



Longboat Key News

February 16, 2024

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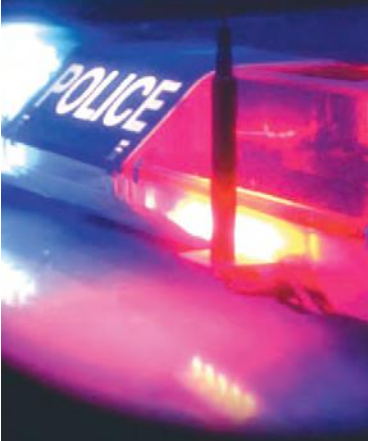
Bayside estate hits \$9.8 million ...page 9



LBK birding turns spiritual ...page 6



Beer's perfect marriage found ...page 13



Furniture flung into roadway ...page 10

Suit filed against Commissioner Battie

'What happened on the 16th was a performance. It was scripted, orchestrated and probably rehearsed over nearly a month.'

A lawsuit has officially been filed against Sarasota City Commissioner Kyle Battie for what Kelly Franklin's attorney describes as a racial hoax.

The lawsuit stems from a photo Battie presented at a meeting on Jan. 16 that Franklin's attorney says painted her as a racist, adding the picture featuring a caption about gorillas was edited.

"What happened on the 16th was a performance. It was scripted, orchestrated, and probably rehearsed over nearly a month. It was not unfortunate, it was intentional and deliberate," said Franklin's attorney Richard Harrison in a meeting last week.

According to the lawsuit, texts show Battie was sent an edited picture and the original post from Franklin's Facebook page of real gorillas about a month before he brought it up at the meeting, saying the texts were taken out of context.

"I did my due diligence in terms of trying to vet it. It's something to sit here and have people lodge stones at you right to your face," Battie said during the same meeting last week.

Franklin is suing Battie for defa-



mation and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

The four-complaint alleges that Battie has defamed Franklin in multiple ways — including committing conspiracy to defame her — and intentionally inflicted emotional distress upon her:

Franklin is seeking damages in excess of \$50,000, "exclusive of interest, court costs, and attorneys' fees" and is demanding a jury trial, the complaint adds.

A private citizen, Franklin is a retired publishing executive who has resided in downtown Sarasota since 2011, the complaint says. She is civically active, and has advocated for public parks and greenspace and human rights," the complaint continues.

At all times material to this action," the complaint contends, "Battie was acting beyond the scope of his employment or function as
See Battie, page 2

Mote hires 'interactor' with public



Kathryn Gentile has recently joined the Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium as a Communications Coordinator.

In her role, Gentile will spearhead Mote's media communications by drafting press releases, coordinating media interviews, organizing public relations events, keeping in constant contact with members of the media, monitoring mentions of Mote in the news, as well as keep-
See Mote, page 2

Workshop scheduled for Longboat's GMD

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) invites you to an alternatives public workshop for the SR 789 (Longboat Key) Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study from North Shore Road to Coquina Park Entrance in Manatee County.

This study will evaluate three bridge alternatives to address the need to replace the existing Longboat Key Bridge over Longboat Pass due to the bridge's age and the need to improve bicycle/pedestrian accommodations, emergency evacuation, and safety. The alternatives public workshop is being conducted to present information about the preliminary alternatives and allow the public to express their views about the project.

You can participate live online or in person. The same materials will be displayed at both the online and in-person events.

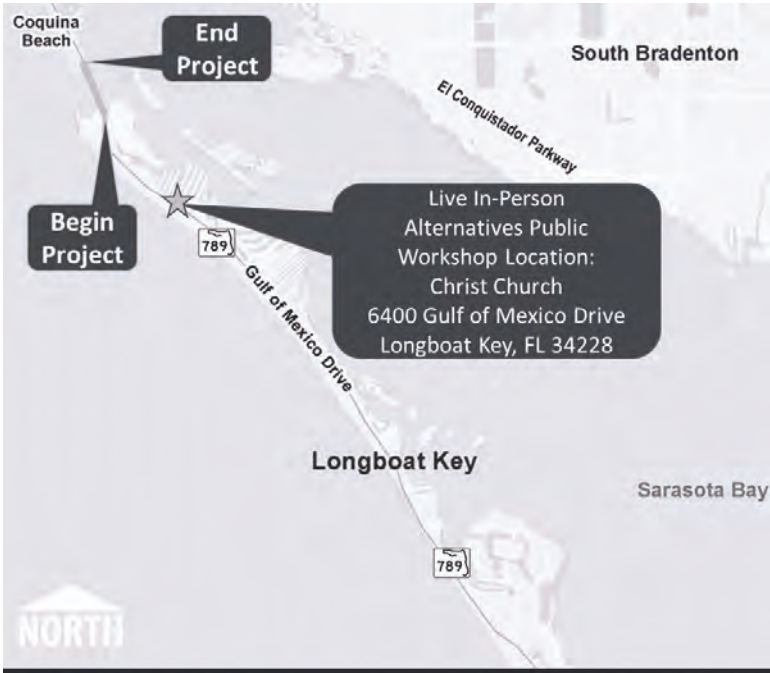
LIVE ONLINE OPTION:

Register in advance: <https://tinyurl.com/LBKSR789>

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

6 – 7 p.m.

This event will include a viewing of the project video and a live question-and-answer compo-



nent with the project team. Please review the materials on project webpage before attending the virtual event (<https://www.swflroads.com/project/436676-1>). Materials will be posted by March 5, 2024.

IN-PERSON OPTION:

Thursday, March 14, 2024

Anytime between 5 – 7 p.m.

Christ Church

6400 Gulf of Mexico Drive

Longboat Key, FL 34228

This will include a looping video (no formal presentation) and the project team will be available for discussion.

If you are unable to attend the meeting, comments can also be provided through the project webpage (<https://www.swflroads.com/project/436676-1>) or by email (Patrick.Bateman@dot.state.fl.us) or mail (FDOT District One, Attn: Patrick Bateman, P.E., MS 1-40, 801 N.

See GMD, page 2

Traffic Watch: Lane Shifts on Longboat start Feb. 20

FDOT has announced TWO lane shifts beginning on Tuesday February 20. These are lane shifts - NOT lane closures.

**The first FDOT lane shift is at Gulf of Mexico Drive (GMD) @ Longboat Club Road for crosswalk improvements and will be from 9am - 3pm on Tuesday, Feb 20 through Friday, February 23.

**The second FDOT lane shift is at St. Regis, 1620 GMD to install a turn lane within the west side right-of-way. This project will begin on Tuesday, Feb 20 and end Friday, March 1.

**Off-island - SR 789 John Ringling Causeway Bridge: Special Event could create delays to Sarasota: On Monday, Feb. 19, through Wednesday, Feb. 21, FDOT and Sarasota County Fire Department's Special Operations team will be conducting multi-agency rescue exercises from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on the West Side of the bridge, with the staging area at Bird Key Park.

Mote, from page 1

ing Mote’s media contact list up to date.

Gentile will primarily focus on public relations efforts while Sean Stover, also a Communications Coordinator, will mainly focus on marketing and social media efforts, while occasionally working with members of the media.

Originally enrolled at Johns Hopkins University, Gentile realized her passion for ocean protection and advocacy after her first three semesters. Subsequently, she left Johns Hopkins and relocated to Roatan, Honduras, where she attained the status of a PADI Divemaster.

In addition to leading dives and assisting with certifications, Gentile actively engaged in addressing the Pterois volitans (Lionfish) crisis. She conducted informational classes on the invasive species outbreak and local mitigation strategies. During her time in Roatan, Gentile also became familiar with coral gardening and volunteered to conduct monthly maintenance dives.

Shortly after, Gentile moved to the Philippines to work with the Institute for Marine Research as a research assistant based in Dauin. In this role, she contributed to data collection, exploring the impact of benthic composition on fish and invertebrate communities, documenting natural and human-induced disturbances to raise awareness of potential reef threats, and studying the influence of temperature, pH, and current on the seasonal and annual variability of coral and fish populations. She used photogrammetry techniques, including Stereo Video System (SVS) and 3D Modeling, to track fine-scale changes in the overall reef community over time. Apart from benthic research, Gentile also led efforts to address the Acanthaster planci (Crown-of-Thorns Starfish) outbreak within the local community.

While in the Philippines, Gentile earned the certification as a PADI Open Water Scuba Instructor. She worked at Atmosphere Resort and Spa, educating and certifying students as PADI divers of varying degrees.

Returning to the United States, Gentile transferred to George Washington University and declared a major in Communication. Gentile focused her studies on science-based communication highlighting the importance of the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans. Toward the end of her degree, she took on the role as the Social Media and Marketing Manager for the George Washington University Organizational Sciences and Communication Department. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Communication and Sustainability in December of 2023.

Battie, from page 1

a City Commissioner, in bad faith and with malicious purpose and in a manner exhibiting wanton and willful disregard of Franklin’s rights.”

Quoting from both Section 166.021(1) of the Florida Statutes and then from Article IV of the Sarasota City Charter, the complaint argues that the “Hoax Post, if taken at face value as presented by Battie, was unrelated to any City-permitted or City-regulated activity by Franklin.”

Further, the complaint says, the Hoax Post “did not reflect, suggest, or relate to the commission of any criminal offense by Franklin,” nor did it “include any incitement to imminent lawless action (incitement), threats of serious bodily harm (true threats), or speech that would cause an immediate breach of the peace (fighting words).”

The complaint also argues, “Neither the City Commission nor Battie has any lawful or legitimate governmental function that involves monitoring, policing, regulating, analyzing, calling out, or legislating over the private speech of citizens — even speech that is hurtful or offensive, or that would fall under what is colloquially referred to as ‘hate speech.’ Such speech is fully and robustly protected under the First Amendment.

“Thus,” the complaint continues, “the Hoax Post, taken at face value as presented by Battie, was outside the scope of any lawful scope or function of either the City Commission or Battie, as an individual city commissioner.

“As such, Battie is personally liable in tort for his actions,” the complaint contends.

GMD, from page 1

Broadway Ave., Bartow, FL 33830). While comments about the project are accepted at any time, they must be received or postmarked by March 25, 2024, to be included in the formal workshop record. Questions can be answered by calling the FDOT project manager Patrick Bateman, P.E. at (863) 519-2792.

FDOT is sending notices to property owners, business owners, interested persons and organizations within 300 feet of the project to provide the opportunity to give comments to FDOT regarding this project.

FDOT solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. People who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Cynthia Sykes, District One Title VI Coordinator, at (863) 519-2287, or email at Cynthia.Sykes@dot.state.fl.us at least seven days prior to the alternatives public workshop.



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Editor
Letters

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.

Sarasota Parks

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider
Thank you for your email regarding Ken Thompson Park. Please note that my official email address for PREP Board business is: derin.parks@sarasotafl.gov and allows me to keep adequate records for sunshine law purposes.
Over the past several months and the last two PREP Board meetings, I have been discussing and recommending at our PREP Board meetings that the PREP Board make recommended modifications to our City’s code to place more specific requirements/restrictions on when and how a private project can be approved and implemented in our public parks. The issue originated on smaller scale in other parks in the City where private groups are making changes to our parks without PREP Board notice and public discussion. So, the topic of rules changes is being discussed and proposed now (i.e. tonight - agenda item 7).
The current rules appear unclear and I am trying to make sure that any Private Projects in a public park have to go through PREP Board review and approval following public discussion and then receive approval from the City Manager and/or City Commission, at a minimum. This affords the transparency and public discourse to make sure no projects are approved with an informal yes or email from staff, etc. that is arguably then binding on the City. Again, this agenda topic (Item #7) was already in place and was not in response to the Ken Thompson Park proposal. However, the rules would be applicable to all of our parks, if recommended by the PREP Board and implemented by the City Commission. If you would like to speak either in support or against these proposed revisions to the code and rules, I encourage to please attend and speak at the hearing this afternoon at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall. A motion will likely

be made tonight on that issue and your input on it will be much appreciated. Thank you for your time and passion for our city parks. They are fantastic.
Derin Parks
Parks and Recreation
City of Sarasota

Longboat Library

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider
Nothing is more expensive than free money. Land is the most precious thing we have on Longboat. So little remains undeveloped we need to husband our limited public land for the highest and best use. A few things stand out after the Library charette.
One, the plans for the Library have been developed with little regard to our community’s needs and wishes. Just because we check the “library” box on a long list of amenities doesn’t mean that’s the most important one for our Town Center. The plan shows a huge space carved up into rooms for people to do “something” in, making the space unusable for our needs. Why not partitions?
It seems the county and private donors are throwing construction money at us to build what they want, not what we need. They are in control, and we need to regain it to protect what is done with our land.
Two, Libraries are obsolete with the fact that everyone has a “library” in their pocket. Libraries want to store their books in warehouses now. As a readaholic that grieves me, but that’s what you’ll see if you google Modern Library. Seems the “Modern Library” concept is an attempt to stay in existence.
What we need is a flexible community center that serves our needs. Our current library is open for 15 hours a week in season and six off season. So where’s the demand?
What we saw Monday was a gigantic building out of scale with our Town Green, built up 11 feet that will loom over the Town Center, crowding out other uses like the popular farmers market, art shows etc. It will require at least 12 steps to climb if the land is at 5 feet of elevation. One more thing...who owns the building? If it is the County, then we will never be able to fix it.
Shannon Gault
Longboat Key

Commercialization of Ken Thompson Park

To: Parks, Recreation and Environmental Protection Board
I am a year round resident of Lido Shores a neighborhood that encompasses some 225 homeowners living at the north end of Lido Key. Our neighborhood as did the neighborhoods of Longboat Key, St Armand’s, Lido and Bird Key, (not to mention the many people who visited our beautiful Lido Beach from the City and County) endured one of the worst bouts of traffic congestion during the recent St. Armand’s Food Truck & Music Festival which took place at Ken Thompson Park, and are extremely concerned about similar future events, whether staged intermittently or on a regular basis.
Traffic between downtown and Lido Key often backs up at various times of the day, even when there are no special events, road/utility projects or accidents. It can take close to an hour to travel from Westway Drive to the Gulfstream Avenue Roundabout and this is before St Regis is open.
The group who brought us the failed St. Armand’s Winter Festival is now proposing to privatize some part of Ken Thompson Park and permanently develop it as an amusement
See Letters, page 7

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KeyEncounters

When birding turns spiritual on Beer Can Island

It's afternoon on Beer Can Island. A fisherman throws a fat pinfish to a waiting great egret that takes it in his bill and carries it to a nearby spot. This is not going to be an easy meal.

MICHAEL GIVANT
Contributing Columnist
givant@lbknews.com

The stretch of beach that encompasses Whitney Beach and Beer Can Island has a large number of birds that I see almost every day during the winter. I often notice small details or nuanced behavior, which charms me or makes me wonder. It's then that birding becomes more than an exercise in identification but a spiritual activity. Here are some of those moments.

A Bloody Meal

Saturday, 1:13 PM: It's afternoon on Beer Can Island. A fisherman throws a fat pinfish to a waiting great egret that takes it in his bill and carries it to a nearby spot. This is not going to be an easy meal. The fish is between 6-9-inches in length, wide top to bottom and has "spines." The egret shows dexterity in placing the fish along its javelin-like yellow bill with the head facing the bird's throat. The egret's bill is soon stained with the fish's blood. Several times the fish is dropped or nearly dropped but in the end is held in the bill as if the bird was wielding a large pair of chopsticks. The yellowish green color at the base of the bill merges with the fish's blood.

For a short time the fish is held crosswise in the bill, its eye showing as if it were modeling for a still life painting. Now the fish's head is facing the bird's mouth with the "spines" sticking up. It won't be long now. Before the struggle can conclude however another great egret comes and chases the egret with the fish in its bill. I think that this will be a long struggle. Wrong. The fish caked in sand and blood is being swallowed. The egret's throat seems a little wider as the fish goes down. Two years later when reading over a draft of this article I can still picture the moment. Why? It's about the primeval beauty of color in nature's long running drama of survival.

Leaving No Trace

Tuesday morning: On Whitney Beach there are two willets, large sandpipers, flying over the water, their white wing pattern flashing in the morning sun. What is it about the loud call of a streaking willet, which has just taken off that gets me every time I hear it? I'd like to listen to it for a longer time and to know what that sound means.

Minutes later there are what appear to be three bottlenosed dolphins that seem to be going in opposite directions. There's one by itself and two others together. As they appear to be going both forward and sideward a short tail fin comes out of the water and whitish sides are showing. Then they are gone. The water's surface is smooth, not even showing a clue that they were just here. There's only the din of the waves and some tall grass blowing in a slight breeze.

Dowdy Blues

Thursday morning: On Beer Can Island a scruffy looking great blue walks to the water its neck elongated and its head and bill pointed skyward. This isn't momentary. With its head in that position, it walks partially into the water and then parallel to shore. Its wings are held slightly away from its body. I focus binoculars on the bird's yellow eye, which is facing me. I don't think it cares about my presence and I haven't any idea about what it's doing. There's a strong breeze whistling in my ears. The sea is green and there's a hue of dark blue where it meets the otherwise light blue horizon. Nice color contrast; nice moment.

Saturday morning: On Beer Can Island seven white ibises are standing in the water feeding. A few minutes later all but two are in the air flapping hard. Above the trees the black tips of their white wings are showing as they fly toward a steel gray cloud on the horizon. Better feeding where you're going?

There's a dowdy great blue on the beach facing the water as if it were waiting for a fisherman to toss it a throwaway. The blue lifts up and is flying directly toward me. Its long bill and longer wings are at an odd angle. I don't like the looks of that bill but the bird turns right and lands directly facing the ocean. It's in my path not far in front of me. Does it think I'm a fisherman? Minutes later I again pass the dowdy great blue. Facing neck, its belly and me are streaked a moderate brown. The blue stares straight ahead. I still don't like that lance-like bill and move quickly past it.

Silent Talk

There's a black-bellied plover in shallow water. The tall plover, whose belly in its winter plumage is actually white, bends over and with its short dark bill gets a whole shell and downs it. This is one of the very few times I've seen this plover eat. Most of the time they walk around seemingly indifferent to feeding. I look at its dark brown back with areas that look like tiny



black semicircles. Are those the remnants of summer when the plover's back and belly are black?

Silently I talk to the bird. I haven't seen you in summer for years and years. What did you actually look like years ago when I first saw you on Cape Cod beaches?

Suddenly the black-belly lifts off. As it does the tail fans out white. Nice view. Where are you going? Two years later, writing this, I can still feel the words resonate within me. That's what I mean about birding being spiritual.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 4

venue, featuring carnival attractions, golf course, “a bar in the sky. And I’m sure other events throughout the year to draw even more traffic. This portends for us a non-stop replay of the Food Truck Festival and the traffic tie-ups it generated. The last thing we need is more cars and trucks coming across Ringling Causeway, squeezing into the single lane between St. Armand’s Circle and Ken Thompson Park and making it impossible for residents and visitors to get to their destinations in a reasonable time.

In consideration of traffic congestion, impeded emergency vehicle access, the harmful impact on our diminishing quiet green spaces, environmental impacts and more, we respectfully ask you vote against any proposed commercialization of Ken Thompson Park. Allowing this special space to fall prey to business interests with no connection to the City’s barrier islands will drastically alter the character of our immediate environment and certainly diminish the quiet quality of life we presently enjoy. We thank you in advance for supporting our very important cause.

Denis Bischoff
Sarasota

Undergrounding Update

To: Longboat Key Commission
Here is the latest undergrounding project status update from Public Works Director Isaac Brownman. This update is focused primarily on the electrical portion of the project.

Phase 2
We are encouraged to hear that FPL has released the final Phase 2 residential switch orders for Ed Lee Lane and one on Cedar Street. These residential properties are all expected to be converted next week. Wilco also continues to convert overhead to underground transition drops within Phase 2 with less than about a half dozen remaining. All have been submitted to FPL for conversion. According to FPL, feeder pole removals in Phase 2 are tentatively set to begin within the next week.

Phase 3 & 4 Existing Transformers
We are pleased to report that all 24 new transformers to replace the existing ones discovered late in the process have been received by Wilco. Since these are replacing already active, existing ground transformers, Wilco is beginning the process with FPL to gain approval for the necessary authorization and shut downs to replace the existing transformer equipment in Phases 3 and 4. There are a large number of customers on many of these existing transformers change outs (serving condo developments), so scheduling and coordination is key.

Phase 3
Conversions continue throughout Phase 3, primarily in the Neptune area. As noted above, Wilco is working through existing transformer change out authorization and scheduling with FPL.

Phase 4
Phase 4 switching and conversions cannot begin until Phase 2 is completed. However and as noted above, Wilco is working through existing transformer change out authorization and scheduling with FPL.

FPL will have a representative(s) available at the March 25, 2024 Town Commission Workshop to share updates, and also address their Hurricane Idalia response letter of January 26, 2024. This update should include their efforts on the three components, including: 1) Finishing the current project in coordination with the Town and Wilco, 2) Nearer-term planning, design and implementation to raise transformer pads (and related infrastructure work) in lower areas, and 3) Longer-term efforts to explore and enhance component materials within transformers and boxes based on their investigation and lessons learned.

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

Undergrounding Update

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman
Thanks for this update. It is so helpful for those of us who get questions about the progress. Great news about the Phase 3 and 4 transformers and the upcoming Phase 2 pole removals. By the way, in discussions with some residents, I’ve been told that the resistance to placement of transformers and pads on or near private property can be eased by making it clearer that

See Letters, page 8

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 7

some landscaping is permitted around those elements. This may help with sea level rise projects as well.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Key Town Center

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
We attended the Sarasota County proposed Library Plan Presentation yesterday. On the way we stopped at the Town Center Market event which is a neat Community offering. A lot of booths with a good crowd of people enjoying a nice day with all the offerings.

The proposed site of the library, as well as the Green, was filled with vendor booths and lots of people. The juxtaposition of that experience versus the Library plan for that site was striking.

We know things are well along, while not sure if most LBK residents are aware of the Town Center development status and approve. It is clear that the Library design criteria is well established by the Sarasota County Library experience in creating a model for other County regional Libraries, a cookie cutter development process with a few modifications.

However, it is also clear that the Town planning of the design criteria for what resident research indicates is the top priority for a Community Center that includes adequate flexible meeting space, Education class space, entertainment and events space is way behind the power curve with the County seemingly leading the planning process based on their library model magnate.

The input sessions at the presentation appeared to be form over substance, terribly disorganized and didn't move the ball forward regarding developing LBK's priority needs for our Town Center design criteria detail.

Bottom line, in our opinion, the proposed library takes up way too much of the Town Center limited foot print to the exclusion of the resident expressed use priorities of meeting

space, education space, events and entertainment that will have a much higher use than a new Library that appears the be "free" but is not.

Another look at our existing library's land parcel should be considered if a new County Library is deemed to be necessary. We have heard that the lot is too small but it appears to be at least 35,000 Sq Ft. Two stories? Please take another look, it is not too small for a new library.

As an aside, rather than see the County spend taxpayer money on a new but low use library here given huge seasonal residence dynamics, the money should be spent on higher priority things like helping area Foster Care kids in need with a tutorial hand up educationally so that they may some day have the opportunity to live on our beautiful island of Longboat Key and enjoy our Town Center priority based, high use facilities. First things first. Thank You For All Your Hard Work.

Bob and Shannon Gault
Longboat Key

Longboat Key Town Center

To: Bob and Shannon Gault
I know this was sent only to the Mayor, but the rest of us may find comments from the community useful as we work in this issue.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Hello, Renee

Thanks to you and your team for a worthwhile meeting today. Please see below, a resident who was unable to attend would like to pass her suggestions on to be included in the community's feedback.

Sarah Karon
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Strategic Implementation Plan by SarasotaLHR

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon
I am tied up with work off the island and cannot make it back to the island for the library meeting. No remote participation.

Can you share my list of ideas.
These are activities at other Sarasota libraries so it is within the normal operation. We can have it in the standard facility that the library pays for. Therefore, no addition building or Maintenance fees will be required from the town.

- Activities:
Meditation
yoga
Open mic
Jazz jam
Maker space resources
Genealogy
Card games
Book club
Tax assistance
Knit/crochet
Speaker series
Legal aid
Fall prevention classes
Master Gardner
Great decisions

.Must have remote participation setup in the community room. This is missing in the town and over 50% of property owners work or are homesteaded elsewhere (part time on LBK). Without this technology they have no input to these meetings

If we had it I would be able to provide this live and hear all the other ideas.

I do not think we need roof top decks. That is not necessary and becomes vip seating for the band shell. People can sit on the town green where they should have strong WiFi . If

See Letters, page 11

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KeyRealEstate

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1975 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#G4-106	1,068	\$695,000	2	2	0	46	\$650,000
4974 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#Villa 19	1,621	\$750,000	3	2	0	53	\$675,000
5757 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#103	1,561	\$725,000	2	2	0	8	\$712,500
5265 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#305	1,128	\$800,000	2	2	0	0	\$800,000
7105 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#11	1,170	\$899,000	2	2	0	199	\$850,000
2120 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#645	2,776	\$1,650,000	3	2	1	18	\$1,721,000
2020 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#434/435	2,462	\$1,795,000	3	3	0	0	\$1,735,000
2165 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#111	2,470	\$2,150,000	3	3	0	103	\$2,000,000
3464 MISTLETOE LN	3,367	\$2,299,000	4	3	1	120	\$2,000,000
435 L AMBIANCE DR Unit#K905	2,820	\$3,995,000	2	2	2	268	\$3,750,000
5005 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#3	4,638	\$10,995,000	5	5	2	165	\$9,800,000



5005 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#3



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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.

Feb. 9 Restaurant workers return

1:25 a.m.
Officer Montfort while on patrol, observed two men dressed in dark clothing walking south onto Longboat Key from the Longboat Pass Bridge. Officer Montfort made contact with the men who stated they both work at the restaurant on Longboat Key and left work about an hour ago. The men then said that they went home and returned to go for a walk on Longboat Key. The men said they parked their vehicle on the Coquina side of the Longboat Pass Bridge. Officer Ferrigine proceeded to the Coquina south boat ramp and observed the only vehicle in the lot being a Ford Mustang. The vehicle was registered to an elderly woman of Bradenton. The men agreed to proceed back to their vehicle and return home to the residence. Case clear.



Feb. 11 Water in the road

2:56 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to Norton Street on a call of citizen assist for a water leak. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson observed water coming up from the ground in front of the address. Officer Martinson contacted Public Works. The man requested Officer Martinson record a video of the leak and email. After emailing the video, he replied stating it was a small leak and they would address it first thing Monday morning. , He requested someone check on it later to make sure the leak did not get worse.

Feb. 12 Business owners’ disagreement

4:11 p.m.
Officer Pescuma responded to the 5300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a civil disturbance between two business owners. Upon arriving on scene Officer Pescuma was greeted by a business owner of one of the units within the shopping plaza. He stated that a business owner of the other units has been blocking the entrance of his door to his store/office with displays for her shop. This became a concern for him due to the accessibility for his packages to be delivered by UPS/FEDEX. An argument broke out between both business owners. After speaking with the woman, she said that sometimes the packages that are delivered to the other business are blocking the entrance to her shop. Officer Pescuma was able to have both parties come to a civil agreement moving forward and the other business owner agreed to place a sign on his window indicating where to leave the delivered packages, not to hinder the man’s shop, nor will she block his entrance with her shop displays. Case clear.

Feb. 13 Loud music

10:11 a.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Kingfisher Lane for a noise disturbance regarding loud music. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma observed construction workers on site of Kingfisher Lane with music on low volume. Officer Pescuma advised the foreman that there was a complaint of loud music, and they complied and ensured that the music will be secured. Officer Pescuma did not observe music being played too loud. Case clear.

Noise

6:30 a.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 6600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a call of a noise disturbance. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson observed a large white dumpster truck backing up in the driveway with the rear backing alarm blaring loudly. Officer Martinson made contact with the driver and explained to him he could not be making any construction type of noise prior to 8 a.m. The man said the dumpster company he works for was hired by a construction company who is building the home on the property. The man said he would come back at 8 a.m. to pick up the dumpster and left the area. Officer Martinson then spoke with an employee of the construction company who arrived on scene shortly after. Officer Martinson advised the man of the ordinance and he apologized that workers had arrived and started work prior to 8 a.m. Officer Martinson checked the listed names and addresses and did not see any previous noise complaints, written warnings, or citations. The man was given a written warning for violating the noise ordinance. Case clear.

Noise

7:36 p.m.
Officer Nazareno responded to Harbourside Drive for a noise complaint regarding loud music coming from the Tennis Center. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno was advised that there was a sanctioned event until 8:30 p.m. at the tennis center and was not in violation of the noise ordinance. The caller did not wish to be seen or contacted. Case clear.

Feb. 10 Found property

11:52 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to the 5400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to found property. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with a bicyclist who advised he had found a New Jersey license and credit card belonging to a man while cycling on Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Miklos completed a property receipt for the two items, which were placed into evidence at Longboat Key Police Department for safekeeping. Case clear.

Trespass

2:47 p.m.
Officer Ferrigine responded to the 5300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a disturbance. Upon his arrival, Officer Ferrigine met with the complainant who stated around 2:30 p.m. a customer came into the store and was rude and cursing at her. The customer was identified by a recent notary he came into the store for a woman who said she would like to have a man trespassed the next time he enters the store. The complainant was advised to call the police back if the man was to come into the store again. Case clear.

Car in the roadway

2:20 p.m.
Officer Martinson while on patrol, observed a blue Cadillac parked across from the 2200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive facing northbound with the vehicle half in the grass and half blocking the bike lane. Officer Martinson made contact with the driver who was sitting inside the vehicle and asked him if everything was all right. The man said his vehicle was overheating so he pulled over to let the engine cool down. The man also said he lives on Gulf of Mexico Drive and needed to let the engine cool down for approximately ten minutes before heading the rest of the way home. The man also said he did not need any police assistance. Officer Martinson stood by with the man and his vehicle until he was able to restart it and drive home. Case clear.

Furniture in the road

3:08 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 1200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a call of a highway obstruction. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson located a black small broken plastic shelf or end table lying in the middle of the road. Officer Martinson picked up the item and placed into the trunk of the squad car. Officer Martinson later disposed of it into the garbage dumpster at the police station. Case clear.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

the town green will not have tables and chairs then the library is a nice alternative as long as it is outside the building so it is available at all times. The goal is to avoid duplication of resources. We already have three town greens.

The library will most likely have reduced hours off season so we cannot let the physical structure be a limitation on the ability to use the community room or use the outdoor tables and chairs.

Blythe Jeffers
Longboat Key

Strategic Implementation Plan by SarasotaLHR

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon
Thank you! Have a great day,
Blythe Jeffers
Longboat Key

Longboat Library

To: Blythe Jeffers
Following up on your recent inquiry:
I don't think our library system has any standard designs. Here is a link to their most recent strategic plan, completed last year. Thank you for your interest!

Sarah Karon
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Water Quality Update

To: Longboat Key Commission

It's been a lot of fun going out to the community and bringing them good news about our recent improvements in water quality. For those who might want a reminder, our water quality has sufficiently improved that we no longer have any portion of the open waters of Sarasota Bay considered "impaired" for nutrients, using criteria developed by the SBEP more than a decade ago – criteria that were meant to protect our bay from harmful algal blooms.

To be clear – the part of the bay between Ringling Boulevard and Venice Inlet was out of compliance with those same criteria for several years, but recent improvements are sufficient that the years of 2020, 2021 and 2022 had enough progress to get us "de-listed". Also – this improvement did not occur because of the very dry conditions we had in 2023. In fact, 2023 conditions weren't included in this report – although the good water quality in 2023 adds to the good news from the prior three years.

With this in mind, we have shown that the community knows how to come together to focus on the things that most adversely impact our water quality. This will be required over the next few years to decades, because our water quality issues are now complicated by us also being in the early stages of accelerated sea level rise and warming waters. So why would higher water levels concern us? As one example, because they

could put at risk one of our most important ecosystem features – our mangrove forests.

Mangroves do a lot of great things for us, what we call "ecosystem services". First off, they provide habitat for a wide variety of fish and crabs and oysters in their below-water features (at least red mangroves) while their above-water features provide habitats for nesting and/or just resting for our sea-birds. Think of the fish called "mangrove snapper" – its name references an affinity (not exclusive) for mangrove fringes. Second, they improve our water quality in two ways – by filtering out pollutants, and by the benefits of the tannins added to our local waters from the decomposition of mangrove leaves. In terms of filtering out pollutants, I was working as a private consultant a few years ago when the pipeline carrying raw sewage from Longboat Key sprang a leak on the mainland side. Fortunately, the leak happened several hundred feet into an extensive mangrove forest. The leak was in excess of 10 million gallons, but samples taken within days of the leak being detected did not find any evidence of elevated bacteria in the bay, even when we sampled immediately adjacent to the mangrove fringe closest to the site of the leak. If this happened in someone's lawn or in a street, I'm fairly certain we'd have found elevated bacteria, but the mangrove fringe filtered out much of the adverse impacts of this fairly large amount of raw sewage. The tannins released from decomposing mangrove leaves also help to ameliorate the impact of nutrients on harmful algal blooms – which means that they help us to have better water quality than we'd have if they were gone.

Finally, mangroves help to protect shorelines from wave action during tropical storms and/or hurricanes. We do not seem to have enough of a mangrove fringe to substantially reduce storm surge from such storms, but we do have – in many locations – enough mangroves to reduce the wave action that is generated from such storms. Natural shorelines come through natural storms with less damage than typical seawalls or other hardened features – one of the reasons why so many local governments are looking to increase so-called "living shorelines" for protecting both public and private property.

So...good reasons to want to preserve mangrove forests into the future. But here's the scenario we are concerned about, based on work done for the Tampa Bay Estuary Program – the topic of "coastal squeeze". It's important to remember that mangrove forests survive in the intertidal zone – the area that is inundated by high tides, but not those areas that are consistently underwater. Well, here's the trend in sea level the past 20 years, at our closest long-term gage (St. Pete).

This graph shows a lot of variability, but also an underlying trend of 6" of increase over the past 20 years. If we extrapolate this over the next 30 years, it suggests that another 9" of sea level rise is anticipated, even if no further acceleration occurred. Our tidal range is about 18" locally, which means that in the year 2050, the average sea level would be roughly where today's high tide is, and high tide would be 9" higher still. With this in mind, what would happen to an "intertidal community" such as mangroves if the intertidal zone is higher

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Longboat Key News

Sarasota City News

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 11

in the future? Well, it depends on what’s on the landward side of that mangrove community.

This panel (courtesy of TBEP) shows what would likely happen if there was an opportunity for mangroves to “migrate” upslope over time. In such places, mangroves could persist over time, but farther upslope (inland) than where they are currently. In the second example, there is a hardened shoreline adjacent to the mangrove forests, preventing them from migrating upslope.

The loss of mangroves from “coastal squeeze” is not something that should be of concern in one area only – it is a possibility along many parts of our shoreline, including both private and public property, and even along the shoreline of properties owned by NGOs that are focused on environmental issues. This is not a phenomenon in only one area, or in only one part of the bay – it is something that we need to think about across our bay.

So, how time-critical is this? Is this something we have to “fix” this year or next year? Or the next few years? Well, maybe not. While in the private sector, I worked on a project where we addressed this question for the TBEP. In that study, we considered a few questions, such as:

In the absence of an ability to migrate upslope, can mangroves just persist on the outside of those structures?

If not, when might we see mangroves succumb to too much inundation?

For the first question, we don’t know if mangroves can persist over time on the outside of a seawall (for example) if the water level came up 9” in 30 years. Why don’t we know this? Because we are now experiencing a rate of sea level rise that appears to be higher than anything recorded (at least in South Florida) over the past 5,000 years. So...maybe, maybe not. But don’t count on it.

If mangroves can’t migrate upslope, and if they can’t just remain in place and handle another few decades of accelerated sea level rise, when might we start to lose them? Well, our estimates in the report we did for the TBEP were that mangroves could be substantially gone from such areas by the year 2075. This scenario was based on the NOAA Intermediate High SLR scenario, and wherein sediments from adjacent uplands were not available to supplement the soil accretion rates of mangrove forests. That could be a worse-case scenario, or it could be spot-on, or it could be that it underestimates the onset of such losses.

So what can we do about this? Well, our Infrastructure Law Work Plan includes a project for FY26 to work with the City of Sarasota for a project that would look to “soften” the shoreline between the City’s Bayfront Park and Selby Gardens shoreline. The project intent is to try and design a modified shoreline that would allow for the continued protection of public infrastructure (such as roads and parks) while also allowing for mangroves to migrate upslope – at least for the next few decades. We hope to come up with a project that not only would allow mangroves to persist over time in this area, but also to include enough public outreach and education that we could get others to think about doing similar projects along their shorelines.

Mangroves are like the Rodney Dangerfield of our coastal ecosystem - they do a lot for us, but they don’t get a lot of respect for what they do. Quite frequently, they are viewed as a nuisance that is blocking our views, rather than a key ecosystem feature. They help protect our uplands from storms, they help protect our water quality, and they provide important habitat for fish and oysters and crabs and seabirds. We can – and should – do a better job making sure that future generations of Sarasota Bay residents and guests also get to see them and enjoy them for the benefits they provide.

Dave Tomasko
Executive Director
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Sleepy Lagoon

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I’ve been asked to meet with a number Lagoon residents on Tuesday at 1:30 to discuss the flooding issues there in preparation for our upcoming budget talks. I need a refresher on the status of our sea level rise program for that neighborhood, including what phases of the Kimley Horn program we are working on now and the timing and funding arrangements for those and future phases. Monday afternoon after the charrette maybe? Thanks.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longbaoat Key

Sleepy Lagoon

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thank you Mr. Mayor, we will get you an update drafted and bring to the meeting today.

Isaac Brownman
Director Public Works
Town of Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman

Great. Thanks. I’ve been trying to find the Kimley Horn plan, part of which we have set to move forward.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Not a problem, we can get you a copy of that as well.

Isaac Brownman
Director Public Works
Town of Longboat Key

House Bills

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

You are correct in your assessment. The difference is the timeframes in HB 267 and 684 would apply to all building permits. I have attached a side by side comparison of these bills to current law for reference. These bills include the 30,000 population threshold for the creation of the expedited building permit issuance at the preliminary plat phase.

HB 665 and SB 812 are dealing to mandate a municipality of 30,000-population and have 25 acres of contiguous land zoned residential or agricultural purposes, then the creation of the two-phase platting program is mandated. The program would afford an applicant to be approved up to 50% of their building permits at the preliminary plat phase approval in exchange for indemnification and a performance bond of up to 130%. They do not have the reduced permitting review time frames included in HB 267 and SB 684.

Taken together, these bills are bad news. We are opposing all four bills.

We are working diligently to get the 30,000-population threshold back into HB 665 before it goes to the House floor for a vote even though we are opposed to the bill.

Charles T. Chapman IV
Legislative Consultant
Florida League of Cities, Inc

House Bills

To: Town of Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons

So it would be our priority to keep the 30,000 exemption in 267 and 684. Thanks.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

House Bills

To: Florida League of Cities Legislative Consultant Charles Chapman

So both sets of bills deal with reducing the time a municipality has to review permit requests? I’m not sure I understand the difference between the two sets, and the 30,000 limit is important to us.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

St. Regis

To: Longboat Key Town Attorney Maggie Mooney

PaulineBea, LLC, owner of property on Gulf of Mexico Drive, was requested by the Town to grant an easement for beach renourishment along its property. They are declining to grant this easement for the reasons set forth in the attached letter. An original of this letter will be mailed to each of you today. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Brenda L. Patten, Esquire
Berlin | Patten |Ebling, PLLC
Sarasota

See Letters, page 15

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Pigfish & Calusa make a perfect mainland adventure

Calusa brewmasters love to capture little symphonies of tastes in their craft beers, wines, and ciders.

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

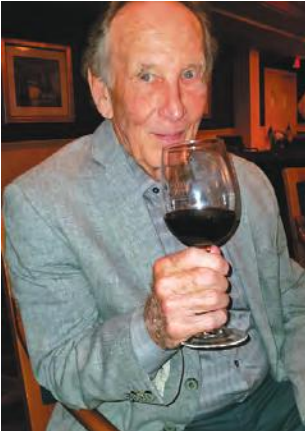
Rarely do we find a venue for a special occasion that exceeds our expectations and does not leave us feeling overly indulged. This Valentine’s Day we chose a taproom and take in/out food service counter in an industrial area of Sarasota Florida. Not the usual Champagne and dark chocolate lava cake feast....

The Pigfish restaurant occupies a corner of the spacious new taproom of the Calusa Brewery. We have met one of the owners of Pigfish, Steve Phelps, at his destination restaurant, Indigenous, between downtown Sarasota and the Rosemary District, where Pigfish co-owner, Anand Pallegar, a successful entrepreneur on a mission to contribute to the welfare of his community, serves as Chair of the Friends of Rosemary Park. The owners of Calusa Brewery, Geordie Rauch, Vic Falck, and Jason Thompson, have joined forces with Phelps and Pallegar, to offer a different take on ecological best practices and sustainable seafood and locally farmed meats.)

To understand the concept of Pigfish, one has to go back to the original taproom in the warehouse setting of the Calusa brewery a few miles away. Vats of brewing beer towered over rows of tables and a bar with a counter where customer would come from near and far to buy cans of beer to go. (Calusa supplies the popular Zote draft beer in kegs to restaurants and bars in the Sarasota area but does not at this stage supply its products to retailer outlets.) The taproom did not serve food, except by way of various food trucks that catered to serious beer drinkers and the fans of the local musicians that performed on site during weekend afternoonnd and evenings. The food truck business model transitioned to the new Calusa taproom when it moved to a more spacious and attractive facility.

The pairing of an established chef’s new venture with a favorite regional brewery over a to-go counter strikes most Calusa groupies as cool and unusual. They don’t ask to add endangered swordfish and Chilean Sea Bass to the menu, but they do grouse about prices of top quality seafood, beef, and pork products. Some go as far as to wish for a return of food trucks. Judging from Google and Yelp reviews, Pigfish patrons endorse the idea of sustainable and local sourcing of foods, yet balk at the costs of supplying them. That sentiment recurs from sea to shining sea.

During a scouting expedition a week or so before Valentine’s Day, we sampled The Pigfish handheld on the limited menu. It features a generous cut from a Cobia filet, blackened and served on a potato bun with lettuce, tomato, onion, house pickles, and bacon tartar sause. The \$24 price tag seemed pricey, unless you compare it to a \$33 grouper sandwich highlighted as a bargain at a popular beach restaurant. In any event, we found the Pigfish handheld as too heavy for most individuals and better shared with two persons. At \$12 per person, the Pigfish seemed more affordable.



During our Valentine’s Day visit, we discovered the delight of 4oz glasses of the craft beers, ales, and ciders in the Calusa portfolio. We have described in an ealier column the artistry of the Calusa brewmasters. Generous tastes of the Zero-Zero double IPA with Mosaic hops (8% ABV), the Perception Bown Ale (5.5% ABV), the Pass a Good Time fruit beer (5% ABV), the Bones and Dominos Hazy Double IPA (8.5% ABV), the Black Blade Baltic Porter (8.55 ABV), and the Mango Cider from Keel Farms (5.5% ABV) provide a worthy ample of the Calusa brewing arts. The Sharables on the Pigfish menu, Calusa Beer Cheese with pretzels (recommended) or farm fresh veggies (also reommended), the Blackend Fish Bites, and the Hushpuppies interleaved with the beer samples and the Pigfish and Bacon Tarter Sauces.

Calusa brewmasters love to capture little symphonies of tastes in their craft beers, wines, and ciders. The taproom has a respectable wine list, but few will bother with wine when the subtle tastes of the more exotic Calusa beers and ales live for the moment here.

Pigfish has a special place in the Calusa taproom. Patrons feel no pressure to order from the menus. We suspect that this freedom to challenge the palate with craft beer and foods healthy for you and the planet continues to draw Calusa fans to the Pigfish menu.

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 Otego 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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Letters, from page 12

Taverns

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

As we are about to eliminate taverns as a category of business (at least eliminating the definition), I'm wondering "what was a tavern?" My imagination supposes a neighborhood hangout serving beer (maybe wine for the "ladies").

Does it serve a purpose to differentiate businesses limited to beer and wine from businesses with full liquor licenses?

Switching gears to large parcels in the Urban Mixed-Use areas, and thinking about what "neighborhood" businesses we'd expect to see (Starbucks, of course), I realized that many traditional places — e.g., the corner grocery — are obsolete. But I can envision a neighborhood bar (tavern?) and neighborhood cannabis joint (accidental pun). Day care, bike shop — I hope we can avoid big chain fast food places. Has there been much thought at this level yet?

Last night's Architecture Sarasota talk with Mitchell Silver was the best so far IMHO. (I envy the Planning staff for the time they had with him earlier.) A point he made that especially resonated with me was the need for the City (and its people) to decide what it wants in the large parcels slated for redevelopment. The same point was made in Atlanta in redeveloping the Belt Line properties. I asked Mr. Silver how to balance planning the future-future with addressing the immediate planning needs (which appears to consume most of our staff's energies). I would be surprised if that topic wasn't addressed during his time with staff.

My question/concern is that we're going to be publishing guidelines for the large Urban Mixed-Use parcels before we've thought about what we really want. Is there a way we can slow down the ZTA process to enable a vision of the future to be developed first?

Debbie Trice
Commissioner
City of Sarasota

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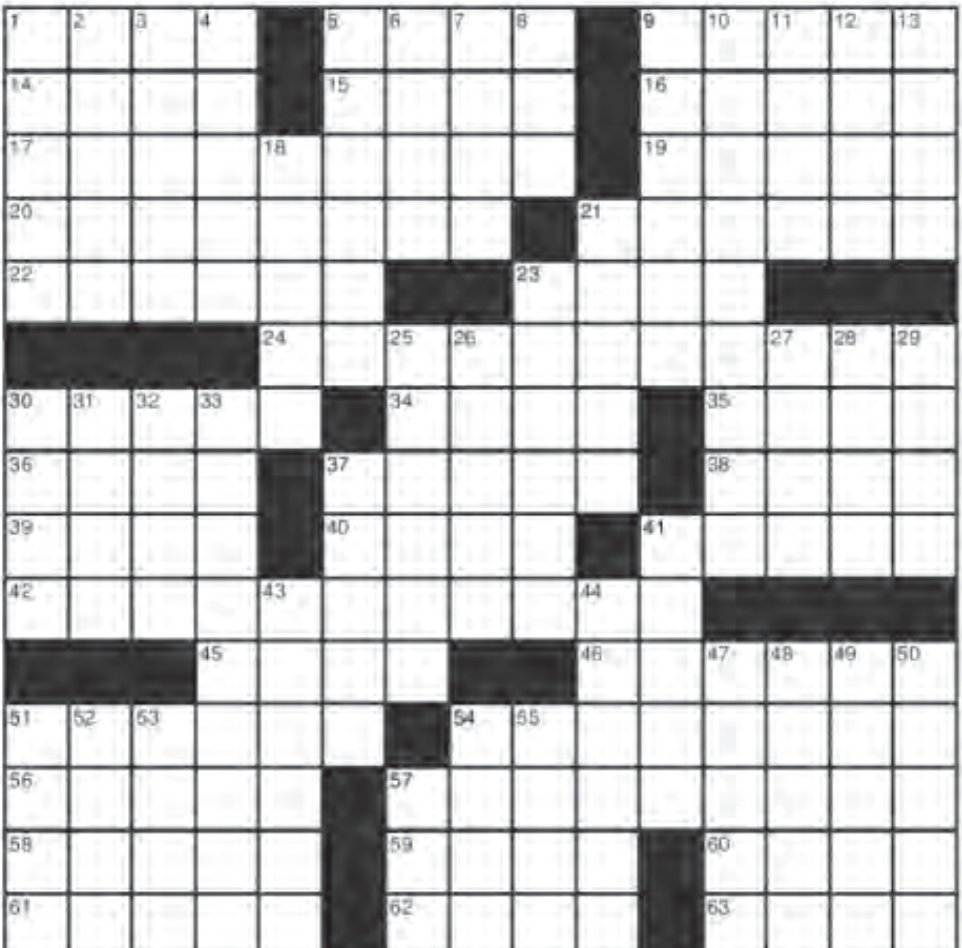
KeyCrossword

Hot to Trot

ACROSS

- 1. Cry of dismay
- 5. Member of the first family
- 9. Blue shade
- 14. The wise have it?
- 15. 1993 "Prisoner of Zenda" redux, featuring Kevin Kline
- 16. What he says, goes
- 17. Stopped sleeping on the floor?
- 19. Weightlifting maneuver
- 20. Request to a barista
- 21. Connect the cars
- 22. It's usually cured before you get it
- 23. Tropical tuber
- 24. Barber's instruction manual?
- 30. Gallery opening?
- 34. The true face of Walter Mitty
- 35. Research org.
- 36. Certain
- 37. Eponymous album on the "Heiress Records" label
- 38. Heart
- 39. Gets a bronze
- 40. Unguarded
- 41. Evening news hr.
- 42. "Best of Intentions" or "Modern Day Bonnie and Clyde"?
- 45. Impersonates
- 46. Surrounded by
- 51. Virgin, in a way
- 54. Prepare to end an engagement
- 56. Line of the Times?
- 57. Prestigious list of ground-breaking axioms?
- 58. One of the Hindu Trimurti
- 59. Imbrium or Serenitatus, e.g.

Robert Stockton



- 60. Slangy negative
- 61. Reader to serve
- 62. Should take the stage
- 63. Cut
- 12. Shade of black
- 13. Being, in Barcelona
- 18. Pal of Timothy Q. Mouse
- 21. Champs Élysées sights
- 23. Trifling
- 25. Striped African animals
- 26. Isak Dinesen's real first name
- 27. Privy to
- 28. Base number at an auto dealer: abbr.
- 29. Hold back
- 30. Attention getter
- 31. Time of day
- 32. Present opener?
- 33. Take a Porsche out without paying, perhaps
- 37. Sat for a 30 Across
- 41. Melodic subjects
- 43. Over the line
- 44. Triangular sail
- 47. Collar attachment
- 48. "Beavis and Butt-head" spinoff
- 49. Floors
- 50. Sprocket stand-outs
- 51. Red letters
- 52. Radar's quaff
- 53. Blunder
- 54. Tijuana wives: abbr.
- 55. French bread
- 57. Brief request that a brief be briefer

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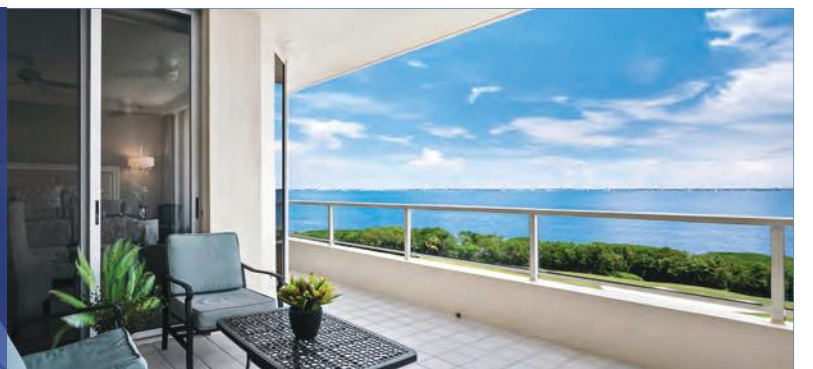
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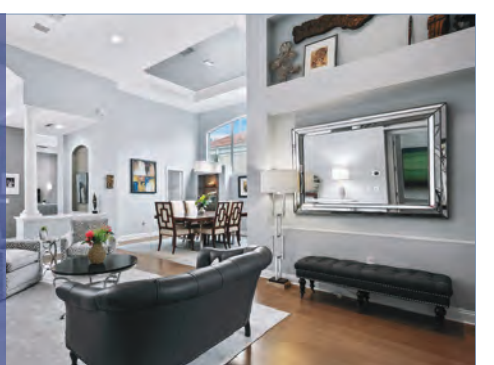
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