



Longboat Key News

March 28, 2025

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InsideLook



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LBK Ed Center
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Suspected HOA
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Longboater walks away from collision with sod truck turning on Gulf of Mexico Drive

Longboat Key police believed they had a fatality on their hands when they approached the crash scene. Traffic was impacted for hours.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Longboat Key police believed they had a fatality on their hands when they approached the crash scene on Gulf of Mexico Drive last week after a resident drove his pick

up truck in the early morning hours into a flat-bed semi-truck with a load of sod.

At 4:45 a.m. on March 27, Longboat Key police officer Simon Maple was making his rounds and patrolling Gulf of Mexico Drive in front of Country Club Shores when

he saw two semi trailers loaded with grass sod at the 200 block of the roadway.

Maple reports that one semi trailer was facing southbound and was actively unloading the sod, while the second semi, a green Peterbilt, was parked in the center

lane in the middle of the road facing northbound with hazard lights flashing.

This has become an issue over the past years says interim police chief Frank Rubino — semi truck drivers and car haulers unloading in the center lane and along the side of the road.

A cyclist drove into such an unloading car hauler and died a few years ago. The police have a policy of ticketing or minimally relocating such vehicles.

In this case, Maple told the driver he needed to move his vehicle from the center turn lane immediately.

The driver told maple he would head north and turn around as he was waiting his turn to offload the sod. Officer Maple did not give specific directions where to turn around.

The driver of the Peterbilt truck departed while the other semi-truck driver was instructed to relocate further off the roadway while unloading his sod. It has been reported that his truck was jutting into the roadway while he was unloading.

Just moments after the first semi had pulled out of the center turn lane and headed north to turn around, the officer heard a large collision a short distance down the road to which he immediately responded.

When Maple arrived at the scene, he witnessed the semi-truck facing northbound, but occupying both lanes at the 475 Gulf of Mexico Service Road. He then noticed a southbound, white Ford F150 with the vanity plate GOLDDOG, driven by Longboat Key resident Sy

See Crash, page 15

Celebration tees off on Key



A passion for golf, camaraderie and perhaps alcohol fueled the Longboat Key Friar's Club annual dinner party with more than 180 members and spouses at the Harborside Ballroom at the Key Club last week. Friar Jeff Lenobel helped fuel the fun. For more, see page 13.

Cirque St. Armands opens on Lido to Roaring '20s Ringling theme

Success in the restaurant and the resort industry depends on change and adaption, as well as creating a destination experience.

That is exactly what Opal Properties sought to accomplish when it transformed the aging and tired looking Holiday Inn on Lido Key into Cirque St. Armands Beachside, a 135-room luxury hotel and "Ringside" restaurant that opened last week.

And Cirque is anything but ordinary. It's interiors, decor, furniture and furnishings all speak to the roaring 1920s. When you enter, you feel transported into the archetypal world of the Great Gatsby and Moulin Rouge with rich velvets and vibrant colors. Even the staff attire resembles characters one might see in a

See Cirque, page 2



Cirque, from page 1

Peaky Blinders episode with caps and English tweed.

The true nexus of the idea is an homage to John Ringling and the art, entertainment and opulence he brought to the Sarasota region.

“Cirque St. Armands Beachside is where Sarasota’s rich circus legacy meets modern luxury,” said Melissa Kaplan, Cirque St. Armands Beachside’s General Manager. “This reimagined boutique hotel brings the magic of the Big Top to life with sophisticated flair. Every detail celebrates the ‘Greatest Show on Earth’

And of course, the new restaurant, named Ringside, and the hotel are all easy walking distance to Saint Armands Circle and directly across the street from the sprawling beach.

The Ringside also incorporates the circus theme. Billboard-sized murals display trapeze artists, and five private booths are set off by velvet drapery. Guests can indulge in a menu filled with gulf seafood and bold-flavored fare at Ringside.

Drinks and small plates are also on tap at the lobby bar and lounge, dubbed Midway. After March, a pool bar called the Ringmaster will also open. Shaped like three rings and designed to bring to mind the “three-ring circus,” the pool will be completed this spring, featuring striped loungers and tent-like cabanas.

The rooms boast floor-to-ceiling windows, balconies, and an art-deco-meets-Big-Top aesthetic, complete with billowing draperies, geometric and stripe patterns, ornate ostrich feather chandeliers, golden wall sconces, pinstriped columns, antique photos and posters, and more.

Cirque guests can access a 300-foot stretch of private beach at nearby sister Opal property, Lido Beach Resort, accessible by shuttle, and they can also visit the public Lido Beach across the street.

The location is the previous home of Lido Key’s Holiday Inn, which was built in 1970. Lido Hotel LLC, a subsidiary of the Delray Beach-based Opal Collection hotel group, purchased the site’s 1.7 acres for \$30 million in 2018, according to Sarasota County property records.

The seven-story hotel features 135 guest rooms, and almost 8,000 square feet of commercial space on its top floor. Room prices range from around \$200 a night to about \$1,000 for its higher end suites, depending on date of booking.

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Contact: Patrick DiPinto 941-323-0033



585 CUTTER LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
\$3,399,999 - Country Club Shores
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Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



3131 BAYOU SOUND | LONGBOAT KEY
\$2,150,000
3 Beds 3 Baths 3,023 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



3408 FAIR OAKS LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
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Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



1050 LONGBOAT CLUB RD #704 | LONGBOAT KEY
\$949,500 - Privateer
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Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



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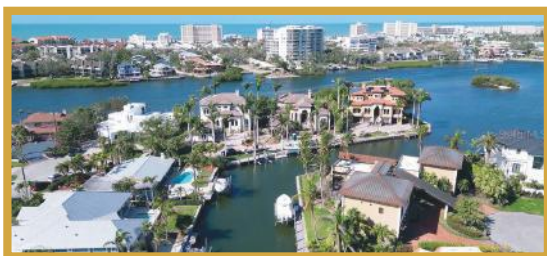
3318 BAYOU SOUND | LONGBOAT KEY
\$1,495,000 - Bay Isles
Bay Isles 3 Beds 2 Baths 2,675 Sq. Ft.
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129 TAFT DRIVE #W102 | SARASOTA
\$2,350,000 - Park Res of Lido Key
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Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



131 GARFIELD DRIVE #4D | LIDO BEACH
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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.

Important note concerning HB 943 - heard in Tallahassee this week

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
This week, Commissioner B.J. Bishop and I spent a great deal of time in Tallahassee meeting with House and Senate members of our legislative delegation. We also had the privilege of meeting with some very knowledgeable staff members. I have a great appreciation for the time and attention they all afforded us. Thanks to Commissioner Bishop for her earlier overview of our meeting and key legislative issues.
There is one bill, however, that deserves more attention: House Bill 943 (Rep. Lopez, V.). This would be an unwarranted expansion of the relatively new Live Local Act, while hindering the enforcement of any local planning and zoning codes, giving developers and their projects

free rein to build anywhere they please.
HB 943, which unfortunately passed out of the House Housing, Agriculture and Tourism Subcommittee on Tuesday, would lead to unchecked apartment development in our neighborhoods by taking away local decision making on housing / apartment land development and shifting developer costs to taxpayers.
Essentially, the bill would all but prohibit local decision making regarding housing development, apartment heights, building locations and population density. Development plans would be done outside of the sunshine, with no opportunity citizens to be notified or given the opportunity to comment on any development project planned in their neighborhood. Likewise, city and town commissions/councils are also removed from the process. By mandating “administrative approval”, citizens are shut out of the process.
The bill changes definitions, so essentially giant apartment buildings could be constructed in any single-family neighborhood, historic neighborhood, planned development, on agricultural land, golf courses, parks, open spaces, preserves, etc.
HB 943 would prevent local governments from enforcing any zoning ordinances regarding parking, even with areas with no public transportation, or road or drainage setbacks. The way this bill is written, cities would be forced to allow big apartment buildings anywhere. One provision would give developers the opportunity to skip zoning laws by temporarily donating land to a church or religious group, or establishing one, prior to putting up their building.
There is also a disregard of any existing density rules, local comprehensive plans, and development regulations. If passed, city and town governments would be subject to lawsuits (and attorney fees) if they attempted to enforce exiting planning and zoning ordinances against an unchecked development. Developers would get special treatment, while citizens and locally elected officials lose the ability to protect their communities.

See Letters, page 8



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What’s Happening at The Education Center?

Everything Under the Sun to Learn & Enjoy!

The middle of April marks the end of the 2024-2025 season at The Education Center at Temple Beth Israel.

SUSAN GOLDFARB
Contributing Writer
goldfarb@lbknews.com

The middle of April marks the end of the 2024-2025 season at The Education Center at Temple Beth Israel. Programs begin again in November for the 2025-2026 season. As many Longboaters know, the former Longboat Key Education Center, located in the Centre Shops of Longboat Key, was officially dissolved due to Covid in 2021 after 35 successful years! In good faith and with a vision for the Longboat Key community and Temple Beth Israel’s future, Isaac Azerad, the Temple’s executive director, and Beth Israel’s Temple board members, saved the popular lifelong learning center from disappearing by recreating it under its auspices. I am very grateful to be able to continue my purpose and my passion of the last 39 years recruiting, interviewing and scheduling lecturers and performers, writing the program descriptions for the annual brochure, and promoting our offerings in the media and with Eblasts.



GOLDFARB

This season The Education Center took in 3,000 registrations for special events, lectures and concerts, despite the hurricanes that caused so much damage to many LBK properties. The fall was very slow and so was January but by February people started registering with intensity and excitement! Membership is not required but members get discounts and credit for program withdrawals. We have 450 active memberships, many of them couples, so the number is closer to 750.

Concluding its fourth season at Temple Beth Israel, the mission of the Education Center at Temple Beth Israel is to continue to create, develop, and administer a copious array of stimulating and diverse programs that keep the mind and body active and the spirit young. Lifelong learning is the key to staying vibrant and engaged in family life, friendships, communities and the world. The only prerequisite to attend and enjoy over 150 adult enrichment programs each season is a desire to keep pursuing new educational, recreational, and cultural adventures, regardless of religion—The Education Center at TBI is secular—or educational background.

Everything under the sun to learn and enjoy awaits the eager students from yoga to Supreme Court to nature walks, to jazz nights, literature, poetry, bridge, canasta, mah jongg, movie discussions and film festivals, technology, politics, painting, meditation, birding, wellness, languages, private piano lessons, art and music appreciation, Sunday concerts, an annual lecture series with 12 diverse topics and much more! Each season I plan 75% new programs while the other 25% is devoted to perennial favorites such as painting, yoga, bridge, nature walks, etc. Loyal students come back year after year and we welcome the new ones who discover the center!

The last concert of the season, MUSIC IN MOTION, featuring Scott Blum, musician/percussionist, on drums, accompanied by his talented musicians, Joe Porter on bass, Chris Neville on piano, and Scotty Wright, vocalist, will play jazz standards including the music of Duke



Ellington and other notable jazz greats, uniquely accompanied by Leymis Bolaños Wilmott, director, dancer, and choreographer of Sarasota Contemporary Dance, adding a multi-dimensional perspective to this musical celebration. The date is Sunday, April 6 from 3-4:30 PM.

Temple Beth Israel is located at 567 Bay Isles Road. For reservations call 941-383-8222, Email Admin@tbieducationcenter.org or register online at www.tbieducationcenter.org. Please use this contact information if you would like to be on the school’s database for brochure mailings and emails.

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Letters, from page 4

Further, HB 943 bill makes taxpayers pay for developers’ costs. Traditionally, developers are charged “impact fees”, to help pay for things that will be needed after their building(s) go up, such as roads, drainage, water, sidewalks. This bill cuts those fees, transferring the additional costs to city taxpayers.

Local decision making has always been needed to ensure that growth is thoughtfully planned to ensure adequate resources are available to meet the growth in population density. Shockingly, this proposal would take away a municipality’s ability to be smart about expansion, and would force cities to approve new buildings, even when there is not enough water or roads to support them. It also takes away the option of towns and cities to require developers to fix problems, like water shortages or storm damage, construction problems or insufficient roads.

This legislation would also encourage more Airbnbs by letting people (or real estate investment groups) build accessory dwellings (ADU’s), by right, in back yards. There is no requirement that these new houses be affordable, making this an invitation for more corporate-owned short term rental units, without any additional local density, drainage or parking requirements.

A number is amendments have already been filed on this bill, but this particular piece of legislation has so many problems — not all have been discussed here — that it would be best if HB 943 were removed from further committee meeting agendas. It is important to note that some of these concerning provisions are found in other bills in both the House and Senate, but none are quite so comprehensive in their effort to prevent local involvement in the planning process.

The final committee hearing on this bill, if it does continue to move forward, will be the Florida House Commerce Committee, chaired by Rep. James Buchannan. I encourage folks to reach out to members of that committee in opposition to HB 943.

Committee Phone: (850) 717-4870. Members of the House Commerce Committee:
<https://www.flhouse.gov/Sections/Committees/committeedetail.aspx?Committeeid=3285>.
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Rental Assistance

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Yes, we can check with their HOA to make sure they are aware of the opportunity.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Rental Assistance

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
I know the Spanish Main residents have not been able to return to their homes. I am guessing those who are full time residents of LBK are renting. FEMA does offer rental assistance, but as you saw from the email I forwarded to you yesterday they (FEMA) has not been moving forward with helping those who have reached out for rental assistance.

Can we find out if the Spanish Main residents have availed themselves of that help or if they even know it is possible? Then, can we find a resource with FEMA who will help expedite these rental assistance needs.

I don’t know of another community that has been hit as hard as Spanish Main. My neighbors who have lost homes and are renting are aware of the rental assistance. They are just not getting response from FEMA.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

HB 943

To: Florida House Delegate Hunschofsky, U.S. Rep. James Buchanan

Thank you for taking the time to speak with us yesterday after the committee meeting on HB943. My name is BJ Bishop and I represent the Town of Longboat Key as the President of the Manasota League of Cities and the at large representative on my commission.

I have served in municipal government in VA, as well as FL and prior to that worked in Washington DC for a national trade association on Capitol Hill. I have never read a bill that is as devastating to towns and cities as Delegate Lopez’ bill.

For us personally in Longboat Key we cannot absorb any more residential density. We are a barrier island with service from one state road. That road is gridlocked now and there is no possibility of significant improvements to our transportation plan.

In the 1980’s Longboat Key’s elected officials had the wisdom to revise our Comprehensive Plan to cap density. We have successfully held the cap on that density. If a property owner wants to add a single residential property they must go to a Town-wide referendum. We have had a number of referendums in the last 10-15 years and only 2 have succeeded. One for two homes and one for six homes.

None of the barrier islands in the Manasota League could survive successfully if HB943 is passed. None of the barrier islands are able to absorb more traffic and puts all of us at tremendous risk. Thank you for your help on this critical issue.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Trees

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Penny Gold
Yes, it is on the 4/7 meeting agenda.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Trees

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Will you please add this issue to the April 7 meeting agenda?
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Trees

To: Terri Driver
Terri- Thanks for your inquiry. The Town’s Tree Protection ordinance does not currently have an exception for natural disasters. As noted in Tip’s email, at the bottom of this email chain, there is an exception for improved single-family lots (i.e. those properties do not require a permit from the Town to remove trees).
What can be helpful for other residential properties (i.e. multi-family/condo & vacant single-family lots) that do not want to have to submit for a Tree Permit & provide 2 replacement trees for each tree removed, is a statutory provision (F.S. 163.045(2)) that provides an
See Letters, page 12



Town of Longboat Key ATTENTION VOLUNTEERS

The Town of Longboat Key is accepting applications for appointment to the following board:

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Board of Trustees
Planning and Zoning Board
Zoning Board of Adjustment
Sarasota County Citizens Oversight
Committee for Public School Facility Planning**

All applications must be submitted to the Office of the Town Clerk **by 12:00 p.m. on April 23, 2025**. All applicants must be registered voters of the Town of Longboat Key. Late applications will be held for one year for any future board/committee vacancies that may arise.

All members of the Planning and Zoning Board, and Zoning Board of Adjustment are required to file a financial disclosure form within 30 days after appointment and annually thereafter for the duration of the appointment as required by Florida Statutes Chapter 112.

The Town Commission may schedule a Meet and Greet with applicants at a later date. Please call the Office of the Town Clerk at 941-316-1999 for an application or if you have any questions. Applications are also available online at: www.longboatkey.org. Completed applications may be submitted to:

Town of Longboat Key – Office of the Town Clerk
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Stephanie Garcia, Deputy Town Clerk II
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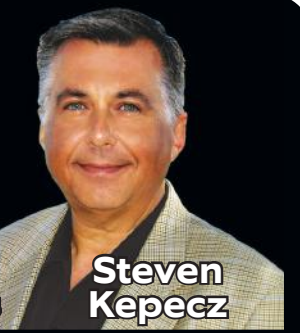
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Judy Kepez-Hays
941.587.1700



Steven Kepez
941.376.6411

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OnPatrol

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

March 21 Intoxicated

1:18 a.m.
Officer Troyer while on patrol, observed a vehicle in front of him gaining distance, indicating it was speeding. Officer Troyer caught up to the vehicle and reached a max approximate speed of 75 mph. Officer Troyer observed the vehicle slow down as he caught up, and obtained a consistent pace of 65 mph in a posted 45 mph zone. Officer Troyer observed the vehicle as a black Land Rover. Officer Troyer conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle near the approximate cross streets of Longboat Club Road and Gulf of Mexico Drive. Upon walking up to the vehicle and introduced himself to the driver and explained the reason for the traffic stop. Upon asking the driver for his license, registration and insurance. Officer Troyer observed the driver had slow hand movements and did not appear to comprehend what he was asking of him. The driver provided Officer Troyer with his license, but was not able to provide the vehicle's current registration or insurance. The driver gave registration cards for other vehicles and kept fumbling through random documents. While at the vehicle's driver door, Officer Troyer smelled the odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage which emitted from the vehicle and observed the driver had a thick tongued and slightly slurred speech. Officer Troyer cleared the driver through the databases and he was clear of any wants or warrants, and the vehicle was registered to him. Upon the driver exiting the vehicle, Officer Troyer continued to smell the odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage which emitted from his person in an open aired environment. Officer Troyer asked the driver if he had any alcoholic beverages recently and his whereabouts. The driver informed he was on his way to a friend's residence after leaving a wedding. The driver said he had approximately three alcoholic beverages over the span of seven hours. The driver said he went to the wedding at approximately 6 p.m. and stayed until his travels. Officer Troyer asked the driver if he would be willing to conduct voluntary standardized field sobriety tests to either prove or disprove if he was impaired. The driver said he would be willing to voluntarily take the tests. Officer Troyer asked him standard questions prior to testing. The driver said he suffered from a traumatic brain injury a few years ago. Upon conducting the Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus, Officer Troyer observed four out of six clues coming from his eyes. Upon conducting the walk and turn, Officer Troyer observed three out of eight clues from the driver. Officer Troyer observed the driver stepped off the line, took the incorrect number of steps on his first 9 steps, whereas he took a tenth step then immediately turned around which led into the improper turn where the driver spun around. Officer Troyer also observed the driver used his right arm for balance while walking. While conducting the One Leg Stand, the driver displayed three clues of impairment. The driver used his arms for balance, swayed while balancing and put his foot down. Based upon the totality of the circumstances, whereas the vehicle was in motion, the driver was driving at 20 mph over the posted speed limit and veered outside of the lane and into the bike lane once along with all indications of impairment from the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests, Officer Troyer placed him under arrest for suspicion of Driving While Under the Influence. Officer Troyer transported him to the Sarasota County Jail. Upon arrival and opening the rear door to the patrol vehicle. Officer Troyer continued to smell the odor of an unknown alcoholic beverage which emitted from the man. Officer Troyer asked the driver if he would be willing to provide a voluntary breath sample to determine a blood alcohol content. The man refused and Officer Troyer read the driver an implied consent warning to which he complied and agreed to provide a breath sample. He provided two breath samples at .041 BAC. Officer Troyer issued the driver a citation for unlawful speed and a citation for DUI was created, however Officer Troyer did not suspend or confiscate his driver's license due to being under .08 BAC. Based on Officer Troyer's investigation, Officer Troyer found probable cause to believe the man was driving under the influence of alcohol, whereas his normal faculties were impaired. Therefore, the driver was arrested on the violation of driving while under the influence.

March 22 Injured Swan

8:54 a.m.
Officer Ericsson was dispatched to Bay Isles Parkway regarding a swan with a broken leg.



Upon arrival, Officer Ericsson contacted the complainant who showed Officer Ericsson an injured swan next to the roadway and advised she contacted a gentleman who was en route to help. Several minutes later, the man who works with The Gracie Swan Foundation responded to the scene and took custody of the injured swan. Case clear.

Disturbance

10:20 a.m.
Officer Ericsson and Officer Miklos were dispatched to the 3700 Gulf of Mexico Drive on a disturbance involving several individuals interrupting an HOA meeting. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos contacted the caller who said there were several individuals investigating a coup in the HOA. He said they weren't allowing the HOA meeting to begin initially. Officer Miklos asked what the individuals were doing to keep the meeting from starting and the man said they were talking loudly. Eventually, prior to the officers' arrival, the individuals stopped and the meeting began. When Officer Miklos, Officer Ericsson, and Officer Martinson arrived the meeting was running without issue. The individuals involved lived in the neighborhood and did not commit a criminal offense or Town ordinance violation. Case clear.

March 23 Vehicle

4:04 a.m.
Officer Nazareno while he was conducting a speed enforcement at the 400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive which is a 35 mph zone when he observed a white car travelling northbound. Officer Nazareno visually estimated the speed of the vehicle at 50 mph and activated the LIDAR Device which showed a speed of 49 mph at a distance of 370.4 feet. Officer Nazareno then conducted a vehicle stop with his marked patrol vehicle at the 500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Nazareno made contact with the driver and advised him for the reason for the stop. The driver was not the registered owner of the vehicle and said that his driver's license was suspended. FCIC records showed that the man's driver's license was suspended indefinitely for failure to complete court ordered school. Warrant check was negative. The man was issued a citation for driving while license suspended and was issued a written warning for Unlawful Speed. The passenger had in her possession of a valid Florida Driver's License and drove the vehicle from the scene. Case clear.

March 25 Vehicle

3:54 p.m.
Officer Mathis while on patrol noticed two vehicles parked in the driveway of a home on Gulfside Road. It should be noted that this residence and many neighboring homes were severely damaged by the hurricanes and remain vacant. These vehicles had passed the officer's location while sitting stationary. A blue Ford and a gold Ford Expedition were parked in the driveway of a house on Gulfside Road, the residence was inhabitable due to the severity of damage it sustained during hurricane season. During previous patrol of the area no vehicles were at the location. Upon checking the registrations through ELVIS, neither vehicle was registered to the address. Officer Mathis observed several footprints leading from the vehicles into the open residence and around the property leading to the beach. During a check of the area, Sgt. Montfort, Officer Mathis and Officer Troyer located three male subjects walking towards the residence with fishing poles and tackle. The three men explained that they had permission to utilize the property to fish. The men provided text messages from the property owner that he had permission to be on the property. The man advised he understood how the situation looked and that normally he came during the day and it was bad judgement call to be at the location so late at night. All three subjects returned to their vehicles and left the area. Case clear.

Noise 7:37 a.m.

Officer Pescuma was dispatched to St. Judes Drive in reference to a loud leaf blower in or around the area. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Pescuma canvassed the area with negative sightings initially, Officer Pescuma did locate the man operating a leaf blower. Officer Pescuma explained the town's noise ordinance policy and the modified hours regarding construction noise due to hurricane damage. Officer Pescuma observed the man using the leaf blower slightly before 8 a.m. and did not appear to be hurricane related. A warning was issued for noise ordinance violation. Case clear.

Animal

12:14 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier responded to Rountree Drive for a report of a red and black snake on her property. Officers located the snake and determined it was a non-venomous, red corn snake. Officer Pescuma safely relocated the snake from the property to a nearby wooded area. Case clear.

March 26

Vehicle
12:33 a.m.
Sgt. Montfort while on patrol, observed a black Toyota Tacoma parked in the rear of the 6900 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Sgt. Montfort further observed that the rear of the vehicle has a truck bed covering and all windows were covered with condensation. Sgt. Montfort made contact with one occupant in the truck bed of the vehicle who said he was traveling throughout the country and camping in his vehicle. The man was advised of the town ordinance and sent on his way without incident. Case clear.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

exception for trees deemed to be unsafe. This provision, in a nutshell, says that if a property owner gets documentation from a certified arborist that a tree poses an unacceptable risk to people or property, then a local government may not require a permit or fee. Certified arborists are often part of tree removal company’s teams. So that’s an option.

As you highlighted in your attachment of the Tree Protection ordinance, the overall intent is protect, maintain & enhance the tree canopy of the Town. There are many benefits that flow from that.

On another note, at the next Commission meeting (April 7th), the Commission will be considering whether to extend the Building Permit Fee Waivers, for storm related damage, beyond its current April 30th expiration date. Their consideration will include whether to add the Tree Permit application fee (\$65 per application) to that Waiver list (if it’s extended).

Staff will also be putting together an ordinance for the Commission’s consideration that could potentially add a specific exception for trees damaged as a result of a natural disaster.

Your input & others will certainly be welcomed on those topics. If you have any other specific questions or ideas, please feel free to reach out to me directly. Contact info below.

Allen Parsons
Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key

Trees

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I have concerns about the message received about Tree Permit Applications “required” after a natural disaster (see below).

Understood that a tree is, according to the code... “Tree.” Any living, self-supporting, woody plant having a diameter of four inches or more

when measured 4.5 feet above ground level, and which will typically reach ten feet or more in height. For the purpose of this chapter, all palms with 4.5 feet of clear trunk when measured from ground level are declared to be trees and are protected by the provisions of this chapter.”

Please see attached the code with my orange highlights.

1. I would ask if the Town has any exceptions regarding natural disasters.

2. Before the Town receives thousands of Tree Permit Applications, I would ask that you reconsider your words. Please define tree vs. shrubs vs. hedge.

4. Which part of the application reason applies due to natural disaster? My point is the trees are dead due to a natural disaster, not a choice of the homeowners to remove a living tree.

“1. The condition of the tree has significantly degraded or deteriorated because of disease or insect attack and is in danger of falling within the proximity of existing or proposed structures;

2. The applicant cannot practically alter or revise the pro-

posed development or improvement under all applicable laws and regulations to accommodate existing trees, including the tree or trees proposed to be impacted (move or trim);

3. Removal of the tree will enhance the ultimate tree canopy and removal will not result in erosion, or adversely affect the flow of surface waters; or

4. The tree poses a significant safety hazard to life or property.”

5. Can the Commissioners or P&Z or Public Works please consider that this is a very different situation based on the intent of Chapter 98 — Trees?

Terri Driver
LBK Citizens Green Team Co-Chair

Spanish Main

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

So, this does not track with our experience — either they are getting a less than accurate story from the board and sub-contractors or have a problem.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Spanish Main

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

Thank you for your quick response. Your information re: the Board and contractors causing permit delays directly conflicts with the information our contractors have given us. Claremont Construction, our remediation contractor, and our Board members have been in frequent contact with the Longboat Key permit department who are apparently working very hard to get the permits done. We are told they are understaffed. We just want them to get whatever staffing or assistance they need to get the job done as quickly as possible and ensure they are prioritizing permanent residents.

I am sorry that you lost your home which must be demolished, and certainly understand the stress we all are experiencing. In Spanish Main Yacht Club, our 212 ground floor, 1 story villas can not be demolished or built up on stilts. They must be remediated to their original state because they do not violate the Fema 50% rule. As a result, the next flood will create the same issues, remediation costs, and special assessments. The effects of sea level rise and stronger hurricanes are transforming the barrier Islands into a playground for the ultra-wealthy, while many retirees will not be able to stay.

Adrienne Scott
Longboat Key

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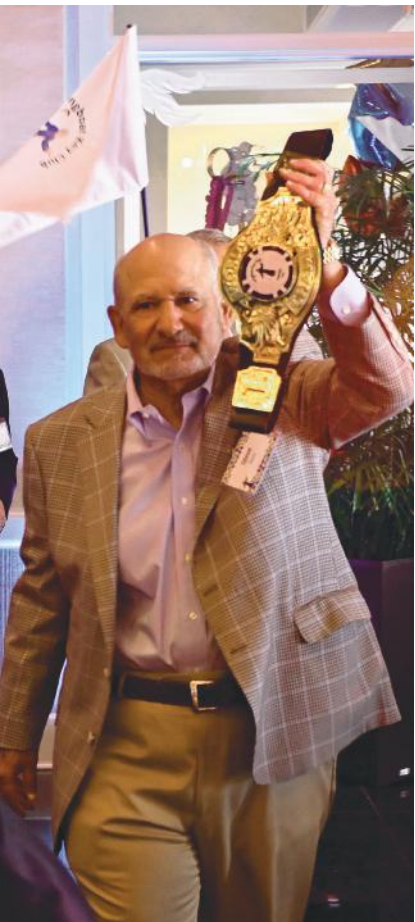
Friars, from page 1



Shah Guilani



Jeff Lenobel & Steve Mason presenting the Friars Inspirational Man of the Year Award to Don Kreiss



Steve Stein



Ted Romanow, Jeff Lenobel, Donna Lenobel, Charlie Cannon.



Brian Harris and Hank McFarlane, the youngest and oldest Friar



Jeff Lenobel, Friar Council Member and (unpaid) General Counsel handing the desired JBL speaker to Chuck Eldridge, the leader of the Friars, as a gift for his work in running the Friars golf games



Chuck Eldridge awarding the Frank Sulzman Golf Genius Award to Bill Calpin and Tom Murphy (Frank Sulzman in the middle)

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Crash, from page 1

Rabins wedged between the trailer of the semi truck and the temporary concrete lane dividers installed by FDOT is part of the country club Shores turn lane project to increase safety in the area.

Ribbons was trapped inside his vehicle, but stated he was OK when I asked. Orascio Ramiro Pesina, the man driving the semi truck, was already outside his truck when the officer arrived and stated he was backing up in attempt to turn around and was struck by the southbound vehicle.

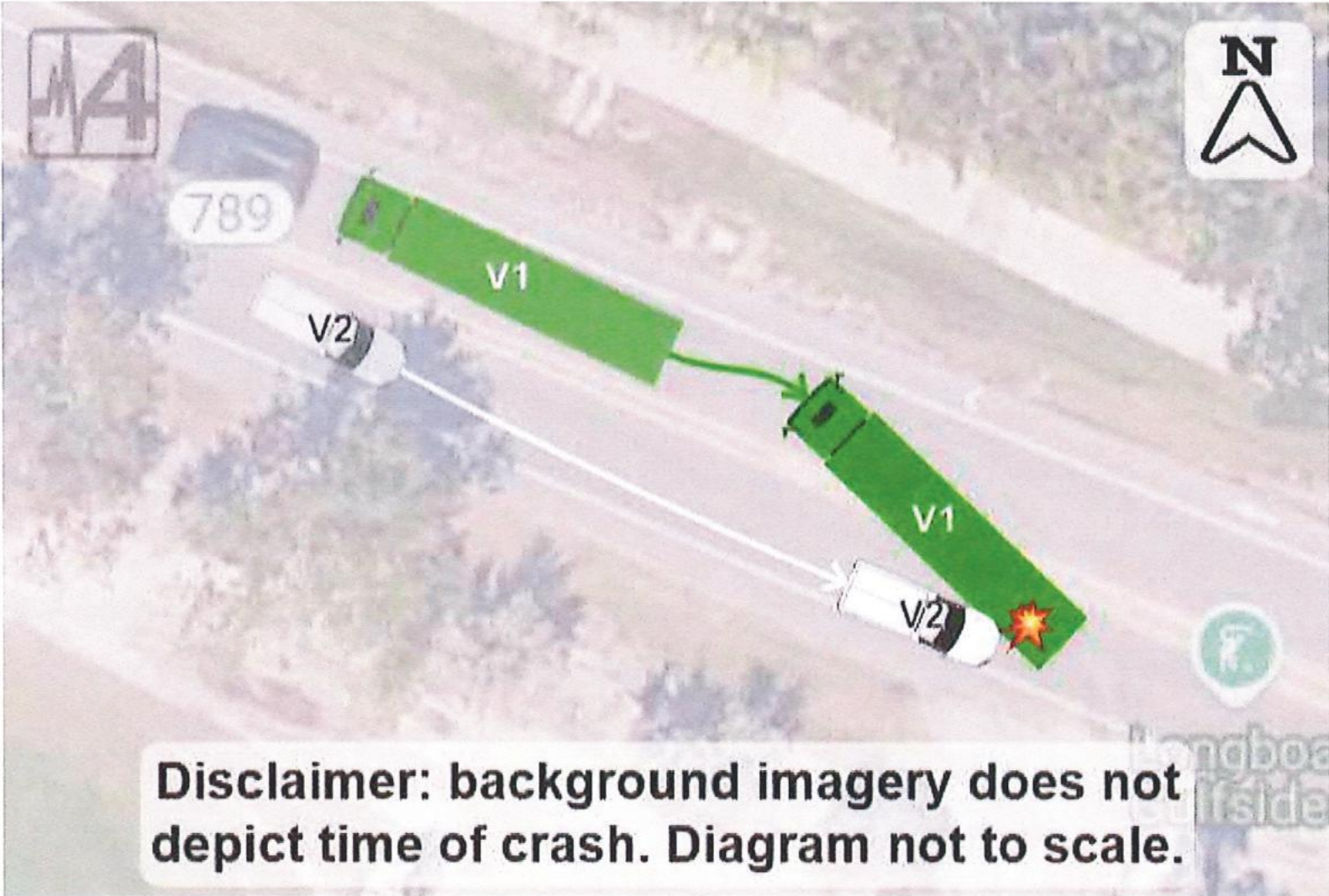
Rabins was reported to have told Officer Maple that he was headed south traveling at the posted speed limit and noticed the northbound. Sammys headlights in the northbound lane, but did not realize he was backing up in Gulf of Mexico Dr., and that the trailer was in his lane until it was “too late to take action.” Officer maple observed no signs of excessive speed.

Although he was trapped in his vehicle, when Longboat Key fire department arrived, and he was evaluated, he was treated for an injury to his right wrist, and further medical assessment was turned down.

The severity the impact was such that the cab of the semi was only operable and disconnected from the trailer, but the trailer is suffered a broken axle and air brake line damage. The F150 had to be towed from the scene and the trailer was eventually offloaded on site..

Traffic had to be rerouted north and south around the incident. Using Longboat Club Road on the west side of the golf course.

The driver of the semi truck was cited for improper backing. Chief Rubino emphasized the danger of semi’s in car, haulers weeding along Gulf of Mexico Dr. in the early a.m. hours, trying to avoid traffic and ready to unload in the morning. Rubino said the town has made a known allowance and policy to have such vehicles wait near the tennis center in town center green and not along the state roadway.



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2065 HARBOUR LINKS DRIVE
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/3.5BA • 2,865 SF • Updated



GRAND BAY • \$1,795,000
3010 GRAND BAY BLVD. #482
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/3.5BA • 2,250 SF • Furnished



LONGBOAT KEY TOWERS • \$1,595,000
603 LONGBOAT CLUB RD., #1102N
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2BA • 1,458 SF • Gulf & Bay views



THE MARK • \$1,350,000
111 S. PINEAPPLE AVE., #1004
SARASOTA, FL
2BR/2.5BA • 1,513 SF • City views



COREY'S LANDING • \$1,235,000
3467 BYRON LANE
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/2.5BA • 2,227 SF • 2-Car garage



HARBOR OAKS • \$1,095,000
2129 HARBOURSIDE DR., #901
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/2.5BA • 2,219 SF • Golf views



FAIRWAY BAY • \$995,000
1900 HARBOURSIDE DR., #102
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2.5BA • 1,590 • Updated • Boat Dock



BAYPORT BEACH & TENNIS CLUB • \$895,000
520 BAYPORT WAY
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2BA • 1,456 SF • Gulf to Bay



PLAYERS CLUB • \$895,000
1485 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #205
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2.5BA • 1,569 SF • Gulf front



LBK YACHT & TENNIS CLUB - \$869,900
4215 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #103
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2BA • 1,497 • Furnished



ISLANDER CLUB • \$799,000
2301 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #85N
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2BA • 1,235 SF



FAIRWAY BAY • \$649,000
1932 HARBOURSIDE DR., #242
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
2BR/2.5BA • 1,192 SF • Bay views



NOW PENDING

L'AMBIANCE • \$2,995,000
415 L'AMBIANCE DR., #C404
LONGBOAT KEY, FL
3BR/3.5BA • 2,820 SF • Furnished

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

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