



# Longboat Key News

March 25, 2022

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## Orchestra buys Fruitville Road land for future concert hall

*The orchestra hopes the extra 15-minute drive beyond its current location will be a small price for its patrons from the islands to enjoy a state-of-the-art musical experience.*

**STEVE REID**  
Editor & Publisher  
sreid@lbknews.com

In bittersweet news for the City of Sarasota, the Sarasota Orchestra announced it is moving out of the municipal limits, east on Fruitville Road, closer to the I-75 corridor.

Sarasota Orchestra President and CEO Joseph McKenna said the proximity to I-75 will expand its regional capacity and allow the kind of outstanding acoustics that a new concert hall can provide.

The orchestra has contracted with the Wal Mart Corporation, which

owns the 32-acre parcel at 5701 Fruitville Road. The plan is to construct a 1,800 seat concert hall as well as a 700 seat recital hall for chamber music and other flexible uses.

See Orchestra, page 3

## NewsWorthy Lido Key resident Shoffstall runs for City Commission

**STEVE REID**  
Editor & Publisher  
sreid@lbknews.com

Lido resident Carl Shoffstall is running for Sarasota City Commission as an At-Large candidate and says he is concerned with the pace of the tremendous changes in the City and he wants to make sure that it develops in a way that will enhance the arts, the parks as well as property values. His main concerns are traffic, beach maintenance and a need for better and more proactive planning by the City.

Shoffstall is currently President of the Lido Key Homeowner's Association and has helped run the organization as it campaigned for a beach maintenance program that provided relief for a massively eroded shoreline. The group helped raise \$700,000 toward the project.

Shoffstall has lived in Sarasota for more than 20 years where he owns a commercial pool and spa company, along with his wife Cindy, whom he met in Bloomsburg University where he studied Earth Science and played football.

Like most residents, the manner in which Shoffstall moved to the area resonates: "Cindy and I vacationed here decades ago and fell in love with the area."

So far, five candidates have filed to run for two City At-Large seats on the Sarasota Commission. One seat is being vacated by Commissioner Hagen Brody who is seeking broader political horizons on the Sarasota County Commission.

The other At-Large seat is held by Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch and she is seeking re-election.

The other candidates in addition to Shoffstall and Ahearn-Koch are Sheldon Rich, Terrill L. Salem and Debbie Trice.

Qualifying for placement on the ballot opens on June 13 and runs until 12 noon on June 17. To qualify, candidates must submit a petition with at least 25 voters who live in the City. Candidates must also pay one percent of the annual commission salary as a non-refundable fee. The annual salary is \$28,149 and the fee is \$281.49.

The election is scheduled for Aug. 23. The three candidates with the most votes in August advance to the General Election in November in which the top two will be elected commissioners.

## Showing Sarasota Art



HotWorks.org presents 9th Sarasota Open Air Fine Art Show, April 2 & 3 outdoors at Phillippi Estate Park, 5500 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota featuring 60 quality juried fine art and fine craft artists selling their original and personally American handmade art. Great food by Cousin's Maine Lobster, Chef Job and more! Visit the youth art competition integrated within the art show to expose students to the rules and entrepreneurship opportunity of doing art shows for a living! Sat & Sun 10-5 daily; Free admission; \$5 parking supports arts and education! More info at [www.artsandeducationinc.org](http://www.artsandeducationinc.org) or call 941-755-3088. Christine Moore's original mixed media work shown above.

## Howard Tibbals, Circus Collector And Ringling inspiration Builder, Dies At 85

Harold Tibbals is a local legend, Tibbals, a philanthropist with a passion for the circus died Sunday at his Sarasota home from natural causes. He was 85.

His love for the circus inspired his life-long project, creating the Howard Bros. circus model, which is a centerpiece of The Ringling Circus Museum's Tibbals Learning Center in Sarasota.

He began working on his circus model in 1956, as a freshman in college. For more than 60 years, Tibbals devoted at least 20 hours a week to building pieces for the detailed and historically accurate ¾" scale model of the tented Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus of the early 20th century, according to a news release from The John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art. The last wagon was added in April of 2021.

He also collected materials documenting circus history for more than 60 years to ensure the historical accuracy of his model circus. The Tibbals Circus Collection includes photographs, posters and other advertising materials, programs, scrapbooks, correspondence, design drawings, costumes, and props as well as more than 2,000 books related to the circus. This collection, which documents all aspects of the circus and other traveling entertainment, is also now held at The Ringling.





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## MacKenzie Scott Gives \$3.2M to Boys & Girls Clubs Of Manatee

*The Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County has received a \$3.2 million gift from MacKenzie Scott, the ex-wife of Amazon’s Jeff Bezos.*

Philanthropist MacKenzie Scott, a billionaire and the ex-wife of Amazon founder Jeff Bezos, has gifted \$3.2 million to the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County.

In 2020, Scott pledged that she would donate the majority of her wealth to nonprofit groups. Since then, she’s donated more than \$8 billion to nearly 900 organizations, according to U.S. News & World Report. Her net worth is estimated to be more than \$46 billion.

Calling it a “transformational gift,” the Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County plans to use the funds to provide more access to high-quality youth programming, according to a news release from the organization.

“The impact of this investment is powerful,” said Dawn Stanhope, the organization’s president and CEO. “With so many families struggling to ensure that their children have the resources necessary to recover from multiple effects of the pandemic, this gift expands our ability to help kids, families and our community close the opportunity gap.”

The donation in Manatee County is part of a larger, collective gift of \$281 million to 62 Boys & Girls Club organizations across the country and Boys & Girls Clubs of America, the national federation that oversees all clubs.

Boys & Girls Clubs of Manatee County plays a significant role in the lives of thousands of young people each year, offering homework help, STEM learning, sports and recreation, fine arts, leadership programs and more, the organization said.

The six club locations in Manatee County are designed to provide a sense of belonging and inclusivity while creating life-enhancing opportunities for kids and teens to thrive. Club members are supported by caring mentors and learn essential skill-building, both after school and during the summer.

### Orchestra, from page 1

The property is valued by Sarasota County at \$7,335,600. The sale price is undisclosed, but the orchestra has said that the money has already been raised.

The Sarasota City Commission over the last four years has struggled with the orchestra to find a location that met the demands and needs of the organization. Former Mayor Hagen Brody implored then-City Manager Tom Barwin to proactively work with the orchestra as well as other organizations that may contemplate heading east to the rapidly growing audience that has settled along the interstate in planned communities.

The Players Theatre announced its departure to Lakewood Ranch about five years ago, and Mote Marine sought to build its future aquarium in the City where The Bay project is underway on 53 acres surrounding the Van Wezel. Mote Marine was turned down by the City and instead negotiated with the County for a site at University Parkway and I-75.

For McKenna, the purchase marks a major milestone for an organization that has had to perform in various halls with subpar acoustics. The orchestra hopes the extra 15-minute drive beyond its current location will be a small price for its patrons from the islands to enjoy a state-of-the-art musical experience. Perhaps more importantly, is the fact that the entire corridor from Naples to Tampa is suddenly more accessible to a facility that will be located three minutes from the interstate.

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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](mailto:letters@lbknews.com) or mail to PO Box 8001, Longboat Key, FL 34228. We also print letters sent to Town Hall that address Longboat Key issues. We reserve the right to edit.

## Longboat Key Green

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier  
I believe there are few Longboat Key residents who mow their own yards. I am one of them. Mostly what I see are numerous lawn service companies mowing yards on a regular basis, regardless of the season and growing conditions.  
I estimate there are around five thousand properties on Longboat requiring lawn maintenance, including all our condominium grounds, twice a month, or 10,000 lawn mowings, string trimmings and leaf blowings a month.  
A am asking if you believe we can continue caring for our lawns, using gas equipment, without unwanted repercussions?  
If Longboat Key was the only source of small engine pollution, no problem. Unfortunately, there are 130 million homes in America. So the pollution created from lawn care is enormous.  
What can we, as citizens, do to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from all the millions of small gas engines, each running hours a day?  
So far California is the only state to ban small gas engins. There are more than a hundred municipalities across the country that have banned gas powered leaf blowers, ignoring mower and string trimmer pollution. Mowers run far longer that leaf blowers. I believe that Florida will not enact small gas engine controls any time soon. That leaves only municipalities as agents of climate change.  
Here is my list of a few actions the town might take to not only reduce pollution, but orgnize our community to be good sheperds of our planet for future generations.  
1) hire an eco-friend lawn care company to maintain all currently contracted town lawn areas.  
2) purchase a commercial battery powered mower, along with string trimmers and leaf blowers for town maintained lawn areas.  
3) reach out to condominium assiciations to also use eco-friendly lawn services.  
4) use new federal infrastructure money to replace all town gas powered vehicles. Electric powered vehicles are less expensive to own and operate than gas powered vehicles.  
5) educate and encourage residents to find alternatives to small gas engine lawn maintenance.  
Gene Jaleski  
Longboat Key

## Sister Keys Cleanup

To: Longboat Key Commission, Town Manager Tom Harmer  
Hope all is well. Please join us on April 9 if you can.  
<https://sarasotabaywatch.org/event/sisterkeys040922/>  
Rusty Chinnis  
Longboat Key

## Longboat Key Bicycle Association Report from the Town Council Meeting

To: Longboat Key Bicycle Association Committee members  
Today March 21 committee members: Emanuel Charron, Richard Garrett, Aaron Kleiner and Andrea Edson spoke for the LBKBA at the Town Council about bicyclists recommendations and needs for a revamped GMD.  
The Town Council seemed very supportive of the recommendations. Future plans will provide 7 ft wide bike lanes with a 'slight' edge elevation at the demarcation of the road and the bike lanes. There will also be a 12-foot wide multipurpose lane replacing the sidewalk allowing bicyclists and pedestrians to share a lane with slower speeds.  
I would expect a fuller report will come from the Town. There is no date as to when to expect these changes.  
The planned round-about at GMD and Broadway is coming sooner. It appears that bicyclists will have to exit the bike lane to the sidewalk to get through the roundabout.  
I would ask members who were at this meeting to review this report and add corrections and addendums.

Howard Tessler  
Longboat Key

## Bicycle membership

To: Howard Tessler  
Thanks for signing me up. It was good to see your group at the Commission meeting yesterday. I thought we made good progress on a design to improve fast and causal riding on LBK. Now the hard part starts - funding. Please continue to provide input to us.  
Mike Haycock  
Commissioner  
Longboat Key

## Longboat Key Bicycle Association Report from the Town Council Meeting

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman  
Mr. Isaac Brownman, our Public Works Director ask that I please share that the Gulf of Mexico Drive Corridor Plan Public Meeting has been scheduled for May 3rd from 9-11am in the Town Hall Commission Chamber located at 501 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key, FL 34228.  
Alexandra Lowe-Mains  
Office Manager Public Works Department  
Town of Longboat Key

## Follow up

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman  
I'd like to follow up on our meeting of November 11 over at the Preserve. Can you please provide me with an update on the items we discussed?  
I'm aware that a deeper swale has been cut on Hibiscus down toward the corner of Longboat Drive South. Can you tell me what changes are in the works for alleviating the flooding on that corner and the status of the swale that is supposed to run down LBDrS toward Hughes Street?  
Likewise, what is the status of any changes that are to be made to the swales that run along the back of the Preserve property along the backyards of the folks living on Hughes Street?  
Also, what is the status of the FDEP you mentioned during our meeting? Thanks Issac, I look forward to hearing back from you.  
Michael Riter  
Longboat Key

## Follow up

To: Michael Riter  
Thank you for reaching out. Swales have been cut along Hibiscus. Partial temporary swales/cuts were made on Longboat Drive South to the inlet, but those are going to take more reshaping and sustaining due to ongoing home construction. John Skhor is aware. Those will be complete as each home finishes. A swale was cut into the corner and the driveway trench drain were cleaned out. More than likely, the entire intersection will need to be repaired and resurfaced, including the concrete portions. That is not scheduled yet, but would be on our Public Works list. We met with a contractor and drove through the Village to get an idea of road segments for future, larger resurfacing project.  
After reviewing the rear area, there already are low areas functioning as a swale lower than the adjacent backyards. We told John Sckhor and the home builder that a path will need to be maintained to keep flow moving to the roads. There are three new houses back there that will make it tough and tight, but that is the goal. We are still waiting on the FDEP Close-Out documents.  
Isaac Brownman  
Director Public Works  
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 5



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# EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Follow up

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman  
As a follow-up to your email of January 28 and our meeting of November 11, I'd like to address two issues.  
First, the corner of Hibiscus Way and Longboat Drive South. You mentioned that more than likely the entire intersection will need to be repaired and resurfaced, including the concrete portions. It's been over four months since our November 11 meeting and almost two months since your last update. It's also been literally years that we've been living with the flooding mess that The Preserve has created. We're rapidly approaching the rainy season of the year. What is the schedule of completing these repairs/rebuilding and resurfacing? Or are we to assume that the flooding caused by a poorly engineered and constructed corner drainage system will continue indefinitely. Please provide specifics of what will be done and when.  
Second, it's our understanding from building permit specifications and from our meeting of November 11 that it is the contractor's responsibility to remove on an ongoing basis the clods of mud and dirt that is tracked into streets from construction vehicles. Please take a moment to pay a visit to the construction site at the corner of Hibiscus and Poinsettia. For weeks now the contractor has neglected to clean up the mess they've made of Hibiscus. Why has this been allowed to continue? In addition, trash that has been strewn around the job site and in the dumpster makes its way on to Hibiscus on a regular basis. Isn't it the responsibility of the contractor to see that the job site is left in a clean and secure state and not the responsibility of we neighbors to clean up their mess? I look forward to hearing from you.  
Michael Riter  
Longboat Key

The 96 percent rule

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Maureen Merrigan  
Commissioner, 93 percent of the eroded sand from coastal beaches is transported into inlets. If one looks at the rapid beach erosion at the north end, one can see the sand transport into the bay and at Lands End.  
Given the 93 percent rule, wasn't this anticipated?  
Of course the town could employ continuous sand recycling via an electric micro-dredge in the inlet, to continuously replace the millions of dollars of eroded sand that migrates from our beaches into Longboat Pass.  
Look at Hillsboro Inlet as a shining example of successful sand recycling, for a fraction of our beach management costs.  
Gene Jaleski  
Longboat Key

Electric Vehicles Public Workshop

To: Longboat Key Commission  
Carolyn Brown has coordinated a public "Green Workshop on Electric Vehicles" in partnership with Sarasota County. It will be at Town Hall on April 14th from 10-11am.  
Thomas A. Harmer  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

SUV on Greer Island

To: Longboat Key Commission  
Commissioners, FYI. I was forwarded a copy of an email sent last night to a couple of the Commissioners about an incident that occurred last night on Greer Island.  
Thomas A. Harmer  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

SUV on Greer Island

To: Longboat Key Commission  
This evening at 7:32 EST, this was observed on Greer Island. Many concerned citizens have been worried about boats and personal watercraft on the North End of LBK and at Greer (very valid concerns). Maybe we should be more concerned about people taking an SUV out to Greer Island for sunset on St. Patrick's Day?  
First photo is the SUV and police presence on the North/West end of Greer Island. Thank you to the LBK Police Officers who responded. Second photo is of tire tracks heading from North Shore beach access onto Greer Island. This is really complicated, because there is no actual vehicle access to the beach (Greer Island) from North Shore Drive; however, it is wide enough to allow the Town's vehicles to access, so maybe the SUV thought it was all good.. Maybe the Town of Longboat Key could install a secured pole with a lock in the middle so no vehicles can come through unless the lock is removed to pull out the pole to allow the Town to access as needed.  
In addition, I and many other people (it is a small Island), have some serious questions about what the offenders were told/arrested. We really expect that they were not given a warning, but were actually fined or arrested from the stand point of FWC. This is a very egregious violation of both LBK laws and FWC laws (I assume). I would appreciate a response back as soon as possible.  
Terri Driver  
Longboat Key

See Letters, page 8



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EditorialOpinion

# Our Broken Education System, Part 2

As William Shakespeare put it in his play Julius Caesar, “The fault dear Brutus is not in our stars but in ourselves.”

**BILL ALLEN**  
Guest Writer  
allen@lbknews.com

In prior columns I have reported on the major dysfunction in our K-12 public school system which has resulted in our schools going from world class to second class at best.

Today, I want to cover several more problems and offer my opinions on identification of the culprits who have caused this mess along with their tendency to blame others but not themselves.

As William Shakespeare put it in his play Julius Caesar, “The fault dear Brutus is not in our stars but in ourselves.”

Problems

- Those who move into Management positions in the K-12 educational system are usually Teachers who have had no real management training, which is a distinct disadvantage in performing their duties. Have you ever wondered why?
- A very high percentages of teachers are women but a much lower percentage of women are in management? And yet, as much as I read I seldom see complaints about this.
- If you do some research, which seems to have gone out of fashion, you will find that it is almost impossible to fire an incompetent teacher for poor performance.
- The classic case of this is that of the so called “Rubber Rooms” in New York City where hundreds of incompetent teachers were placed in “reassignment centers” where they received full pay and benefits for doing nothing often for years and at a cost of millions to taxpayers.
- Another case I recall was a study done by the Tampa Bay Times which showed that only a handful of teachers had been fired in the greater Tampa Bay area over a five-year period.
- When it comes to pay increases Teachers Unions strongly endorse “across the board” increases rather than awarding them on merit.
- This is means that the incompetent teacher who cannot be fired gets the same increase as the teachers who are top performers
- There has been a significant growth in what is referred to as “school choice” as a refuge from failing traditional public schools. In many cases parents have gone to home schooling or Charter Schools, which avoid the downsides of failing schools.
- The fact is that affluent parents have school choice, which is to send their kids to private

school, which is not affordable for less affluent parents. The good news is that Charter Schools offer an opportunity.

The bad news is that Teachers Unions fight tooth and nail against Charter Schools even by going all the way to the Florida Supreme Court to prevent them from operating. More bad news is that many affluent, so called “progressives” who talk about helping blacks oppose one of the main ways that these kids can get a good education.

Friendly politicians, usually Democrats, who take Teacher Union Campaign contributions, do the Union bidding by placing caps on the number of Charter Schools in many municipalities.

Franklin D Roosevelt, a visionary, was a strong supporter of labor unions but was just as strong an opponent of unions in government. He envisioned the symbiotic relationship that would emerge between these unions and politicians ie: you get out the vote for me and I will take good care of you after I am elected.

Subsequent Presidents and politicians who traded vision for votes supported unions in government which in many ways has created a Frankenstein Monster for taxpayers. So the teachers Unions won but the losers are the kids because they do not vote.

-We now have a major problem, which could be even more destructive, and that is the fact that the “culture wars” have emerged in our School Boards and our schools.

When it comes to teaching about factual issues on race I fully support the teaching of slavery and related issues as a part of American history.

But I am just as opposed to the teaching of racial theories particularly what is called CRT to very young and susceptible children.

First of all slavery is a fact but CRT is a theory which is defined in the dictionary as a “proposed explanation whose status is conjectural, not factual.”

CRT backers also propose to teach little children that racism is systemic in our country which cannot be proven. The fact is that racism is certainly present in this country but systemic suggests that we are all racists, which as I said cannot be proven. Here again the dictionary meaning of systemic is “universal and all encompassing”

Democrats should learn a lesson from the recent Virginia election where their Candidate had his lead slashed and lost the election after he publicly told parents that what was being taught to their kids in school was none of their business

- For those who may have missed it I will restate again the most recent results of the two major assessments of our K-12 schools. On the “Nation’s Report Card only 26% scored as “Proficient” in the major basic subjects. Asian Americans scored highest and African Americans lowest.

On the PISA an, assessment of our 15 year olds against other countries we finished # 30 in math, 25 in science and 23 in reading comprehension. The highest scores were Asian Countries, mostly China.

There are numerous culprits for this sad state of our schools and they include the Teachers Unions, the Educational Administration, the Federal Government, School Boards, Politicians and parents who are too busy watching football or soap operas to give their kids a head start in reading skills.

And lastly, will someone please tell me when they have seen a President or Presidential candidate even talk about the importance of our schools and the need for reform.



**LBK**

LONGBOAT KEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

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Longboat Key News Sarasota City News





# EditorLetters

## Letters, from page 5 SUV on Greer Island

To: Terri Driver

The Police Chief notified me last night of the incident that occurred on Greer Island. He also forwarded a copy of your email. Obviously very inappropriate and very unusual incident for Longboat Key.

I have been advised that they were international visitors in a rental vehicle from outside the area.

Appreciate the quick notification to the Police Department so they can respond. That is the appropriate action.

I have been advised the Police quickly responded, cited the driver and escorted them off the beach.

I am following up with the Police Department and Public Works Department on what occurred to see what other actions or follow up may be appropriate.

Thomas A. Harmer  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

## Bridge at Cortez

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider

Mayor, this Cortez Rd solution would be a striking solution that would cost much less and not disrupt either Cortez Village or Bradenton Beach. Construction time is a fraction of a high bridge and have much lower maintenance.

Gene Jaleski  
Longboat Key

## Bank of America Branch

To: Longboat Key Chamber President Gail Loefgren

I spoke with Mike McCoy of Bank of America this week about the re-closing of our branch on Bay Isles. You will recall that they were open Monday, Wednesday and Friday last year and planned to fully re-open at the beginning of January. According to Mike, plans changed due to the retirement of 3 out of 4 staff members from the LBK branch, but that they are now hiring and training replacements. The current plan is to re-open for 3 days a week in early June and to re-open fully sometime after that. We shall see.

Ken Schneider  
Mayor  
Longboat Key

## Can we update on Ohana?

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider

Hello Ken, I would like a phone chat to fill you in on my present thinking. Are you available?

Laurel Gilbert Phillips  
Longboat Key

## Boat access at Land’s End pier

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Maureen Merrigan

I am sure you are aware but the boat access at the tip of Land’s End pier into the bayou at Greer Island is almost closed to boat traffic once again. I believe it was just over a year ago that the dredging occurred and gave great water flow to the bayou and granted access to boat traffic in the bayou. Clearly the dredging was not sufficient to last a little more than a year.

I am the President of the Homeowners Association of Longboat Pass Condominiums, these nine condos reside at North Shore Road and in the bayou at Greer Island. Many of

the unit holders, including myself, are boat owners. We enjoy our boat dock as well. Today we cannot bring our boats to our dock. We were ecstatic last year when we had boat access after years of no access. Just recently I also noticed the water clarity has diminished as well. This past year we had an aggregation of Manatees in the bayou, and the number of fish in the bayou has grown significantly. The dredging really brought life into the bayou that I had not seen.

I believe we have an open permit to allow the dredging for the navigable waterway that leads into the bayou. As a representative of nine-unit owners in our condominium, I ask the city of Longboat Key to once again dredge the access point just North of Land’s End’s pier. We enjoy this beautiful waterway and want once again there to be a large, natural water flow and access for our boating pleasures.

Thanks as always for you representing the citizens that reside in the northern part of this gorgeous island.

Darryl Derwort  
President  
Homeowners Association for Longboat Pass Condominiums

## Boat access and water flow in the bayou at Greer Island

To: Homeowners Association for Longboat Pass Condominiums President Darryl Derwort

Thank you for your letter. I discussed the closing of the cove and the need for a dredge with Tom Harmer, our Town Manager (copied above), last week. He should have an answer back shortly from Public Works regarding how the Town is going to address. This is a direct result of our beach re-nourishment efforts - and fortunately we now have permits

See Letters, page 11

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PO Box 8001  
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941-387-2200  
www.lbknews.com

Steve Reid, Editor & Publisher  
sreid@lbknews.com

Associate Publisher  
Melissa Reid

Sales  
Lillian Sands  
Steve Reid  
ads@lbknews.com

Graphic Production  
Dottie Rutledge

Staff Columnists  
Peter O’Connor

Contributing Writers  
Karen O’Dowd • Susan Goldfarb  
Matthew Edlund M.D.

Letters to the Editor  
letters@lbknews.com

Send us your reaction: letters@lbknews.com



# KeyRealEstate

## How much more is that amazing water view?

*With a water view sold for \$721.28 per square foot, whereas in the same building without a water view sold for \$437.92 per square foot.*

TRYLA LARSON  
Guest Writer  
TRYLA@lbknews.com

Not always, but a lot of times when people move to Florida they move here to be near the water. Sometimes having beach access nearby is important, sometimes a short drive to the water will suffice. However, some people want that amazing view! The view that you can sit and look at for hours on end, that helps you relax and takes you to that tranquil place. The view that inspires you accomplish great things. The view that increases the price of your piece of paradise. Here are a few examples of how a water view can increase the price of your house or condo.



LARSON

Example one with a water view sold for \$721.28 per square foot, whereas example two in the same building without a water view and sold for \$437.92 per square foot.

Example two with a water view sold for \$751.41 per square foot, whereas example two in the same building with no water view sold for \$602.58 per square foot.

Example number three with a water view sold for \$568.18 per square foot, whereas example three in the same building lacking a water view sold for \$370.83 per square foot.

Granted, there are other factors in the pricing equation besides the view. Pricing can be affected by the floor the condo is on, updates to the condo, and a host of other things. However, the water view will always give you the boost in value when comparing apples to apples and oranges to oranges.



example 1 with water view



example 1 no water view



example 2 with water view



example 2 no water view



example 3 with water view



example 3 no water view

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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.

## March 17 Parking citation

6:59 p.m.  
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to North Shore Road for an anonymous parking complaint of a gray Jeep parked in the beach area. Upon Officer Nazareno's arrival, he observed the gray Jeep Wrangler parked approximately one-quarter mile in the beach area. Officer Nazareno made contact with the driver of the vehicle, identified by his German passport and driver's license. The man stated he did not see the 'No Parking' signs for the beach area. The man was advised that a sign is posted at the beach entrance which states no vehicles at the beach area. The man was issued a parking citation for violating Longboat Key parking ordinance. The man was escorted off the beach without incident.



## March 18 Citizen assist

2:05 a.m.  
Officer Macniven responded to the 300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in response to a disabled vehicle in the roadway. Upon the officer's arrival, he met with the complainant who stated their rental car has run out of fuel. The complainant said he has contacted the rental agency and they are sending a tow company. Officer Macniven stood by until the tow company arrived on scene and put fuel into the vehicle. Vehicle removed from the roadway. Case clear.

## Noise complaint

7:40 a.m.  
Officer Montfort responded to the 6300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in response to a noise complaint. It was reported that saws were being run during the noise ordinance. Officer Montfort arrived at the residence at 8 a.m. and did not observe any saws running, however he did observe several workers doing construction. None of the workers spoke English and one of the workers gave the officer his cell phone to talk with the foreman of the construction company. Officer Montfort advised the foreman of the noise ordinance. Officer Montfort then returned to service without incident, case clear.

## Traffic hazard

12:01 p.m.  
Officer Montfort while on patrol on Harbourside Drive, observed a civilian paving crew, sending vehicles down the wrong lane of traffic with oncoming vehicles. Officer Montfort greeted the supervisor and explained that they were directing traffic onto oncoming traffic. Officer Montfort also explained that the lanes needed to be divided by cones, with proper flaggers. The supervisor agreed to open the roadway until more cones and employees arrived at the site. Case clear.

## March 19 Citizen assist

10:22 a.m.  
Officer Montfort was dispatched to Bayfront Park for a lock out of a bathroom. Officer Montfort arrived at the park and proceeded to the bathroom here he observed the bathroom door's deadbolt engaged. Sgt. Cooper and Officer Montfort were unable to ascertain a keyholder and requested the fire department to the scene to access the key box. The fire department arrived on scene and retrieved the key. The door was opened and it was confirmed no one was inside. Case clear.

## Citizen assist

12:14 p.m.  
Officer Hodo and Sgt. Cooper were dispatched to a large hold on the beach. When officers arrived, the hole was being filled in by some children, nothing further. Case clear.

## March 21 Suspicious vehicle

5:43 a.m.  
Officer Nagell and Officer Tillman responded to the area of Longboat Harbor for a report of a suspicious vehicle. The caller who did not want to meet, advised dispatch that a U-Haul truck driven by an unknown man, was in the area. Upon arriving the entrance of the complex, Officer Nagell observed the vehicle exiting the complex. Officer Tillman and Officer Nagell made contact with the driver who was a delivery driver for the Sarasota Herald newspaper. The driver advised that his normal vehicle had mechanical issues and he rented the U-Haul to deliver papers. Case clear, nothing further.

## Welfare check

9:49 p.m.  
Officer Macniven responded to Bayou Circle for the report of a welfare check on a homeowner. Upon arrival, Officer Macniven knocked on the front door and the homeowner answered the door. Officer Macniven explained that the complainant was concerned for his welfare because she received three missed calls from him tonight. When she tried to return the calls, she got his voice mail both times. The homeowner stated he was fine and had turned off his phone to let it charge. The homeowner looked well and did not need any assistance. Officer Macniven called the complainant back and let her know that the man was okay. C

## March 22 Noise complaint

7:43 a.m.  
Officer Montfort responded to Cedar Street for a noise complaint. Officer Montfort arrived at the residence and observed a dumpster delivery vehicle unloading a dumpster. Officer Montfort made contact with the operator who was advised of the town ordinance. The man stated that he was from out of the area and did not know about the noise ordinance. The man was sent on his way with a verbal warning.

## Suspicious person

10:55 p.m.  
Officer Tillman responded to the Longboat Pass Bridge for a suspicious person report. The complainant said the suspicious person was fishing from the bridge. Upon arrival, Officer Tillman observed several people fishing from the bridge, but were not fishing on the span where fishing is not allowed. The fisherman closest to the bridge tender were advised of the fishing area permitted. Case clear.

## March 24 Citizen dispute

12:51 p.m.  
Officer Hodo responded to Jungle Queen Way in reference to a disturbance. Officers arrived and discovered that there was a verbal disagreement with another vehicle. The complainant stated that a truck was in front of her telling her to stop for the garbage and she was not paying attention to the road traffic. The complainant stated that the driver yelled some profane language at her she called the police to make a report. Officers noted that no crime had occurred. No further investigation. Case clear.

## Citizen assist

9:39 p.m.  
Officer Nagell responded to St. Judes Drive for a request to ensure that the occupants of a residence had vacated the premises. The caller advised that she was told two subjects that had been evicted had not left the location and were there now. Upon our arrival, officers checked the residence which was secured and appeared vacant. A neighbor advised that the two had left several days ago. Officer Nagell informed the complainant who thanked officers for checking. Case clear.

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# EditorLetters



## Letters, from page 8

in place that should provide for a much quicker response than prior years.  
I was asked to view the accelerated closing from the Lands End dock this weekend and was surprised to see how much it has changed (closed) in the last 3 weeks - the channel is now impassible by boat, as you note below.  
Maureen Merrigan  
Commissioner  
Longboat Key

## Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda

To: Sarasota County Commission  
Just wanted to say thank you for assisting Rumble with taxpayer monies.  
If it wasn't for you five I would have not known that the maternity hospital bombed in the Ukraine was really a secret military installation and all those dead mothers and babies were just actors. You all make me proud to live in Sarasota.  
Paul Sloan  
Longboat Key

## Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda

To: Longboat Key Commission  
Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda in U.S. Maybe you all should stand up and let county commissioners know how you feel about all this. Hopefully you all can separate politics from aiding and abetting Russian invasion of the Ukraine? Or just stay silent and live with the notoriety that's comes with this.  
Paul Sloan  
Longboat Key

## Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda

To: Paul Sloan  
We are all sickened by what is happening in the Ukraine and understand your anger regarding any support for Russia right now.  
As I am sure you know, we have very little, if any, say in who can rent office space and/or purchase property on the Key. (Thankfully we live in a free country that way).  
We have a workshop Monday and will ask what we can do as LBK Commissioners. At a minimum we can confirm that no Town of LBK funds are being used to support the company.  
Maureen Merrigan  
Commissioner  
Longboat Key

## Rumble

To: Longboat Key Commission  
Was the Longboat Key Commission notified about the Sarasota County Commission grant of \$825,000 of Economic Development Incentive funds to Rumble? Rumble is located at 444 Gulf of Mexico Drive and is a media tech platform based in Toronto. Does the Town have a position on this Grant?  
Larry Grossman  
Sarasota

## Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Maureen Merrigan  
I am so glad to see you write, "Thankfully we live in a free country....," where we have been blessed with the First Amendment which guarantees free speech to all.  
You don't need to protect free speech that you agree with! And the cure for erroneous/false speech is more speech, not censorship!  
My thanks goes to people who have the courage to stand up to those who would deprive us of the blessings of free speech in the name of "correctness." Thanks for listening.  
Dr. Jim Whitman  
Longboat Key

## Congrats on being home of Russian State Propaganda

To: Dr. Jim Whitman  
I'm sorry Jim did I take you away from your viewing of Russian State media I bet you miss Stalin! Yes I'm not a resident of LBK but I still get to voice my opinion to elected officials.  
Paul Sloan  
Sarasota

## Thank you for your response

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Maureen Merrigan  
I actually did not get your e-mail (checked spam) but saw your response when it was attached to Mr. Wittman's response.  
I appreciate your response and yes we live in a free country, which allows you and the board to publicly take a stand.....it may not be binding but it puts you on the record.  
Silence is not the answer. And by the way, the county deal with Rumble is as dirty as they

See Letters, page 12

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# EditorLetters

## Letters, from page 11

come.  
Paul Sloan  
Sarasota

## April 10th Gopher Tortoise Day Request

To: Longboat Key Commission  
This is somewhat short notice, but I hope the Town can consider this request from FWC and me.

“Support gopher tortoise conservation by contacting your local government and asking them to adopt a resolution proclaiming April 10th as Gopher Tortoise Day. You can help raise awareness about the role gopher tortoises play in Florida ecosystems and show your support for this threatened keystone species. For a sample resolution that can be easily modified to fit the needs of your local government please visit: <https://gophertortoisedayfl.com/resolution/>.”

Living mid-island on Longboat Key with a large sea grape area, we have one large, female, Gopher Tortoise that is pretty much a resident, locally named “Delilah”. Last year she had a male visitor nicknamed “Sampson”. They had at least one offspring, nicknamed “Blind Willy,” because we found it in the parking lot and relocated it back to our large sea grape area. The story of the naming is very long, involving the Grateful Dead’s album Terrapin Station, but I digress.

Please see the Gopher Tortoise family photos below. I hope they make you smile and consider another threatened species that resides and is reproducing on our island.

Terri Driver  
Longboat Key

## April 10th Gopher Tortoise Day Request

To: Terri Driver  
Terri, thanks for the email. We process Proclamation requests through the Clerk's Office. I will follow up with her tomorrow.  
Thomas A. Harmer  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

## April 10th Gopher Tortoise Day Request

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Tom Harmer  
Gopher tortoises are considered to be a keystone species...their burrows provide shelter to hundreds of different animals.  
Dr. Jeffrey H. Driver  
Longboat Key

## Fruitville Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch

Hello Jen, Having experienced untenable traffic delays at the 41 Fruitville Roundabout coming to and leaving Lido, I would like to point out there are no signs in the roundabout or approaching the roundabout from either direction on 41 saying this is Fruitville. Such signs exist in the 10th and 14th Street roundabouts. Why are they missing at Fruitville? Best wishes for the New Year.

Stephen Helpern  
Sarasota

## Fruitville Roundabout

To: Stephen Helpern  
Thank you for your email about the Fruitville Roundabout. I have copied Pinky from FDOT on this email to best address your observation about a lack of signage. Thank you again for taking the time to email me! I do appreciate it!

Jen Ahearn-Koch  
City Commissioner  
City of Sarasota

## Fruitville Roundabout

To: Stephen Helpern, Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch

Good point. I'm not sure if the signs were not included in the Fruitville Roundabout construction or were taken down later for some reason. We'll look into it and possibly add them as part of Gulfstream project.

Pinky Pakalapati  
Project Engineer  
CDM Smith

## Fruitville Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch  
Well it's now been over a month and still no signs as we enter the busy tourist season. No temporary or permanent signs sorry to say. Why not and how much longer will this take?  
Looking forward to the new signs. Thanks  
Stephen Helpert  
Sarasota

## Fruitville Roundabout

To: Stephen Helpert  
As a follow-up in coordination with FDOT, they will be installing the permanent signage as part of the US 41 Gulfstream project. They anticipate having the final signage installed at the end of the project. In checking with FDOT today, they expect to install the temporary signage by the end of the month.

Nik Patel  
City Engineer  
City of Sarasota

**See Letters, page 14**

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# WineTimes

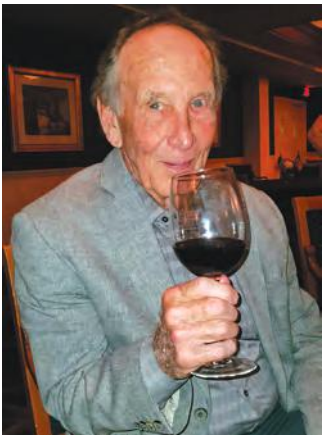
## Enjoy field research with glass in hand

Any bar serving small plates and appetizers and an adequate list of fine wines by the glass qualifies as a wine bar.

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

While conducting field research for Wine Times, we observe that many people bar-hop. Although what they are doing looks a lot like our field research, three key differences distinguish our field research from bar-hopping: we have to maintain our focus after tasting several glasses of wine; and, we have to write notes for fear of forgetting something....

Wine bars offer an ideal setting for our field research. Outstanding wine bars have flights of wine that one may sample and enjoy with small plate food pairings. Barcelona wine bars have fourteen locations in the USA: Colorado, Connecticut, Georgia, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington, DC. Bartender Ron Jackson at the Cathedral Heights DC location recommended a flight of three obscure Spanish and Italian wines (\$16). The young Diorama White Grenache from the Penedes regions of Spain and the Sicilian 2019 Abisso Cataratto Bianco with Boquerones (fresh anchovies in vinaigrette and olive oil) pair into a taste sensation. A light 2018 Biografico Uva de Vida Tempranillo from La Mancha Spain enhances the taste of a spinach and chickpeas served in a cazuela, a small casserole dish. A list of four hundred wines and thirty-five small tapas plates entice a curious person to try



many combinations. Any bar serving small plates and appetizers and an adequate list of fine wines by the glass qualifies, as we see it, as a wine bar. In a surprise turn, the owner of the Venezia Restaurant on St. Armand's Circle in Sarasota, Rafael Miccio, suggested as an aperitif a decidedly unusual 2019 McNab Chardonnay from Mendocino California. Served in the crush of a crowd during high season, the clean and crisp Chardonnay reminded me of a classic Pouilly Fuisse from Bourgogne region of France. It has none of the cloying buttery, oaky taste of many California Chardonnays. Rafael ventured well outside of the Argentine, Italian box when he added this wine to his list. Good choice. It pays to check out specials and open bottles at a wine bar. Bartender Megan at the Chart House on Longboat Key recommends the special selection of the 2019 Elouan Pinot Noir that sources grapes from the Oregon Rogue, Willamette, and Umpqua Valleys. The California winemaker Joseph Wagner



sold his popular Meiomi brand for a reported \$315 million and segued into the higher end Belle Glos and less pricy Boen and Elouan Pinot Noir. The Elouan has a deep red color and intensely tart stone fruit and Marionberry (hybrid blackberry) tastes. Chocolate and white pepper in the tasting notes seem imaginative. Overall the Elouan rates as a step above the usual wine bar. We look forward to exploring a wider range of wine bars. Our reading of the restaurant and beverage market in the USA tells us that small plates and flights of wine will continue to gain popularity among multiple age groups. Whether you call it bar-hopping or field research, a visit to a wine bar two or more times a week seems likely to replace the suburban habit of dining at a restaurant table once a week. 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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# EditorLetters

Letters, from page 12

Fruitville Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Engineer Nik Patel  
Looks like we are fast approaching the “end of the month” and still no temporary Fruitville signs. Then again it is only February 26th and there are two more days till month end.  
See below re the schedule for the signs. I will refrain from comments re the continuing chaos and delays at this roundabout while construction proceeds at a snails pace on the big project. Maybe sometime I will see some work being done. Ms. Ramos assures they are working hard at night. And as we enter our busy season things are sure to get worse.  
Stephen Helpern  
Sarasota

Fruitville Roundabout

To: Stephen Helpern  
I appreciate letting us know. FDOT will be following up soon on the status of the signage.  
Nik Patel  
City Engineer  
City of Sarasota

Fruitville Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Engineer Nik Patel  
Good morning all, still no Fruitville signs. Traffic going south around 10 a.m. on US 41 backed up past 10th Street.  
Stephen Helpern  
Sarasota

Fruitville Roundabout

To: Stephen Helpern  
The temporary Fruitville Road Roundabout signage has been requested. It is in the process of being manufactured and scheduled for installation by the Contractor. A date has not been set yet, but within the next three weeks is expected.  
Alice Ramos  
Community Outreach Manager  
Florida Department of Transportation  
  
Fruitville Roundabout  
To: FDOT Community Outreach Manager Alice Ramos  
Ms. Ramos, Thanks for the update and glad temporary signage has finally been ordered. Hopefully more than one sign since they are needed going both north and south.  
Steve Helpern  
Sarasota

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Sarasota City Commission  
I am planning to attend the Abba concert at the Van Wezel along with five other members of my family this Sunday March 27. I purchased these tickets 8 months ago at a cost of almost five hundred dollars. Yesterday, via an email from Van Wezel, I was informed that face masks or face coverings would be required at all times indoor, even during the entire concert. What kind of a requirement is that, and who thought of this lunacy? I certainly would never have purchased these tickets had I known that I would be required to wear a mask during the entire, high energy, concert! Today, on March 24, what gives you the right to impose your philosophies/restrictions on people simply trying to enjoy a concert? Even the archaic rules imposed in New York City have been lifted, as of today, March 24! What you as a board are doing, does not represent the Governor and people of Florida! Please correct this injustice before the concert on Sunday, allowing the theatre goers.  
who paid a lot of money, to enjoy the concert. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.  
Richard Yaure  
Sarasota

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Richard Yaure  
Mr. Yaure, City Manager Marlon Brown forwarded your email to me concerning the masks at the Van Wezel. The mask policy was put in place by a consortium of over 39 of the arts venues in Sarasota County when theatres began to reopen. The group often referred to as #SafeArts Sarasota also put in place that customers also needed to provide prior to entering the venues a negative Covid 19 test or voluntarily provide a vaccine card. We recently lifted that policy here at the Van Wezel with the exception of the Sarasota Ballet performances , the Sarasota Concert Association performance, and for the shows by Itzhak Perlman and Dianna Krall as these were dictated by policy of the renters in the first two cases and in the last two by the contracts of the artists.  
We checked our system and you bought your tickets online in July. Our health and safety protocols were noted on our system where you bought your tickets about our safety protocols. These were the same you found all over town at Florida Studio Theatre, the Sarasota Opera, Ballet and Orchestra, the Asolo, the West Coast Black Theatre  
The Circus etc. It is on our web site, on our phone messaging system , there was a full page ad in the paper , front page articles in the paper, I did numerous press appearances about the safety protocols as did members of our group. There were editorials and so forth . The reason for these protocols was to keep our patrons safe from this deadly virus and to keep performers on the stage who can’t be masked safe. Numerous shows and concerts and full tours have been cancelled since live performances began as too many artist became sick with the virus and could not perform. There were numerous stories about this as well. Our safety pages always said to keep checking our protocols as they could evolves as they did with when we stopped requiring negative tests to get in the theatre. I hope in the near future we can revise the mask policy as well.

As we are basically sold out for Abba on Sunday and we have a waiting list for tickets we will be glad to offer you a refund as an exception today only for your tickets by calling Janice Schmall our Box Office Manager at 941-263-6736 and we will offer them to other customers.  
While you are correct that masks are no longer required for entering public venues or restaurants in New York they are required by all 41 theatres on Broadway and I have attached the most current Broadway theatre policy which can also be found on the Broadway League site and on the ticket show sites if you wish to investigate yourself. They are also still requiring that patrons must provide a vaccination card prior to attending the theatre. These policies were enacted to save the theatre industry from another shut down which previously shut down our businesses for over 16 months and devastated us both financially and cancelling careers of huge numbers of people making their living in the live performing arts industry. For Broadway and other shows the Artists unions required these protocols by contract and then we are required by contract to have these protocols or there would be no tours or shows of this kind. We also wanted to do everything possible to keep you our audience members safe.  
I hope my explanation answers all of your questions but if they don’t please feel free to contact me.  
Mary Bensel  
Executive Director  
Van Wezel

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Van Wezel Executive Director Mary Bensel  
Dear Mary, thank you for your prompt response to the email that I sent to the city commissioners and the mayor of Sarasota after they forwarded it to you. While I appreciate your offer to refund me the money for the six tickets I purchased, however, that will not be possible as they are gifts for two couples that are friends of ours. We will just attend the concert, as I have been looking forward to it a great deal, but it will not be as enjoyable wearing that mask throughout the entire concert. Once again, I thank you for your professional and prompt response and wish you well and stay safe.  
Richard Yaure  
Sarasota

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Richard Yaure  
Thank you so much. I too look for masks to be gone. But I danced the night away for the Tina Turner concert the other night and had a blast but you are right it is not as enjoyable. I am in NYC this weekend and will see 3 Broadway shows in masks and can’t tell you how many shows as the Director of the Hall I have attended that way. Many people choose to disregard what we have said once in the theatre and we are not the mask police just trying to do the best we can but we get so many angry emails, calls and texts from customers who want people to wear masks. My staff has been verbally abused, pushed , threatened etc., a customer at the Opera threatened a guard’s life and I got an email saying they were going to ‘wup me. I am so sorry we are all so divided we are just trying to keep the theatre safe and open. Thank you sir, for being so polite and kind. I really hope to see masks gone soon.  
Mary Bensel  
Executive Director  
Van Wezel

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Sarasota City Commission  
If you read below my email you will see I got a very nice courteous letter from the gentleman re the masks. I really hope I can remove masks by May 1 the end of the season. In April most shows are either rentals requiring them or Broadway shows that require them by contract. May forward it is several rock shows and those patrons really as a whole are anti masks needless to say if conditions change we will adjust.  
Mary Bensel  
Executive Director  
Van Wezel

Van Wezel mask requirement

To: Van Wezel Executive Director Mary Bensel  
Thank you Ms. Bensel for your comprehensive and professional response and communications. I know he appreciated a response.  
Jen Ahearn-Koch  
City Commissioner  
City of Sarasota

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