



Longboat Key News

February 2, 2024

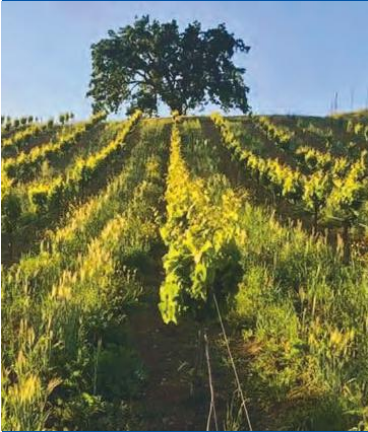
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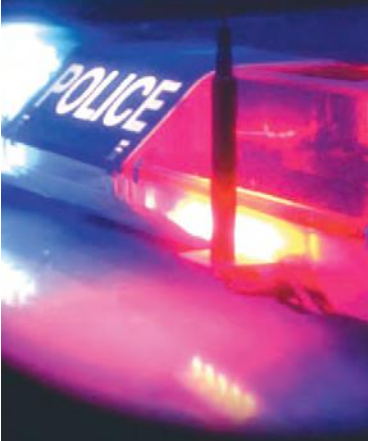
Bird Key's \$4 million flight ...page 9



The Red, White and Best of wine ...page 13



Jamie Dimon: enough already ...page 6



The man with the orange towel ...page 10

Resident push-back mounts against City Island park development plan

The future of publicly-owned Ken Thompson Park on City Island, nestled between St. Armands Circle and Longboat Key, is on the agenda this week and one entrepreneur is pushing for a golf course, gondola ride and food court.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Jeffrey Koffman of Ride Entertainment will propose to the Sarasota City Commission at its Feb. 5 meeting a public-private partnership to convert the Ken Thompson Park into a venue offering the following: a food court, splash pad, topiary gardens, nine-hole golf course and an Aerobar.

An Aerobar is a gondola that lifts passengers 120 feet into the air to provide a view.

Koffman faces already mounting opposition and questions from concerned residents. The president of the St. Armands Circle Residents' Association, Chris Goglia, has offered several foundational questions and issues.

First he questions whether residents want to remove the quiet relaxing ambiance and trade that for tourism attractions and rides and entertainment.

"Do we want our city's parks to be mostly peaceful community gathering places, playgrounds, and open space, or do we want them to become non-stop tourist attractions, festivals, markets, etc...?" Goglia said.

Another issue is the fact that Longboat Key will add future traffic with the opening of the St. Regis this year and the future hotel and



Photo by Steve Reid

condominium allowances that have been approved at the Longboat Key Club Islands development.

Residents on Longboat and on Lido have historically been sensitive to creating traffic draws in public parks except for special events.

The area surrounding Ken

Thompson Park has been the home to Mote Marine Aquarium, The Sarasota Sailing Squadron, Save our Seabirds the Salty Dog Restaurant, boat ramp, walking trails and more for years.

Koffman hired Kimley-Horn to perform a traffic and site survey.

The consultant concluded that the kind of features proposed would enhance the park.

Kimley-Horn wrote in the report's conclusion: "Ken Thompson Park is significantly under-utilized relative to other similar parks in the

See Park, page 2

Public input wanted for new County Library on Longboat

This will allow the community to have a direct impact on the library's amenities

Sarasota County is partnering with the Town of Longboat Key to build a public library in Longboat Key as part of the Town Center Green Project. This will be Sarasota County's first new library project since 2018 as well as the county's first library project on a barrier island.

Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners took an important step in making this initiative become a reality in 2022 when they allocated \$1 million toward development costs for a Longboat Key library.

An architect and construction manager were given contracts for the project, and the design phase officially began in December 2023. Sarasota County has been working closely with the Town of Longboat Key to design and plan a library that will best serve the town's residents.

The county will hold its first public meeting with the library director and the architect presenting basic components of the library at 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 12, at the Longboat Key Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key.

A second public meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. on March 18 at the Longboat Key Town Hall.

The presentations will be followed by a breakout session, where the community will have an opportunity to provide input for any potential enhancements to the project.

This will allow the community to have a direct impact on the future of the library's amenities. The cost for the library, which will be county-built and run, may be supplemented by private donations for any enhance-



ments.

Following the public meetings, architects will create and propose designs for the suggested enhancements. These designs, along with cost estimates, will be used for fundraising efforts

Mote Launches Sustainable Farming Program with Sarasota

Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium has formed the Beginning Farmer Education Program in partnership with UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County with the goal of creating the future Florida workforce in food, agriculture, and natural resources.

The 8-week program provides the next generation of farmers with hands-on work experience and practical education under the mentorship of Mote scientists, extension educators, successful entrepreneurs, and local producers.

Many Florida communities have a need for access to sustainably grown, healthy, nutritious food, including seafood, as year after year, wild fisheries continue to fall short of feeding Earth's growing population—with nearly 60% fished to capacity and 34% overfished.

"Mote continues to successfully demonstrate how to raise seafood away from the coast while recycling 100% of the salt water—and we've built upon that core technology to do much, much more," said Manager of Mote's Marine & Freshwater Aquaculture Research Program, Dr. Nicole Rhody.

The Beginning Farmer Education Program participants gain practical skills from agricultural extension agents in areas such as crop cultivation, soil health, irrigation, pest and disease control, equipment operation, and harvesting techniques. Participants can learn more from Mote scientists about aquaponics—the marriage of aquaculture and hydroponic growing techniques—to raise fish and grow edible plants in a symbiotic, closed-loop system. Participants will also gain an understanding of different business models, along with opportunities to connect with local supply chains and network with

schools, local farmers, restaurants, etc.

The 200-acre Mote Aquaculture Research Park (MAP), one of eight Mote campuses was established in 2001 to pioneer the development of sustainable aquaculture technologies working in land-based recirculating systems and to address the need to develop a viable, domestic aquaculture industry in the United States.

This campus includes the Ron and Marla Wolf Aquaponics Center established to expand Mote's successful research with marine aquaponics. Aquaponic systems transfer nutrient-rich water from fish tanks through filtration systems to plant raceways, where the nutrients fertilize the plants. Next, the cleaned water is returned to the fish—ready to begin the cycle again. These remarkable systems can produce two types of foods (fish and plants) from just one nutrient source, the fish food. Most aquaponic farming involves freshwater, and Mote has been working to expand options for sustainable, affordable, saltwater production that can be done in closed recirculating systems away from the coast.

Participants receive access to land, aquaculture facilities, and supplies. Here they can design, implement, learn and adjust plans for their own future farms using a micro plot and that can be scaled upwards.

Mote and UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County began prepping the Mote land six weeks before contacting participants to begin the program.

At the beginning of October, planting began, which included produce such as Swiss chard, collard greens, tomatoes, beets, okra, herbs, marigolds, and more. Harvesting is expected sometime end of January into early February just in

time for Mote's annual Farm to Fillet event.

The Beginning Farmer Education Program is funded by Federal and state grants, membership fees, philanthropy, co-op sales and community/government support.

To apply to be part of the program, contact instructor Dr. Rod Greder, Sustainable Agriculture Agent at UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County, at rgreder@ufl.edu.

Park, from page 1

area. The lack of diverse amenities, programmed spaces, clear way-finding, and shade are all factors that contribute to lack of activation of the Park. The low density of the Park gives the sense of the spaces being undesirable. The lack of users or natural surveillance after the business hours of the adjacent properties along with the absence of modern safety features such as cameras or blue light call boxes contributes negatively to the comfort and image of the space. ... With additional programmed spaces and more variety in amenities, Ken Thompson Park has the potential to become a great asset to the community of Sarasota."

According to Koffman's presentation, the proposed partnership requires no financial investment by the city. The private organization has the necessary capital funds for all enhancements. Ride Entertainment will be responsible for all maintenance of the park and will create and execute a national and local marketing strategy for Ken Thompson Park.



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Modern marvel overlooking New Pass in Lido Shores! Step into this tropical escape through the hidden courtyard that connects the three-bedroom main home to the secluded, two-bedroom guest house with an expansive sundeck, 60-foot wet-edge lap pool lined with royal palms and unique fire bowls, as the perfect introduction to a contemporary masterpiece.



Boasting all the amenities required for luxury living, this SMART home's inspired style highlights spectacular water views that stretch out to the Gulf of Mexico from just about every room of the nearly 6,600 square-foot interior. Stacked glass sliders create a seamless transition to outdoor living, opening to the glass-railing terrace, summer kitchen, built-in grill, and spiral staircase that leads down to the waterside hot tub. Boaters will appreciate the deep-water dock with multiple lifts.

NEW CONSTRUCTION TO BE BUILT



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Waterfront location, this custom home is situated on a quiet cul-de-sac steps to Siesta Key. Offering nearly 5,350 AC/SF, with an open concept floor plan, highly desirable finishes and touches, and 4-car garage, you will be impressed. Work with builder direct to create your dream home.

GULF FRONT NEW CONSTRUCTION



LONGBOAT KEY • 6489 GULFSIDE DRIVE \$16,900,000
Fabulous Gulf front lot offering nearly 100 ft. of sandy beach, this gorgeous DSDG Architect designed home is a rare find. Boasting almost 6,000 AC/SF, this spectacular home is custom built with the finest details throughout. Architect designed landscaped exterior and 4-car garage.

Fellow Country Club Shores Residents,
I have qualified buyers who are actively searching in our neighborhood. If you are looking to sell in the near future, let's chat. Remember, I am also a Country Club Shores resident and would love the opportunity to work with you.

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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.

Ken Thompson rides

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
My friend Beth Mc Quade is a good friend of your friend Trudy...actually I remember Trudy from a pilates class that had a teacher at her house in Mae Rim Thailand back when I was living there, anyhow...
I just picked up the newspaper...have not even read the whole thing but ...how the heck can these people be proposing Rides and Entertainment at Ken Thompson. When the food truck were there recently it took me over one hour to get home from The Vue and I live near Charchouse, it's already crazy, so what can we residents do...please advise because I often feel like the prisoner of zenda out here as it is...Sarasota doesn't seem to give a darn about Longboat Key.
Guessing it's all about the money, everyone and everything seems so greedy these daze... please advise and I will be on board and I am sure our friends out here have had enough too...
Thanks, and hoping 2024 is peaceful at best.
Jean Gramaglia
Sarasota

Ken Thompson rides

To: Jean Gramaglia
I just spent 5 hours driving back from Tallahassee with the Vice Mayor of Sarasota who is very unhappy about this suggestion. Write the City. We have weighed in as well. It is a horrible idea from the same guy who wanted a permanent carnival at St. Armands.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Longboat Key

Ken Thompson rides

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Beyond stupid on public land.
Jean Gramaglia
Sarasota

Private permit

To: Bryan Winsom
A friend who resides in Country Club shores is concerned that neighbors at 521 and 531 Golf Links may be doing some dredging work on the canal adjacent to those properties. Is it possible that a permit was issued for the work to be done privately?
Debra Williams
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Hearing on “Amusement Park” at Ken Thompson

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Will anyone from our team be attending on 2/5? I can make myself available if needed.
Sarah Karon
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Hearing on “Amusement Park” at Ken Thompson

To: Bonnie Wilder
Thanks for this note. I was made aware of this plan and the City meeting to discuss it by the President of the St. Armand's Key Residents' Association and passed it on to Town Manager Howard Tipton. I expect Longboat will be represented at the February 5 meeting, as our Commission meeting that day doesn't begin until 1 p.m., and agree that our residents should be alerted to the plan. We actively and successfully opposed the renewal of the less intrusive and less permanent St. Armand's Winter Wonderland proposed by the same vendor this past year.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Future of Ken Thompson Park on City Island

To: Longboat Key Town Commission
Want something to talk about this weekend?

See Letters, page 6

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Accompanist

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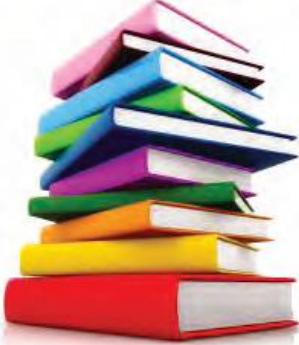
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6609 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Coastal-inspired elevated pool home. This North Longboat Key 4 bedroom, 4 bath, 4,132 sf home with private beach access features views of the Gulf of Mexico and sunsets from wide covered decks and the third-level widow's walk. The main level is ideal for family gatherings and entertaining with ample seating in the kitchen, living room, dining area and wet bar. All bedrooms have ensuite baths. The Gulf of Mexico facing glass sliders open to an expansive balcony with a gas grill overlooking the pool, spa and lush array of mature tropical trees and landscaping.



\$1,250,000

569 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

100 ft. x 100 ft. canal front homesite in Sleepy Lagoon. Great location – perfect balance between beach/ICW. Updated seawall and 10,000 lb. lift. Topographical survey and geo-technical engineering reports available.



\$2,100,000



370 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #432 | LONGBOAT KEY

Delight in scenic views of Sarasota Bay in this custom-designed 4-bedroom, 4.5-bathroom PENTHOUSE in the gated resort-style Tangerine Bay community on the southernmost tip of Longboat Key. the spacious condominium features soaring ceilings, skylight, great room with gas fireplace, marble gallery for displaying artwork, and private gated courtyard. All bedrooms are ensuite. Sliding glass doors in the primary suite and great room open to a tiled terrace where you can start your day with a cup of coffee while watching the sunrise. An additional west-facing terrace boasts stunning sunset views.



\$4,495,000

648 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Boater's dream property on oversized (19,994 sf) rarely available cul-de-sac end lot with a brand new 320-foot seawall located in Sleepy Lagoon, on the north end of Longboat Key. This location offers fantastic panoramic views of Bishops Bayou and the ICW. Situated on nearly a half-acre lot is a 3-bedroom, 4,157-SF home, which could be renovated or removed creating a build site for an incredible custom home.

Editor Letters

Letters, from page 4

Jeff Koffman of RIDE Entertainment (one of the guys behind the controversial St. Armands winter festival; we don't know yet if Tom Leonard of Shore Restaurant is still involved) has asked to present at the upcoming Monday, Feb 5th, City Commission Meeting about taking some level of private control of Ken Thompson Park on City Island. Here are some links with more information:

Link to a city email about the upcoming presentation, at the request of Commissioner Erik Arroyo

Link to a video in that email featuring an amusement park ride called the Aerobar with the caption: "Why drink on the ground when you can drink in the sky"

Link to the actual presentation with some pretty spectacular concept drawings

Link to the Feb 5th City Commission Agenda (see item II.1)

Two questions that come to mind:

Would the attractions and frequent for-profit events and festivals cause increased traffic congestion for the city's barrier island neighborhoods and for people traveling to and from the Town of Longboat Key?

Do we want our city's parks to be mostly peaceful community gathering places, playgrounds, and open space, or do we want them to become non-stop tourist attractions, festivals, markets, etc...?

What are your thoughts on this? I'd sincerely like to hear your point of view.

Chris Goglia

President

St. Armands Residents Association

Hearing on "Amusement Park" at Ken Thompson

To: LSPOA members

Those of you who were at home in the neighborhood on January 19-21, experienced life in Lido Shores during the inaugural St. Armands Food Truck & Music Festival, which drew crowds estimated in excess of 10,000. While the Festival was certainly a wonderful and fun event, for those of us who were here at home, the Festival brought with it a traffic debacle. John Ringling Causeway was intermittently at a bumper-to-bumper standstill throughout the weekend.

Now we hear that the folks who brought us the failed St. Armands Winter Festival are proposing to privatize some part of Ken Thompson Park and to develop it permanently as an amusement park featuring such things as "bars in the sky." This portends for us a non-stop replay of the Food Truck Festival! Details of the proposed park development are included below.

The first hearing in this matter is scheduled for February 5 at 9:00 am at City Hall. I ask that you join me at this hearing, which may be the most opportune time to make known at the onset our objections to development which will drastically alter the character of our immediate environs and certainly diminish the quiet quality of life we presently enjoy.

If you are able to attend please contact Erika Ivanyi or me for details at LidoShores@gmail.com

Bill Farber

President

LSPOA

Hearing on "Amusement Park" at Ken Thompson

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider

The message below was sent to me by a friend who lives in Lido Shores. Shouldn't this
See Letters, page 8

follow the locals to...
our newly renovated dining room

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680 BROADWAY STREET | 3 Beds | 4 Baths | 2,009 Sq. Ft. | \$1,995,000



7030 POINSETTA AVENUE | 2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,402 Sq. Ft. | \$1,875,000



6960 POINSETTA AVENUE | 2 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,461 Sq. Ft. | \$815,000



5131 JUNGLE PLUM ROAD | \$9,330,000

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6957 LONGBOAT DRIVE S. | \$2,575,000

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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 7

important message about the meeting be sent to all residents here on Longboat Key? Last Saturday we picked our daughters up at the airport and were shocked by the stand-still traffic attempting to get home due to the Food Truck Festival.
Bonnie Wilder
Longboat Key

To: Jean Gramaglia

Attend the Sarasota City Commission meeting at 9 a.m. on Monday February 5 where this project will be presented to the Commission.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Longboat Key

Living on boat

To: Longboat Key Commission
The same couple are now living on the boat in the middle of the canal, tied up to the homeowner of the above property. They've been there since last weekend supposedly temporary since they sold their slip at the moorings. We really need to find a way to have this ordinance codified because as long as the resident lives there, we will constantly have this type of abuse and complete disrespect of the community, the neighbors, and actually what the commissioners and the mayor requested the homeowner to not continue with allowing people (that don't own property here or rent property) to park a big vessel in the middle of our canals he thinks he has a private marina for rent! We really need some help with this matter it's not going away!
Kathy Callahan
Longboat Key

Living on boat

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
With the boat turning into a residence, does this violate the code in a single-family residence area?

Lynn Larson
Longboat Key

Traffic Safety issues

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
I rarely receive handwritten notes, but I got two today that both involve traffic safety issues along GMD. One from Sharon Schreiber, a resident just inside the South entrance to Bay Isles, raises concerns about exiting Bay Isles there and whether the problems will be exacerbated by St. Regis traffic. The other, from Condo President Stacy Rolfe at Islands West involves a similar issue their residents face trying to exit their condo against the traffic entering GMD from directly across the street at the Bay Isles Pkwy traffic light. She provides a Safety Committee contact for you or George to contact.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Traffic Safety issues

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Thank you Mayor. PD will follow up.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Meeting with Mike Rahn

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Sounds like a great meeting. We're happy to work with you and him to arrange a tour of the island. Since our joint meeting is at the end of April, I would suggest we target for a time in mid-April so that we're fresh in his mind (for the joint meeting) and we are on the beginning of the back side of season for traffic purposes. Tour could include Greer Island, Broadway intersection, Gulfside erosion, traffic impacts at Coquina Beach, Whitney Plaza community center, and whatever else you think we can accomplish in a couple of hours.

If that sounds good, Susan can begin to coordinate with the Chair's staff.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Meeting with Mike Rahn

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
I had a very good meeting yesterday with Mike Rahn, the newly appointed Chairman of the Manatee Board of County Commissioners. He recognized the contributions we make to Manatee and was enthusiastic about maintaining the improved relationship we have developed in the past few years with Kevin and others on their Commission. We reviewed all recent and ongoing projects between Longboat and the County, and he is on board with moving forward on all of them and to supporting us regarding future needs. I told him the future projects that might benefit from Manatee assistance include the sea level resiliency programs in North end communities and the complete streets program for GMD. I think he will support assistance as long as we give him enough lead time to meet budgeting deadlines. Mike asked if we could arrange a Longboat tour for him to visit our facilities and meet our key managers; we agreed this should be scheduled in the next month or so.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Greetings from the team at Visit Sarasota County

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission
We continue to reach out to share our monthly numbers with you. We hope these economic indicators are helpful to you as you look to make decisions for your business/community.
Please plan to join us on Tuesday, February 20th at 8:30AM
See Letters, page 11

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SARASOTA, FLORIDA

KeyRealEstate

Bird Key, Lido Key, Longboat Key latest sales

Address	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Bed/Bath/Half Bath			Days On Market	Sale Price
493 PARTRIDGE CIR	3,422	\$2,495,000	5	3	0	25	\$2,375,000
1800 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#B506	2,070	\$3,269,000	3	3	0	0	\$3,269,000
355 W ROYAL FLAMINGO DR	3,273	\$3,950,000	3	3	0	10	\$3,800,000
464 MEADOW LARK DR	3,437	\$4,000,000	3	3	0	0	\$3,930,000
230 SANDS POINT RD Unit#3605	634	\$1,130,000	1	1	0	2	\$1,140,000
4900 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#201	1,561	\$925,000	2	2	0	67	\$819,000



464 MEADOW LARK DR



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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.

Jan. 26 Citizen assist

4:45 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 3100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a call of a citizen assist. A man in an electric wheelchair was about to run out of battery on the northbound side of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson was met by the man who was traveling northbound on the sidewalk from Buttonwood Plaza in his motorized wheelchair. The man said the battery was about to die and he would not be able to make it home. His wife was on scene with her husband and they offered to transport him and his wheelchair home. Officer Martinson followed the couple to their car and he assisted them in getting the man into the car and the wheelchair into the vehicle. Case clear.



at her unit at the condominium. The purse contained cosmetics, various credit cards, a Toyota fob key, and a Florida Driver's license. The Driver's License listed an address at the condominium, but nobody there was familiar with the name of the individual on the license. Through research, Officer Zunz was able to contact the owner of the purse and she drove to claim it. The owner advised that some cash, gift cards and cosmetics were missing, but she was happy to have the purse and the rest of the contents back. She signed the property receipt and exited the police department with her purse. Case clear.

Jan. 27 Man on private beach

11:44 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to the beach at Longboat Club Road in reference to a citizen complaint over a private beach chair by a caller who did not wish to meet with police. Sarasota Sheriff's Office Dispatch advised the unknown man was sitting on a chair with an orange towel. Prior to arriving at the beach, Officer Miklos spoke to the complainant via phone who said she was upset at how the man responded to her. The complainant was not sure if he was staying at the condominium. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos contacted the man who stated his family has a residence in the condominium. Case clear.

Disabled vehicle

6:19 p.m.
Officer Maple was dispatched to the 6700 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a disabled vehicle. Upon arrival, Officer Maple spoke with the driver who said she was driving her Hyndai Palisade and had run out of gas while sitting in traffic awaiting to cross the bridge. The officer obtained two gallons of unleaded gasoline and assisted the driver to fill the tank. The vehicle was started and left the island without any further issues. Case clear.

Noise complaint

10:05 p.m.
Officer Maple was dispatched to the 5000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a noise complaint. Upon his arrival, Officer Maple heard loud, live music coming from the back of the residence. Officer Maple made contact with the owner who stated he was having a 50th birthday party for a family member and did not realize what time it was. The owner turned down the music and the party was moved indoors with no further incidents. Case clear.

Jan. 28 Parking with no permit

1:28 p.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to Broadway and Palm Drive in reference to a vehicle parked in resident parking only without a permit. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos observed a black Ford parked near the permit parking only sign. Officer Miklos observed a valid Longboat Key parking permit in the windshield. Case clear.

Jan. 29 Found property

1:44 p.m.
Officer Zunz entered the lobby of the Police Department to respond to a purse that was found along Manatee Avenue in Bradenton over the weekend and someone had dropped it off

Jan. 30 Dogs barking

10:15 a.m.
Officer Swinford was dispatched to Schooner Lane in reference to a welfare check on a dog that was howling. Officer Swinford arrived at the residence and attempted to make contact with the homeowner. It did not appear anyone was home and was therefore unable to make contact. Officer Swinford observed two dogs inside the residence but did not hear any howling as he walked up to the residence. The dogs checked out today. Case clear.

Golfcart in walkway

2:56 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier while on patrol, observed a Toyota SUV parked in the vicinity of the golf course and Harbourside Drive. The vehicle was unoccupied with the keys in it off the golfcart path. Officer Ramsaier observed a man on the golf course and later identified as a maintenance worker for the golf course and was doing his job. Case clear.

Feb. 1 Raccoon

9:25 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to Halyard Lane in reference to a raccoon that appeared to be acting weird in a dumpster. Animal Services was advised of the raccoon and no police services were needed. Case clear.

Missing car

2:11 p.m.
Officer Martinson was flagged down by a woman in the parking lot of Publix. She said she had been searching the parking lot for a long time and could not find her vehicle. The woman provided Officer Martinson with the make, model and license plate of her vehicle and went searching for it as she waited next to the squad car. Officer Martinson located her vehicle parked in the far east parking lot of Publix and escorted her back to it. Case clear.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

as we will present our FY24 Quarter 1 Outcomes.

During these presentations that take place via Zoom – not only do we share information with you but we also have a opportunity for questions and feedback.

To join us, please register here: <https://www.cognitoforms.com/VisitSarasota1/QuarterlyResearchAndRecap>

Here are the numbers comparing December 2023 to December 2022.

Visitors were 86,640 compared to 100,200 in 2022

Visitor direct expenditures were \$127,698,800 compared to \$139,457,400 in 2022

Lodging occupancy was 58.6% compared to 65.9% in 2022

Lodging average room rate was \$257.75 compared to \$264.13 in 2022

There were 245,800 room nights sold compared to 266,700 in 2022

We have seen some normalization after some strong years in 2021 and 2022. Occupancy was around 65% in the last couple years versus just under 59% this December. In addition, part of the uptick in 2022 may have partially due to displaced residents and recovery workers post Hurricane Ian.

Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions or need anything from our team.

Erin Duggan
President & CEO
Visit Sarasota County

Citizens Fire Academy

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton, Town Commission

I want to cordially invite you all to our Citizens Fire Academy taking place at the Englewood Fire Academy on February 17th, 2024. This is a great opportunity to come out and be a firefighter for a day. There will be 4 scenarios including vehicle extrication using the “jaws of life”, search and rescue operations, fire operations with live fire, and a medical scenario simulating our interventions on a patient suffering from a cardiac arrest. A great opportunity to see and do the things our firefighters are trained to perform. I have attached copies of our media release and informational flyer. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me via email or cell phone your interest in attending or any questions you may have about the event. Media should be present, and this event has always been a good time for all involved. I look forward to speaking to you all about this great event. Be safe and God Bless!

Jason Berzowski
Business Agent and Political Liaison
7th District Vice President
Florida Professional Firefighters

FPL Letter about Hurricane Idalia Transformer Failure Assessment

To: Longboat Key Commission

Attached is a high level summary that came in this afternoon of FPL's investigation into the transformer failures during storm surge events. It is a short read.

As discussed with FPL, whatever changes they deem necessary for failing transformers in surge events will not impede the undergrounding project. The completion of the undergrounding continues to be the #1 priority.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

FPL Letter about Hurricane Idalia Transformer Failure Assessment

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I read this a few times to try and understand it. I think the letter and attachment suggest that some transformers failed during Idalia after being submerged in saltwater and some did not. Those that failed had a “different material make-up” from those that did not and suffered from total corrosion of some parts despite being in place for less than 6 months. If this is the correct reading, wouldn't we want to install the transformers with materials that don't corrode? I'm not sure that's suggested.

The report also mentions 24-inch pads as an effective solution. Are we identifying with FPL/Willco which transformer locations would benefit from that solution and implementing that solution? What is the timing?

Ken Schneier
Mayor, Town of Longboat Key

FPL Letter about Hurricane Idalia Transformer Failure Assessment

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thanks for your feedback Mayor. We don't know the timing for raising the pads on the surge impacted transformers yet, but we have asked. The redesign of the transformers (so that are salt water tolerant) is I believe a longer term solution. The short-term solution of raising the units that have corroded, which FPL will determine, is the solution we're all waiting to know more about. We are asking FPL to come to the next quarterly update to discuss the project and options going forward.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

FPL Letter about Hurricane Idalia Transformer Failure Assessment

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Obviously, our new transformers on the Island cannot be exposed to salt water. When can we complete engineering and get the ones in flood areas raised?

Mike Haycock
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 12

Longboat Key News

Sarasota City News

PO Box 8001
Longboat Key, FL 34228
941-387-2200
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Steve Reid, Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Associate Publisher
Melissa Reid

Columnists
Susan Goldfarb, Sig Hermansen,
Greg Rusovich, Blake Fleetwood

Sales
Lillian Sands
Steve Reid
ads@lbknews.com

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 11

Thank you Fire chief

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Tip, this is a letter of appreciation to Fire Chief Paul Dezzi for accompanying me to the 40 carats Daycare Center for a presentation of fire safety to the three to six-year-olds. This month the students were studying and learning about government services. The staff was incredibly impressed by the presentation mostly because Paul had his fire gear and taught them important safety facts, he basically stole the show. Fifteen kids and four teachers have been instructed in what to do in the event of an emergency. As I've said before we are so fortunate on the island to have such qualified and capable people on your staff. Little Jaks's only question was, "When do we eat?" Which reminded me, that maybe this presentation was not that different from our commission meetings. Thanks for your assistance.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

New Urbanism Luminary Andrés Duany to Sarasota: 'You're Not a Little Town'

To: Sarasota City Commission
I hope you had and felt the same takeaways that I did. This was one of the most enlightening talks I've ever heard in my 31 years of public service where I felt (as the City Manager and for our staff and the City Commissioners who have taken harsh criticisms but yet made bold decisions) so vindicated hearing what Mr. Duany had to say about Sarasota. I know this all may be temporary because we (as humans) soon get back into our normal routine and forget things we hear about how great of a city we are and what a great job we are doing because we are so often drowned out by the negative voices but it is my hope that his views continue to resonate in us as we continue to progress to being an even more awesome city. This was shared with me and I felt it needed to be shared with you all. Please read it. Thank you and have a great weekend.
Marlon Brown
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Employee of the year

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider
Back when I was gainfully employed, I used to do various team building exercises. One of the recommendations out of that training was for managers to try to catch someone doing something right! I always liked that idea and made it a point to use that with my team on a daily basis.
I wanted to share with you that the Town has an employee that I continuously catch doing something right. The latest example was her flawless running of the Observer Tournament this past weekend where she showed up early every day and stayed late to make sure that the tournament came off without a hitch – and it did.
At a time when a lot of people are trying to see how little they can do, I see this employee showing up early and staying late regularly to make sure the Tennis Center is ready to go when it is supposed to be.
This employee came into her current position with no real training on how to be a boss or

manage all the disparate aspects of running a Tennis Center, but she was a quick study. She has assembled a team that now has significant tenure and a similar customer-oriented focus and she appears to have learned all she needs to know about attracting good talent, handling a retail operation, and maintaining a not insignificant physical facility with the many challenges it presents from its exposure not only to constant use, but also to the harsh elements of the Floridian climate.
I have been particularly impressed with her attention to taking appropriate care of the equipment at the facility. One benefit of this attention is because she takes the time to make sure the ball machine is regularly cleaned, the Tennis Center has only needed one ball machine , while over the same number of years, a neighboring facility needed to buy 3 machines, because the other facility didn't make the effort to properly maintain the machines. Not only is she mindful of the Town's assets, but she is also mindful of minimizing the Tennis Center expenses, such that she frequently performs these tasks because she has no one to hand them off to.
For these and other reasons, I would like to nominate Kay Thayer to be the Town of Longboat Key employee of the decade, year, month, week or whatever time period for which the Town may make awards. If there is no such award, then start one with Kay as the first awardee.
Please see that this gets to the appropriate people in the Town management. Kay tends to shun the limelight and can be uncomfortable with accolades; but she deserves many accolades, as she is an excellent example of an outstanding leader and employee to her own team and to all of the Town's employees. If I was still hiring people, I would want as many Kay Thayers on my team as possible!
David S Gutridge
Longboat Key

Employee of the year

To: David Gutridge
This is high praise indeed for someone I know is not easy to impress. Kay is one of the Town's stars and has done a wonderful job with the tennis program. Thanks for recognizing her good work.
Ken Schnerier
Mayor, Town of Longboat Key

Employee of the year

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider
I think Debra and I are the members of Commission who see Kay in action. She goes way beyond to meet a ton of demands daily.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Employee of the Year

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I just wanted to thank everyone for their kind words. I have truly enjoyed being a part of the Town of Longboat Key for these past 24 years. It's a great team to be on!
Kay Thayer
Director
Longboat Key Tennis Center

City Island

To: Richard Shaffett
Day of the meeting, click on the link below, will have the City Commission meeting listed and then "in progress", click on that and you can watch online live.
<https://www.sarasotafl.gov/services/meetings-agendas-videos>
If you want to speak and participate via zoom, contact Shayla.Griggs@sarasotaFL.gov
Per gas leaf blowers, I think we can request a meeting with the City Attorney (copied on this email so he may want to respond as well) and have copied Christina and Alexya on this email to arrange a meeting if necessary.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
Vice Mayor
City of Sarasota
City Island

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WineTimes

White and Rosé from Top-Shelf Red Wine Producers

The winemakers of these white and rosé wines have invested in them the same attention and care as they give to the better known and more prestigious reds.

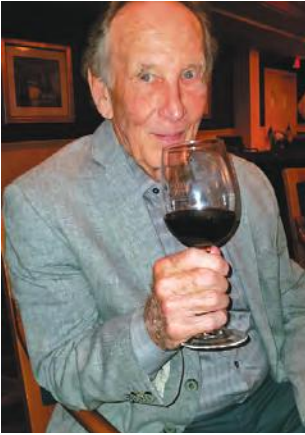
S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com

Wine stores usually put better wine brands on the top shelves of their displays. The top-shelf red wines have prices in the \$35 and up range. During and after a tent wine tasting event, we found two exceptional white wines by producers of great top-shelf reds at middle-shelf prices.

The 2020 Etude Carneros Pinot Gris with a light touch of Gewürztraminer (\$32) comes from a region of California and a producer better known for pricier Chardonnay and Pinot Noir. Certified French Alsatian clones growing in cool nights and warm days during the summer of 2020 give this wine a pleasing edge of acidity and the mingled guava, kiwi, lemon peel, and stone fruit tastes that one hopes to find in a fine Pinot Gris. Although some have questioned the idea of reviewing a white wine vintage approaching an age of four years, we find this sturdy vintage ready to drink now and not likely to pass its peak during 2024 or later. The delayed release of this vintage by the producer reflects confidence in the aging potential of this wine. Etude winemakers select high quality Pinot Gris grapes and press whole clusters before fermenting in stainless steel where they mature in the slur of grape skins, seeds, stems, and residue of fermentation known as “lees” for four months. This “sur lie” step and aging in the bottle develops in Pinot Gris wines a full-bodied and complex structure that stands up to a wide variety of dishes: seasoned vegetarian casserole’s, tuna and salmon sushi, fin and shellfish, chicken and game birds, pork loin, bratwurst, and strong cow and goat milk cheeses. The winemakers’ technical and tasting notes on the Etude web site provide meaningful detail.

In contrast, the 2021 Etude Grace Benoist Ranch Carneros Pinot Noir Rosé (\$40) comes from red Pinot Noir grapes instead of white/grey Pinot Gris grapes. Whole cluster pressed and fermented and left sur lie for four months in old French oak, the extended soaking with red grape skins colors the wine a vibrant coral hue. Call it Pinot Noir lite, if you like. It will complement spicy Asian, Mexican, and Middle Eastern dishes, as well as fin and shellfish, veal, and summer favorites on the grill.

The 2022 Ridge Grenache Blanc from Fossil Creek, Halter Ranch, Adelaida District, Paso Robles, Central Coast, California (\$30) represents another departure for Ridge, from a grower of Cabernet Sauvignon grapes beginning in 1959 at higher elevations at its famous Monte Bello estate in the Santa Cruz mountains due south of San Francisco; to an artistic maker of wines in the tradition of great Bordeaux left-bank chateaux, except for using wines planted in California; to a developer of premier vineyards in some of the better microclimates and soils of California. Acquired by the Otsuka Pharmaceutical in 1986, Ridge has bought ranches, essentially its estates, from families of settlers in the Central Coast area. Ridge also acquires grapes from growers. The 2022 Grenache Blanc selection had its whole clusters of grapes pressed and



fermented in new French oak barrels (12%), stainless steel vats (33%), and 2-3 year old barrels (55%) for four months, and barrel-aged on lees for ten months. Blending the Grenache Blanc with 24% Pic Poul, a clean and acidic white wine that originated in southwest France, gives the wine a lighter touch. The golden yellow color of the wine rightly foretells its pear, stone, and tropical fruit tastes and viscous mouthfeel, plus sharp acidity on the finish. Ready to drink now, yet expected to mature in the bottle for five years

The winemakers of these white and rosé wines have invested in them the same attention and care as they give to the better known and more prestigious reds. As an apéritif during a leisurely afternoon or evening, or served with foods too delicate or too spicy for a big red wine, aged white and rosé from top producers will enchant you and your guests. Enjoy.

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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This property features a majestic façade with a barrel tile roof and a paver circular driveway surrounded by tropical landscaping. Enter through the double doors to a foyer that unveils large ceramic tile floors, high ceilings with architectural tray details and recessed lighting creating an open, airy feel. The kitchen opens to the great room, featuring a large breakfast bar/island, stainless steel appliances, a gas range, and an abundance of counter space. The dining area merges with the lanai, creating a harmonious flow between the interior and exterior spaces. The primary suite includes a sitting area, a wall of windows overlooking tropical foliage, his and her walk-in closets and an expansive primary bath with a spa tub, dual vanities, a dressing area and a tiled walk-in shower. Upstairs, the guest accommodations provide ample space,

comfort and privacy for family or visitors. The great room, featuring a fireplace and a wall of pocket sliders, connects to the spacious lanai with two covered areas, including a summer kitchen. Facing west and south, the pool area is complete with a sunshelf, a spa with a bubbling fountain, and a fire feature—all embraced by tropical foliage for ultimate privacy. Offered for sale by Bruce Myer, Coldwell Banker Realty, Longboat Key, for \$3,995,000.

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3521 BAYOU POINTE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$4,150,000
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2BR/2BA • 1,192 SF • Bay & City views • Excellent value



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520 CHIPPING LANE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$5,975,000
5BR+OFFICE/4.5BA • 4,412 SF • Waterfront • Built in 2022



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1055 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #8-502 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,475,000
2BR/2BA • 1,392 SF • Direct Gulf front • Updated • Covered parking space



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100 SANDS POINT RD., #21 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,495,000
Gulf views • 2BR/2BA • Within the gates of the Longboat Key Club



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2110 HARBOURSIDE DR., #514 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,395,000
2BR+DEN/2BA • 2,031 SF • Walk-down to Bay • Covered parking space



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2BR/2BA • Golf course, and Sarasota Bay views



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700 HIDEAWAY BAY LANE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$3,295,000
3BR/3.5BA • 3,306 SF • Waterfront • Easy access to bay



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3408 WINDING OAKS DRIVE • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,195,000
2BR/2.5BA • 2,039 SF • Completely updated • Private Pool



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5757 GULF OF MEXICO DR., # 102 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL • \$1,295,000
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