



# Longboat Key News

August 22, 2025

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## InsideLook



How to not  
blow a lead  
...page 13



Bird Key sells  
for \$4 million  
...page 11



Your guide to  
the wine cellar  
...page 15



A reckless  
Expedition  
...page 10

## Invite-only meeting over St.Armands development squashed in City Hall

*A private closed door meeting between a handful of St. Armands property owners and Sarasota City Planning staff and its Director slated to be held on Sept. 8 was abruptly canceled after a flurry of emails questioning exactly why it was not a public meeting and why both the President of the Merchants Association and other St. Armands property owners were unaware of its existence.*

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

The issue started on Wednesday, Aug. 20 when St. Armands Merchant's Association President Rachel Burns wrote Sarasota's Director of Planning Steven Cover as well as the City Commission and City Manager questioning if the Sept. 8 meeting that she became aware of was open to the public, St. Armands Property Owners, Merchants or residents. She also wished to know who received a "special invitation." Burns also asked if the meeting would be recorded in the Sunshine and sought clarification as to why representatives from the St. Armands District were not invited.

Planning Director Cover responded the same day at 4:58 p.m. to explain the purpose of the meeting. Cover wrote that after the hurricane damage last year and the impact on St. Armands, the City "recognized that maybe we should take a look at the commercial area and how it could be more resilient to severe flooding in the future, rebound from severe damage and investigate how maybe our regulations inhibit restoring St. Armands."

Cover went on to write that the Sept. 8 meeting is with "many of the largest property owners." He added that there would be future meetings with businesses, the residential community and tourism entities. In closing, Cover said the meeting is "just for those who are invited."

Five minutes after Cover's letter was sent, Deputy City Manager Pat Robinson sent a memo to Cover and Burns and everyone else on the email list. Robinson said if there was another group or groups that would like to set up a meeting, the City would be happy to accommodate them. He said there will be a long series of discussions between interested parties and City Staff.

At that point on Wednesday, the closed door meeting scheduled for Sept. 8 between large property owners and the City Planning Director and staff was still on, but by Friday morning there was a complete reversal.

### We shall be inclusive...

Assistant City Manager Robinson sent out an email at 9:47 a.m. on  
**See Meeting, page 2**

## Goodbye Woody Wolverton: A lover of Longboat Key and force in our community

*Commissioner, pilot, stockbroker, financial planner and in love till the end, Woody passes at 91 years of age.*

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

What makes someone indelible?

Sometimes it is force of personality or charm or charisma. Sometimes it is intellect or accomplishments. But in the case of Longboat Key resident Woody Wolverton, all of these qualities coalesced into a singular personality that stood out in every occasion and left an impact making him something of a local legend. Sadly, especially for those left with cherished memories, Wolverton passed last Monday at 91 years of age in his beloved Longboat Key home.

No single story can catalogue the expanse of life and all of Woody's undertakings. To start, he was a tremendous football player, being instrumental as a two-time champion for the Oklahoma Sooners football team in 1955 and 1956 during their 47-game win streak.

Decades later, while living on Longboat Key, he earned his rating at age 80 to fly a twin jet plane. He stayed connected with the Sooner football organization and flew coaches around Oklahoma to visit prospects and recruit.

And his passion for flying was life-long. He not only served as a pilot in the Army for eight years in the 1960s, he served as a flight instructor as well as accomplished helicopter pilot.

Following his Army career, Wolverton worked in the furniture industry in Oklahoma before moving to Longboat Key in the late 1980s. His path quickly intersected with another legendary character of the island, Colony Beach and Tennis Resort founder Dr. Murf Klauber.

Woody and Murf spent countless hours together, not only as friends, but in numerous Longboat activities such as the Kiwanis Club. In fact, when Woody passed, he served as the island's Longest Serving Kiwanian, having joined in 1990. He served as President of the Kiwanis Club, and his personality and commentary flowed as he flipped pancakes during fundraisers and in planning sessions for the annual Lawn Party fundraiser.

Friend and co-Kiwanian, Lazy Lobster Owner Michael Garey, said Woody's passion for the Kiwanis Club was unwavering.

"Just two weeks ago, he and I were on the phone strategizing for this year's event. Woody brought thousands of dollars to our Club through his



Sue and Woody Wolverton.

tireless sponsorship efforts," said Garey.

Many lives intertwine on a small island such as Longboat Key, and Woody's, Klauber's and Garey's overlapped on many levels. Garey says he knew Woody long before Kiwanis and Lazy Lobster as they were close friends of his mentor, Murf Klauber, and founder of Cafe L'Europe, Titus Letschert.

But beyond the Kiwanis and flying helicopters and jets there is undeniable  
**See Woody, page 12**

Meeting, from page 1

Aug. 22 stating that after receiving numerous inquiries about the meeting, it was going to be canceled.

Robinson’s email goes on to say that instead of a small group meeting, the City will be holding “a community conversation kickoff” meeting that will be open to all interested parties for all short and long term improvements to St. Armands. Robinson says smaller charettes will then be scheduled based on feedback from the kickoff meeting. Those meetings will all be open to the public, he added.

Then Robinson added urgency and said the City Staff would like to “make haste” in scheduling the initial meeting. He then added that many residents are gone for the summer but that staff thought that an online meeting might be appropriate. He asked for thoughts on that issue. Robinson closed his email by stating staff will be looking for dates and locations the following week for the meetings and that he will make sure the resident and business community is noticed of the meetings in ample time to get the word out.

**Unsettled business**

The fact that an unannounced, closed-door meeting with a handful of major property owners was discovered and then canceled left many in the community unsettled, especially given the fact that twice in the last five years, there’s been a concerted push for increased density, height and development rights and entitlements by those who wish to see either residential units or hotel uses on St. Armands Circle.

St. Armands Resident’s Association President Chris Goglia reacted to the flurry of emails in stating that the Resident’s Association “Would very much like to be included in the discussions since St. Armands Circle is located smack-dab in the middle of our residential neighborhood.”

But Goglia completely disagrees with the idea that the discussion of an issue of this magnitude – the future of St. Armands Circle – should be done “in haste or in a closed door meeting.”

Goglia said that residents who are away are less engaged and to maximize participation in community workshops and such meetings in the January through April timeframe.

And nobody is more aware of the importance of St. Armands Circle to the region than Goglia. In many ways, much of his job as President is to stay completely connected to any issues affecting all of the surrounding homeowners. He suggested that the City discuss issues

such as traffic, parking, infrastructure, and how these problems might be impacted by loosening regulations to allow increased size, density and intensity of use.

**Déjà vu development**

Then Goglia brought up two ghosts from the recent past. He reminded Deputy City Manager Robinson that the City had already hosted two community workshops regarding increased development and larger buildings on St. Armands Circle within the last four years.

Goglia said that the City Commission voted 5-0 to reject taller buildings on St. Armands Circle in November 2022.

“Apparently the developers are trying again, less than three years later,” Goglia added.

Goglia finished by saying that all stakeholders need to be in the conversation including St. Armands Key and Lido Key residents, Circle businesses and property owners as well as the Town of Longboat Key, all of whom have a vested interest.

Jim Ludwig who lives on Lido Key and serves as the Vice President of the Coalition of City Neighborhood Associations as well as a Lido Key Resident Association Board member was clear in his feelings after learning of the cancelation of the closed door meeting.

“St. Armands is too important to not spend the necessary time and effort to look at its future viability,” said Ludwig.

The entire issue of adding height and hotels and density to the Circle also falls on the heels of additional battles that residents have had to fight over recent years. First the Lido Beach Pavilion plan which was endorsed by City staff and was eventually derailed after public outcry at the idea of turning the publicly-owned asset over to the owners of the Daiquiri Deck to turn into a restaurant and bar.

Then a push to add an amusement park including putt putt golf to City Island was fought and went away. And then there was the push to change the zoning on the Circle and develop the Fillmore Parking Lot into a hotel and gourmet supermarket.

Also along the way, the St. Armands Business Improvement District was disbanded after it spent months lobbying for increased development rights and zoning changes on behalf of a handful of the Circle property owners.

In all of the battles against increasing development and changing uses and intensifying uses, several themes have emerged. Primarily the concern for traffic gridlock, the concern over evacuation, and the attitude that the entitlements primarily benefited the property owners rather than the community, all came to the fore.



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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.

## Ceratium furca bloom in Palma Sola

To: Environmental Protection Association Division Manager Alissa Powers  
Good idea. The person or persons who saw this should be the point of contact, because they'll want specific information about locations and/or date/time.  
The good news is that it looks like there's not much if any Karenia around. Wasn't aware of Pseudo-nitzschia being around. That said, it looks very different than Ceratium, (diatom vs. dinoflagellate, respectively) and what I saw from the photos that Peyton included looked pretty much like Ceratium. Then again, I'm not at all a phytoplankton taxonomist.  
Dave Tomasko  
Executive Director  
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

## Ceratium furca bloom in Palma Sola

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Director Dave Tomasko  
Has anyone contacted the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, HAB Program to confirm the ID of this microorganism? I have copied Mary Harper to this email chain for assistance. I also included the FWRI most recent HAB reports which noted a widespread Pseudo-nitzschia spp. bloom in the area.  
Alissa Powers, PWS  
Natural Resources Department  
Environmental Protection Division Manager

## Ceratium furca bloom in Palma Sola

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission  
This is NOT good news. This organism is rightfully classified as a harmful algal bloom. While Greek researchers (among others) have suggested this species is a eutrophication indicator. In that study in Japan, for instance, it is stated that "We offer two reasons why the two Ceratium population densities were maintained at high levels in low nutrient conditions..."  
Which means, you can get these blooms in waters where there's not an obvious nutrient oversupply. Which might on the surface sound good, but which also means you may not have many levers to pull to get it under control.  
In a big fish kill associated with this species in Kuwait, the prevailing conditions were warm water (which we certainly have) and calm conditions., exacerbated by nutrients from a nearby aquaculture facility, and then later from nutrients leaching out of the dead fish.  
This species has the capacity for mixotrophy, which means it can gain "nutrition" by acting like a typical plant – using sunlight to turn nutrients and CO2 into biomass. But it can also grow in response to assimilating nutrients from the water column directly, which is a way that many HABs work. That is, kill off fish and feed on the nutrients from the decomposing fish.  
Not a good idea to fish in that bay for now, since dead and dying fish may have been exposed to toxins, and the decomposing fish will add to bacteria levels, and decomposing fish will be decomposed by organisms that use up oxygen, which can further add to the stresses in that system. Don't eat shellfish from those waters, as prior blooms from this species have brought about detectable levels of paralytic shellfish poisoning.  
Short term, there may be some value in removing dead fish from the shoreline when encountered. This will reduce the nutrient loads, bacteria, and low oxygen associated with decomposing fish. Roughly speaking, removing 100 pounds of fish could likely remove just under a pound of nitrogen from the water, and a pound of nitrogen could fuel about 300 pounds of algal growth. Longer term, it illustrates how our warming waters will make it harder in the future (and even now) to keep HABs at bay, as warm water helps create the conditions that promote HAB growth.  
Apparently, we as a society are not going to do very much to reduce carbon emissions into the atmosphere, which means we're going to have to do as much as we can to reduce our nitrogen and other pollutant loads into our hydrosphere. Hopefully this bloom diminishes over time as we get cooler waters and/or more rainfall – less stagnant conditions. But there is no guarantee that this won't get worse before it gets better.  
Thanks so much to Peyton for the ID, and to Abbey for raising the profile of this problem.  
Dave Tomasko  
Executive Director, Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

## Ceratium furca bloom in Palma Sola

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Director Dave Tomasko  
We wanted to let you know that we got a report of dead fish in Palma Sola Bay north of the

causeway. Peyton, Suncoast Waterkeeper's Water Quality and Pollution Specialist, was able to collect a water sample and some other water quality parameters. Through this effort, she was able to identify the alga as Ceratium furca. I am attaching some images. Please research the species to learn more about it. It creates brown/red water which is apparent right now at Palma Sola. I have spoken to all the horse and jet ski operators out here to let them know and asked for them to report any bloom increase. I have also spoken to one fishing guide who informed us that all his baitfish died in Palma Sola yesterday. I don't think there is any government agency that tracks blooms in brackish water, but let me know if that has changed. Please let me know if you have any questions.  
Pia Ronquillo  
Waterkeeper & Executive Director  
Suncoast Waterkeeper

## Ceratium furca bloom in Palma Sola

To: Suncoast Waterkeeper Executive Director Pia Ronquillo  
The Manatee River on the south side of Snead Island has LOTS of decomposing Dapis along the shoreline. More Dapis there than most places for some time now.  
A bit worried about the continued presence in that system, since macroalgae levels across most of Sarasota Bay have dropped quite a bit since March.  
Dave Tomasko  
Executive Director  
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

## Aug. 12 Suncoast Waterkeeper Weekly Review

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Director Dave Tomasko  
On August 12, the Northern Region enterococci survey was carried out during an incoming tide from 0.6 to 2.2 feet. There was black water with a high amount of suspended solids by the stormwater pipe at Indian Beach. Wrack remains on the shore of The Bay Park and Longboat Key Bayfront Park. Horses were present at Palma Sola Bay, 300 feet away from the sampling area, at the time of collection. Decomposing Dapis pleousa was observed at Emerson Point Preserve and Terra Ceia Bay, pictured below at the shoreline of Terra Ceia Bay:  
The results for sites sampled in Manatee County are as follows:  
· Longboat Key Bayfront Park (bay side): Undetected  
· Town of Longboat Key Boat Ramp: 20/100 mL  
· Herb Dolan Park: 75/100 mL  
· Palma Sola Causeway North: 41/100 mL  
· Braden River: 20/100 mL  
· Palmetto Bridge: 63/100 mL  
· Emerson Point: 20/100 mL  
· Terra Ceia Bay: 30/100 mL  
Any count exceeding 71 is considered unsafe for swimming, indicating a potential health concern. The standard for enterococci in Class II and Class III Marine waters is "MPN or MF counts shall not exceed a monthly geometric mean of 35 nor exceed the Ten Percent Threshold Value (TPTV) of 130 in 10% or more of the samples during any 30-day period. Monthly geometric means shall be based on a minimum of 10 samples taken over a 30-day period," (62-302.500 F.A.C.). The two Longboat Key sites are located in Class II waters.  
We are committed to bringing these critical issues to your attention and believe your active involvement is crucial. The official reports for this week's sampling activities, courtesy of  
**See Letters, page 4**

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# EditorLetters



Letters, from page 3

Benchmark Enviroanalytical, are attached to this email. We want to encourage you to direct all questions, suggestions for additional analysis, and feedback to Dr. Abbey Tyrna at and Pia Ronquillo. Your input is invaluable in our collective efforts to address these water quality issues.

Pia Ronquillo  
Waterkeeper & Executive Director  
Suncoast Waterkeeper

Veteran’s Day and Town 70th Anniversary

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton  
Wonderful. Thank you.  
Penny Gold  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Veteran’s Day and Town 70th Anniversary

To: Longboat Key Commission

The Town would like to extend an early invitation and kindly ask that you save the date for a special event on Saturday, November 8, as we come together to commemorate Veteran’s Day and celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the Town.

Our Communications Team is diligently working on the event planning, and we are honored to have the opportunity to both recognize our Veterans and mark this important milestone in the Town’s history.

With more information to come, I sincerely hope you will be able to join us for this wonderful celebration. As always, please let me know if you have any questions.

Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Cancellation of September 8th 10 a.m. Budget Workshop

To: Longboat Key Commission

Earlier today, a cancellation notice was issued for the Town Commission Special Budget Workshop originally scheduled for Monday, September 8, 2025, at 10 a.m.

Because you previously elected not to receive calendar invitations for meetings, this message serves as your official notice that the workshop has been cancelled.

We hope your summer recess was filled with more sunshine than spreadsheets and fewer “homework assignments” than our budget books. We look forward to seeing you at the Regular Meeting at 1 p.m. on September 8.

Stephanie Garcia  
Deputy Town Clerk  
Town of Longboat Key

ROW Hydro seeding

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Steve Branham

According to FDOT, the hydro seeding is complete. If residents see areas that are not growing or were missed, we’re asking them to please reach out to Julie Anderson in Public Works who is acting as the hub of communication with FDOT. This way we can track and provide follow-up.

Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

ROW Hydro seeding

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton  
When convenient, could you provide a quick update, please? Thank you.  
Steve Branham  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Veteran’s Day and Town 70th Anniversary

To: Longboat Key Commission

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With more information to come, I sincerely hope you will be able to join us for this wonderful celebration. As always, please let me know if you have any questions.

Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

In Memory of Woody Wolverton

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

We were just advised of the passing of Woody Wolverton, a former member of the Zoning Board of Adjustment and the Town Commission during the 1990s. Woody was an active member of the Longboat Key community for many years.

A service to honor his life will be held next Wednesday, August 27, at 4:00 PM at St. Mary, Star of the Sea. In lieu of flowers, the family has requested that donations be made directly to Kiwanis Longboat Key in his memory.

Savannah Cobb  
Executive Assistant  
Town of Longboat Key

Fire assessment fees

To: Town Manager Howard Tipton  
Great points - one of the thousands of reasons we are blessed to have you here.  
BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Fire assessment fees

To: Longboat Key Commission

Good morning. The City of Sarasota contracts with the County for fire/medical services. Since we have our own Fire Department, we are in control of our costs (and we do a good job

**See Letters, page 5**

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# EditorLetters



## Letters, from page 4

in keeping them reasonable). Coincidentally, the City of Tallahassee provides fire protection services for Leon County and is proposing a 20%+ increase for the coming fiscal year (and that's in the 2nd year of a five-year agreement).

As to the Sarasota Sheriff's increase request, it has been the source of much discussion between the County Commission and the Sheriff. And as you know, half our island will end up paying whatever the increase is that the County Commission finally agrees to. As to the Town's position on it, I would recommend we not take one. But what we can share, and what the County already knows, is that this type of increase along with the other Sarasota Sheriff's Office increases in the past couple of years are not sustainable for the County at the current millage rate.

My 2 cents....

Howard N. Tipton

Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

## Fire assessment fees

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

SRQ proposing 22.9% budget increase for fire assessment fees. Do our citizens pay this? Topped with the sheriff's proposal of 12% increase for services our residents do not get from County should we be weighing in?BJ Bishop

Commissioner

Town of Longboat Key

## Bacteria Source Identification Efforts

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission

Almost two years ago, the SBEP was communicating with local stakeholders to try and explain the different bacteria classes and standards that exist for our waters. The state of Florida uses three main “fecal indicator bacteria” to determine compliance with standards meant to protect human health. Those include “fecal coliform bacteria”, enterococci bacteria, and *E. coli* bacteria. Fecal coliform bacteria are used to sample for compliance with standards used to protect against contamination in areas where shellfish are harvested. Enterococci bacteria are used to sample for compliance with standards meant to protect public health at both bathing beaches and the open waters of the bay. The enterococci values for bathing beaches are understandably more stringent (lower) than values for what is referred to as “fishable/swimmable” waters, which is the sort of shortcut term for Class III marine waters. *E. coli* bacteria are used to sample for compliance with standards meant to protect public health for Class III freshwater systems, such as rivers and streams.

Unfortunately, none of the three fecal indicator bacteria are specific to humans, or mammals, or even animals as a source. Elevated levels of enterococci bacteria, for instance, could indicate leaky septic systems or a failed wastewater lift station. But higher levels of enterococci could also mean more bird poop, higher levels of decomposing seaweed, etc. Or, the presence of horses.

As you might know, the folks from Suncoast Water Keepers (SCWK) have been sampling for enterococci bacteria at locations that are not regularly sampled by the Florida Department of Health (FDOH). Designated bathing beaches are sampled for enterococci bacteria by FDOH about every week. As we pointed out more than two years ago, the site on the north side of the Palma Sola Causeway, on the mainland side, is a location where vendors regularly provide people with an in-water experience riding horses. On the south side of the Causeway, also on the mainland side, is a designated bathing beach sampled by FDOH. The bacteria levels on the north side are more frequently in excess of both the bathing beach and Class III Marine waters threshold values than the area on the south side of the causeway. This begged the question, “Is the higher frequency of exceedances on the north side due to the horses?”

After discussions with local stakeholders, SBEP worked with SCWK staff to conduct more sophisticated sampling, looking for DNA sequences that are associated with specific sources. The sources we tested for were Humans, Birds, and Horses, and we focused on that portion of Palma Sola Bay by the causeway. Previously, SCWK used the same lab to test for horses and humans and found hits for both at the north side of the causeway, on the mainland side, where the horses enter the water. If you've been out there, having a "hit" for horses is not unexpected, because you can find horse poop on the shore and also in the water. But we wanted to know if the horses were contributing 50, 5, or 0.5% of the bacteria. And so we went ahead with a quantitative study, but we also decided to test not just one site, but four, as shown on the map.

Site NE is located where the horses enter the water. There was, and often is, evidence of horse poop in the water on the day of sampling, as well as on days when we've done macroalgae sampling in the bay. By the way, in case you didn't know this, horse poop tends to float, not sink, and so can get blown around by wind and tides. More on this later. Site NW is also on the north side of the causeway, but over on the west side by the dock. Site SW is on the south side of the causeway, east of the boat ramp. Site SE is on the south side of the causeway, on the mainland end, by the designated bathing beach that is sampled by FDOH.

Our first sampling event found the following:

NE – no evidence of birds or humans, but a bit for horses as a source of bacteria. However, the levels for horse-associated bacteria were determined to be “detected not quantified” or DNQ, which means that the “... host-associated fecal biomarker was detected in both replicates, but in quantities below the limit of quantification.” The limit of quantification is defined as “... the smallest amount...which can be measured and quantified with defined precision and accuracy...”

NW – no evidence of birds or humans as a source of bacteria, but a DNQ level hit for horses.

SW – no evidence of birds, humans, or horses as a source of bacteria.

SE – no evidence of humans as a source of bacteria, but evidence of both birds and horses,

both at DNQ levels.

At the same time, and same locations, SCWK results showed levels of enterococci were lower than both bathing beach and Class III Marine waters criteria at sites, NW, SW, and SE, but values at the NE site were above both bathing beach and Class III Marine waters criteria.

So...the highest levels of enterococci were at the site where the horses enter the water, where we also detected horses as a source. But an influence from horses was found at three of the four sites sampled, including the designated bathing beach where FDOH samples. Even when the overall level of bacteria at the FDOH site met bathing beach standards. Humans were not detected as a source at any site, while birds were detected as a source at the SE site, where FDOH samples.

What does all this mean? The lab techniques are really impressive, for one thing, as both birds and horses were detected as sources of bacteria at the SE site, even when the enterococci levels were low enough to result in compliance with bathing beach standards. Also, the bacteria associated with horses appear to be able to be detected at locations other than the location where the horses enter the water. Detections of horses as a source of bacteria at an FDOH-designated bathing beach are troubling, obviously, and likely will result in some sort of management action, moving forward. SBEP is not a regulatory agency, but members of our Management and Policy Boards are; thus, this note to our Management and Policy Boards.

We have funding still for several more sampling efforts, and we will report those findings as they come in. Right now, our approach is to repeat the same effort at the same locations, in coordination with SCWK, so that we can help interpret the source(s) of fecal indicator bacteria in Palma Sola Bay. Please reach out to me with any questions or concerns.

Dave Tomasko

Executive Director

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

## Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I think I like SRQs better

BJ Bishop

Commissioner


Town of Longboat Key

## Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

I believe in Sarasota they are part of the county government. These two organizational

**See Letters, page 6**



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Letters, from page 5

structures are the most common in Florida.  
Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton  
I did not know that. Same for SRQ?  
BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop  
The Manatee Mosquito Control is not a county department but their own taxing district. I met with the Director when I first came on board and I will reach out to see how we can get to a better place than the current status.  
Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton  
Can you call the County Administrator? I can verify mosquitoes are as bad as I have ever seen them?  
BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Concerned Residents of The Village re Manatee Mosquito Control

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop  
My name is Kathleen Yow and my husband Richard and I reside at Cedar St. within The Historic Village. While we understand that the Town of Longboat Key does not offer mosquito control services or otherwise direct the Manatee County Mosquito Control Office, a recent conversation with frustrated neighbors led us to you. The community at large has been struggling for months with mosquitoes and our calls to Mosquito Control, specifically Chris Lesser, have been summarily dismissed as he and his office is of the opinion that Longboat has

organized a “call-in campaign” to target his office and that we (the residents of Longboat) have a feeling of “entitlement”. I can assure you that neither of these claims have any merit and that Mr. Lesser’s office is doing everything possible to retaliate against us by refusing to spray when necessary. Attached to this email you will find correspondence had between Mr. Lesser, my husband and myself which clearly illustrates his disgust with Longboat Key and unwillingness to assist with a vital health concern.

A little background information may be useful when reading the attached emails.....

1. We contacted their office back in June and an agent came out and said he did not see any activity in our yard yet once he opened the gate to the back, he was covered in what he called salt marsh mosquitoes. The agent advised he could not spray for that insect and could not spray because it was behind our house and along the alleyway.
2. We reach out to the office again seeking assistance in July. The agent met me at the house early in the morning and stated he couldn’t spray because he was not getting bitten. My husband then reach out the following day for a follow-up visit at which time he met with Wesley and explained how terrible the mosquito activity was primarily in the afternoon. Again, we were denied services. Ironically enough, our neighbor called them the same day and their yard was sprayed.
3. Our neighbor behind us on Linley requested a service call and Mr. Lesser told her in so many words that Longboat Key residents have a feeling of entitlement, sent an agent out and of course he did not spray despite the fact there was standing water on her property.
4. Disappointed by the correspondence with Mr. Lesser, my husband left a Google review on their website detailing our encounter with him and his failure to act. As a form of revenge, Mr. Lesser, we believe, had a third party leave a fraudulent review on our company website (see attached) which included much of the same terminology used in my husband’s original review. Once Mr. Lesser was called out for this fake review, it was immediately removed.

We are frustrated! Yesterday my neighbor Jill Nemeth requested mosquito services and she too was denied despite having swarms around her house. While I am not sure what if any steps can be taken by the Town, I felt it was imperative to let you know how the Mosquito Control Office views our beautiful island and its residents. We pay for mosquito control services and according to Mr. Lesser, they will “no longer service our home” which is totally unacceptable.

Thank you for your time and attention to this matter. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Kathleen Yow  
Longboat Key

Property taxes

To: Florida League of Cities Casey Cook  
Casey- I have already asked for a LBK data packet and Jon confirmed it’s in the works. Thanks for other info. I took lots of notes but I don’t want to get too deep in the weeds with the media.  
Lots to absorb last week. Still reeling from the DOGE guy.  
BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 8

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# EditorLetters



**Letters, from page 6**  
**Property taxes**

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

Here is the link to the property tax resource page. Attached are two documents from the toolkit that can serve as a guide when discussing property taxes with the public and / or media. You may also want to look at one of the data packets (the dots on the map) and that can give you some other ideas when specifically talking about the impacts of eliminating homestead property taxes. We have not done one yet for Longboat Key, but I can get the analysts started on one if you are interested. I think it would be especially helpful when meeting with your legislators. Give me a call if these miss the mark or you're looking for something else.

Casey Cook  
Chief of Legislative Affairs  
Florida League of Cities, Inc.

**Property taxes**

To: Florida League of Cities Casey Cook

Not sure which of you to reach out on this issue, but FLC's talking points on property taxes would be very helpful. I am arranging meetings with all of our Sarasota/Bradenton elected officials and have been invited to do a segment on the ABC news here in Sarasota.

BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Longboat Key

**Water**

To: Ray Rajewski

Absolutely, sir. It was a pleasure meeting with you in person, and I appreciate you guiding me around your beautiful home to help identify the issue. I checked the meter usage this morning, and it looks like we've resolved the problem—there's no more random flow in your water usage. If you need any further assistance in the future, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Jessie Camburn  
Public Works, Town of Longboat Key

**Water**

To: Longboat Key Public Works Jessie Camburn

Jessie, thanks for stopping by and finding the problem. I appreciate what you all do for Longboat residents.

Ray Rajewski  
Longboat Key

**Model Municipal Tree Ordinance**

To: Sarasota City Manager Dave Bullock

Please see the attached documentation per the Model Municipal Tree Ordinance agenda item presentation request for potentially October 2025, but we are still in discussion and it needs coordination and confirmation with the presenter Mr. Snow.

For now, my only request is for you to have a quick look at the information and provide feedback. I will be talking to Mr. Snow soon to go over the presentation before we schedule the Commission presentation. We can go over your thoughts during our next meeting.

Jen Ahearn-Koch  
City Commissioner, City of Sarasota

**Model Municipal Tree Ordinance**

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch

As requested, I've attached the PDF from our presentation so you can share it with your colleagues at the League of Cities.

The key point here is that terms have definitions and we all need to be clear on what they mean and how they are applied. I came across another great example today of the mixed signals and inappropriate terms:

Standards. At least one (1) of the following standards Shall apply in order for a tree to be designated a specimen tree:

1. Size. Trees with a thirty (30) inch caliper or greater, singly or with a combined trunk, measured at fifty-four (54) inches from the surface of the ground shall be specimen trees unless otherwise classified in this chapter.
2. Age. Trees that are determined to be at least one hundred (100) years old or to be at approximately half-life maturity and are in good health.
3. Form. Trees that are determined to have a unique form or shape, due to geography, climate, environmental or natural growth habitat conditions, and are in good health.
4. Ecological Value. Trees that are determined to have an ecological value to the County in terms of soil or water conservation and management, wildlife habitat, or endemic native flora habitat, and are in good health.
5. Rarity. Trees that are determined to be non-indigenous, rare, or unique to the County, and are in good health. As you can see, the term caliper is misapplied and actually refers to Diameter at Breast Height (DBH).

More importantly, just about anyone could argue that any term provides Ecological Value so why is that even in there when they are trying to define "specimen" tree (a poor term as well). Sorry for the rant, I just needed to share with you.

John Harris and I would definitely like to be presenters for the League of Cities as subject matter experts. Attending the annual conference and speaking would be beneficial, but in the short term, a webinar or podcast series would be a great alternative. We need to start getting the word out and receiving feedback from the League of Cities members. It's critical to the effort.

Also, as discussed, let me know about the 7 minutes in Sarasota. Happy to help!

John Snow  
Senior Urban and Community Forester  
Tree Check Up

**Model Municipal Tree Ordinance**

To: John Snow

I'm confident that Rachel grossly underestimated the City's contribution to the tree event, considering SPD and public works personnel costs. So I don't think it would be prudent to make the commitment she's asking for. Can we help in some other way this year? Reach out to philanthropists? Any ideas?

Debbie Trice  
Vice Mayor  
City of Sarasota

**Holiday Decorations on St. Armands Circle**

To: Sarasota City Commission

In March, I met with you regarding the 2025 Holiday Season on St. Armands Circle. At that time, only 75 of the potential 150 merchants had reopened. As I explained, merchants are responsible for renovation and restoration costs, had to repurchase merchandise and equipment, and had experienced a very slow season due to lack of tourists and residents being unable to occupy their homes. I shared the concern of the Board of Directors about charging for membership which funds the installation of the St. Armands Christmas Tree. Unfortunately, the summer continued this slow trend, becoming one of the worst financially on record for the district.

Our merchants are expressing a desire to rejoin our Association, but can not afford the dues. In an attempt to make membership accessible for all, our dues are tiered based on size, \$600, \$900, \$1,200, and \$1,800 annually. We are even accepting monthly payments of \$150 from merchants, but this is still proving to be a struggle for many. As you are aware, the landowners pass all costs associated with the units to the tenants through triple net leases, including maintenance, repairs and taxes. Rent is some of the highest in the area, averaging between \$100-\$150 sqft vs downtown at about \$50 sqft. We are just over 60% occupied, with only 90 businesses open, and others still unopened or leaving the district due to permitting issues.

With only 30 businesses open last December, our Board and merchants felt it was important to show the resiliency of the district. The St. Armands Circle Association, because of a donation from a private business owner, was able to fully fund the \$40,000 installation of the Christmas Tree and host Holiday Night for the community, as we have done every first Friday of December for over 45 years. This was a difficult decision and a stretch financially for our association, but one that we felt was important to show that St. Armands Circle will endure!

See Letters, page 12



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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.

## Aug. 15 Civil

8:54 a.m.  
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Longboat Club Road in reference to a verbal disturbance in the front office between a condominium unit owner and a staff member. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma met with the unit owner and the staff member in the front lobby. Officer Pescuma spoke with the unit owner and she said that there were maintenance workers that needed to access her utility closet to install wires unbeknownst to her. The owner said that she was not notified and was unsure as to why they needed to access her unit. A verbal argument occurred between the guest and the employee as a result of the matter. Officer Pescuma advised both that this was an HOA matter and any grievances should be routed through the HOA Board. Officer Pescuma advised the woman that rather than trying to resolve it in person, the matter may be better suited to email to avoid confrontation. The woman left the lobby without incident. Case clear.

## Alarm

9:22 a.m.  
Officer Butler was dispatched to Roundtree Drive in regard to a burglar alarm. Upon arrival, Officer Butler met with the individual who was working on the house and he said the owner was not at home and he accidentally set off the alarm. The alarm silenced with proper code and the homeowner was contacted and confirmed the workers at the home. Case clear.

## Raccoon

8:51 p.m.  
Officer Ericsson responded to North Shore Road about an animal problem involving a sick raccoon. Officer Ericsson was contacted by the caller who stated her contractor told her there was a sick raccoon in the open garage of her neighbor. St. Montfort and Officer Ericsson checked the garage and discovered the raccoon had left prior to the officers' arrival. The caller was notified. Case clear.

## Aug. 16 Property

12:44 p.m.  
Officer Van Dyke responded to Longboat Drive South in reference to a citizen assist. Upon arrival, Officer Van Dyke spoke to the builder of the property. He advised that a dump truck had backed into his property's backflow and damaged it so severely that he's unable to remove it. Additionally, his plumber isn't available. Officer Van Dyke then spoke to the Longboat Key on-call utility employee and he advised to give his phone number to the builder. Case clear.

## Reckless Driver

6:34 p.m.  
Officer Mathis responded to the 6300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a reckless driver. Officer Mathis then spoke with the driver who advised he was traveling North on Gulf of Mexico Drive behind a newer Ford Expedition. The driver advised that the Expedition was traveling at a slow speed, around 30 mph. The driver further advised that once the roadway was open and he was able to pass he did so and while overtaking the Expedition the vehicle swerved into his lane in what the driver articulated as a maneuver to run him off the roadway. The driver continued and pulled off the roadway at his earliest convenience to immediately contact law enforcement to report the reckless driver. Officer Mathis spoke with the driver via telephone and he advised that the Expedition continued north over the Longboat Pass Bridge. The driver gave the officer the license plate information for the Expedition and he ran the information and found it is not assigned to a vehicle. A check of the camera system also yielded negative results. The information was passed onto neighboring agencies. Case clear.



## Aug. 17 Vehicle

12:32 a.m.  
Officer Mathis while on patrol in the Broadway Beach Access observed a vehicle parked in front of the posted 'No Parking 11 p.m. - 5 a.m.' sign. The vehicle was not at the location at an earlier check. Officer Mathis then parked his patrol car behind the illegally parked vehicle. The vehicle was unoccupied and warm to the touch. Officer Mathis then made his way down the boardwalk to the beach from the Broadway parking lot. It was at the end of the boardwalk near where he came into contact with a man and woman hastily getting dressed while walking. Officer Mathis identified himself and explained why he was speaking with them. During this time, both had items in their hands they were trying to hide and shove in their pockets. The woman advised that they were just having sex on the beach and the items she had in her hand was her underwear. The man refused to remove his hands from his pockets and appeared to be grasping an item inside his front right pocket with a clinched fist. Officer Mathis then again gave the man verbal instruction to remove his hand from his pocket at which time the man complied and held up his underwear. The man advised he did not have time to put them back on before coming out. Officer Mathis then escorted both parties back to their vehicle. Both explained that they are in a relationship and reside together, the woman further explained that they were in town for a friend's birthday and were just having fun on the beach. Officer Mathis explained to both that they were in violation of the Town of Longboat Key's ordinances for the after hours parking which was clearly posted in plain view in front of their parked car, as well as multiple signs they walked past indicating the beach was closed after 11 p.m. The woman said she saw the signs but they wanted to see the lights and have fun on the beach. Both the man and woman were check through ELVIS which returned no wants or warrants for either party. Both were cited for being on the beach after hours and both signed the court copy of the citation. The man was also cited for the parking violation of being parked after hours. Both were told the process to pay or contest the citations and provided copies. The man and woman then entered their vehicle and left Longboat Key.

## Trespassing

8:13 p.m.  
Sgt. Montfort while on patrol in the area of the guard house at the 300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive, was flagged down by the on duty security officer. The security guard stated he just denied access to a white Honda Pilot. The security guard said that the subjects were attempting to access the golf course for fishing. Once the vehicle turned around, they entered the restaurant parking lot and walked on foot around the security gate. Sgt. Montfort was then contacted by the on duty security supervisor who wished to have the subjects trespass if located. Officer Mathis and Sgt. Montfort located the people at the rear of Longboat Club Road about to enter the golf course. The subjects apologized and Security Officer was contacted who proceeded to the location. Officers obtained the information from the mentioned persons and trespassing warnings were issued. Security was provided for their records and trespassing warnings were entered into teletype. The subjects departed the area and advised not to return to any of hte properties owned by the club. Case clear.

## Aug. 18 Civil

5:13 p.m.  
Officer Tillman responded to the police station to the report of a civil incident with a landlord. After speaking with the complainant it was determined to be a landlord tenant dispute. The complainant is not out of any money and does not owe the landlord any money. The complainant had questions concerning leases and documents that would be considered legal. The complainant stated that he is not in a contract and is going to move out today. Case clear.

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Woody, from page 1

ably an even more important aspect to life and that is love.

And maybe through all of Wolverton’s wanderings, the day he walked into Coldwell Banker on the south end of the island turned truly transformative. It is there he met Sue Louis.

Louis served as the Managing Broker and although nothing developed immediately, it was that meeting that led Wolverton to find the love of his life and Sue became the person he shared the final decades of his life. And while the causation of love remains always a mystery, the fact that Sue was a pilot and her three children had all graduated from Oklahoma State created an instant bond. In fact, it was Woody who asked Sue on their first date if she rooted for any college football teams and she immediately blurted out, “Yes, the Sooners!”

Soon after their first date, Wolverton lost a Bijon Frise puppy after it drowned in his pool. This left Wolverton, who was very attached to his dogs, devastated. Sue helped Wolverton during his grief and their love never waned.

In true Longboat style, Woody and Sue married on New Year’s Day 2006 at the former Colony Beach & Tennis Resort. Sarasotan Bob Roskamp performed the ceremony in front of more than 120 guests and employed an American Indian clay vessel from New Mexico that depicted symbols for marriage including a mountain, a house and fertility. He joked at the service, “You better watch out Sue,” after he said the word fertility.

Beyond love and the Kiwanis, Wolverton served as a stockbroker, financial advisor, and as a Longboat Key Town Commissioner in the 1990s.

For former Republican Club President Joe McElmeel, Woody was not only highly educated with Engineering degrees, but also a sizeable allocation of street smarts and could acclimate into any social situation with ease.

“Woody was a guy you could always count on. He was fun. He would say things for effect and was an instigator but was



Woody and Joe McElmeel

never a mean person,” said McElmeel.

McElmeel said that the smartest thing Woody ever did was marry Sue, but added, “The stupidest thing Woody did was marry his first wife twice and divorce her twice.”

McElmeel said they would tease him about that all in good fun and as part of the camaraderie Woody both enjoyed and brought to most any social setting.

McElmeel said that Woody was truly an American and loved his country and was the consummate Republican.

“Most Republicans are laid back and docile. Woody was not,” added McElmeel.

And while it will be difficult for his wife Sue and son Brendan following his passing, one thing is certain: Their lives, the lives of countless Longboat Key residents and the island itself were all fortunate to have someone with as much zest, zeal and passion for life as Woody Wolverton.

A funeral mass for Woody will be held at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Aug. 27 at St. Mary’s Star of the Sea Catholic Church on Longboat Key.



Sue and Woody married by Bob Roskamp at the Colony

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Letters, from page 8

We lost many of our decorations and all of our string lights due to the flood water, salt corrosion, and mold. With regular upkeep of decorations, wrapping the palm trees and light poles, we can incur an additional \$20,000 a year in expenses.

Fundraising to continue this tradition has been nearly impossible. Our Board of Directors and I are turning to you. As I was told by many of you, paying for the installation of the holiday decorations in 2025 may not be possible due to your own budget constraints after the hurricanes. While we appreciate the City co-sponsoring with City services each year for Holiday Night, the average cost to the City is only \$2,500. In comparison to other districts, we are the least expensive of all the co-sponsored events in the City, and receive no additional partnership funding for events in the district.

After how hard St. Armands Circle was impacted by the hurricanes in 2025, we need your assistance. We need equitable attention in how the City is decorated for the holiday season. If we can not afford to install a Christmas Tree or install lighting, this is a Sarasota problem. Holiday Night is a generational community event that is free and safe for families. St. Armands Circle will no longer be a shopping and holiday destination for families and guests. Without these visitors, many more businesses could close, and the City and County will lose the tourism tax revenue.

The Board of Directors and I are asking for the City to expand their co-sponsorship with our district to include the installation and storage of the St. Armands Christmas Tree and decorations going forward.

Please let me know if you are available for meetings to speak on this, or if you would prefer we speak during public comment at an upcoming commission meeting.

Thank you in advance for your support in the continuation and vitality in the St. Armands community.

Rachel Burns  
Executive Director  
St. Armands Circle Association

Stormwater system Bay Shore Rd between Patterson / Bay Shore Circle

To: Sarasota City Mayor Liz Alpert

I have called your office requesting a meeting and never received a response. When I sent my father in person—because I am unable to walk right now—he was turned away.

This flooding did not exist when I purchased my home seven years ago. It is the direct result of past actions by the city and is now being made worse by continued inaction. Today’s storm is a small rain event, yet I’m again watching water flood my front porch and the entire road in front of my home. I am done living in fear that my home will flood every time it rains.

Both my neighbor and I have sent multiple emails over the last month regarding this issue—confirmed as received by your assistant—yet no action has been taken. You have previously acknowledged this problem and committed to corrective action, including dredging and drainage improvements, yet those commitments remain unfulfilled. The City of Sarasota’s failure and negligence in addressing this matter will result in it being held responsible for both past and future damages.

Matthew Montgomery  
Sarasota

# BreakPoints

## How can I not blow a lead?

*Help! My last few matches I have had a commanding lead, and then I blow it! Yesterday, I was up 6-2, 5-1 and I lost! What am I doing wrong? I can't seem to close out a match to save my life!*

**JACKIE BOHANNON**  
Guest Columnist  
tennis@lbknews.com

Unfortunately, your problem is not uncommon. Not only does it happen at the recreational level but in the pros too! This is not something that just happens in tennis either; it transpires across all sports.

The term I like to use for this situation is called "choking." It is a mental ailment that then effects your physical ability to perform. Choking can happen for a wide variety of reasons. The main reason is that the player starts celebrating their win in their head too early, or gets tentative and stops playing to win, but playing not to lose!



I always coach my players to play each point literally point by point. Don't think about the score, and do not let that affect how you are playing. Obviously if you are losing badly, you should change strategies, but if you are winning stick with what is working, and try to stay focused until the very end. Often when we blow ginormous leads it's a combination of factors. Players tend to tense up or start playing more cautiously, while the opponent has nothing to lose and starts swinging away and "treeing". (Treeing in tennis is when a player can do no wrong. They hit lines, winners, and play abnormally well.) When the opponent starts playing better, then you start feeling pressure and then it snowballs from there. The most important thing is to keep your foot on the gas pedal, and never look back. When you are winning, playing at a faster pace, and taking less time between points is a good idea as well to keep to the momentum going. My best advice to you is to treat 5-1 like



you did 0-0, play each point with high percentage shots, and don't focus on the score whether you are winning or losing. Play every single point like it is championship point at the US Open!  
*Jackie Bohannon is the Director of Tennis at the Bird Key Yacht Club.*

*Serve Jackie your best shot!*



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

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- Across
1. Nephew of Aunt Bee
5. Deputy exec.
10. Blocking numbers
14. Treat hair for long and short
15. Came to
16. Something to do in a hammock
17. Desert-bred horse
18. She played June in "Walk the Line"
19. Where a pirate waits out the storm
20. Moon Buggy
22. Practiced with cutlasses
23. One who leaves the sinking ship
24. What the captain's table sometimes does
26. Bonnie wench
29. Fails to follow through
32. Pretentious
33. The Flying Dutchman, e.g.
35. Enjoy salt pork and hardtack
36. Beefeater, abbr.
37. Sanctuary separator
40. Lode stone
41. Machu Picchu builders
43. Longboat propellers
44. Words before and after "to be"
46. Occupies
48. Home of the Forestiere Underground Gardens
49. Mass belief?
50. Skin: prefix
51. Pirate in a Disney film
53. Constant for springs and prices
57. "\_\_\_\_, poor Yorick!
58. Newton or Asimov, e.g.
60. Part of an ancient treasure, perhaps

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Down

1. Firey gemstone

2. Land of La Libertad

3. Shah's state

4. Tum red

5. Efts, e.g.

6. Chick's chirp

7. Suffix with church or party

8. Assents

9. Victory sign

10. Responded to a fresh man?

11. Antarctica and Greenland, e.g.

12. Turn tail

13. Place for runners in winter

21. Indian language (relative of Bengali)

22. Mother's offspring

24. León ladies, abbr.

25. Utah city

26. "\_\_\_\_\_ on the line"

27. Play ground

28. The Daytona 500, for one

30. Infamous bankruptcy filer of 2001

31. Look after

33. Philippine volcano

34. Piratical sound of agreement

38. Roisterous

39. Mr. Moto portrayer

42. Spray propellant

45. Ties another knot?

47. Stitch together

48. Sabre wielder

50. William and Harry's mum

51. Scuttled

52. Balletic bend

53. Word with sea or memory

54. Primal predecessor

55. Lug

56. Otherwise

58. Part of T.G.I.F.

59. Sty mom

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# WineTimes

## Better Wine Lists at Wine Bars and Restaurants

*Wine lists, both in print and on the web, have a key role in connecting wine drinkers to the cellar of a wine bar or restaurant*

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

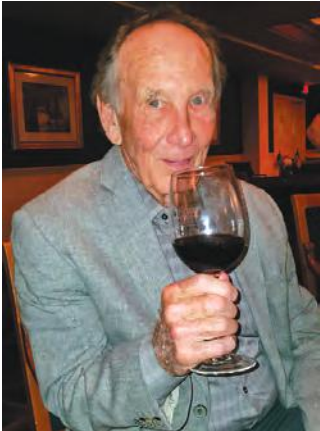
Our ongoing field research has exposed us to wine lists that if stacked one atop another would reach the moon. Well, perhaps not the moon but as far as the eye can see.

Over the years, we have developed strong opinions about what should appear in a wine list. We began thinking seriously about contents of wine lists after attending a wine tasting in which our instructor read the labels on wine bottles; soon after, we wrote up a wine list ourselves for another tasting. We read the label on each bottle that we planned to taste, and we had to decide what to include and exclude. Labels on wine bottles make good starting points for wine lists.

The front label on a bottle of wine has a brand or name that identifies the original vendor of the wine, the grape variety or varieties used to make the wine, the vintage if from one year, and the region where the grapes are grown. A basic wine list includes these facts about the wine and the price for a glass or a bottle or both.

Using a listing of a classic Stags' Leap wine as an example, the basic information from the front label reads "Stags' Leap Cabernet Sauvignon Napa Valley 2021. The price at the end of the first line.

A more informative wine list adds to these basics other information from the front and back labels on the bottle and brief tasting notes. Wine bottles sold in the USA must have the percentage of alcohol by volume (ABV %) and warnings about allergens such as sulfites and egg whites. We like to see the ABV in a wine listing. Aside from its value in health and safety, it tells us something more about the degree to which sugars in grape juice have been converted to alcohol. A moderately high ABV, say 14.5%, tells us that the winemaker has converted most of the sugars to alcohol and made a dry wine. We usually prefer dry wine to bring out the flavors of foods and not mask them with sugary tastes. The usual warnings about sulfites pertain to people highly sensitive to allergens because most wines contain sulfites in very low percentages, and egg whites used in fining (clarifying) wines leave only traces in wines. Catchphrases from labels and technical notes pack meaning into a few words. The phrases vary from region to region. The top vineyards in Burgundy France have earned the designation "Grand Cru", and the slightly lower level "Premiere Cru". In Bordeaux France the designation applies to Chateau ranging down from Premiere Grand Cru Classe. In California, the wines designated Chateau grown, single vineyard, or region (Napa, Sonoma, Russian River, etc.) generally rate higher



than wines that select grapes from wherever in California. Terms such as "Reserve" (longer aged), "Old Vines", and, of course, "Organic" and "Sustainably Grown" have special meanings.

Tasting notes have a variety of sources: winemakers, reviewers, buyers, distributors, especially valuable tasting by a wine steward. One good example in Sarasota Florida: "Valckenberg Pinot Blanc, '21 Rheinhessen Germany \$13.00/+

Palest of yellow, exuberant nose of fresh lemons, tart and very dry on the palate, with green apples and citrusy notes, long finish with slight lingering bitterness".

Block 15 Cork and Craft, 1528 Main Street.

The nearby Vino Bistro of Sarasota at 1419 5th Street in the Rosemary District captures the tastes of a wine in a few words: Janela Branca – Special Selection. Smooth Portuguese red with ripe berry fruit, a touch of spice, and soft tannins.

Wine lists, both in print and on the web, have a key role in connecting wine drinkers to the cellar of a wine bar or restaurant. Key terms from the label and winemaker and reviewer notes, plus accurate and enticing tasting notes, make a better wine list.

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

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

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