



Longboat Key News

January 3, 2025


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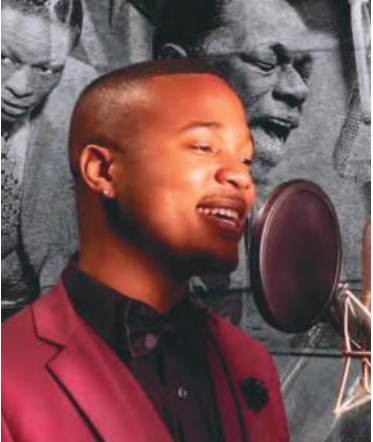
InsideLook



St. Armands hits \$3.75 million ...page 15



Naming your favorite wines ...page 6



LBK Ed Center kicks off 2025 ...page 15



Showdown with raccoon ...page 10

Father starts fundraiser for man who survived Milton floating off Longboat in cooler

When Milton slammed us in October, most residents left by car. But Joe Tessa survived in the open water, floating in a grizzly cooler 30 miles off Longboat Key.

When Milton slammed into Siesta Key in October, most residents left by car.

But for Joe Tessa, the storm left him in the open water, floating alone in a grizzly cooler 30 miles off of Longboat Key.

On Oct. 9 just hours before Milton made landfall, Tessa went out into the Gulf to repair a fishing boat he captained. However, the Coast Guard said he radioed that the boat became disabled on his way back, leaving him stranded at sea.

His life raft flipped over and a cooler knocked him in the back of his head. He eventually locked himself into the cooler, using it as a make-shift lifeboat for roughly 17 hours. As Tessa was riding out the storm in the Gulf, the Coast Guard estimated that he faced 75 to 90 mph winds and 20 to 25-foot seas.

The next day as a Coast Guard search team was out on patrol, they got an alert.



Crews were able to safely fly Tessa back to land via helicopter.

A family appeal...

His father set up a fundraiser to benefit Joseph Tessa. Here is some of the appeal from his GoFundMe page. “Joe has been a commercial fisher-

man for most of his adult life. He grew up with a fishing pole in his hand and feels at home on the open water.

On Wednesday, October 9th, Joe endured 17 grueling hours inside a Grizzly cooler in the Gulf

See 17 Hours, page 2

Longboat one of Forbes’ chosen few

Longboat Key made the ranking along with other prominent cities around the world such as Amsterdam and the Maldives.

Longboat was cited for its beaches and nature preserves. Forbes writers note the 12 miles of soft white-sand beaches and turquoise waters.

“Unless you are a local, you might not know about this tranquil barrier island off the coast of Sarasota,” the report read. It also highlights the new St. Regis Longboat Key Resort

It’s the only hotel from the brand to debut in the United States in 2024. It’s also the largest development on the island in 50 years, according to the report.

Other locations in the United States that were on the list include New Orleans and Santa Monica.

Flow rate should keep Midnight Pass open says USF

Midnight Pass should stay open on its own due to strong water flow, says USF scientist.

In the months since a coastal inlet known as Midnight Pass was blown open by Hurricane Milton in October, many people say water quality has improved in Little Sarasota Bay.

But questions remain about whether the waterway will stay open. It was closed off with piles of sand in the 1980s after two homeowners asked Sarasota County to protect their beachfront property. Some would like to see the area dredged ever deeper, to make sure it stays open and passable for boats.

Scientist Ping Wang is optimistic it will stay open on its own, due to the power of the water flow as it moves into Little Sarasota Bay from the Gulf of Mexico and back out with the changing tides.

“The pieces should be all in place for this to stay open,” said Wang, a geology professor at the University of South Florida.

Wang and his students measured Midnight Pass in October and November, and they found that “the flow is significantly stronger than 3 feet per second, so it really should keep it open,” he said.

The inlet is about 130 feet wide and 15 feet deep, according to Wang. The waterway has shifted a little bit since October, and the beach to the north is shrinking.

“The north side did erode quite noticeably during the months of October and November. However, the beach to the south gained sand,” said Wang.

See Pass, page 2

Lakewood Ranch expansion plans clear another hurdle

Thursday night, plans to turn open spaces into thousands of new homes passed another hurdle in Sarasota County.

Now, the only people standing in the way of Lakewood Ranch Southeast developers are county commissioners. The planning commission unanimously approved a zoning request, the third in two weeks for different parcels owned by those developers. Lakewood Ranch spans across parts of Manatee and Sarasota counties and is home to more than 35,000 people.

Some planning commissioners signaled opposition to the plan but felt compelled to approve it. “We have a very specific job to do, which is to uphold the comprehensive plan,” Commissioner Emmalee Legler said.

Developers convinced the county to change the county-wide comprehensive plan, turning the land from rural to more residential, clearing the way for a total of 5000 new homes.

Michael Hutchinson lives nearby and sued the county and developers over the switch and the case will go before a state appellate judge later this month.

If approved, developers will be on the hook for possible infrastructure improvements along Fruitville Road and University Parkway.

Red tide has been found near Venice

Venice Beach visitors started the new year coughing through beach celebrations on New Year’s Eve, as red tide made a return to the Sarasota County coastline.

Reports of respiratory irritation and dead fish surfaced early Tuesday, with Mote Marine Laboratory confirming the presence of the harmful algae bloom through its beach conditions reporting system.

The naturally occurring red tide, caused by the phytoplankton *Karenia brevis*, was detected in elevated concentrations south of Sarasota County in Collier County, according to a Dec. 27 sample collection by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Low levels of *K. brevis* have been observed offshore in Sarasota, Pinellas, Charlotte, and Collier counties, while medium concentrations were reported in Manatee, Hillsborough, and Lee counties in this week’s sample collection.

The Florida Department of Health in Sarasota County previously issued a health alert in early November for elevated levels of red tide across a dozen local beaches and waterways. It remains unclear whether a new alert will be issued, as attempts to reach the Sarasota County Health Department for comment were unsuccessful Thursday.

Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton Reports...

The Town Hall Hardening Construction Project runs through May 2025

Look for posted entry points to Town Hall, shifted parking areas, and some detours within the facility to avoid construction areas. Town Commission Meetings, and in-person services remain open to the public. Roof improvements, upgraded windows & exterior doors, and generator & generator enclosure are among the project components. Planning, Zoning & Building Department access and services remain fully open and are not impacted by this construction project. These improvements are funded through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program to further protect Town infrastructure from storms/

Planning, Zoning & Building (PZB) staff is ready to assist

with storm repairs and rebuilding following this year's hurricanes. Please see the Town's Post Hurricane Building Permitting webpages for information on building permitting, understanding Floodplain Management requirements (the FEMA 50% rule), the importance of hiring licensed contractors, and links to grant funding options for residential properties. The PZB Dept has supplemental staffing to handle the increased permitting activities. Building permit fees for storm repairs have been temporarily waived by the Town Commission. Our most important priority is supporting our residents and businesses, and providing our customary exceptional service. With much still to do we're LBK Strong! and will restore our paradise with your support. Extended Construction Hours through January 31st The Town Manager's Office has approved extended construction hours for storm-related damage only from 7 AM to 7 PM, seven days a week, through January 31, 2025. After this date, we will return to regular construction hours as provided in the Town Code, with consideration for individual exceptions requested through the Town Manager's Office.

The Gulfside Interim Nourishment

Project includes placing ~80,000 cubic yards of fill, at the Gulfside Road Public Beach Access and working North. The contractor is approximately one third complete with beach placement with a scheduled substantial completion date of January 20, 2025. As this is an active construction area, we recommend that boaters, fisherman and beachgoers avoid the area. The Town is working with the DEP to fund a large portion of this project.

Midnight Pass, from page 1

"Those small shifts aren't enough to indicate a serious likelihood that the pass could close again, but they do indicate that something is blocking the flow of water to the Gulf, according to Wang.

It's "a little curious in that there really should be enough water going in and out to keep that inlet (open), because the bay behind it is quite large. And the fact that it's migrating means there's something blocking the water from draining out of Midnight Pass," he said.

Whatever is interfering with the flow could be something natural or human-made. It might be related to how sand and muck were dredged out and piled up in other spots during the building of the intracoastal waterway decades ago.

Researchers are still working to figure out the future of Midnight Pass, with the help of computer models to simulate the water flow.

"What our research is about is to see if the disposal of the dredge material and where it was disposed, does it influence the flow through the inlet? I don't have the answer at this point," said Wang.

Wang expects to study Midnight Pass for some time. He calls it a prime example of how nature works out its own solutions — without people doing things like dredging or building jetties to keep an inlet open.

Meanwhile, Sarasota County is also measuring and keeping a close eye on Midnight Pass to see how stable it is and how much it is changing over time.

27 Hours, from page 1

of Mexico during Hurricane Milton after the boat he was desperately trying to save became disabled and was overrun by the storm. Miraculously, he was rescued by the USCG the next day. Unfortunately, all of his possessions sunk to the bottom of the ocean along with the boat he captained. Our family is thankful that Joe survived this devastating ordeal.

Now, we want to help Joe get back on the water with the equipment he needs in a boat of his own. Safety is our top priority, as safety gear and a Grizzly cooler is what saved my son's life. Please help me to get Joe back on the water, doing what he loves."

If you wish to support, visit gofundme online and search for Joseph Tessa.



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6489 GULFSIDE ROAD | LONGBOAT KEY

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Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



109 N WARBLER LANE | BIRD KEY

\$11,399,000 - Under Construction
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Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



1212 CENTER PLACE | LIDO SHORES

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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.

Groins

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton, Mayor Ken Schneier

It appears the current Gulfside Road beach nourishment is making good progress. Unfortunately this will still not allow for full beach access around Ohana seawall.

If groins are a solution and the town moves forward as it has been presented, it appears beach access might still be an issue. If this northern groin functions similar to the northern rock groin on Greer, there will still not be any sand aka beach to walk on by the Ohana seawall. Having access to the full beach is an important asset to residents of Longboat Key. Please keep this in mind while moving forward with any future nourishment plans.

Cyndi Seamon
Longboat Key

North beach sand accretion

To: Longboat Key Commission

Happy new year! Around 5 years ago, you may recall, the only way to walk the beach up to Greer Island was by walking over the sea wall at the Longbeach condominiums. After the extensive renourishment in 2021 the beach was made whole again and those of us who enjoy beach walking as well as those who are entrusted with turtle patrolling were so very fortunate to have sand again to walk on. The renourishment was wonderful and with the groins seems to be lasting even through the recent storms.

I know that groins are proposed now South of Ohana and some sand renourishment as well,

but I'm wondering if you have considered major renourishment as was done in the Longbeach area? Such a plan would restore our South walks and would be especially beneficial for the turtle patrols. I have not met the new owners of Ohana yet, they do not seem to be on the property as it was significantly damaged from the hurricane. It would be helpful to know what their approach to the walking issue will be and if the town will continue to advocate for us.

Patricia DeChiara
Longboat Key

North beach sand accretion

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thanks so much for your encouraging email. I sincerely hope that we don't have to wait until 2029 for appreciable sand in this area. I also wrote to William Weeks of Florida DEP requesting a review of the ECL on the North end of Longboat Key which hasn't been done in over 30 years. I have not yet had a reply.

Patricia DeChiara
Whitney Beach

North beach sand accretion

To: Patricia DeChiara

Thanks for your note. As you know, we've lost about 60 percent of our sand and most of our dunes in the recent storms. The most affected area, Gulfside Road, will receive a limited replenishment soon. Although our next major beach renewal isn't scheduled until about 2029, we expect compensation for some of our sand loss from FEMA and some sand sharing for the sand taken by FDEP for sanitization. These may enable the Town to accelerate shoreline repairs, but it's early days in that analysis. As for Ohana, I have no news regarding the new owners but continue to hope that something can be worked out.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

North beach sand accretion

To: Patricia DeChiara

Thank you for your email. We have much to deal with after the hurricanes, but our public works staff is always analyzing beach nourishment and planning the next project with our beaches.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Speeding cameras

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin

Good morning Commissioner and Happy New Year. We've reviewed Florida Statutes and confirmed with FHP regarding the use of unmanned cameras to cite speeders and it is limited to school zones (and even then there are restrictions). The City of Sarasota advises that they will only be using unmanned cameras in school zones however they are not active yet. The City does use some red light cameras at key intersections, but they don't measure the speed of a vehicle in any way. We will continue to explore ways to utilize technology to help us be more

See Letters, page 8



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WineTimes

Wines by Other Names

Robert Mondavi, the legendary developer of the Mondavi brand name, came up with the name Fumé Blanc to describe a style of Sauvignon Blanc aged in oak barrels to impart a smokey edge to white wine.

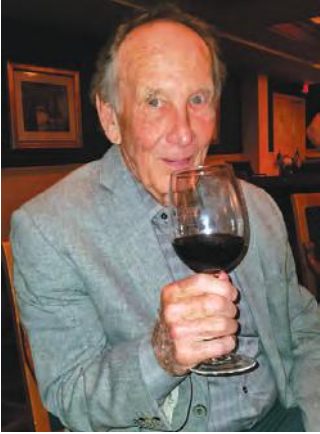
S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com

“What’s in a name? That which we call a rose by any other name would smell as sweet”
Some experienced wine drinkers prefer one variety of wine over all others. Perhaps more than a few years ago, we opted for Alberino white wine from Spain largely because we could pronounce its name correctly and liked the sound of it. Eventually we realized that different wine brands of the Alberino variety had different tastes, some delicious and some not so much. Even so, the names of some wines have a fascination for many wine drinkers.

Robert Mondavi, the legendary developer of the Mondavi brand name, came up with the name Fumé Blanc to describe a style of Sauvignon Blanc aged in oak barrels to impart a smokey edge to white wine. This name stuck to Sauvignon Blanc wines aged in oak barrels in California and Australia. Though close to impinging on the Pouilly-Fumé Appellation, the name has survived and expanded.

Wine names may also confuse wine buyers. Looking for a great Sauvignon Blanc? Have you considered a Bordeaux Blanc. Many wines take on the names of the regions where they are grown. The white wine of the Bordeaux region happens to be Sauvignon Blanc blended with more or less Sémillon to mute the sharp acidity of the French grape. The 2023 Chateau de Beaugard-Ducourt Entre Deux Mers (\$12) blends 19% Sémillon with 81% Sauvignon Blanc to produce a crisp wine ideal for shellfish and white finfish dishes.

Or perhaps you are looking for an elegant Chardonnay to pair with a hog fish snapper filet. This dish requires a delicate wine with enough finish to bring out the taste of the sea in



the snapper. Whether called a Burgundy Blanc or a Bourgogne Blanc, a Pouilly-Fuissé, or a Chablis,, the wine will come from the Chardonnay grape.

The Vouvray wine in France uses the same variety of grape grown in South Africa, Chenin Blanc; Zinfandel in California and Primitivo from the Puglia region of Italy belong to the Croatian Tribidrag variety; Australian Shiraz belongs to the French Syrah variety; and, Italian Pinot Grigio and French Alsace Pinot Gris belong to the Pinoy Gris variety.

Changing names of wines does not change essential characteristics of their varieties. Become familiar with the different wine varieties and you will discover your favorites under whatever names they assume.

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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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 4

efficient and effective. Please let me know if you have any questions.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Speeding cameras

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Ok. Thanks
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Speeding cameras

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
Thanks Commissioner and hope you're enjoying your time off as well. Let us do some research on the subject of using cameras for speed enforcement beyond school zones and get back with you. Happy New Year!
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Speeding cameras

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Tip, I hope you're enjoying your family and your well-deserved vacation. In as much as I will not be able to attend the January 6th regular meeting, I would like to bring up for discussion the issue of speeding cameras. I noticed in the Herald Tribune, Sarasota County is installing them. Seems to make sense as they would allow our already limited staff time to focus on more important issues. Any questions I will have my phone with me be sure to give me a call thank you.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Library

To: Longboat Key Commission
Please find attached a letter from Sarasota County Administrator Lewis confirming that the County is in agreement with the library fundraising extension.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Short term rental

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
In the rare instance that an issue occurs at a short-term rental in your community, we understand you want to be able to resolve it quickly. We offer the following resources to get in touch with Airbnb's team and quickly raise and resolve concerns.
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For law enforcement officers: Airbnb has a dedicated Law Enforcement Portal where law enforcement officers can submit valid legal and emergency requests for information to Airbnb that may assist with ongoing investigations. Through our dedicated portal, after creating an account, officers can securely create and track requests they make, as well as receive status updates.
In the rare event of an emergency during a stay, we also provide an in-app Local Emergency Services feature that quickly connects guests staying in your community to the local emergency services.
Nick Martinez
Airbnb Policy Associate

Casa Del Mar Drywall Permits

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
I appreciate your prompt attention to this issue. I know if we can get this process expedited it will benefit all of us. Wishing you all a Happy New Year and all the best for 2025.
Cheri McCann
Broker of Record
McCann Realty Group

Casa Del Mar Drywall Permits

To: Cheri McCann
I hope Patti's note helped clarify some issues for you so your program at Casa Del Mar can be expedited,

See Letters, page 12



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Leah Judy
Steven

We sincerely hope that it was an exceptional holiday for you and your family, and as always, we thank you for being part of our success.

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415 L'Ambiance Drive #A608 - \$7,217,000

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LAmbianceA608.com



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OnPatrol

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

Dec. 28 Boat

12:14 a.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to Grand Bay Blvd. on a call of a suspicious incident. The caller said there were multiple bright lights coming out of the water moving toward Sarasota, lights coming from out in the Gulf. Officer Martinson responded to the beach access located at the 2800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive which is the most parallel beach access along the Gulf. Officer Martinson walked out onto the beach and in the distance, several miles offshore and he could see the faint blinking of what appeared to be white and red lights coming from a boat traveling toward Sarasota. Case clear.



his jet ski caused the damage, he would cap his reimbursement at \$1,000. The complainant stated that the neighbor trespassed onto his property to retrieve his jet ski on Oct. 13. Case clear.

Driver’s license

4:51 p.m.
Officer Pescuma while on patrol, received a license plate camera alert for a suspended/revoked/canceled driver’s license. Officer Pescuma queried the state database and confirmed that the driver had a suspended driver’s license and an expired Florida Learner’s License. The vehicle was located and Officer Pescuma conducted a traffic stop and made contact with the driver. Officer Pescuma provided the reason for the traffic stop and asked her for her driver’s license, registration and current proof of insurance. The driver handed the officer a Honduras passport. Officer Pescuma asked the driver if she had a valid Florida Driver’s license or any Driver’s License and she said she didn’t, nor was she ever issued one. Officer Pescuma asked the driver if she knew that she should be driver, and she said she knew she should not. The driver said she was conducting work on Longboat Key. Officer Pescuma issued a criminal citation to the driver for No Driver’s License, and a citation for No Proof of Insurance. Officer Pescuma advised that the driver could not drive and she arranged for transportation. Case clear.

Dec. 29 Elevator

2:28 p.m.
Officer Maple was dispatched to Grand Bay Blvd. for an elevator rescue. Prior to his arrival, Longboat Key Fire Department arrived on scene and was able to remove occupants from the elevator so no police assistance was required. Case clear.

Dec. 30 License plate camera

10:39 a.m.
Officer Ramsaier responded to a license plate camera alert for a drive with no insurance on file. Officer Ramsaier conducted an FCIC/NCIC query on the license plate. Officer Ramsaier located the vehicle and conducted a traffic stop in the 5500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Ramsaier made contact with the driver who stated that he just bought the car over the weekend and handed Officer Ramsaier the title which indicated that the transferred title by the seller was incomplete and not transferred. Officer Ramsaier asked the driver if he had a bill of sale for the purchase and he replied he did not and his boss purchased the vehicle for him and handled all the paperwork. Officer Ramsaier was notified by Sarasota County Dispatch tat the license plate came back to a different car. Officer Ramsaier asked the driver for his driver’s license but he said he didn’t have one on him and did not have any ID. Officer Ramsaier conducted a vin number check on the vehicle which confirmed that the car was not reported stolen. The Officer issued tickets for no driver’s license and no vehicle registration. Case clear.

Traffic

6:20 p.m.
Officer Mathis responded to the 7200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a vehicle blocking traffic on the bridge. The vehicle was a Honda Civic experiencing mechanical issues and was broken down and blocking the northbound lane of the bridge. The vehicle was pushed from the roadway onto the shoulder to clear the roadway. The driver advised he had help on the way to either repair or tow his vehicle. Case clear.

Jet ski

10:00 p.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to the 5400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to property damage sustained by a red and black jet ski on Putter Lane from Hurricane Milton. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma met with the complainant and he said that his neighbor’s jet ski came loose during Hurricane Milton sometime between October 9 and October 10, subsequently ending up on the complainant’s property allegedly causing damage to his fire pit and coral stone base that the fire pit sat on. The complainant lives on Putter Lane and his neighbor resides at Harbor Cove Circle. The complainant stated that he spoke with the neighbor on Dec. 18 regarding a remediation to rectify the repairs, however there is a disparity on what was quoted for repairs at \$3,500 - \$4,500 and what the neighbor allegedly agreed to pay. The complainant stated that the neighbor said that unless the complainant could provide proof that

Dec. 31 Golf carts

4:46 p.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to the 6600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to two golf carts traveling southbound on Gulf of Mexico Drive. While enroute, Officer Pescuma observed the two golf carts traveling southbound on Gulf of Mexico Drive and initiated a traf- fic stop at the 4900 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Mathis arrived on scene to assist. Officer Pescuma advised the occupants the reason for the stop and asked the drivers for their driver’s license. Both golf carts were rentals from Holmes Beach. The rental place was notified and will arrange to pick up golf carts in front of the location. Both operators were issued cita- tions for improper operation on certain roads. Case clear.

Jan. 1 Noise

12:50 a.m.
Officer Mathis was dispatched to Ranger Lane in reference to a noise disturbance. The complainant contacted 911 in reference to loud music and screaming coming from the afore- mentioned location. Upon Officer Mathis’ arrival, he could hear laughter from the street but no screaming or loud music. Officer Mathis made contact with the homeowner who was in the backyard of the residence and visible from the street. Officer Mathis introduced himself and advised of the call for service. The homeowner explained they had entertained a few guests earlier but the event had ended some time ago. No loud music was present in the area. Officer Mathis canvassed the area in an attempt to locate any music or screaming. No further contact in the area. Case clear.

Animal services

10:12 a.m.
Officer Ericsson was dispatched to Sands Point Road regarding an animal problem. The call- er said there was an injured racoon on the third floor near one of the units. As Officer Ericsson was responding, Animal Services was contacted and enroute to the scene. Upon arrival, Officer Ericsson located a racoon on the stairwell in front of the unit. The racoon appeared to be injured, but alive. Officer Ericsson contacted the calling party and advised Animal Services was on the way. Officer Ericsson left the scene prior to Animal Services arrival. Case clear.

Jan. 2 Citizen Assistance

4:41 p.m.
Officer Maple and Officer Ericsson were dispatched to the 200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a signal 67 call. The call was in reference to a Middle Eastern Man walking on the sidewalk pushing a shopping cart and yelling at people. Upon arrival, the person in question was the same individual the officer has observed several times walking the sidewalk north- bound for the last few hours with no incidents. Transient was located at the 3100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive and was still pushing a shopping cart. Transient had a beard, appeared in an unkept manner and was wearing headphones but showed no signs of concern. Additionally, he was talking loud to himself but engaged in no obvious criminal activity. The subject was not confronted and was observed continuing to head north at a steady pace. Case clear.

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| 1561 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#501 | 5,895 | \$12,512,637 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | \$12,512,637 |
| 1591 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#214 | 2,249 | \$6,900,000 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | \$6,900,000 |
| 1581 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#206 | 2,347 | \$4,859,000 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | \$4,859,000 |
| 2185 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#212 | 2,448 | \$1,999,000 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 48 | \$1,850,000 |
| 4241 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#502 | 1,660 | \$1,800,000 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | \$1,800,000 |
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NEW CONSTRUCTION

453 E. ROYAL FLAMINGO DRIVE, SARASOTA • \$8,495,000
NEW CONSTRUCTION • 5BR/6BA • 4,500 SF



Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Casa Del Mar Drywall Permits

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thank you for your prompt response. I will now coordinate with our Condo Corporation board to reach out to Mr. Parsons and Ms. Fige to expedite the drywall permit process.

The delay we are facing is becoming untenable. Our Condo Corporation is losing \$250,000 per month in revenue, and these financial losses are having a severe impact. We rely on this income to sustain operations, and waiting six weeks for a drywall permit is jeopardizing our ability to recover. If a drywall permit is required, it should be processed without unreasonable delays, especially considering that the other permits (electrical, structural, and plumbing) have been processed promptly.

As you may know, in Florida, a typical drywall permit should take no more than 5 to 10 business days to process, assuming all documentation is in order. Given this standard, the current delay is far beyond the normal timeframe, which is why we are requesting urgent action to resolve this matter.

Moreover, since the need for the drywall permit is due to storm damage, we believe there should be an exception or expedited approval to account for the unique circumstances following the storm. In situations like this, it's essential that recovery efforts are prioritized, and the permitting process should reflect the urgency of restoring properties to a safe and habitable condition.

It is difficult to reconcile how some businesses and properties are moving forward as though nothing has happened, while others—especially those that depend on rental income—are bearing the full financial burden of these delays.

The impact is not limited to us; it is affecting the broader Longboat Key economy. Small businesses and other local enterprises are struggling, and some may not survive without timely support.

The longer this delay continues, the greater the strain on everyone involved. Securing this permit and resuming operations before the 2025 rental season would provide a much-needed boost to the local economy and help mitigate some of the damage already done.

Longboat Key is a unique and special place, and we deeply appreciate all that you and your team do. However, this situation requires immediate attention and swift action to prevent further financial harm. Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter.

Cheri McCann
Broker of Record
McCann Realty Group

Casa del Mar Drywall

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thank you for your support!

Patti Fige
Building Official
Town of Longboat Key

Casa del Mar Drywall

To: Town of Longboat Key Building Official Patti Fige

Thanks for this comprehensive reply. If there is any way the Commission can help to further simplify permitting measures within the law and good practice, I am sure you will let us know.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Casa del Mar Drywall

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

In answer to your questions; #1 – Yes, originally the Town code required a permit for residential types (Residential Single Family homes and for Multi-family condo's) for drywall replacement.

As a streamlining measure & process improvement - PZB proactively created a Resolution removing that requirement for Residential Single Family homes only.

Multi-family condo units; we cannot. Condos have fire rated assemblies which have different dry wall materials. They are life safety issues and we need to see those areas for inspections. The Florida Building code requires fire rated assembly inspection. Additionally, This is also why a GC (General Contractor) licensed person is required to handle multi-family work, as residential licensed contractors are not typically familiar with fire ratings etc.

Question #1 – Part 2 – Yes, 48 square feet provision exempting a Multi-family repair of drywall is in place.

Question #2 – We currently have separate permit types, so it is separate.

Additional information for clarification - The Town is in the National Flood Insurance Program and we are required to collect and keep tallies (\$) of all work and permit types for permitting requiring “FEMA” forms, this does slow the process, many are reluctant to provide with initial submittals.

As another streamlining measure & process improvement – the Current permitting system was set up for separate permitting. PZB is consolidating that process into one permit instead of several permits unless the customer choses multi-permit method. This feature will be rolled out when our new permitting software goes live in the Spring of 2025.

I hope this assists you in answering concerns of our residents without overwhelming you with too much technical information. We are working as diligently as possible. Thank you and wish you a wonderful holiday was well.

Patti Fige
Building Official
Town of Longboat Key

Casa del Mar Drywall

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons

I know we have had a number of questions raised by residents of Windward Bay about the length of time it has taken to receive drywall replacement permits. I have now had a similar issue raised by a resident of Casa del Mar. Two questions: 1. Is it true that drywall permits required by Longboat Key are not required in other jurisdictions? I understood the 48 square foot rule was an LBK rule which has now been waived. Do we have other special rules that we could/should waive? 2. I understand that some of the issues in Windward Bay involved permits sought for plumbing, electrical and other work besides drywall and that these other components resulted in a longer time to achieve permits. Is this true? If so, can drywall work be separated from the other issues so that that work can proceed?

I have explained to all who ask that your team has gone above and beyond to move rehab forward and the results have been generally viewed as miraculous. Thanks for that and Happy New Year to all the P and Z staff.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

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Steve Reid, Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Associate Publisher
Melissa Reid


Columnists
Susan Goldfarb, Sig Hermansen,
Greg Rusovich, Blake Fleetwood

Sales
Lillian Sands
Steve Reid
ads@lbknews.com

Graphic Production
Dottie Rutledge

Taxes and Accounting 5370 #202
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WEST OF TRAIL • \$2,580,000
1886 PROSPECT STREET • SARASOTA, FL
4BR/4BA • 3,444 SF • Built in 2016
Offering a 3% buyer broker compensation.



COREY'S LANDING • \$2,800,000
3444 MISTLETOE LANE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL
4BR/3.5BA • 2,836 SF • Upgraded • Waterfront
Offering a 3% buyer broker compensation.



WINDING OAKS • \$995,000
3455 WINDING OAKS DRIVE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/2BA • 2,112 SF • Furnished • Waterfront
Offering a 3% buyer broker compensation.

This material is based upon information that we consider to be reliable, but because it has been supplied by third parties, we cannot represent that it is accurate or complete, and it should not be relied upon as such. The offering is subject to errors, omissions, changes, including price, or withdrawal without notice.

595 BAY ISLES ROAD, SUITE 250 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL 34228