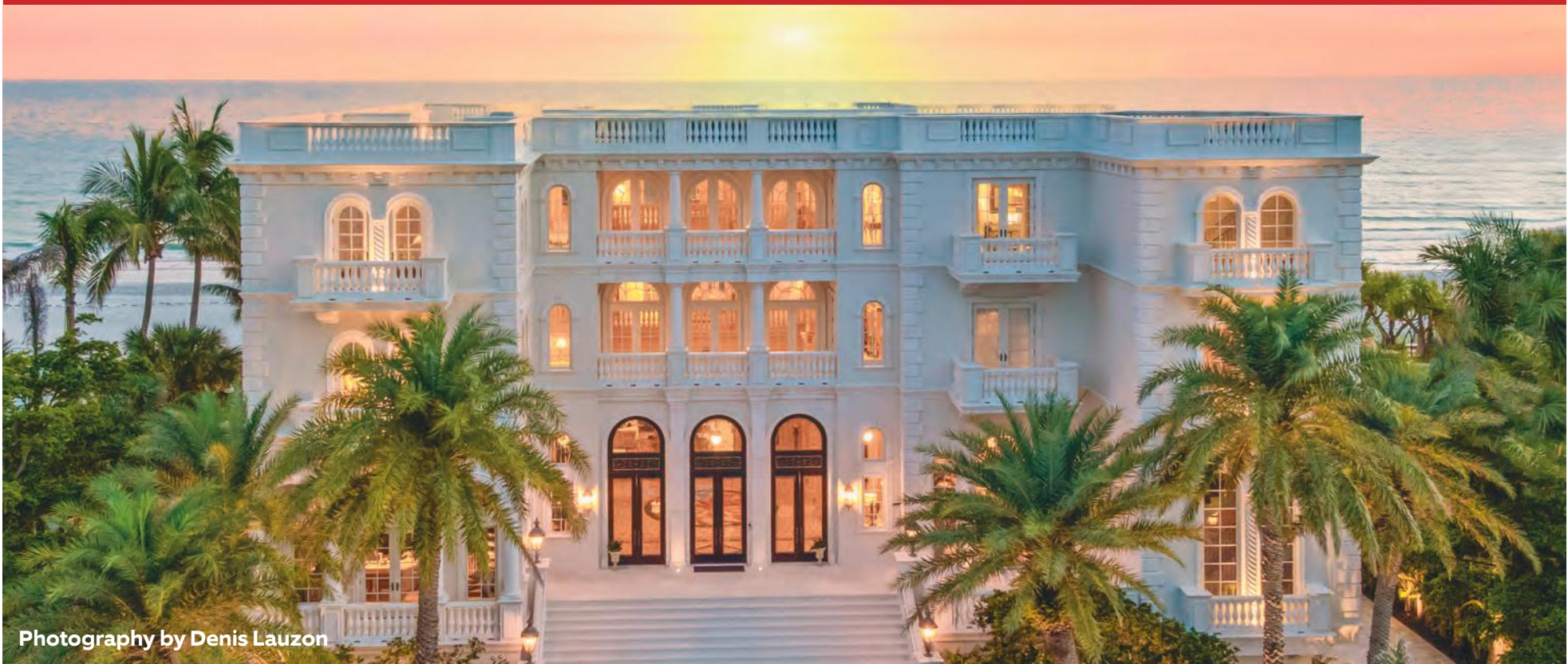


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MarinaView32.com

Emerald Harbor



6011 Emerald Harbor Drive
\$2,350,000
6011EmeraldHarborDr.com

Sanctuary



575 Sanctuary Drive #A303
\$1,620,000
SanctuaryA303.com

Hideaway Bay



757 Hideaway Bay Drive
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757HideawayBay.com

Promenade



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1211 Gulf of Mexico Drive #704
\$999,000
Promenade704.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 25 Alarm

5:55 p.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched to Schooner Lane for a burglary alarm call. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno observed a white Dodge van parked on the driveway and the garage door opened. Officer Nazareno made contact with the driver and spoke with the homeowner through the doorbell camera and was able to verify that the man was authorized to be at the residence. Case clear.



was compromised and did not have a firewall. The man advised she needed to procure a malware subscription to protect her computer. Initially, the complainant stated she would buy the three year subscription for \$800, however when she asked how he took payment, he stated credit card or check. The complainant stated she didn't want to walk downstairs to retrieve her credit card. The man said she could pay by check and he would need her account and routing number. At this point, the woman assumed this to be a scam and hung up. The man called back and left a message. No money was exchanged. The complainant was educated on phone and computer scams and what to look out for when encountering suspicious emails, texts, or phone calls. Case clear.

July 26
Tire

10:26 p.m.

Officer Smith observed a vehicle in the 3400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive with its hazard lights on the side of the road. Officer Smith made contact with the driver and she indicated her lug nuts had fallen off the wheel casing her wheel to fall from the rotor. The owner indicated that her jack had failed and broken. Officer Maple was able to retrieve the jack from the Longboat Key police department and the owner's brother was able to get the tire back on and proceed home. Case clear.

July 27

Noise

12:25 a.m.

Officer Maple was dispatched with Officer Nazareno to the 3000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a noise complaint. Officers arrived at the location and began canvassing the building. During the initial inspection of the perimeter, they did not detect any loud noise coming from outside the building. As they continued the investigation, Officer Nazareno approached the room where he could clearly hear loud talking from inside the room. Officer Nazareno and Officer Maple knocked on the door and it was answered by a younger woman who identified the renter of the room who was a man in the room. He presented his driver's license and Officer Nazareno informed him for the reason of their visit, explaining that they had received an anonymous complaint regarding noise coming from his room. The man stated that he would keep the noise down and admitted that he did not realize they were being loud. He further explained that they had arrived that day for a one-week vacation and assured that they would be more mindful of their noise level. After issuing a verbal warning to the man the officers determined that no further law enforcement action was necessary and departed the area. Case clear.

Vehicle

4:26 p.m.

Officer Miklos while on patrol in the 2100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive observed a gold Nissan traveling northbound at 15 mph with its hazard lights flashing. Officer Miklos entered the northbound lane of travel behind the vehicle. At the time, the vehicle came to a complete stop and initiated a traffic stop in the 2200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Miklos met with a woman who utilized a translator on her phone to advise Officer Miklos the vehicle was having engine issues. As Officer Miklos spoke to the driver, he observed the vehicle's engine struggling to power the vehicle. The woman advised she was going to park the vehicle at Bay Isles Parkway and Officer Miklos followed behind the vehicle ensuring the driver's safe arrival. Case clear.

Incident

9:00 p.m.

Officer Pescuma was dispatched to the 5400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a possible scam phone call. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Pescuma met with the complainant in the front lobby. The woman stated that after picking up her computer from getting repaired at Best Buy she was unable to access her email. The complainant had called Frontier internet services because she could not access her emails due to connectivity issues. Upon fixing those issues over the phone, she then received a phone call from someone who stated her computer

Jan. 28
Vehicle

12:40 p.m.

Officer Butler while on patrol received a Target Alert Service (TAS) notifying of a south-bound vehicle with the registered owner having a suspended/revoked/cancelled driver's license. Officer Butler checked the FCIC/NCIC and it showed the driver's license was suspended in June of 2023. The vehicle was located and a traffic stop was conducted at the 6200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. The driver was advised of the reason for the stop and asked for his driver's license, registration and proof of insurance. The driver produced a valid Michigan driver's license and he further adds that his home is in Michigan. He stated he knew his Florida driver's license was suspended a month ago. Based on the facts, Officer Butler issued a citation for possessing an out-of-state driver's license while his Florida license is suspended. Case clear.

Animal

1:50 p.m.

Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Tarawitt Drive in reference to a large raccoon that appeared to be rabid. The raccoon was last seen headed toward Gulf of Mexico Drive 45 minutes prior to 911 call. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Pescuma canvassed the area with negative results. The raccoon was gone on arrival. Case clear.

Citizen

11:20 p.m.

Officer Ericsson while on patrol in the area of Gulf of Mexico Drive and Broadway, was contacted by two individuals walking southbound on Gulf of Mexico Drive. The couple said they were on Coquina Beach all day long and were attempting to get back to Downtown Sarasota, but their cell phones had died and they couldn't summon an Uber. Officer Ericsson was able to provide a charging cord, which allowed them to charge their phone. Once their phone was working they were able to get an Uber. Case clear.

July 29 Alarm

12:08 p.m.

Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Harbor Cove Circle in reference to a burglary alarm. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Pescuma observed the garage door open. Officer Pescuma canvassed the area and found an electrician working on the home. Officer Pescuma confirmed and the homeowner that they were supposed to be there working on the electric panel. No criminal or suspicious activity observed. Case clear.

Incident

5:49 p.m.

Officer Troyer was dispatched to Gulf Bay Road in reference to a suspicious person. The complainant contacted Sarasota County Dispatch Center and she reported a suspicious person working on a roof at Gulf Bay Road after hours. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer met with the complainant who was furious about the person working after 6 p.m. and felt the person was suspicious. The complainant said the person was releasing gas off the roof of the building. When Officer Troyer arrived a black truck was leaving, the complainant said the driver was the suspicious person. Officer Troyer observed that the address was a business belonging to the company and the complainant also did not seem to report any type of crime, she just was upset about the person working after 6 p.m. Case clear.

July 30
Vehicle

8:48 a.m.

Officer Miklos while conducting speed enforcement in the 7000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive, observed a silver truck traveling northbound at an excess rate of speed. Officer Miklos measured with the radar detector the speed at 48 mph. Officer Miklos entered the Gulf of Mexico Drive and attempted to initiate a traffic stop prior to North Shore Road via overhead emergency lights and siren. The truck did not yield to my lights or siren and proceeded onto Longboat Pass Bridge. At this time, Officer Miklos deactivated his vehicle over the bridge at speeds between 45 mph and 48 mph. Officer Miklos activated his lights and sirens after driving over the Longboat Pass Bridge and the truck a silver Dodge came to a complete stop on the shoulder of the road. Officer Miklos met with the driver and passenger and explained the reason for the stop. At the time, a Bradenton Beach Police Officer provided backup on the traffic stop and observed from his patrol vehicle. The driver did not speak English and the male passenger provided translation. The driver was issued a citation for unlawful speeding of 48 mph in a 35 mph zone. Additionally, the driver was issued a criminal citation for driving with no valid license and issued a court date. Case clear.

The advertisement for LBK Liqueurs features a central graphic of a pink flamingo standing on its left leg, with its right leg tucked up. The text "LBK" is in a large, black, serif font, and "Liqueurs" is in a black, cursive script font. To the right of the flamingo, the phone number "941.953.1835" is displayed in a black, sans-serif font. Below this, the text "The Island's largest selection of Beer, Wine & Spirits" and "Come check out our competitive prices!" is centered. Further down, "Discounts on cases of wine | Special orders welcome" is centered. Below that, "Locally owned & operated" is centered. At the bottom, the address "Whitney Beach Plaza" and "6854 Gulf of Mexico Drive | Longboat Key, FL" is centered. On the left and right sides of the bottom section, there are illustrations of three colorful liquor bottles (yellow, teal, and pink) in each corner.

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845 LONGBOAT CLUB RD	19,300	\$35,000,000	6	6	2	25	\$30,300,000
641 RANGER LN	6,345	\$9,875,000	4	5	1	53	\$8,500,000
545 SANCTUARY DR Unit#A803	2,375	\$2,499,000	3	2	1	158	\$2,175,000
240 SANDS POINT RD Unit#4201	750	\$1,198,000	1	1	0	162	\$1,098,000
663 PENFIELD ST	1,446	\$999,000	3	3	0	7	\$975,000
765 SAINT JUDES DR N	1,900	\$795,000	4	2	0	267	\$750,000
611 HIBISCUS WAY	1,723	\$825,000	3	2	0	219	\$730,000
821 EVERGREEN WAY	1,440	\$599,000	2	2	1	140	\$589,000
6750 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#153	1,441	\$550,000	2	2	0	163	\$475,000
605 SUTTON PL Unit#205	883	\$378,000	1	1	0	153	\$355,000
675 EL CENTRO Unit#675	1,193	\$299,000	2	2	0	5	\$275,000



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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

Water Issue

To: Sarasota City Utilities Director Verne Hall
Please contact the Commissioner with any updates. We just recognized this business in cc meeting this week.
Dave Bullock
Interim City Manager
City of Sarasota

Water Issue

To: Sarasota City Manager Dave Bullock
I just received a call from Bikrim Yoga Studio, located on the north east corner of 2nd and Lemon. They have let me know that they, and their customers. have had no water this entire week. I was told that it is due to a City issue in the right-of-way on 2nd Street.
Bikrim Yoga is the City’s most recently awarded Legacy Business (Monday, July 21, 2025). It is my understanding that they and their clients are not allowed to use the showers or bathrooms at all. As a small business and hot yoga studio, they can not survive without their customers being able to use the restroom and showers.
The yoga classes are in a yoga studio that is over 100 degrees Fahrenheit for 90 minutes. The use of the bathroom and shower is essential to their customers and their business.
Could I please get an update on this urgent situation - and

timeline as well - as soon as possible.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Water Issue
To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson
Just spoke with “Ray”. He’s been working with Aqua Plumbing since Monday to get the leak fixed. I informed him of Larry’s comments.
Verne Hall
Utilities Director
City of Sarasota

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To: Sarasota Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson Pat
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A Utility tech went to the site today as a follow up and

spoke with Bikrim staff. They are aware of the situation and from their understanding Ray is waiting for a permit to do the work. If this is an emergency, which it certainly seems to qualify, he could have worked with DS to do the repair with an emergency permit or receive the permit post construction.
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Could I please get an update on this urgent situation - and timeline as well - as soon as possible.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

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BreakPoints



Rapid Fire Friday...

Tennis Pro Jackie answers a variety of reader questions.

JACKIE BOHANNON
Guest Columnist
tennis@lbknews.com

If both opponents are at the net, what are my best shot options?

Down the middle solves the riddle! With both opponents at the net you have two perfect shot choices depending on your positioning on the court. Number one is to go down the middle. Down the middle can cause confusion about who is going to take the ball. I would suggest hitting a drive down the middle if you are inside the baseline. Try to also hit the shot low so if they reach the shot it is at their feet. The next shot I would suggest is a lob. If you are behind the baseline and not in a position to try a passing shot or drive the ball down the middle I would lob. Other shots like angles can help open up the court, but down the middle and lobs are high percentage choices.



BOHANNON

When serving, what sort of serve is most likely to elicit a return to my partner at the net?

From an offensive standpoint serving out wide or into the body. From a defensive standpoint your partner should always be ready to be attacked on a second serve.

When at the net, if my partner goes back to retrieve a lob, do I move back also?

When your partner is in trouble I would retreat to the service line, and then based on your partner's shot either recover back to the net to resume an offensive position, or scurry to the baseline for defensive. I would only back up completely if your partner hits a shot so short that your opponent has an overhead at you. Furthermore, ideally your partner should take the lob out of the air, perhaps as a scissor kick overhead. Ideally try not to let the ball bounce. Once you let the ball bounce you are now defensive.

While hitting a volley at the net, my racquet crosses over, but does not touch the net ... is my shot still legal?

Yes! As long as you or your racquet do not touch the net, and as long as you make contact with the ball on your side of the net it is legal. You can follow through onto your opponent's side.

When receiving a 1st serve — and the serve is obviously out — is it appropriate to hit the ball back to the server?

No. If the receiver has ample time to receive the serve they should let the ball rest behind them on the fence, or they should catch it and put it in their pocket. Only when the serve comes extremely fast or is very close and the receiver has to return it because it was a reaction would this be appropriate and even in that circumstance you should do your best to return it right back to the server. The most appropriate thing to do when possible is to catch the out ball so there is no delay of game.

Should one ignore foot faults by the opposing server?

No. However, without the presence of an umpire it is extremely difficult to call a foot fault on an opponent from across the court. Therefore I find the best strategy is to politely bring it up to my opponent that I believe they are foot faulting and suggest that they watch the foot fault. In recreational tennis this usually rectifies the situation, as often the opponent has no idea they are committing this error. It is extremely difficult to enforce a foot fault without an umpire present.

Is an underhand serve “off limits”?

No, an underhand serve is not off-limits. You can serve overhand or underhand as long as the ball does not bounce before you hit it. Sometimes when you watch the pros you will see that they do an underhand trick serve. This is perfectly legal as long as the other serving rules apply. You cannot let the

ball bounce, and you have to make sure that you're standing in a legal position

When is alerting your partner to a shot in doubles interference?

You should not be speaking once you have hit your shot. Interference would be when your opponent is going to hit an overhead and you're yelling back up back up or watch out. In practicality your partner should see that you've hit a week shot and start moving back on their own. You should not have to tell them. However you can talk whenever you are receiving the ball and the ball is on your side of the net. Once you've made contact you should try not to say anything else, especially once your opponent is going to hit a shot you cannot say anything.

Serve Jackie your best shot!



Long-time tennis pro and recently-named America's Top Coach Jackie Bohannon will answer any question on tennis. Please email question you have on strategy, technique, mental game, fitness, equipment, etc., to: tennis@lbknews.com

KeyCrossword



Anatomically Speaking

Edited by Linda and Charles Preston

ACROSS

- 1 Gender abbreviation
- 5 Commemorative tablet
- 10 French composer
- 14 Informed
- 18 Riyadh ruler
- 19 Don
- 20 Certain Olympian category
- 21 Ring site
- 22 Suffers defeat
- 25 Kneeling bench, with 29 Down
- 26 Dynamo part
- 27 Extended time periods
- 28 Put to sleep
- 30 Senat votes
- 32 Formerly
- 33 Clergy members
- 34 Refuses to retaliate
- 41 ___ instant: now!
- 42 Wood cutters
- 43 Liberty, in Swahili
- 44 "El ___": Heston flick
- 47 Nervous, with on
- 48 Ballet bend
- 49 Skiers' lift
- 50 Longest cranial nerves
- 51 Bring action against
- 52 Pays
- 56 Tiger Woods, to some
- 57 Regards greatly
- 59 ___ of Fame
- 60 Clara Bow, with The
- 62 No longer laboring: abbr.
- 63 Society hostess Mesta
- 64 Jovial sound
- 65 Italia port
- 68 Koala country: abbr.
- 69 Ladies of Toledo
- 73 Pass over
- 74 Rebuff
- 78 Laptops and iMacs
- 80 Large amount
- 81 Infrequent
- 82 Carol
- 83 Russian range
- 84 Southern constellation
- 85 Prima ___: at first sight
- 87 Crystal form
- 89 Green shade
- 90 Struggles fiercely
- 94 Capital of Turkey
- 97 Aphrodite's offspring
- 98 Meat cooking instruction

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- 99 E. B. Browning output
- 101 Inclination
- 102 Lake source of the Mississippi
- 106 Sentence subject
- 107 The very core
- 112 Noble name in Italy
- 113 God of Abraham
- 114 FL city
- 115 Historic exile isle
- 116 Crabgrass or dandelion
- 117 Smelting waste
- 118 Clinton cabinet member Robert
- 119 Inner man
- 8 Chaney of the movies
- 9 Understanding
- 10 Resinous substances
- 11 Alas, in Graz
- 12 Honolulu handouts
- 13 Now ___ ultimatum
- 14 Settle in
- 15 Lens inventor Giambattista della
- 16 Wickerwork twig
- 17 Requisites
- 20 "Walk Away ___": 1960s hit
- 23 Kind of chef
- 24 Dadaist Hannah and golfer Scott
- 29 See 25 Across
- 31 Peace, to Peres
- 32 Exudes
- 34 Binding forces
- 35 Excessive
- 36 Storms
- 37 Redacts
- 38 Demolition remains
- 39 South Asian tea
- 40 Pitch
- 44 Muslim judge
- 45 Youskevitch of ballet fame
- 46 Pickling condiment
- 48 Form of justice
- 49 Relate
- 50 Strength
- 52 Touch
- 53 What's ___?
- 54 Clashingly colored
- 55 A Barrymore
- 58 Jogs
- 61 Scandinavian thunder god
- 63 San Diego team
- 65 "___ creature was stirring..."
- 66 Love
- 67 ___ colada
- 69 Spill copiously
- 70 Swellings
- 71 Tax time
- 72 Milan's La ___
- 75 Ticket stub abbreviation
- 76 Café lightener
- 77 Individual things

- 79 Bunch
- 83 Removes from a box
- 85 Energize, with up
- 86 Christie and others
- 87 Blue law target
- 88 Cheer on
- 90 Struck out
- 91 Ivories
- 92 ___ Marcus, in TX
- 93 Programmer's preoccupation
- 94 Good ___; restored
- 95 Hangman's halter
- 96 Coach Rockne
- 100 Publicize
- 101 Boast
- 103 Normandy town
- 104 Philippine port or island
- 105 Russian sea
- 108 Menu phrase
- 109 Fort Worth inst.
- 110 Environment: abbr.
- 111 Actor/director Wallach

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Art Ready To Hang Sale

Early Impact of Tariffs on Wine Imports and Exports

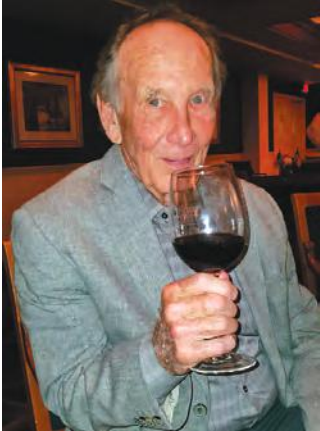
Judging from the drama over tariffs on US whiskey and European wine, one would think that the fate of the US economy depends on favorable terms of trade in these commodities.

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

Donald Trump is playing the role of the Queen of Hearts in the Alice in Wonderland revival now in its sixth month on the world stage. The Queen in this act is sitting in judgment of lesser beings. In this drama as staged by Donald himself, the lower ranks tremble before the Queen who when displeased by their balking at bad deals commands “Off with their heads!”.

Judging from the drama over tariffs on US whiskey and European wine, one would think that the fate of the US economy depends on favorable terms of trade in these commodities. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Joseph Stiglitz, a US economist and Nobel laureate in economics, estimates that the exports of products manufactured in the USA account for ten percent or less of international trade. Imports and exports of alcoholic beverages account for a small percentage of that ten percent. Even so, the Canadians and Europeans know that whiskey exports have special importance to states that supported Trump in the 2024 election, especially Kentucky and Tennessee. The Trump administration knows that small producers of wine grapes and wine in Italy, France, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Greece, and other countries in the EU will suffer disproportionately under high tariffs on exports to the US, and that beer-drinking Midwesterners and religious right voters who helped elect Trump are not buying imported wines and would thus not bear any burden of higher prices. This show of dominance fits into the Make America Great Again and America First themes. Yet cracks in Republican support for Trump’s tariff initiatives suggest that tariffs on commodities will be not only peripheral but also transitory in their impact on the US economy. Services play a more important role on the US side of international trade and China for one knows that and even is threatening to retaliate against Trump’s tariffs in part by further restricting showing of Hollywood movies.

Tariff negotiations between the EU and the US have not reached a conclusion on alcoholic beverages at the time of the writing of this article. A general agreement on a fifteen percent tariff, down from a threatened thirty percent, leaves in this Let’s Make a Deal negotiation a possible exception for agricultural products. It seems unlikely, though, given the political environment described earlier and the background of the tariffs on wine imposed by the earlier Trump administration, that EU alcoholic beverages, largely wine, will escape the default fifteen



percent rate. The early impact of tariffs has everyone on tenterhooks.

What will a fifteen percent tariff mean for US buyers of wine imported from the EU? The Trump administration wishfully claiming that EU businesses that have been taking advantage of the US will eat the tariff by lowering export prices to hold the cost of wine imports at the same level as before the tariff. Proceeds from tariffs will shift some of the US tax burden to someone else, realizing the dream of conservative Republicans and some Democrats in Congress.

Another Nobel Laureate US economist, Paul Krugman, a New York Times columnist and a SubStack podcaster who presents empirical evidence for his claims, compares export prices of commodities already subject to tariffs and shows that instead of eating tariffs, exporters have raised export prices and passed these increases on to US importers. In these cases, US businesses and consumers are shouldering some the burden of tariffs in the short-run, but exporters will have to raise prices further in the longer-run. Bottom line: no such thing as a free lunch.

The evident deep understanding of economic reality in the statements of Stiglitz and Krugman contrast with the off the cuff claims of Trump and the wacky “tariff formula” credited to Trump’s trade advisor, Peter Navarro. The “formula” includes two parameters in Greek letters that offset one another and have no role in its value of the alleged trade imbalance for a specific country. Widely ridiculed by economists, including Keven Corinth and Stan Veuger of the ultraconservative American Enterprise Institute, Navarro denies a role in specifying the formula. (Navarro spent four months in federal prison for Contempt of Congress, but from the tone of economists’ reactions to his recent role should have a life sentence for Contempt of Economics.)

The quiet and truthful discussions by leading economists of economic issues deserve more attention. A friend, the late, lamented Ed Kane of Boston College, Ohio State University, and the National Bureau of Economic Research and a graduate of the same MIT doctoral program as Stiglitz and Krugman, said that the great teachers of economics know how to simplify the subject without distorting it. Bottom line: listen to the scholars and ignore the propagandists.

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 Otago Valley in New Zealand. Currently he splits time between residences in Chevy Chase, Maryland and St. Armand’s Circle in Florida.

Rich Hermansen selected his 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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Larry Moskowitz has practiced law in Florida for more than 35+ years, beginning his career as an Assistant State Attorney/Prosecutor in Broward County, FL. He is an accomplished trial attorney with over 150 jury trials to verdict.

Mr. Moskowitz has handled thousands of Property Damage Claims against all the major insurance companies. He has helped hundreds of business owners recover millions of dollars for business interruption claims resulting from the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, and claims arising from the catastrophic Hurricanes Wilma (2005), Super Storm Sandy (2012), Matthew (2016), Irma (2017), Michael (2018), Laura (2020), Sally (2020), Tropical Storm Eta (2020), Hurricane Ian (2022), and Hurricane Beryl (2024).

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