



Longboat Key News

December 13, 2024

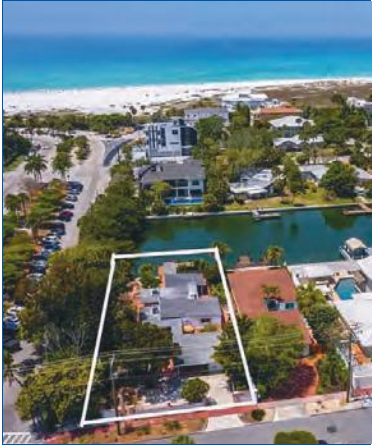
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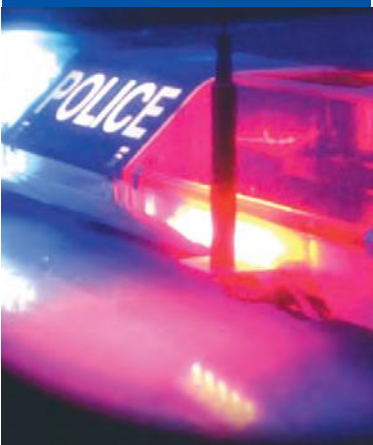
FEMA and
what is covered
...page 4



Lido home tops
\$2.5 million
...page 11



Low-flying
convo goes on
...page 12



Whose ashes
are these?
...page 10

Cafe L'Europe rebrands as The Cafe on St. Armands

The culinary local legend Café L'Europe is being reconcieved as The Café on St. Armands, a Mediterranean-inspired dining destination. Featuring small plates and seafood-forward dishes.

The Café will serve flavors of the Mediterranean coast and offer a Wet Bar and Café Soleil.
The Café, located at 431 St. Armands Circle, closed after damage from Hurricane Helene, which flooded the entire restaurant with 5 feet of water. The Café's owner, Oysters Rock Hospitality, says that the St. Armands Circle restaurant will reopen in January 2025.
Along with the new menu, The Wet Bar is billed to be a "Gatsby-inspired lounge with creative cocktails" and Café Soleil will serve morning cocktails along with coffee concoctions.

Michael Saunders opens Longboat Key St. Regis office

Luxury realtor brokerage Michael Saunders & Company has opened its 18th office on Florida's Gulf Coast, on Longboat Key at The St. Regis Longboat Key Residences.
Michael Saunders & Company serves as the exclusive listing agent for The Residences.
"We are thrilled to announce our newest satellite office at the exquisite St. Regis Longboat Key Resort," Michael
See News, page 2



The egret moves in and out of sun and shadow, eyes glued to the water searching for prey. Its javelin-like yellow bill strikes the water.

MICHAEL GIVANT
Contributing Columnist
givant@lbknews.com

A few mornings each week my wife places her hand over part of The New York Times bridge column and reads it in silence like a monk engrossed in a sacred text. When I interrupt she replies, "Honey, I'm doing my bridge." Last winter when she took a bridge course at the LBK Education Center I dropped her off and went birding in nearby Durante Park.
While writing this I asked her what she got out of playing bridge. Her answer showed me that a game, about which I know nothing, and birding are both serious forms of play in which one can lose oneself doing something that is intrinsically interesting.
On a sunny afternoon at low tide a snowy egret comes out from under a footbridge that crosses a pond. Lithe and agile it stands on a rock showing black legs and bright greenish-yellow feet; feathers and breeding plumes wave in the breeze. Soon the heron goes back into the water patrolling beneath the bridge. Even in the water those feet look freshly painted. They are the

reason for this fish eater's nickname "golden slippers," as they are used to stir the muck and raise prey. It goes back on the rock shaking itself, its wide yellow eye alert and blazing. Now the egret flies to the pond's center, the stage, where it belongs, to hunt.
At the edge of Sarasota Bay is a great egret. The breeding plumes of this one trail into the water like a bridal gown. It flies to some mangroves where it comically lands. Slowly, stealthily it comes toward a footbridge where I'm standing still so as not to cause the bird to fly.
The egret moves in and out of sun and shadow, eyes glued to the water searching for prey. Its javelin-like yellow bill strikes the water, and the bird shakes its head side to side as if savoring the fish it has just swallowed. It moves around a bend where I can only see its broken reflection in the water and then it disappears.
In the park's backwaters I see a faint flash of red by some trees. Carefully looking I see nothing. Maybe it was a turkey vulture. Partially obscured by branches is a large raptor with a light rufous streaked breast and
See Durante, page 15

Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton Reports...

Hurricane Season is OVER!
The last element of debris removal is collection of sand which will be trucked to Coquina Beach for cleaning. Although Manatee County will clean, then place the sand on County beaches, the Town will claim that sand volume as a loss with FEMA.
The FEMA funds will then be used to replace that sand loss in an upcoming beach project.
See Manager, page 2

Holiday Wines & More

Time for the annual guide to wine and other beverage gifts and seasonal buys for parties and family gatherings.



S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com
Yo Ho Ho! The holiday season is upon us. Time for the annual guide to wine and other beverage gifts and seasonal buys for parties and family gatherings.
Artists portray Santa with a red nose and rosy cheeks for good reason; cooler weather and the holiday spirit spur our bodies to seek out rich foods and alcoholic beverages with extra calories to help us stay warm. Gifts of food and drink dominate holiday gift giving. Sales of alcoholic beverages peak during the days preceding the holiday week at the end of the year.
We begin the food and beverage gifts guide with items that a person or business might choose to buy in larger quantities and give individually to a supporting cast of people who deserve remembering during
See Holiday Wine, page 15

News, from page 1

Saunders, founder and CEO, said. “The St. Regis brand is synonymous with luxury, exclusivity, and timeless sophistication. Our presence within the St. Regis Longboat Key Resort will provide an unparalleled opportunity and advantage to all our clients.”

The new office is at 1601 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Longboat Key and open daily from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m

Selby Gardens’ Lights in Bloom Is Back!

Nothing ushers in the holiday season like an evening at the Marie Selby Botanical Gardens’ annual Lights in Bloom. Now in its 21st year, Selby partners with Affairs in the Air to install more than 2 million lights across the 15-acre garden grounds.

Michael’s on East sells snacks and drinks to enjoy while wandering the grounds, Selby’s on-site restaurant The Green Orchid is open from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Lights in Bloom is on display nightly from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, 1534 Mound St., Sarasota. The exhibit is closed on Dec. 24, 25 and 31.

Waterfront restaurant opening next week in downtown Sarasota

Sarasota’s rich roster of waterfront restaurants will soon be enhanced by an upscale dining destination specializing in seafood and steaks. Nationally acclaimed Ocean Prime brand is opening in the Quay, a 14-acre downtown waterfront district along Sarasota Bay.

Ocean Prime, named to OpenTable’s list of the Top 100 Most Beloved Restaurants in America, will begin hosting private preview dinners on Tuesday, Dec. 17, at its new Sarasota location ahead of its official grand opening to the public on Friday, Dec. 21.

Offering 9,513 square feet of space spread across two stories overlooking Sarasota Bay, with outdoor terraces on each floor, the restaurant features more than 355 seats, two bars, and two private dining rooms. The second floor provides what is being billed as “an immersive experience with sliding glass walls that open to the outdoor terrace, seamlessly integrating with the scenic marina views.”

Ocean Prime is at 501 Quay Commons, Sarasota. Beginning Dec. 21, the restaurant will open daily at 4 p.m.

Manager, from page 1

Planning, Zoning & Building to help with needed repairs and rebuilding following this year’s hurricanes

See the Town’s Post Hurricane Building Permitting webpages for information on building permitting, understanding Floodplain Management requirements (i.e. the “FEMA 50% rule”), the importance of hiring licensed contractors, and links to grant funding opportunities for residential properties. The PZB Department will supplement staffing to handle the increased permitting activity and will open a Permitting Recovery Annex in the Longboat Library building, next door to the PZB office.

Watch for announcements when that space & staffing is activated.

Construction activity hours continued through December for work from 7am – 7pm daily.

Building permit fees for storm repairs have been temporarily waived by the Town Commission.

The Gulfside Interim Nourishment project

The plan includes placing ~80,000 cubic yards of fill at the Gulfside Road Public Beach Access and working north. This project also includes dune planting to re-vegetate the dune system. Boaters (commercial & recreational), fishermen, and beachgoers are asked to avoid the area for the next few months until the project completion near the end of December.

Upcoming Public Meetings & Events

- December 17, 2024 9:15 am Planning & Zoning Board Meeting
- December 19, 2024 9:30 am Zoning Board of Adjustment
- December 23, 24 & 25 Town Hall Closed for Christmas Holiday

Fast Fact!

100,000 cubic yards of storm debris was collected from neighborhood streets and Gulf of Mexico Drive on Longboat Key.



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Jules Mackie Tracey Stetler Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan Patrick DiPinto Rene DiPinto Steven Moore Janet Coughlin

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1212 CENTER PLACE | LIDO SHORES
\$6,995,000 – New Construction
5 Beds 6 Baths 4750 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



6489 GULFIDE ROAD | LONGBOAT KEY
\$16,995,000 - Under Construction
4 Beds 5 Baths 6,614 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



569-571 CHANNEL LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
\$1,050,000 – 2-Family Lot
1st floor storm damage/Repair/Rebuild
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



610 YARDARM LN | LONGBOAT KEY
\$4,699,000 – 1 House from the Bay
4 Beds 4 Baths 4,138 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



5444 GULF OF MEXICO DR | LONGBOAT KEY
\$6,900,000 - Bayfront 1.06 Acres
5 Beds, 5 Baths, 6,000 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Tracey Stetler 941-266.9001



3621 SAN REMO TER | SARAOSTA
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Contact: Janet Coughlin 941-323-3736



549 SLOOP LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
\$3,900,000- Country Club Shores
4 Beds 5 Baths 4,127 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Tracey Stetler 941-266-9001



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\$16,995,000 - SOLD!
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Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



109 N WARBLER LANE | BIRD KEY
\$11,399,000 - Under Construction
4 Beds 5 Baths 5,292 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



5440-5442 GULF OF MEXICO DR | LONGBOAT KEY
\$6,900,000 - Vacant Land 2.08 Acres
Proposed for 7 Buildable Lots
Contact: Tracey Stetler 941-266.9001

941-388-2021

53 S PALM AVENUE, SARASOTA, FL 34236

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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.

Correction

The story in the Dec. 6 edition of Longboat Key News entitled “Canals dredge up strong words in LBK Town Hall” should have attributed the quote: “...We should have a discussion of who should pay and how much ...” to Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams.

Question about storm repair permits

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons
I was informed by a constituent that private homes located in condominium complexes were told they were not entitled to the moratorium on building permit fees for storm damage. They were informed their home was not eligible because they didn't live in a stand-alone house. Could this be accurate? If so, why would there be different treatment for condo or townhouse homeowners?
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Question about storm repair permits

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Penny Gold
Thanks for passing that along. That is not accurate. Hopefully there was some misunderstanding, as opposed to us providing incorrect information. Please encourage the constituent to follow-up with us. The Fee Waiver resolution is applicable to all properties & property types

that were impacted by the hurricanes.
Allen Parsons
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Longboat Key

Question about storm repair permits

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons
Thank you Alan, I will pass this along and encourage them to follow-up with Planning and Zoning.
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
I think we are good now, we were able to eliminate the ambiguity.
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Longboat Key Public Works Director Isaac Brownman
Thanks for the clarification. Isaac, do you think we should run the “public beach” part by the attorney for clarification?
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Certainly, I think we have a more complete picture now. Deputy Chief Rubino will call Tom Mayers today and clarify as well. Based on our Police Department having conversations with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (“FWC”) and a bit of additional research, here is what we have learned on all related matters. FWC advised that spearfishing must meet the following guidelines:
Spearfishermen must use a dive flag
May only dive and spearfish under a bridge if the bridge is posted “no fishing” (this is to ensure the diver/spearfisherman does not get gassed with fishing hooks while underwater). If a bridge is not posted in this way, they must stay 100-yards (300-feet) from the bridge.
May not spearfish within 100-yards (300-feet) of a public beach.
Because the Town maintains an Erosion Control Line (“ECL”) that effectively terminates along the Gulf front at the north end, there had been a question as to the continued migration of sand outside the ECL being a designated “public beach” or not for certain activities. I believe we have clarified that we can still consider those migration areas as public beach for other matters, including enforcement actions. This has been communicated to staff.
As an FYI, when our Police personnel arrived on scene, the diver was gone.

See Letters, page 6

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KeyLetters



Letters, from page 4

Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
Isaac - can you please look at the earlier email and explain this to us.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Now it is not a Public Beach, go figure, it gets curiouser and curiouser, like Alice in wonder land. The law wants to make it more difficult to keep order for no good reason.
Tom Mayers
Longboat Key

Spearfishing at Beer Can Beach

To: Tom Mayers
I will ask for clarification.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Drain obstruction

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Bronwman
Yes Sir. As soon as its done you will be notified.
James Bowman
Supervisor
Hull’s Environmental Services, Inc.

Drain obstruction

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Bronwman
Isaac, we can check into that one. I also included James Bowman, who is managing the vac/ jet trucks we currently have working on the Key, to also look into making sure that drain is clear. James, this is the one on Sheets 67 and 68 of the stormwater atlas that I provided, at the end of Cutter LN. Please let us know when these are jetted and cleared. Thanks.
Charles Mopps
Interim Public Works Director
Town of Longboat Key Public Works

Drain obstruction

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
Thank you Commissioner Coffin, I have copied some of our Public Works team to check into that today.
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Drain obstruction

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
Afternoon Isaac I just got a call for an obstructed drain at 609 Cutter Lane. The complaint was contractors runoff debris, but I have not verified it. thanks Gary.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Info

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Yes. Allen called me and he is aware of the issue and is working with the builder. I recomend putting a lean on the certificate of occupancy and he understands. I truly appreciate your help in this situation.
John Varley, Sr.
Longboat Key

Info

To: John Varley, Sr.
I know there was a code violation so best place to start is with Allen Parsons, Director of Planning and Zoning. Phone number 941-316-1966. If he is not available call Howard Tipton, town mgr. 941-316-1999. He is out of office on Thursday.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Info

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

BJ, good afternoon, it’s been a couple of weeks and there has been no update to the driveway’s across the street from me.
I was hoping you could direct me to the right person to talk to about the driveway’s. I think they should put a lean on his certificate of occupancy until the situation is corrected. Thanks for your help.
John Varley, Sr.
Longboat Key

Info

To: John Varley, Sr.
I have been back and forth with town and they have informed the contractor at 597 the driveways do not match the plans (see attached) and must be corrected.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Info

To: John Varley, Sr.
Regarding the building permit for Buttonwood Drive, the house and site are still both under construction; drainage and grading work are not yet complete. There is an onsite drainage collection system for the lot that they are tasked with constructing, including drainage inlets and swales, which is unusual for a single family lot, but is part of the Town’s approval for this site to build in this area. Only portions of this system are in place because they are under active construction. Public Works will be meeting with the contractor onsite on Thursday to inform the contractor that the driveways were not poured per the drainage plan that Public Works approved and to get with their engineer to resolve it.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Town Hall HMGP Hardening Project

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
IWere we able to get the last grant increase to account for the last project cost increase?
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Town Hall HMGP Hardening Project

To: Longboat Key Commission
The Town Hall Hardening Project is a long-awaited project that is now getting underway. As a reminder, the Town received an initial Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (“HMGP”) grant in 2020, and then we went through several budget iterations and time amendments to get to where we are now. The project scope involves replacing and hardening the roof, removing and replacing all the exterior facing windows and storefront doors with impact/ insulated glass, and greatly enhancing the generator and generator enclosure. The new generator will now be able to power the entire facility rather than smaller specific areas. Jon F. Swift was hired by the Town as our construction manager. The total project construction cost is just over \$1.9 million with about 73% covered by the grant. The job requires work in an occupied space, with one closure period to the public, so we wanted to make you aware.
The overall schedule for roof and window construction as well as the generator enclosure reconstruction are planned from Monday December 16th through early March 2025. The Town Hall building will be closed to the public from December 26th through January 4th 2025 as the high story lobby windows are fully replaced. Staff will be available by phone and limited staff will be onsite. Information is already being broadcast and signage will be placed at town Hall. From January 6th onward, the Town Hall building will be open and operational, albeit with staff and the public from time-to-time being directed to an available entrance until the entryway work is fully completed. Once the roof and window work are done, there should be much less disruption to building operations and parking functions.

The next phase will involve installing the new generator. That is planned from April through May 2025 once the generator is received.
Throughout construction, portions of the parking and traffic circulation areas will be in use for construction and not available, so appropriate signage and detours will be provided. Extra parking, as needed, should be available at the private library just north of PZB and areas within some walking distance, like Town Center Green. The contractor is also going to make every effort to work around commission and other key meeting days.

This project has been a long time coming, and while there will be disruption within an occupied building and within the parking area, the goal is to get it done as quickly as possible during the early part of 2025. Please let me know of any questions or concerns along the way. If there are adjustments to the construction schedule, we will do our best to notify the public.
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Thank you

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Executive Director Dave Tomasko
Great to hear from you. So sorry to hear about your storm damage. FPL seems to have alot of priorities - our house can’t get torn down til the meter comes off it and a new meter is installed on our garage, which has an apartment over it where we are living - they get the torn down part, but we are having issues with them getting the fact we can still live here in the garage apartment which is 15 ft. in the air.

See Letters, page 8



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Going east on Fruitville Rd. make a U-Turn at light (Lakewood Ranch Blvd.), then make a right on to Coburn Rd. Go around the circle to Fruitville Commons Blvd., pass Cooper's Hawk and you will see Clive Daniel Home on the right.



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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 6

I have been so spoiled by the great job that Mike has done on your Committee and am a bit overwhelmed by reading all the FEMA and State info on the hurricane issues that I was looking for a shorter version of your fabulous reports - I will take advantage of your website. Hope we all have a more peaceful 2025 - and no storms. Happy Holidays.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Thank you

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I am so sorry to be so late in responding to your email – it appears to have gotten shunted into a spam folder for a while. My apologies, as I tend to check that folder more often, but with all the weather events, travel for work, etc. I have not done so in the recent past.
I am also sorry to hear about your home – I have suffered much less damage than you, but it still took two months to get most of our work done. Still have a boat stuck 7 feet in the air on a boat lift, electricity to our community dock was damaged by Helene, and FPL has higher priorities than a bunch of boaters – which makes sense.
We deal with a large amount of issues at the SBEP, and we have a website that includes links to our management plans, our Director’s Note, volunteer opportunities, a technical library, etc. that you may wish to pursue – Sarasota Bay Estuary Program
Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments, and sorry for the delayed response.
Dave Tomasko
Executive Director
Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Thank you

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Director Dave Tomasko
So appreciate the work you and your team continue to do. Could you do a brief outline of your important info? I have an uninhabitable home and can’t absorb too much plus would love to share it with our community.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Question about storm repair permits

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Penny Gold

Penny- Thanks for passing that along. That is not accurate. Hopefully there was some misunderstanding, as opposed to us providing incorrect information. Please encourage the constituent to follow-up with us. The Fee Waiver resolution is applicable to all properties & property types that were impacted by the hurricanes.
Allen Parsons
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Longboat Key

Question about storm repair permits

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons
I was informed by a constituent that private homes located in condominium complexes were told they were not entitled to the moratorium on building permit fees for storm damage. They were informed their home was not eligible because they didn’t live in a stand-alone house. Could this be accurate? If so, why would there be different treatment for condo or townhouse homeowners?
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Ed Lee Lane requests

Good afternoon Commissioner, let me check on those questions, and I will get back to you. Thank you!
Isaac Brownman
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Longboat Key

Ed Lee Lane requests

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
Can you add a couple of items to your long list of island priorities? Our Ed Lee Lane neighbors would really appreciate a streetlight — are they in line for one of our lighted street signs, by chance? Also, can crews take a look at their sidewalk for clearing next time they are in the vicinity?
Sarah Karon
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 15



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LAmbianceA608.com



415 L'Ambiance Drive #A801 - \$7,500,000

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LAmbianceA801.com



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Discover luxury beachfront living at L'Elegance on Lido Key. Enjoy a casual and inviting 2 bedrooms/2 bathrooms floor plan with panoramic views from every room. Step outside to your expansive balcony to savor the breathtaking sunrise, and the soothing breezes of Lido Beach. L'Elegance is situated on a 400-foot stretch of immaculate Lido Key and features secure underground garage parking, a storage unit, manned gated access, and on-site management. Premier amenities include a Fitness Center, Har-Tru Tennis Courts, an 85-foot heated Pool, Spa, Game Room, expansive Gulf-front deck, and a Clubhouse.

LElegance403.com



WATER CLUB



1241 Gulf of Mexico Drive #105 - \$2,575,000 - Furnished

The Water Club on the South end of Longboat Key is a rare jewel in condominium living. Almost new 2,585 sq. ft. under air, features a garden, and partial Gulf views. Southern exposure w/walls of glass, 10 ft. ceilings, wood flooring, extended 1,000 sq. ft. terraces. The Water Club exquisite clubhouse offers state of the art fitness center, message room, spa, lounge, library w/fireplace, ballroom, game room and phenomenal staff providing concierge services, an Olympic-sized pool, tennis, and 2 pets under 35 lbs. welcome. Walk down the beach and enjoy restaurants at the new St Regis.

WaterClub105.com



ARIA



2251 Gulf of Mexico Drive #204 - \$7,999,000

This epic Gulf-front corner residence, which feels like a home on the beach, offers 3 bedrooms plus an office (or 4 bedrooms) and 3.5 bathrooms in a lavish 4,032 sq. ft. space. The residence boasts floor-to-ceiling impact glass that invites natural light and connects the indoor spaces to expansive sunset terraces with breathtaking Gulf and garden views. Revel in your own 3,400 sq. ft. terrace featuring an infinity pool, fire pit, and summer kitchen, with private stairs leading straight to the beach. This architectural gem features expansive glass walls, clean lines, and angular details, seamlessly merging indoor elegance with the natural beauty of its beachfront setting. With a gourmet kitchen, social room, guest suite, fitness center, and a stunning 5-car garage, Aria delivers unparalleled luxury and on-site management.

Aria204.com



TANGERINE BAY



350 Gulf of Mexico Drive #211 - \$1,078,000

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5941 Gulf of Mexico Drive - \$8,800,000

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5941GulfOfMexicoDr.com



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OnPatrol

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

Dec. 6 Vessel

12:04 p.m.
Sgt. Montfort responded to Dream Island Road to assist Longboat Key Fire Rescue with a suspicious vessel. It was reported that a submerged vessel was leaking diesel fuel. Sgt. Montfort arrived on scene along with members of Longboat Key Fire Rescue. Sgt. Montfort observed that the vessel was partially submerged and leaking a small amount of diesel fuel. He saw a hazmat boom around the vessel but fuel was able to seep through. Longboat Key Fire Rescue made contact with Florida Fish and Wildlife which stated they would respond and re-boom the vessel. Case clear.



to the bathroom before calling the police. The man said that the verbal argument was over the complainant using the bathroom and not the packages. This appeared to have been a verbal argument because of a translation problem. The case has been documented. Case clear.

Dec. 11 Delivery

9:28 a.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to Bay Isles Parkway on a call of a suspicious incident. The caller said the Corr box has fragile sticker but no other markings, Corr package next to Jay McLaughlin Store, found unmarked cardboard. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson was flagged down by a formal complainant outside in front of the business. The complainant then showed the officer a brown box which was secured closed with tape marked ‘fragile.’ The box was on its side lying on the ground next to a planter between the businesses of Bay Isles Parkway. After picking up the box a shipping label was found and the box was addressed to the business at Bay Isles Parkway. The box was then delivered to an employee at the business.

Urns

1:30 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier was dispatched to the 4200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a suspicious incident call. The caller said an unknown person dropped off cremated remains of two unknown individuals to the front steps of the church. Upon arrival, Officer Ramsaier interviewed the pastor who said that two yellow metal urns containing cremated remains were left at the front steps of the church, along with two framed pictures of a man and woman. The pastor stated he researched the names of the urns and said he was unable to find any affiliation in the church director of current or past members of the church. The pastor said that the church will properly bury the remains on property. Officer Ramsaier advised him to contact the police on the date they bury the remains so it can be added as a supplement to the report. Case clear.

Contractor

12:38 p.m.
Officer Troyer while on patrol, was dispatched to the Longboat Key Police Department front desk and he reported he was not receiving payment from a general contractor despite completing work. Upon arrival, Officer Troy met with the contractor who said he accepted a job at the restaurant. He said he and his fellow employee were hired through a contract by a general contractor whom the contractor knew, to complete painting work. The contractor said he and his fellow employee completed the work, but the homeowner refused to pay the contractor for the work completed. The contractor said that he and his fellow employee completed the work but the homeowner refused to pay him because he did not like the work completed. The contractor said he corrected the spots where the homeowner complained about, but the homeowner still refused to pay him. The homeowner said he also corrected the spots where the homeowner still refused to pay him. The homeowner showed Officer Troyer the text messages he had with the contractor and the homeowner told the contractor he had no longer any permission to be at the job site as well. The complainant also attempted to contact the contractor multiple times by phone call and text, with no answer. The homeowner said the contractor did initially assist him with paying for hotel fees due to his homebase being in Kissimmee, but he did not receive any type of payments afterwards. The homeowner said the contractor owed him approximately \$6,000 for his work. Officer Troyer informed the homeowner this incident appeared to be civil in nature and he needed to handle this incident in civil court. The homeowner understood and said he would be handling the incident in civil court. Case clear.

Trespass

6:11 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier responded to the 4600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a trespass. Upon arrival, Officer Ramsaier was met by the complainant who said a rental unit was leased by someone and he had a person staying on property who was not allowed to be there. It was determined through the owner that there was a lease agreement between the business and the HOA of the area that the person who was on property was allowed to be there because he was a key part of the next phase of restoration. No trespassing occurred at the location. Case clear.

Vehicle

3:49 p.m.
Officer Troyer responded to the 4000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a white truck parked in the middle of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer spoke with the operator who was removing debris from a residence and informed the operator he was blocking traffic and the vehicle had to be moved. The operator moved the vehicle without issue. Case clear.

Dec. 7 Soliciting

11:36 a.m.
Officer Troyer responded to the 4400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on the report of a suspicious person. The complainant said a white man wearing a blue jacket, blue shirt and black pants was walking around residences and was knocking on door handles. While en Route, Officer Mathis and Sgt. Montfort located the man walking on Gulf of Mexico Drive. The man said the claims of him knocking on doors were not true. The man also said he was not an actual police officer, and no one was real. The man appeared to be suffering from a mental disorder, but he did not appear to be in any danger. The man also refused medical attention. The man’s demeanor was apparently calm and the man appeared to be carefree. Based upon his investigation, the man was not violating any laws or in any immediate danger. The man only wished to continue walking down the sidewalk, therefore he continued on. Case clear.

Dec. 12 Garage

1:42 a.m.
Officer Ramsaier was dispatched to the 6000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a suspicious incident. The complainant stated his rear garage door opened without anyone depressing the opener. Upon arrival, Officer Ramsaier conducted an interior search of the garage area noting two doors locked and the elevator door locked. Negative results on the interior search as well as the outer perimeter of the home including the immediate beach area, deck and underneath the deck. No footprints were observed and nothing seemed out of the ordinary. Officer Ramsaier closed the garage door from the outside panel Case clear.

Music

3:19 p.m.
Officer Troyer responded to the 4000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a report of a suspicious person. The complainant reported a suspicious man dancing and talking to himself. The complainant reported the man was wearing orange pants as well. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer observed a man playing a drum sitting on the back of a blue Jeep. Officer Troyer spoke with the man and informed him why the officer was contacting him. Officer Troyer spoke with the man who said he was just having a good time playing music and writing music. The man said he was recently down on his luck and only wanted to play his drum. Officer Troyer asked the man if he was okay or if he needed anything, but he denied needing any help. Officer Troyer did not observe any suspicious activity, nor any criminal activity. The man appeared to be just enjoying his time. Case clear.

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500 S WASHINGTON DR Unit#21B	831	\$519,900	1	1	0	29	\$500,000
475 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#107	593	\$549,000	1	1	0	78	\$505,000
1001 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#401	1,293	\$737,000	2	2	0	168	\$720,000
1001 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#606	1,224	\$799,999	2	2	0	234	\$765,000
555 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#3	1,780	\$1,545,000	3	2	1	147	\$1,385,000
421 WOOD DUCK DR	2,052	\$1,975,000	3	3	1	4	\$1,900,000
259 JOHN RINGLING BLVD	1,869	\$2,575,000	4	3	0	0	\$2,575,000
5757 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#204	1,561	\$550,000	2	2	0	25	\$540,000
2016 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#323	1,905	\$989,000	3	2	0	104	\$925,000
714 NORTON ST	1,800	\$1,399,000	3	3	0	9	\$1,200,000
521 PUTTING GREEN LN	1,786	\$1,899,000	3	2	0	18	\$1,750,000
455 LONGBOAT CLUB RD Unit#905	2,880	\$2,599,000	3	3	1	7	\$2,398,533
1591 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#313	2,154	\$2,536,850	2	2	1	0	\$2,536,850
1591 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#617	3,118	\$4,294,000	2	3	1	0	\$4,294,000



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BIRD KEY

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

Condos HOA and FEMA

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
This is helpful, thank you.
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Condos HOA and FEMA

To: Longboat Key Vice-Mayor Gary Coffin
Here is Ronica's thoughts on your FEMA questions.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Condos HOA and FEMA

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Here are a few conditions. All should be submitted to DisasterAssistance.gov
Replacement Equipment for corporations may be reimbursable if damage was caused by the storm or power outage. Submitting a detail list, cause of damage, and estimated cost to disasterAssistance.gov would start reimbursement process.
The cost of Self employed equipment is reimbursable if equipment and materials are required to continue self employment. If a pool service is provided the business owner should submit list, cause of damage, proof of ownership, and estimate cost.
Equipment and materials used in the recovery efforts: owned, purchased or rented are eligible to request FEMA reimbursement. FEMA would reimburse the estimated cost of use of the equipment by labors. Was pool equipment used in recovery services? If so, I would recommend the HOA or condo complete a claim at DisasterAssistance.gov
Ronica Jackson
Accounting Manager

Town of Longboat Key

Condos HOA and FEMA

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Do you know if FEMA accepts claims from Condos for common equipment like pool equipment, etc.
Mike Haycock
Vice Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Legislation

To: Military Legislative Assistant Sami Araboghli
Sami, Please thank Congressman Steube for his hard work in passing the Post-disaster Tax Relief Bill. Over 2200 homes were seriously damaged or destroyed on Longboat Key. This legislation will help so many residents here.
We hope Greg will be successful with funding for SBA funding for low interest loans to help those who must rebuild or repair homes following the multiple hurricanes this year.
Hope you have a wonderful holiday season.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

Low Flying Planes over LBK

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon
Thank you for touching base. Thank you.
I essentially do a short triathlon each morning which means I'm in the Banyan Bay pool from about 7:30 to 8:30. This morning there were 4 planes between 8:02 and 8:25. Two were below 1,000 feet and the other two were probably 1500 to maybe 2,000 feet. The final one banked north and was skirting the eastern coast of us. The other three flew right overhead of me.
I saw at least 2 more when I ran for 30 minutes from 6:45 to 7:15. Again right overhead and probably 1,000 to 1,500 feet above me. One I could easily see was Delta.
You have to wonder what their emergency landing proce-

dures would be, as airplanes tend to have etc., emits issues when taking off.
Between the hurricane and tropical storms damage, degradation of the bay from Piny Point's 200 million gallon dumping and recent sewage overflows due to hurricanes and tropical storms, I can't say we are better off compared to 4 or 5 years ago. Never saw tropical storm in November before that either. Sorry if I sound like I'm ranting but I'm not. These are all facts I can easily back up.
Tom Bright
Longboat Key

Low Flying Planes over LBK

To: Tom Bright
Thank you for these comments. I concur with your observations. Our Town Manager Howard Tipton (cc-ed here) has been communicating with airport and FAA officials over recent changes to flight paths, so hopefully he can make an inquiry as to your valid concerns.
Sarah Karon
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Low Flying Planes over LBK

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon
Hello. I've been an owner on Longboat Key for 12 years. About 3 or so weeks ago I started to notice planes from SRQ that are flying between 1,000 and 2,000 feet above us in the mornings and sometimes in the afternoons. They are smaller commercial
Hello. I've been an owner on Longboat Key for 12 years. About 3 or so weeks ago I started to notice planes from SRQ that are flying between 1,000 and 2,000 feet above us in the mornings and sometimes in the afternoons. They are smaller commercial planes but with the major airlines.
I used to fly planes so I think i have a good idea of their altitude.
Yesterday morning they went over us at 5:38 a.m. and there were 3 others by 6:10 a.m. I saw three more this morning while working out outdoors. One was certainly only 1,000 feet high.
I live at Banyan Bay (5270 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Unit 508) and it's loud (they sound like missiles coming over us) and I have never seen any jets fly over us below probably 5,000 or 10,000 feet ever before.
It's both dangerous and a real disturbance on a daily basis.
I don't know why they started doing this recently, but it's not right. I'd be glad to get more involved with this if you see a way forward to deal with it.
Hopefully we can fight back on this, but perhaps not, but please let me know as Longboat residents should at least unite against this and be made aware.
Please give my best to BJ. She knows me from the Paradise Center. Thank you very much.
Tom Bright
Longboat Key

See Letters, page 15

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Durante, from page 1

belly that has a softly edged tail. I’ve been reading an old classic, “The Peregrine,” by someone who followed another raptor, the peregrine falcon. The author, J.A. Baker, suggests that upon approaching a peregrine, one should attempt to minimize the unsettling effects of one’s face by shielding it and standing still. I back out of the hot sun into the shade, now more comfortable and less conspicuous. I doubt that I would have used shade as cover before and have unconsciously taken a page from a 44-year-old book.

Soon the raptor, a red-shouldered hawk, lifts off at a 45-degree angle, propelling its bulk with speed and ease to a higher branch in another tree. Impressive. Now the hawk is backed by blue sky. I step across the path closer to it but perhaps crossed a boundary I shouldn’t have. The bird doesn’t wait long before it launches itself into open space and vanishes. I stand there allowing the moment to fill me. It’s partly seeing a red-shouldered hawk, which I rarely see here, and feeling a kinship with the author whose book has just made me a better birder.

The next week at another pond there’s a wine, rust, charcoal gray and black-feathered heron. It’s a green heron offering a close look. It has a spring green line as thick as oil paint above its upper mandible in front of the eye, which has a yellow ring. This bird’s nicknamed the “skeow,” because of the call it gives off when disturbed. Green herons are skittish and quick to fly, but this one is feeding. Standing on pale green legs it leans over the water’s edge and plunges its dagger-like bill into the water in a millisecond, coming up with a yellowish fish held crosswise. Three shakes of the bill, the heron’s throat moves slightly up and down and the fish is gone. The heron blends in so well with the dark and light grasses that if I didn’t know it were there I might not notice it.

I’m less than 20 feet from the bird and have been here a long while, yet it’s not bothered by my presence. Lost in the moment I’m suddenly aware that it’s an insane world out there, but in here it’s just the stealthy heron and me. I look closely at the heron’s eye rings and the eye itself, which is very wide. What do you see? The bird starts to walk and I follow. Where are we going fella? It suddenly flies 25 feet. I’ve lost it. No, there it is. This guy isn’t leaving and I won’t have enough time to walk through the park before my wife is done bidding hearts, spades and pursuing strategies. Her chauffeur can’t be late. See ya later.

When I ask my wife what she gets out of bridge, she says it’s something in which she’s immersed and the world doesn’t intrude. Like birding or writing about birds, she adds. Then she totally surprises me pointing out that bidding, an integral aspect of the game, and birding are the same word if one drops a “d” and substitutes an “r.” I still know nothing about bridge but now I understand her concentration and passion for the game. I also will not be interrupting her while she reads The New York Times bridge column. I wouldn’t want someone to break my train of thought either.

Holiday Wine, from page 1

the holidays but for whom cash would not be appropriate. Staying within a budget will be a challenge again this year. Prices of basic 6-packs of beer, as one example, have risen to what had been the pre-Pandemic price range of imported beer. In addition to the small individual packages of candies, cookies, and savory snacks, consider a healthier Mini Panettone, a small version of the Italian flavored bread cake (a delight when substituted for bread in Christmas morning French toast), or small bottles of tiny (non-pareil) capers, or small bottles of olive oil and balsamic vinegar. Capers have a key role in Remoulade and lemon caper sauces, Pasta Puttanesca, Eggplant Caponata, and grilled fresh Salmon. Small quantities of olive oil and balsamic vinegar dress a green salad. Pairs of small bottles travel well; we see diners bringing their own diet salad dressings to restaurants. The price range of small bottles of balsamic vinegar has a high upper end: the Invecchiato Balsamic Vinegar of Modena (3.4 fl oz) 50 years-old sells for close to \$70.

One reviewer of this delicacy suggests putting a few drops on vanilla ice cream. There goes the budget, drop by drop.

Budget friendly wines and spirits have their own issues. Miniature bottles look like what the airlines serve and hip flasks what a liquor store sells from behind the counter to drinkers who can’t afford or can’t resist a larger bottle. Instead of stepping up to a wine or spirit that breaks the budget, take a look at compatible mixers and enhancers. Look for high quality tonic and dry vermouth for vodka and gin drinkers, bitters and mineral waters such as Topo Chico for whiskey drinkers, and sparkling fruit sodas for white wine drinkers who will enjoy a splash of a livelier taste.

White and red wine drinkers who have settled into a variety or two of wine and have no intention of trying something new tend to be difficult to please. Is there a vintage of one of their favorite varieties of wine that reviewers have commended? Or a vineyard that rates higher than the source of their usual buy?

Ask local experts in wine shops to recommend wines or spirits that will appeal to people on your holiday shopping list. Let them know your comfort zone for gift prices.

Next week we will look at selections for those special wine and spirits drinkers on your gift list. How does one make the most of a generous budget?

Enjoy shopping for holiday gifts. The experience should be your chance to please those you care about most.

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

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

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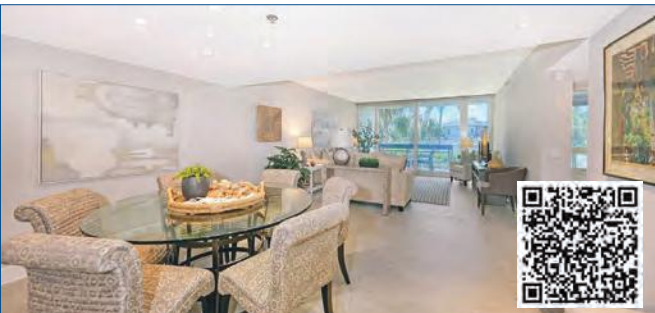
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