



# Longboat Key News

June 27, 2025

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## InsideLook



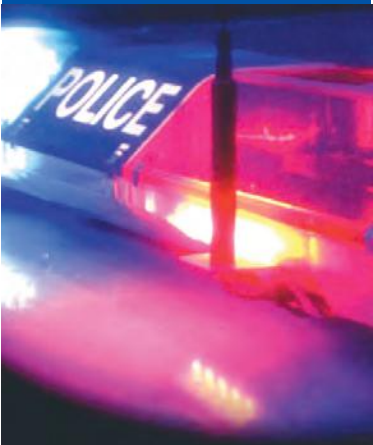
*Bird Key home tops \$7.8 million ...page 11*



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*Should codes be tweaked ...page 8*



*What happened to my mailbox? ...page 10*

## Push to add height, density and hotels to St. Armands back in Sarasota City Hall; pushback is immediate

*"I don't think taller construction, increased density, fewer parking spaces, and more traffic solves the problem. It might make it worse."*

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

While logic might imply that increasing height, development and adding hotel rooms to St. Armands Circle makes little sense given its history of flooding and vulnerability to storm events, one business owner sees this request as the smart way to redevelop the shopping district.

Last Thursday, Met Spa owner Geoffrey Michel wrote Sarasota City Commissioners and staff that "Developers will not invest in the area without being allowed to build three-story structures."

Michel implored the City Commission to not "turn a blind

eye" to the need for revitalization.

This request is nothing new in many ways. A similar proposal was shot down in 2022 when the St. Armands Business Improvement District (BID) asked the commission to make zoning amendments to increase the height to three stories as well as allow hotels on the upper level and increase density and provide parking concessions. That idea was met with overwhelming resistance from surrounding communities who didn't wish to see increased traffic and development in what has historically been the most successful shopping district in the region.

But in this latest ask, Michel is citing the recent hurricanes as yet another reason that new structures

are necessary.

"Most buildings are single-story on grade, built in the 1960s, the buildings are unsafe, not up to code, and not proper for Sarasota's future demographic," said Michel.

Michel continued in his letter to commissioners calling the Circle "blighted, with no public restroom facilities, and minimal community events."

### Resistance mounts fast

Michel's push was expected by many in the community following the failed attempt of those who wanted the increased height and density and the addition of a hotel in 2022.

**See St. Armands, page 2**

## Whittall wants new parking garage at St. Regis

*Whittall tells how the first season went, occupancy and room rates and what's needed to enhance the operations.*

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

Longboat Key St. Regis Developer and Owner Chuck Whittall was on the Indianapolis 500 racetrack last Friday, ready to enter a Ferrari competition race when he spoke with Longboat Key News about the first year the St. Regis has been open.

Whittall is an enthusiast. Like many developers, accolades and excitement infuse everyday dialogue.

"The hotel is doing great; much better than expected," said Whittall when asked about occupancy rates, room rates and his experience over the first year.

Whittall said the Longboat Key St. Regis has commanded the top average daily rate for a Marriot Hotel in the world, averaging \$2,000 per night.

"We're sold out in June and July and we just earned a 5-Diamond rating from AAA," said Whittall.

He said he expects to earn the Forbes 5-star rating by the year's end.

Whittall said he was surprised that the resort has not seen a slow-down and that the 168 rooms have been mostly full since the beginning of the year. Whittall said that the resort has been noted as a family-friendly hotel and when asked what that means he said, "At any given moment, children and families enjoy the lazy river, the saltwater pool and the beach."

### St. Regis seeks Pickleball

He said as the market keeps growing he wants to meet the need for activities and his team is currently designing two tennis courts and four pickleball courts to be constructed on top of the water retention area on the south side of the property. He said they should be completed within a few months.

Whittall said the resort is also responding to customer demand to dine on the patio and he plans to completely enclose the patio with a

**See St. Regis, page 13**

## Longboat's budgeting director and 30-year town employee Sandi Henley heading to retire in Panama

*Town of Longboat Key Town employee Sandi Henley has lived in a world of Heaven and Hell for the last 30 years.*

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

First, the Heaven. Henley has spent three decades working in one of the prettiest locations she can imagine, surrounded by a group of close friends and filled with countless memories.

The Hell is the fact that year after year as the Town's Budget Director, she must present, explain, as well as shape and create every aspect of the Town's budget. And anyone who has sat through a commission meeting or series of Budget Workshops, will find a world that even Dante could not contemplate in his "Inferno."

But joking aside, Sandi Henley is one of the most valued and adored employees. She has a repu-

tation for working tirelessly into the evenings and on weekends, defying the very stereotype of the salaried

public servant. And in a day mixed with mostly joy and a lot of great

**See Sandi, page 13**





**St. Armands Circle, from page 1**  
in 2022.

In 2022, those seeking increased development wanted a density of 150 hotel guest units per acre. The push was to raise the height from 35 feet, which it is today, to 45 feet.

The ask to increase the additional story is to allow 45 feet from the minimum FEMA elevation, not from grade, which the existing buildings were built upon.

Those opposed feared that the proposed amendments would more than double the average existing building height. Additionally, allowing hotels as a zoning change would open the door to the possibility of hundreds and hundreds of hotel rooms in future redevelopment. Additionally, the parking garage has been funded and created through bonds to serve the existing merchants and additional hotel uses would have to seek waivers in order to use the public garage and meet basic requirements.

St. Armands Residence Association President Chris Goglia has painstakingly surveyed residents who overwhelmingly have opposed such initiatives and he seeks to have the city focus on the flooding issues and the infrastructure and resiliency.

“I don’t think taller construction, increased density, fewer parking spaces, and more traffic solves the problem. It might make it worse,” said Goglia in reaction to the most recent push. Goglia said the initiative to incentivize commercial property owners and tenants to invest in their properties is to beautify the buildings and landscaping and make ground level space resilient to flood events.

“I would like to see the businesses on St. Armands thrive. But I’m less interested in making the landlords to which those businesses pay rent, more wealthy,” said Goglia.

For those opposed, the idea that businesses or buildings cannot thrive under the existing rules is a complete fallacy. Goglia points out that property owners today can have a 15-foot first story, a 12 foot second story, a ten foot third story if desired, a foot of interstitial space between each story, a one-foot thick roof, and still be within the 35-foot height limit from the FEMA flood elevation, which is typically five feet above grade.

That is why Goglia fears that what is really being asked for is a series of zoning changes “That will ultimately lead to hotels all over St. Armands Circle.”

**Lucky 7**  
Less than one year after the two named hurricanes that devastated the region, St. Armands Circle has mostly reopened and the majority of those shops that have not are wrangling with

the city to obtain permits and complete renovation and restoration work.

Two buildings on the north quadrant of the Circle - the former home of Madison Avenue Deli and the former bank building - have sat fallow since the storm and the owner of Madison Avenue Deli lost his right to the lease following the storm event.

Some owners who have not reinvested in the properties have been accused by neighboring tenants of keeping their properties in a state of disrepair in an attempt to pressure the city into capitulating to increase development rights. It is not the first time that a property owner has told a municipality that without increased density or development rights, it is not going to invest in the property or it is not viable is the sentiment of opponents.

But 90 businesses that were equally flooded are up and running. In fact, St. Armands Circle was named number 7 in the 10 best shopping centers list in the United States by USA Today last week. USA Today gave the following accolades to the unique character of the circle:

“Originally developed by circus legend, John Ringling, St. Armands blends history, art, and upscale coastal shopping in a beautiful, European style setting. The open-air-center, features around 130 boutiques, galleries, and restaurants, plus the Circus Ring of Fame and Classic statuary throughout. Just across the bridge from Sarasota’s mainland it’s a charming destination for strolling, dining and relaxing near Lido Beach.

**Rooms to Come**  
Another argument against adding hotel rooms to the circle is the fact that two major hotels have been approved already in the vicinity in existing tourism districts that are zoned for hotels. The Longboat Key Club received approval following a public vote that will build a 200 plus room hotel and additional units on the south end of Longboat Key on New Pass on the site of the current Chart House Restaurant and land to the west.

Additionally, the former Helmsley Sandcastle will be replaced with an already approved hotel which is destined to be built within the next five years. These two projects alone will add about 500 hotel rooms, not to mention the St. Regis opened with 169 rooms on Longboat Key last year.

For Met owner Geoffrey Michel, his hope is that the commission will soon entertain this revamped push for entitlements. For Goglia and those fatigued by initiatives to add hotels, density and height, the desire is for the City Commission to focus on fixing stormwater drainage and preserving the integrity of one of Sarasota’s top destinations.



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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](mailto: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.

## Appalled by immigration sweeps

To: Editor

Polls tell us that the majority of Americans are appalled by the brutal, indiscriminate, Trump administration immigration sweeps. Horrified by this spectacle, I am calling on area citizens to send the message to our sheriffs – Rick Wells in Manatee and Kurt Hoffman in Sarasota—that we expect our immigrant neighbors to be treated humanely and with dignity in all interactions. Yes, our county sheriff departments are now forced to work with ICE, but they can continue to set a high standard for how our deputies conduct themselves.

Readers, we are all affected by this injustice, both immigrants and non-immigrants. We all know, care about, and depend on hardworking migrants. A rude awakening is coming when we are suddenly confronted with the need to do the hardest daily work.

Heads up:

- Time to buy a lawnmower, condo owners.
- Time to learn carpentry if you're remodeling.
- Time to clean your own house; care for your own elderly relative.
- Time to learn compassion, if you call yourself a member of any faith tradition.

Louise Machinist  
Sarasota

## Request for Recent Elevation Certificates and Substantial Damage Letters

To: Longboat Key Plans Examiner Neal Mazzei, Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

As conveyed, I as the property owner was going off of apparently bad information that a permit was not required for interior repairs due to Hurricane damage. Unfortunately, I now know that was for emergency repairs only (and even then a permit needs to be submitted within 24 hours), and this situation will be brought into compliance immediately. There was no intention of doing work that required a permit.

I'm certain this is what I was told by more than one person when all the contractors were working up and down the street, but that was the early days after the hurricane and I appreciate being corrected, and it being caught at this juncture. It's been a very long year dealing with all of this and I appreciate the town and all you do for us.

Jim Lince  
Longboat Key

## Request for Recent Elevation Certificates and Substantial Damage Letters

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I spoke with James Lince this morning and my SDE Inspector has already been there for the inspection. I am awaiting any storm damage photos to justify any SDE letter from the TLBK.

Just an FYI, there are no permits issued for all the rebuild work being done as of this writing. I advised him that he needed to have a Level 3 Alteration master permit secured by his GC "Stray Cats" along with listing their electrical, mechanical and plumbing subcontractors immediately today or we will have to place a Stop Work Order at the property for unpermitted work by days end.

Neal Mazzei  
Plans Examiner  
Town of Longboat Key

## Request for Recent Elevation Certificates and Substantial Damage Letters

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I have attached a letter from Jim Lince who received this letter requiring substantial damage letter by July 1. We received one as well, so I imagine many on LBK have the same issue. Please be sure staff is up to speed on this.

BJ Bishop  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

## Request for Recent Elevation Certificates and Substantial Damage Letters

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

Our home at 760 Longboat Ct. in the village, (like many others on LBK) was substantially damaged in Helene. We've also been flooded 4 times in the last five years.

We applied to Elevate Florida.

We are seeking a substantial damage letter from LBK, and/or any documentation on the elevation and damages from the Hurricanes so that we can obtain the correct priority from Elevate Florida.

We would appreciate it if you could help us with the correct POC, or forward on our behalf, as the suspense for the letter is by July 1st. This is the first notice we received of this requirement.

Thank you very much for any assistance.

Jim Lince  
Longboat Key

## GMD Clean-up

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Sir, I responded to him directly.

Charles Mopps  
Public Works Director  
Town of Longboat Key Public Works

## GMD Clean-up

To: Lawrence Brown

Thanks for your timely note. After removing most of the large debris from Longboat, FDOT has recently begun a clean-up effort for the grass and plantings along the GMD Right of Way. At our budget meeting this week, the Commission also supported a plan to fix the common areas along Bay Isles Road, most of which were destroyed by the storms. I have copied this correspondence to Public Works Director Charlie Mopps in case he has anything to add.

Ken Schneier  
Mayor  
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 5

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# Editor Letters



Letters, from page 4

GMD Clean-up

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier  
Whose responsibility is it to clean up the area along GMD between Bay Isles Pkwy and Bay Isles Rd? There are large dead limbs and palm fronds along with underbrush that needs to be cleaned up and removed. It really is a detriment visually to our beloved Longboat Key which we all love!  
The hedges along Bay Isles Pkwy have recently been trimmed, but the palm fronds and dead underbrush are still there and have been there as an unsightly mess even before Helene wiped us out. Also, the area west of City Hall that joins The Neptune condos is strewn with undergrowth, dead trees, dead palm fronds, etc that inhibit new growth and do little except trap rain water which in turn leads to stagnant growth and has become an environmental wasteland.  
Thank you Mayor Schneier for your leadership of LBK. I look forward to your response.  
Lawrence Brown  
Longboat Key

Stub ups

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman  
Isaac ,we are aware of this NEI light malfunctioning and have ordered parts for replacement. Also , the conduit is part of the Path Light project. Thank you.  
Guy Matricciani  
Construction & Facility System Manager  
Public Works Department  
Town of Longboat Key  
  
Stub ups  
To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin  
Thank you sir, I have copied the Public Works team.  
Isaac Brownman  
Assistant Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Stub ups

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman  
Of course.. I noticed on my walk last night the street light at GMD and Sloop is not operating properly.  
Gary Coffin  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

Stub ups

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman  
Isaac, I spoke with the contractor regarding the stub ups at the sidewalk, he explained they were for the sidewalk light poles. He wasn't the foreman but seemed knowledgeable. At Ketch and GMD OR GOA.  
Gary Coffin

Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

St. Regis yet again

To: Longboat Key Fire Chief Paul Dezzi  
My only concern is what happens in an emergency.....they are currently parking on the north side of the hotel, sometimes for the entire length of the hotel.  
John Bradbury  
Longboat Key

St. Regis yet again

To: John Bradbury  
We will visit today. Understand they can park slung the south side of the entrance..it allows for the fire department to enter. We will stop by today.  
Paul Dezzi  
Fire Chief  
Town of Longboat Key

St. Regis yet again

To: Longboat Key Fire Chief Dezzi  
I received this email regarding parking in the St. Regis fire lane. Can you please respond to Mr. Bradbury regarding this?  
Debra Williams  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

St. Regis yet again

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Debra Williams  
As you may know, the parking on the service road at the St. Regis is still usually jammed with cars...the other day the line stretched out across the walking path!  
John Bradbury  
Longboat Key

NEST items for you

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon  
First, I want to thank you for your contributions to establish a north end community center. You may know that I am the NEST team lead for exercise activities at the north end center.

See Letters, page 6

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Letters, from page 5

We have collected several exercise related suggestions from residents of the north end neighborhoods, and I've had a few of discussions along these lines. You may have seen the results of the data we collected.

Someone at my church, mentioned that you are discussing the programming of the north end space with the folks at the Paradise Center.

Can you confirm that please? If this is the case, will you include me in such discussions, or bring me up to date on what has taken place?

I know it is still early days in the discovery and feasibility study of the purchase of the Chiles property by Mantee County, so I suspect any discussions you had were very preliminary.

We can meet and SIPs for a conversation or simply have a phone call. I want to ensure we are collaborating on programming and make you aware of the item we already have on the schedule. I look forward to hearing from you.

Deborah Di Carlo  
Longboat Key

New Tip Talk: Hurricane Season Preparedness with Fire Chief Dezzi

To: Longboat Key Assistant to Town Manager Savannah Cobb  
Well done, good review of important info. The bumper tune was great also.

Gary Coffin  
Commissioner  
Town of Longboat Key

New Tip Talk: Hurricane Season Preparedness with Fire Chief Dezzi

To: Longboat Key Town Commission

The newest episode of Tip Talk is out now! In honor of hurricane season, Town Manager Howard Tipton sits down with Fire Chief Paul Dezzi to talk about how we can all stay prepared and safe this year.

Watch the full video here: Tip Talk - 2025 Hurricane Season

A few key reminders from the conversation:

Have a "Go Bag" ready with essentials to last 72 hours – don't forget critical items like medications.

Evacuate when ordered – your safety is our top priority.

Pick up your re-entry decal now so you're ready to return after an evacuation. Decals are available at all Town offices.

Stay safe, stay informed, and check out the new episode today!

Thank you.

Savannah Cobb  
Executive Assistant  
Town Manager's Office  
Town of Longboat Key

Mayor meeting on building codes

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider

Blythe has provided below some additional thoughts for your meeting with Rep. McFarland. I do agree that the rebuilding we're seeing now and will see in the near future should be at the elevated levels as the projections for the life of these properties (50 years) shows the greatly increased chance of flooding.

Howard N. Tipton

See Letters, page 8

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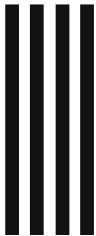
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# EditorLetters

Letters, from page 6

Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Thanks for your help -- I hope this different perspective will help the mayor’s meeting.

To: Mayor Ken Schneier  
I wanted to share some thoughts as you prepare for your meeting on building codes. I believe time is of the essence. Following last year’s storms I believe a high percentage of non-conforming homes on north longboat will be torn down and new homes built on those lots. We need the building code changed now, so these new homes will be built to meet resiliency needs that are projected for the next 50 years, at a minimum. The need for resiliency is twofold. First, it protects the house and property and minimizes the damage, stress and financial drains associated with tidal and storm flooding. Second, it enables that town to raise infrastructure to appropriate heights, gradually over time as homes are rebuilt. If new homes are built at low grades then the town will never be able to raise infrastucture to elevations required to ensure public safety.  
I am not sure if it is appropriate in your meeting to share that the sea level rise consultants provided an option for the town to exclude low lying neighborhoods from the town’s required levels of service (fire and rescue) -- the inability to increase elevations will contribute to the reduction of town services to taxpayers and increase insurance rates. It would not look good

if the state blocked towns from making improvements and therefore jeopardize the safety of residents and property owners).  
With regard to the state code limiting restrictive building codes following hurricanes, it is my understanding that the freeze on building codes is to protect property owners. The idea being that homeowners will be able to rebuild (to current standards) The unfortunate alternative might be that a town changes the code in such a way that it will force existing owners to sell, since they cannot afford to rebuild at the new requirements, thereby changing the financial demographics of the neighborhood. With the adoption of the Miami Dade hurricane standards I feel that the state has already made the decision to require homes to withstand natural disasters, rather than allowing the building of disposable structures. So the big financial conundrum was already decided by the state.  
Also, more restrictive changes are already allowed; the Florida building code was changed in 2024, and some sections might be considered more restrictive. LBK, like all municipalities, adopted the new Florida building code and therefore adopted more restrictive building requirements. Now, the question is how to support local codes that are more restrictive that result from local knowledge, new scientific research and new building philosophies.  
For LBK, the goal of increasing freeboard is to protect the home as well as the municipal infrastructure that supports the existence of the home and surrounding community. In our situation FEMA lowered the base flood elevation and therefore made the building code less than it was. Perhaps there is a way to word this hurricane law such that resiliency code changes are allowed; or more specifically any reduction in coastal base flood elevation by FEMA can be returned to previous elevations to ensure resiliency.  
In our current situation the local government is well educated in understanding the topography or our island and where the endangered neighborhoods exist. In fact, the town adopted new building codes to allow increased freeboard, prior to the storms that flooded the island. Following last year’s storms, many non-conforming homes in low-lying areas cannot be repaired under the FEMA 50% rule and as a result are being rebuilt. These new homes will exist for 50 years and it is our desire to ensure they are not flooded by seasonal flooding. Therefore our town wants to see these homes raised out of the flood waters, along with our streets, utilities and storm drains. It is imperative for the safety of our residents that the town’s infrastructure be raised. The ability to do so is tied to raising the elevation of all new homes and businesses. The inability to make the higher freeboard mandatory will create unfortunate situations in the future when roads are raised to elevations higher than ground level of garages, or towns reduce safety services to neighborhoods with low elevation structures. I hope this point of view helps you prepare for your meeting.  
Blythe Jeffers  
Longboat Key

See Letters, page 12

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# OnPatrol



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

## June 20

## Suspicious incident

10:36 a.m.

Officer Troyer was dispatched to the 3700 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a report of a suspicious incident. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer met with the complainant who reported that \$324 worth of ammunition was set to arrive and did not arrive. The complainant showed the officer the UPS delivery sheet which showed the package was delivered at 10:36 a.m., but the complainant was home and did not receive the package. While at the residence, one of the complainant's neighbors knocked on the door and informed the complainant he had a package at the clubhouse. The officer and the complainant walked over to the clubhouse and he identified the package and contents as his. Case clear.



explained that the seats were moving and the wipers were operating without the truck being turned on. Upon Officer Mathis' arrival, he met with the complainant and observed the vehicle's electronics operating while turned off, seat moving, dash lights on, and wipers running. It appeared that vehicle that had an electrical issue. Officer Mathis advise the man to contact his local mechanic to sort out any issues and that the Police Department was unable to assist him in working on the vehicle.

## June 23

## Civil disturbance

12:00 p.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 2500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a civil disturbance call. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno

made contact with the complainant who stated that an applicant whom she interviewed for the maintenance position and made numerous phone calls on June 23 inquiring if he got the position. The complainant further stated that he was told that they were still in the process of interviewing other applicants. At approximately 12 p.m. the applicant left an angry message saying that "You can shove that job up your ass, I hope you die of a heart attack." No threats of bodily harm were made by the applicant. Officer Nazareno attempted to contact the applicant's cell phone number and left a detailed message. The complainant was given the case number and advised to call 911 if the applicant returns to the property. Case clear.

## Mailbox

12:00 p.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched for a lost property report. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno made contact with the complainant who stated that he wanted to report his mailbox missing from his vacant property next door. The complainant further stated that he last saw the mailbox intact the day before at noon. He also added that there were construction vehicles constantly traveling on his street using his driveway to turn around and one of the trucks had previously struck his mailbox. The complainant didn't see any construction trucks hitting the mailbox. The pole for the mailbox was bent and the mailbox was missing. Officer Nazareno was unable to locate any security cameras on the property. The complainant was given the case number. Case clear.

## June 25

## Aircraft

8:39 a.m.

Officer Nazareno was dispatched to Hideaway Bay Drive for a suspicious aircraft call regarding a red helicopter flying low in the area. Prior to the call, Officer Nazareno received a message from dispatch that Manatee Sheriff's Office will be conducting swift water rescue training in the area of Longboat Pass Bridge. Upon arrival, the helicopter was no longer flying in the area. Case clear.

## Marine rescue

12:25 p.m.

Officer Mathis was conducting a marine patrol in the area of Greer Island and Jewfish Ikey when he observed a man swimming who appeared to be in distress. Officer Mathis maneuvered his patrol vessel to protect the swimmer from boating traffic. The man advised he was exhausted as the officer pulled him onto the patrol boat. The man explained that the current was too strong and had swept him from the sandbar at Jewfish Key. The man refused medical attention and advised he just needed to sit and rest for a few minutes. After a brief period of rest and speaking with the man, Officer Mathis returned him to his vessel which was anchored at the Jewfish Key sandbar. Officer Mathis asked the man again if he wished to be checked out and he politely declined the offer and advised he was fine just exhausted. Case clear.

## Trespassing

8:41 p.m.

Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 3300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a call of Trespass. Dispatch reported that there was a woman approximately 50 years old wearing a white shirt and blue pants with a small dog on a leash sitting on the sea wall and loitering. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson observed a woman matching the description walking with a small dog southbound along Gulf of Mexico Drive on the sidewalk. Officer Martinson pulled over and spoke with the woman who said she lives on Buttonwood Drive and had walked over with her dog to watch the sunset. Officer Martinson advised the woman she was on private property and residents do not want her on their property. She said she would find somewhere to watch sunsets from now on. Case clear.

The advertisement for LBK Liquors features a central graphic of a pink flamingo standing on its left leg, with its right leg tucked up. The text "LBK" is in a large, black, serif font, and "Liquors" is in a black, script font, both positioned to the left of the flamingo. To the right of the flamingo is the phone number "941.953.1835" in a black, sans-serif font. Below this, the text "The Island's largest selection of Beer, Wine & Spirits" and "Come check out our competitive prices!" is centered. Further down, "Discounts on cases of wine | Special orders welcome" is centered. Below that, "Locally owned & operated" is centered. At the bottom, "Whitney Beach Plaza" and "6854 Gulf of Mexico Drive | Longboat Key, FL" are centered. On the left and right sides of the bottom section are illustrations of three colorful liquor bottles (yellow, teal, and pink) in each corner.

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1561 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#302	4,992	\$9,795,000	3	3	1	0	\$9,795,000
3540 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#303	2,568	\$1,150,000	3	3	0	7	\$1,000,000
1211 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#207	1,827	\$995,000	2	2	0	73	\$940,000
3630 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#304	1,284	\$674,000	2	2	0	66	\$661,000
2383 HARBOUR OAKS DR	2,222	\$699,000	3	2	1	250	\$659,000
653 CEDARS CT	1,440	\$625,000	2	2	1	110	\$585,000
681 FOX ST	810	\$575,000	2	1	0	4	\$580,000
250 SANDS POINT RD Unit#5105	634	\$499,000	1	1	0	108	\$416,000
29 TWIN SHORES BLVD	924	\$325,000	2	2	0	0	\$325,000
4360 CHATHAM DR Unit#108	1,092	\$349,000	2	2	0	197	\$325,000
2600 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#O-05		\$239,000				66	\$207,000
2800 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#M-01		\$249,000				508	\$200,000
408 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#2233		\$69,000				2	\$69,000
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# Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

FEMA CRS Program

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

The Freeboard issue is that the Town was prohibited from requiring newly constructed structures to meet FEMA flood requirements, plus an additional mandatory ‘Freeboard’ height. This change would have essentially maintained the recently revised FEMA flood elevation requirements (which are now generally 2 feet lower than the prior FEMA flood elevations). If the Town would have been able to adopt this as a mandatory requirement, as opposed to an optional requirement, the Town could have garnered additional points as part of FEMA’s Community Rating System (CRS) program. Communities that participate in the CRS program gain points for various management practices that exceed the minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP). Additional points are awarded to communities that enact & enforce ‘higher regulatory standards’. These points then translate into CRS classifications, which among other benefits, provide increased flood insurance policy premium discounts as communities move into the different classifications. The Town is currently a Class 6 community, which provides for 20% discounts on qualifying NFIP flood policies. We are relatively close to achieving a Class 5 designation, which would provide for 25% discounts.

Allen Parsons

Planning and Zoning Director  
Town of Longboat Key

SB 180

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons

I have a call with Rep. McFarland next Thursday to discuss SB 180, the bill she sponsored in the House that further restricts any ordinances that tighten any zoning rules in areas affected by hurricanes. As you know, the predecessor law has already pre-empted our attempts to add boat widths to dock width restrictions to prevent canal blockage and to add required free-board height for reconstruction plans, in part to compensate for FEMA’s incredible 2-foot reduction of the sea level base elevation.

I am well-versed in the boat/dock issue (clearly unrelated to storms), but I would like help from you on the free-board issue. This does add a restriction, but it is so tied to resiliency here, it seems crazy to block this kind of modest rule change. Can you send me a paragraph that explains our proposal and why it should be allowed before the call? Thanks much.

Btw, I understand SB 180 has finally been delivered to the Governor for his signature and there is a letter-writing campaign to get him to veto it. Even if he signs it, though, we should begin to build a case for modifying this law in the next session.

Blythe Jeffers

Longboat Key

Road change

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Allen shared the following in answer to your question: I did not see anything in the bill that indicated mandatory (or voluntary) name changes of features referencing the Gulf of Mexico were an obligation. The bill primarily addresses a series of boundary descriptions of gulf counties, agencies, coastal definitions, special coastal areas & other statutorily defined areas. In all of those definitional instances ‘Mexico’ was struck-thru & replaced with ‘America’.

We’ll look to FDOT for their guidance on what else the State wants to change regarding the roads.

Howard N. Tipton  
Town Manager  
Town of Longboat Key

Road change

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Does anything in HB 575 or otherwise require a name change for GMD? Thanks.

Ken Schneier  
Mayor  
Town of Longboat Key

Road change

To: Longboat Key Commission

The Florida legislature has recently passed for implementation by the FDOT house Bill 575.

This bill, signed by the governor requires agencies to make changes from Gulf of Mexico to Gulf of America.

I live on Longboat Club Road, I drive of Gulf of Mexico road daily.

I support the name change, can you please advise the timetable for compliance. I am not sure if the current name extends beyond the bridges at the north and south end of Longboat Key.

How do we proceed? I understand your privacy policy, I have BCC a number of residents that support this change.

George Reenstra  
Longboat Key

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St. Regis, from page 1

glass enclosure in order to control temperatures and create more viable dining area overlooking the gulf.

When asked about rumors that he sold a significant interest in the hotel to a large development firm, he said he could not talk about financial details but that he owns the hotel and that will not change.

Currently Whittall’s development company, Unicorp, is building a 700-room Intercontinental Hotel in Orlando. He said that having built the St. Regis, “gives you credibility.”

Parking problems...

Residents on Longboat have become aware that the St. Regis has been using Town Center Green property owned by the Town to accommodate staff parking from the St. Regis.

The St. Regis has also approached the Seaplace Condominiums seeking to create an ongoing parking arrangement.

When asked if the hotel was approved by the town without enough parking to accommodate the staff and guests, Whittall responded that “Since we have been so full, we need a lot of parking and we may install lifts in our existing garage.”

Whittall said that the ultimate solution is that he would like to build a two-story garage on the front of the property on the site of an existing surface parking lot.

When asked if he had sold all of the condominium units that exist in a semi-circle to the south of the hotel, Whittall said there is only one remaining. He did say though that he saw the current real estate market and its challenges as “a cycle that will play out but interest rates are very high.”

In closing, Whittall said that the St. Regis purchased a flood dam that is a 5-foot tall barrier that can be placed around the resort in the event of a storm and it is filled with water, which is engineered to resist storm surges.

Following the conversation, Whittall was ready to do some laps at about 200 mph in his Ferrari challenger race that is part of a series that culminates in Italy.

Sandi, from page 1

food and friends, Sandi was thrown a sizeable goodbye party as she finishes her final days of employment after three decades and is heading to Panama to live out her retirement dreams with her husband, John.

The Town Manager, several commissioners, numerous current and previous employees as well as Euphemia Haye founder Ray Arpke, all showed up on Friday to wish her well, share memories and mildly roast the departing budget maven.

Why Panama?

Sandi said she does not know anyone in Panama, but it checked all the retirement boxes. First, it has a 40 percent lower cost of living than the United States. Her husband John said they checked out Thailand, “But Sandi doesn’t like Oriental food.”

Another great reason is that Sandi is a beach girl and they are definitely going to live on the beach in their new home which they plan to rent for a year while they survey the situation.

Sandi said the current Town Commission is the favorite commission she ever worked with because she finds the entire group, “so caring of the employees.”

Sandi is not paying a compliment to gain any advantage, she is simply a person who is known to say exactly what she is thinking.

When her fellow employees roasted Sandi, Human Resources Director Lisa Silvertooth said that Sandi had fallen more than any other employee in the history of the town and she tested the insurance policy to its fullest extent.

“But she always bounced back from her falls with great humor,” said Silvertooth.

The only employee currently employed longer than Henley was Donna Chipman who works in the Planning and Zoning Department. She said she would miss Sandi terribly.

Chipman baked a double decker chocolate cake for Henley’s party and Chipman is known to bake all the cakes for all the retirement parties since she is an accomplished pastry chef on the side.

Former Public Works employee James Linkogle said, “I can’t say enough about our friendship, but I don’t ever want to see another FEMA reimbursement spreadsheet.”

Town Manager Howard Tipton came in to wish her well and said his first impression of Sandi was “I started my first conversation with her on a Monday and it ended on a Wednesday.”

Tipton praised Henley and made a small circle with two fingers and said, “Most people’s vision for their retirement is this as he held a small circle of air, but your vision is a grand adventure and nothing could be more exciting.”

Erica Waggoner is destined to replace Henley and will start on July 14.



Panama bound: John and Sandi Henley



Kay Thayer had a few things to say about Sandi...



Town Manager Howrd Tipton says kind words



Mayor Ken Schneier and Sandi



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

Using web sites in place of physical locations and shared commercial kitchens, chefs, bakers, caterers, and “pop-up” restaurants are building client databases and distributing menus and offers via e-mails, text messages, and phone calls. Clients order food on-line or by phone. Food vendors deliver orders to clients through a variety of means: employees, Door Dash and other food delivery services, Uber/Lyft, and taxis. Further, famously in the San Francisco Bay area, a last-minute secret “pop-up” restaurant address in a text message.

While we enjoy dining out with a cocktail before dinner and wine with a meal as much as anyone, these excursions often lead to overeating and meals high in salt, sugar, and fat. The cost of dining out also puts a strain on the budget. Selective orders of healthy foods for home delivery give us alternatives to dining out in the comfort of home.

After a careful web search for local food vendors, we decided to try a small on-line business, Jo’s to Go’s Meal Prep (jos-to-gos.com). The web site specifies that orders must be placed by noon on Saturday. Orders on Saturday for deliveries go out the following Tuesday morning. Jo’s to Go’s delivers orders across a wide area (basically the entire metropolitan area of Sarasota and Manatee) for a flat fee of five dollars. As an experiment, we checked their menu for the week and ordered a few main and side dishes. When we found that the place where the order would be stored prior to delivery was within walking distance, we asked to pick up the order there and save the delivery charge.

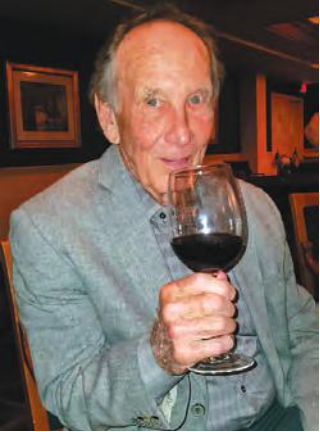
The location where the order would be stored for pick-up turned out to be the storefront location on Central Avenue of Tamiami Trail Catering. The owner of Tamiami Trail Catering, Chef Jeremy Davis, an enterprising young front man for a business that includes meal delivery, event catering, private jet catering, cooking classes, and, most relevant for our understanding of this sector of the gig economy, a shared kitchen.

Chef Jeremy promotes businesses that timeshare his kitchen. He hands out their menus and food description flyers. He suggests visiting the Sarasota Downtown Farmers’ Market and tasting some of the special foods prepared in his kitchen. Davis’s shared kitchen is helping bring start-up businesses to the Rosemary District of Sarasota.

Jo’s to Go’s has turned out to be a fortunate find. Chef Joanna Fotch and her husband and business manager Derek have launched a healthy meal business that draws on Chef Joanna’s education (BS in Nutrition Science, Loyola Marymount and graduate of Cordon Bleu in Paris) and frontline experience in fine dining kitchens. Her cooking showcases the blending of fresh, local ingredients and flavorful herbs, spices, and rich sauces. The dishes travel well. Microwaves and toaster ovens revive the texture and flavors. A lightly acidic sauce and a dusting of spices brings a simple roasted cauliflower side dish to life. A medium-rare beef filet has enough of a rare interior to withstand reheating in an oven. Tart cherries and almond slivers enrich the flavors of a wild rice side dish. A salad of thin soba noodles, jicama, red cabbage dressed with tahini and a hint of mint makes a light and tasty lunch. A roasted beet falafel comes with a tasty yellow pepper sauce. The entrees, salads, breakfast items, side dishes, and desserts on the menu have increased in number during the last few weeks.

Individual tastes, preferences, diet restrictions, and budgets factor into decisions about what to order and reorder. The web offers a wide enough range of selections to meet the needs of almost everyone. Try a few selections and let your palate guide your decisions about vendors and deliveries.

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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I’m Chris Pinto, and together with my wife, Tiana, we’ve been happily serving Long Island, New York, for the past 20 years. We recently moved to Sarasota with our four adorable puppies, and we’re beyond excited to bring our passion for service to your community!





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