



Longboat Key News

July 7, 2023 *Serving Longboat Key, St. Armands, Downtown Sarasota & Anna Maria Island* FREE

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Longboat says FDOT, FPL slow major projects after missed details and blunders

Town Manager Howard Tipton is finding that being fast on his feet after five months on the job means knowing every detail of the budget he has to defend, how to fight FPL when the agency delays the undergrounding project and dealing with an army of pickleballers wanting to paddle the town into building courts.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Its no secret that Longboat Key has two great resources: unparalleled natural beauty and an unlimited supply of intelligent type-A personalities who generously not only question everything, but come armed with answers and edicts.

Town Manager Howard Tipton is finding that being fast on his feet after five months on the job means knowing every detail of the budget that he has to defend, how to fight FPL when the agency delays our town's undergrounding project and dealing with an army of pickleballers who invariably are attempting to paddle the town into building more courts.

Longboat Key News asked Tipton about a few contentious issues that are swirling in the summer heat.

Undergrounding delay

"It was disappointing news," remarked Tipton when asked why the town had to delay finalizing a project it has painstakingly planned for years.

Tipton explained that it is not the town, but Florida Power and Light that is responsible for the contractor, Wilco, which is overseeing the project, getting the wrong trans-



Photo by Bob Parrish.

formers and not noticing it during the planning stages and approvals.

It is the singular most expensive Public Works project Longboat Key has undertaken at a cost of more than \$40 million and now the project will not be completed until January 2024, an additional six months. More troubling is it puts the existing power poles in the central part of the island as fixtures once again

See Manager, page 14

Sea Turtle Protection Zone to help stop boat strikes

"Since the 1980s, sea turtle vessel strikes have tripled in Florida and unfortunately more than 90% of sea turtles with definitive boat strike injuries have resulted in fatalities,"

Mote Marine established a voluntary Sea Turtle Protection Zone (STPZ) in Sarasota County.

Its main focus is to protect sea turtles from unintended boat strikes.

The Sea Turtle Protection Zone initiative was created in 2021 through a partnership between the Loggerhead Marinelife Center and the Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research at the University of Florida.

Mote Marine Laboratory scientists documented boat-strike hotspots in local waters and mapped the voluntary Sea Turtle Protection Zone for this area. The zone stretches from Longboat Key to Siesta Key, including Sarasota Bay, and extends from shore to 1.5 miles offshore.

"We're excited to partner with the community to help protect sea turtles in the areas where we see the most animals struck by boats," said Gretchen Lovewell, Mote's Stranding Investigations Program Manager. "By closely monitoring for changes in stranding numbers and boater speeds, we hope

See Turtles, page 2



Sarasota Orchestra makes progress toward Fruitville Center

Since the closing on 32 acres on Fruitville Road for its new Music Center, The Sarasota Orchestra Board and planning teams are working diligently to plan the region's first concert hall built specifically for music.

The Orchestra hired Stages Consultants, a world-renowned acoustics consultant and theatre planner. The New Jersey-based company has participated in major projects from the Dr. Phillips Center in Orlando to the Harpa Concert Hall in Iceland. The firm is led by industry veteran and acoustics expert Damian Doria and theatre planner Alec Stoll.

With an acoustician and theatre planner in place, the Orchestra can now move forward to identify and secure a design architect for the Music Center. Garfield Public/Private, a Dallas-based firm that specializes in coordinating planning and building efforts for similar projects, is assisting the leadership and Board with that effort, putting the criteria and processes in place.

While development work has not yet begun at the Fruitville Road location, you may see activity over the summer as new acoustician performs sound studies and ongoing land maintenance is performed on the property.

Sarasota Orchestra Board Chair Tom Koski offered the following answers about the project:

Why does Sarasota Orchestra need its own Music Center?

Creating a new Music Center is both aspirational and necessary.

It is aspirational in that we will elevate the arts in our community by bringing this region its first concert hall purpose-built for acoustic music.

A new Music Center is absolutely necessary to address the region's critical need for performance, rehearsal and education space that has already eclipsed available schedule dates for our Orchestra and

See Orchestra, page 14

Turtles from page 1

to expand the zone and our monitoring efforts to all hot spot areas in the county.”

Sea turtles are threatened and endangered species found year-round in southwest Florida waters. During nesting season, sea turtles spend more time closer to the surface and close to their nesting beaches. With more turtles near the surface, there’s a greater chance that a boat might strike one by mistake. Many of the grass flats in the area are prime foraging grounds for sea turtles, which also puts them at risk for boat strikes. The good news is, boaters can protect sea turtles by slowing down and using vigilance in key locations.

“Since the 1980s, sea turtle vessel strikes have tripled in Florida and unfortunately more than 90% of sea turtles with definitive boat strike injuries have resulted in fatalities,” said Valerie Nicole Tovar, Conservation Manager at Loggerhead Marinelife Center. “Our goal with the STPZ is to increase boater awareness and enlist boater voluntary compliance to decrease sea turtle injuries and deaths by creating a united front with our local boating communities. The STPZ has served as a vital tool for sea turtle conservation in Palm Beach County and will continue to do so in Sarasota.”

The project is funded by the Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research with funds from Disney Conservation Fund and in part by a grant awarded from the Sea Turtle Grants Program. The Sea Turtle Grants Program is funded by proceeds from the sale of the Florida Sea Turtle License Plate.

“The Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research at the University of Florida is excited to collaborate with and support the Mote Marine Laboratory with funds from the Disney Conservation Fund to reduce vessel strikes to sea turtles in their coastal waters,” said Dr. Cathi Campbell, Adjunct Assistant Scientist for Archie Carr Center for Sea Turtle Research. “We began a partnership with Loggerhead Marinelife Center a few years ago to address this threat in the Juno Beach area and with their guidance are expanding the Sea Turtle Protection Zone to partner with Mote Marine Laboratory. Educating the boating community about this threat and asking for their help is vital to decreasing unintentional boat strikes on sea turtles. Working together, we can enjoy our coastal areas and help maintain healthy sea turtle populations here in Florida.”

Hot Spots for boat-struck sea turtles are Longboat Pass, New Pass, Big Pass, Siesta Key, Venice Inlet, and offshore two miles north of New Pass to two miles south of Big Pass extending out one and a half miles; limit travel time within these Hot Spots and travel at a minimum safe speed when in these areas. Enjoy coastal waters and help sea turtles by making sure you Go Slow for Those Below!

To report distressed, injured or deceased sea turtles, manatees, dolphins or whales in the Sarasota/Manatee area call our strandings hotline at 888-345-2335. For locations elsewhere in Florida, contact the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission: 888-404-3922.



Mote scientists documented boat-strike hotspots in local waters and mapped the voluntary Sea Turtle Protection Zone. The zone stretches from Longboat Key to Siesta Key, including Sarasota Bay, and extends from shore to 1.5 miles offshore.

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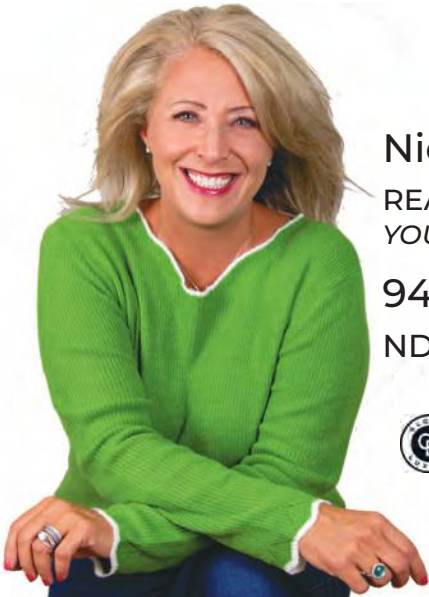
LONGBOAT KEY • 6489 GULFSIDE DRIVE **\$16,900,000**
Fabulous Gulf front lot offering nearly 100 ft. of sandy beach, this gorgeous DSDG Architect designed home is a rare find. Boasting almost 6,000 AC/SF, this spectacular home is custom built with the finest details throughout. Architect designed landscaped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

I am looking for properties on Longboat and Lido for my buyers.
If you are thinking about making a move, let's chat.

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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.

St. Regis Parking Structure: Compromise for Everyone

To: Editor
Mr. Whittall has exhibited vision, foresight and business acumen, which most residents of Bay Isles must recognize as what they possessed in order to earn the success of living in one of Longboat Key’s most elite neighborhoods. Give Mr. Whittall every chance at making this stellar property the best it can be with no constraints. He is ensuring the resort is able to accommodate parking for every patron (that’s us, dear locals). Your property values will reflect his success.
Critics cringe at the thought of a wall of concrete with years to wait for trees to conceal it. Have you not heard of fast-growing evergreen vines? Within one year they will miraculously shroud the garage, providing a sound and sight buffer for us at the utility corner of this property. You will thank Mr. Whittall for sparing you what Matt Walsh so eloquently described as “the constant clanging and rumble of big truck rigs delivering food and hauling away garbage”. As Mr. Walsh pointed out, the total height of the proposed parking structure was to be 27 feet, 4.5 inches. Since the allowable height of a single-family residence on LBK is 30 feet, I’m sure a compromise could be achieved if an extra 2.5 feet were added to the rooftop so that headlights will be imperceptible to humans and turtle hatchlings.
Contemplate this if you are still adamantly opposed to the parking structure: Mr. Whittall has increased your property values while you have diminished ours. Perhaps there should be a height limit proposal for trees on the island. As we on the west side of Gulf of Mexico Drive look eastward, your Bay Isles trees are blocking the bay views we once enjoyed and paid dearly for. As they grow, your trees will further restrict the bay views of the St. Regis as well. I fully

endorse Mr. Whittall and Unicorp to build this legacy property with no restrictions. Let the compromise begin.
Karen Thomson
Longboat Key

Bay Isles Maintenance Building - Replantings Status Update

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
Good afternoon! Below is an update from Allen regarding the Bay Isles maintenance building plantings. From a Code Enforcement perspective, the goal is always compliance and while this has moved forward slowly, it is moving forward with plants now on site. Staff can seek from the Club a specific target date for the auger replacement and then for the plantings (which have a value from the Club of \$5,000). With the golf side of their house in full maintenance mode, hopefully they can get everything accomplished in the next couple of weeks.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Bay Isles Maintenance Building - Replantings Status Update

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Following-up on the report below, Mr. Reilly has informed Code Enforcement that the plants are going into the ground, with work expected to be completed by the end of the day.
Allen Parsons
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Longboat Key

Bay Isles Maintenance Building - Replantings Status Update

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Passing along an update on the active Code Enforcement case regarding trimming and tree removal around the Bay Isles Maintenance Building. This case originated back in January. It was determined that there was FDEP authorized mangrove trimming and the removal of invasive Australian Pines. Ultimately it was determined that the removals violated Resolution 82-19. That Resolution approved a Site Plan that included the maintenance building, which had a condition that the property “shall be heavily screened with native plants and berm” to screen the maintenance area from the residential area.
Staff has been in contact with John Reilly, who is the Director of Agronomy for the Longboat Key Club. As of last week, Mr. Reilly advised plantings have been staged (cost \$5,000) and the

See Letters, page 6

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5910 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Under Construction. This spectacular, 4,210 sq. ft., newly built 4BR/4.5BA, coastal contemporary waterfront home provides easy access to the Intracoastal Waterway, Sarasota Bay and Gulf of Mexico. Located on a three-quarter acre lot with 133 feet of frontage on a 125-foot-wide canal.



\$2,299,000

793 JUNGLE QUEEN WAY | LONGBOAT KEY

Two-story custom-built, canal-front 4BR/3BA featuring a private rooftop deck. Spacious open floorplan with 22' soaring ceilings. French doors lead to an expansive back porch and screened patio with a pool and spa.



\$1,995,000

1211 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #601 | LONGBOAT KEY

Stunning views of the Gulf of Mexico and Sarasota Bay in this 6th-floor condominium in Promenade. The desirable end unit features 2 bedrooms plus a den, all with full baths, abundant floor-to-ceiling windows and glass sliders to 2 balconies.



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830 TARAWITT DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Just three lots to the ICW from this over 2,500 sf, coastal 2015 built home. Living area and kitchen open to the patio and contemporary pool. The privacy of the second level offers two guest bedrooms with full bath, plus an extra lounge.



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Club is caring for them until they can be put in the ground. He indicated that the soil where the plants are to be planted is stone and roots. He purchased an auger (\$3,000) and when it arrived it was broke. He has returned it and is awaiting a new auger to finish. He did not know when the auger will be delivered but, assures when it does the plants will go in. All plants are native and should spread quickly. We will continue to stay in contact with Mr. Reilly regarding the status. Case is still open.

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

Proposed Budget increase of 43 percent

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

I was stunned and shocked to read that the town plans to increase the budget by 43 percent merely because we “are all millionaires” and property values have gone up dramatically. Seven new employees at an annual beginning cost of \$700,000.

First, we’re all retired here, we don’t have continuous “cash flow” like salaried people. Second, you can’t “eat” home equity by, say, lopping off the garage door to pay the taxes.

If a big project like the St. Regis calls for more work than staff can handle, a competent business “farms it out” to keep fixed costs low. You need to do the same.

Since the town will be receiving vast additional revenue from the non-homesteaded properties here, plus the St. Regis, I was expecting a reduction in the millage rate to benefit all taxpayers.

An increased budget means increased taxes. Let’s not forget that property values frequently drop dramatically, but sunk costs keep going up.

Finally, the lack of respect for we taxpayers is disheartening. Town management should be trying to save our money, not increasing costs just because they can.

Shannon Gault
Longboat Key

Proposed Budget increase of 43 percent

To: Shannon Gault

Thank you for sharing your thoughts on the proposed budget for next fiscal year. While I’m not making any attempt to sway your opinion of my work to date, I do want to make sure you have the facts that were considered when building the budget.

Operating costs are increasing by 15.3 percent. The remaining increase of 28.6 percent is investments in capital infrastructure. The Town had accumulated a fund balance (beyond needed reserves) in excess of what I believe was necessary and so have recommended that the Town invest \$5.1 million in excess fund balance into capital projects that included \$300,000 in grant match dollars (leveraging local dollars for state and federal funds) and the balance for street projects. The remaining bullet points provide information on the reasons for the operating budget increases.

Police and Fire salaries were increased due to the fact that we couldn’t get any applicants as pay was in the bottom quartile. We hire all paramedics for Fire and experienced officers for law enforcement and in the current environment they are difficult to find and the Town needed to be competitive (in my opinion). I don’t recommend eliminating (farming out) the Fire and Police departments and going with County services as I believe the Town would receive inferior services at the same or increased costs.

The Town has been “farming out” plans review and building inspection work when needed however it is at \$100/hour and the manpower is not always available (due to shortages of plans examiners and inspectors). We can pay \$50/hour (fully loaded) for an employee to do the work and we then have a resource that we can utilize for storm assessment and recovery as well. Importantly, their salary is only paid from permitting fees and not property taxes. The new permitting software system is also paid for from permitting fees and not property taxes.

The new maintenance position in Public Works was recommended as we’re adding the Town Center park to our inventory and staff was already struggling to keep up with maintenance responsibilities. Even with this addition Parks staff is still below where it was in 2010. Farming out maintenance is something I don’t recommend as these same staff wear a number of different hats from parks to buildings to streets to beaches and when we are recovering from storm damage or red tide or whatever else this crew is invaluable in their support of the Town’s operations. They show up every day (including in season) and do great work for very reasonable costs.

The Fire Department position was restoring a position cut back in 2010 and is part of a restructuring that the Chief recommended. The position that was cut years ago was a deputy chief and we’re adding back a supply/logistics position at a lower pay rate.

The two positions in I.T. are restoring the office back to its manning levels in 2010. One position is dedicated to security as cyber-crime has seen historic increases and local governments are targeted more and more. The second position is a business analyst that will assist with the permitting software implementation (and 80 percent of their salary will be paid from the permitting fees) while that project is underway (approximately 18 months). That position will also provide expertise to enhance our other existing systems so that we can maximize our technological capabilities and efficiencies.

The Grants Coordinator position should be able to see a return on investment in this grant

rich environment of at least 10:1 and shooting for 30:1 or more while also managing the grant reporting requirements. The other finance position being requested will have half of their salary paid from other sources (not property taxes).

We’re moving our ERP system to the cloud for better security and performance and that is budgeted at \$150,000.

The Town’s operating expenses went up (Florida Retirement System increase for Fire employees, increases in property/casualty insurance and employee health insurance, frozen pension fund loss, etc.) which are largely out of our control.

While not meant to be an exhaustive list, these examples illustrate that there were many needs identified this year that in my opinion should be addressed through additional investment. The financial impact of all of this for a homesteaded Longboat property that has a taxable value of \$1 million is an annual increase in Town taxes on the Gulfside of \$31.39 and on the Bayside of \$49.58.

Finally, I am aware of no instance when I or a member of my team was ever disrespectful to our citizens claiming as you indicate that we should increase the budget “merely because we “are all millionaires” and property values have gone up dramatically.” That is not at all who we are or how we conduct ourselves. The budget was carefully built to provide the exceptional service that our residents have come to expect and to make critical capital investments.

I will always support and defend your right to disagree with my recommendations, however I wanted to at least share the why behind making them while working from the same set of facts.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Proposed Budget increase of 43 percent

To: Longboat Key Commission

Good afternoon. I generally don’t respond to all budget criticisms as there are any number of different ways to run an operation. However, the comment that I was disrespectful and increased the budget because everyone’s a millionaire pushed my button. I understand you also received the concerns from Ms. Gault and so wanted to share this response.

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Proposed Budget increase of 43 percent

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Thank you for responding. I also was insulted by some of the comments but always respect our citizens right to disagree with us. However, the misconceptions and lack of understanding of our decisions need to be responded to.

Mike Haycock
Vice Mayor
Longboat Key

Property taxes refresher

To: Longboat Key Commission

Given that we have a new and very experienced Town Manager it would make sense for his Longboat Key financial orientation, for a staff department head refresher, a Town Commission reality check and most important, for transparency and communication to tax payers, a zero base budget process, based on actual financial need by line item, should be done.

We all know property values have skyrocketed this past year and if there is no reduction in the millage, (which should obviously be done), the Town government will enjoy windfall revenue from the newer non- homesteaded property buyers and businesses like the St Regis.

Government behavior historically always finds ways to spend surplus tax revenue. The Sarasota County budget is also enjoying huge growth and assessed market values on top of our Town’s which is another taxpayer liability concern.

While the new proposed staff positions may seem to be needed, a zero base budget process may reveal other places that could be reduced, or most important, outsourced part time or project based rather than full time with the additional benefit costs.

What is the real value added and ROI of these new positions including benefits?

How is the Town functioning today without these positions?

Looking at part time outsourcing by project may save money and help lower the millage to cover the needed, not wanted, zero based line item budget expenses.

As you well know high property values are ephemeral, remember ‘08.

Please base your decisions on real financial and resident services needed not based on a “snap shot” of the current economy and real estate values.

Zero based budgeting process is a business oriented discipline all taxpayers should demand. The Federal government and even Sarasota County are examples of what happens if we don’t hold the line executing fiscal discipline and responsibility.

We have confidence that LBK leadership will hold the line. Thank you for your service.

Bob Gault
Longboat Key

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KeyOpinion

America: A reflection on its history and direction

Winning national elections has become all about satisfying the respective bases of each party, rather than seeking broader consensus from the middle. And America’s social cohesion has been tested as various groups seek to coerce the entire society to not only accept their status, but also to completely adopt their positions.

GREGORY RUSOVICH
Guest Writer
rusovich@lbknews.com

At the conclusion of Mass this past Sunday, the closing hymn was “America the Beautiful.” As the congregation sang the glorious words, I choked up as I always do for that venerable song. And I was reminded that America’s birthday is a good time to reflect on our nation’s history, founding principles and current state.

America was born almost 250 years ago, uniquely placing the government in the hands of the governed. “We the people” laid the foundation for the democratic republic which changed the world for the better. Bold, adventurous American colonists propelled the values of political and economic freedom, religious liberty and individual initiative to the forefront of humanity. The world took note and America was called upon to lead efforts to defeat the spread of fascism and later, Soviet Communism. Like other prominent countries, we also committed some terrible transgressions — most notably, the horrific sin of slavery. But we atoned and survived as a nation and reaffirmed our commitment to equality and freedom.



RUSOVICH

As we grew and prospered, America led the Free World. Americans became known as risk takers who advance individual initiative and chutzpah. As we built on our founding principle of equality for all, America became the most racially diverse nation in the world. And we embraced the principle of liberty as we nurtured individual, economic and political freedom at home and abroad. While political debate on the issues of the day became regular and intense, we shared a belief in the American way of life and respect for one another. The outcome of a particular issue may have disappointed one side, but underlying confidence in our institutions and founding principles was strong enough for all to appreciate the ebb and flow of decisions.

But today, our historic commitment to a set of shared basic beliefs is at risk. Legitimate disagreements have evolved into intolerance of differing viewpoints as foundational institutions and principles are under assault.

We now are separated by “red states” and “blue states” with a small handful of “swing states” determining national elections. Just 39 years ago, Ronald Reagan won reelection by carrying 49 states and losing only the District of Columbia and opponent Walter Mondale’s home state of Minnesota (the latter by a 0.18% margin). That level of consensus is unimaginable today.

In 2016, 139 million votes were cast in the presidential election, and Donald Trump won the presidency by a total of 80,000 combined votes in three swing states. In 2020, with 154 million votes tallied in the presidential election, Joe Biden secured a razor-thin 44,000 combined votes in three swing states as the margin of victory.

Winning national elections has become all about satisfying the respective bases of each party, rather than seeking broader consensus from the middle. And America’s social cohesion has been tested as various groups seek to coerce the entire society to not only accept their status, but also to completely adopt their positions. This has provoked a culture war among various individual belief sets and values. Those social issues become far more personal and intense than ongoing economic and foreign policy matters. The country’s internal dissension is prompting a heightened level of frustration among the public and putting the country in a distressing funk.

So how does America get her mojo back? Commitment to a few basic founding principles may help.

Respect for longstanding American institutions is a core tenet of our stability. There has been recent chatter about stacking the U.S. Supreme Court to satisfy a political whim. Bad idea. Radically altering core institutions is a model of banana republics, not democratic world leaders. Relatedly, voting in a democracy is an honor and privilege. Election processes must be clear and validate each individual vote. And election results must be fully accepted and acknowledged.

Our educational institutions also could do more to teach civics and history, get back to basics,

and leave personal, intimate issues to parents. Universities need a quick reality check; their



job is to encourage a free exchange of ideas and respect for all opinions. Free speech is an American bedrock. Universities should embrace and advance this democratic essential.

Equality of opportunity provides a level playing field and aligns ideally with the Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal...” Contrarily, equity reallocates the exact resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome. Arbitrarily choosing to penalize one group for the benefit of another is divisive and counterproductive, and it contradicts a primary foundational principle. America cannot become a country of disparate groups, each with a separate identity advocating

solely for its own myopic purpose rather than for the overall good of society.

The American story is still being told. Returning to our foundational principles is the best path to enhancing that tale. Our history, while imperfect, has improved humanity and lifted the individual over the state. Liberty and equality can and must find harmony and balance once more.



Town of Longboat Key Community Discussion July 12, 2023 at 2:00 p.m.

Potential Community/Learning Center at Whitney Plaza

The Town of Longboat Key is hosting a community discussion with our residents to provide insights, input, and recommendations on a **potential Community/Learning Center at Whitney Plaza**. The Manatee County Commission will consider the lease of the Whitney Plaza space at their July 25, 2023, budget planning meeting. **The community conversation will be held on July 12, 2023 at 2:00 pm at Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road.**

Can’t make the meeting on July 12? Please feel free to send an email with your ideas to the Town’s Support Services Director Carolyn Brown: cbrown@longboatkey.org We want to hear from everyone!

Published: □□□□□□□□

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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

Manatee County Board of Commissioners

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Deborah Murphy
Should be a great meeting. The LBK North Board will be sending a letter to the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners in advance of the July 25th meeting in strong support of this opportunity.
Also attached is a power point that lists potential ideas we have collected from the community over the last few meetings. Not prioritized. (Carolyn - please use this with the workshop and Paul can certainly speak to these at the LBK meeting).
Maureen Merrigan
Longboat Key

Manatee County Board of Commissioners

To: Longboat Key Commission
The Manatee County Commission is expected to address the proposed lease for the Whitney Plaza space on July 25. I plan to attend and invite you and/or representatives from LBK North to attend. We hope to have the inputs available from our July 12 meeting with the Town of Longboat Key to use as the foundation for how we (LBK North) envision the space to be utilized.
It is very encouraging to see this long awaited partnership coming together. Having well defined expectations from the Manatee residents of Longboat Key will help in defining what success looks like.
Thanks to all the members of LBK North who have worked tirelessly in this effort.
Debbie Murphy
Commissioner, Longboat Key

To: Debbie Murphy

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Also attached is a power point that lists potential ideas we have collected from the community over the last few meetings. Not prioritized. (Carolyn - please use this with the workshop and Paul can certainly speak to these at the LBK meeting).
Maureen Merrigan
Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon meeting

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Further to our conversation(s) regarding the request to meet with the Sleepy Lagoon residents who would like to discuss funding options related to the stormwater/drainage improvements for the remaining streets, I would appreciate you checking your calendar to offer two dates for them to consider. I am happy to have you take the lead in facilitating the meeting arrangements. If possible, they have asked if we could offer Zoom as an option for anyone not able to attend in person. Thank you very much for your time in listening to and responding to their thoughts. Best wishes to you and your families for a memorable Independence Day.
Debbie Murphy
Commissioner
Longboat Key

Bay Isles plantings

To: Longboat Key Commission
Good afternoon! Below is an update from Allen regarding the Bay Isles maintenance building plantings. From a Code Enforcement perspective, the goal is always compliance and while this has moved forward slowly, it is moving forward with plants now on site. Staff can seek from the Club a specific target date for the auger replacement and then for the plantings (which have a value from the Club of \$5,000). With the golf side of their house in full maintenance mode, hopefully they can get everything accomplished in the next couple of weeks.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Bay Isles Maintenance Building - Replantings Status Update

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Tip- Passing along an update on the active Code Enforcement case regarding trimming & tree removal around the Bay Isles Maintenance Building. This case originated back in January. It was determined that there was FDEP authorized mangrove trimming and the removal of invasive Australian Pines. Ultimately it was determined that the removals violated Resolution 82-19. That Resolution approved a Site Plan that included the maintenance building, which had a condition that the property “shall be heavily screened with native plants and berm” to screen the maintenance area from the residential area.

See Letters, page 11

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KeyRealEstate

Bird Key, Lido Key, Longboat Key latest sales

Address	Sq. Ft.	List Price	Bed/Bath/Half Bath			Days On Market	Sale Price
3806 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#C310	1,046	\$399,000	2	2	0	5	\$375,000
804 EVERGREEN WAY	1,440	\$675,000	2	2	1	6	\$675,000
3500 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#101	1,486	\$692,500	3	2	0	201	\$692,500
4725 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#101	1,032	\$950,000	2	2	0	0	\$932,000
2120 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#611	2,616	\$1,095,000	3	3	0	71	\$1,000,000
3630 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#301	1,521	\$1,097,000	3	2	0	15	\$1,065,000
1000 LONGBOAT CLUB RD Unit#301	1,736	\$1,495,000	3	3	0	101	\$1,350,000
1910 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#501	2,135	\$1,685,000	3	3	0	88	\$1,563,690
700 TARAWITT DR	3,897	\$3,400,000	4	5	0	306	\$3,055,000
610 YARDARM LN	4,138	\$4,590,000	4	4	1	339	\$4,200,000
500 S WASHINGTON DR Unit#11A	1,034	\$675,000	2	2	0	11	\$640,000
618 OWL WAY	2,434	\$2,295,000	3	3	0	43	\$1,880,000



610 YARDARM LN



JEFF RHINELANDER

941-685-3590 • Jeff@jeffrhineland.com

COURTNEY TARANTINO

941-893-7203 • courtney.tarantino@floridamoves.com



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WATER CLUB
1241 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #808
ACTIVE LISTING \$3,395,000



LAKWOOD RANCH
5527 PALMER CIRCLE, #206
ACTIVE LISTING \$485,000



BIRD KEY
410 MEADOWLARK DRIVE
PENDING \$3,795,000



BIRD KEY
526 BIRD KEY DRIVE
SOLD \$2,225,000



BIRD KEY
449 E ROYAL FLAMINGO DRIVE
SOLD \$5,600,000

Send us your reaction: letters@lbknews.com

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 30 Boat warning

9:55 a.m.
Officer Kolodzieski while on marine patrol, observed a blue personal watercraft operating at a speed that was in excess for a Slow Speed Zone west of the Longboat Pass Bridge. Officer Kolodzieski activated his emergency equipment and conducted a vessel stop. The operator was unaware of the Slow Speed Zone and had several questions about boating regulations. Officer Kolodzieski helped to educate the operator and gave him a verbal warning. Case clear.

July 1 Suspicious incident

2:20 p.m.
Officer Ferrigine responded to the 4100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of an open door. Upon his arrival, Officer Ferrigine noted the front door was unlocked to the massage shop. Officer Ferrigine conducted a walk-through of the store and no workers appeared to be present. The caller stated she had an appointment at 2 p.m. and there was nobody there. Officer Ferrigine was unable to contact the owner or was unable to lock the door. Case clear.

Dog on beach

3:28 p.m.
Officer Montfort while on beach patrol on Greer Island, observed a woman with two dogs off leash at the northern point of the island. Officer Montfort made contact with the woman who was advised that dogs or animals of any kind were prohibited on the beach. Furthermore, Officer Montfort observed one of the dogs using the bathroom on the beach leaving behind feces. The dogs were off leash and were not service animals. A citation was written to the woman. Case clear.

July 2 Snake in the kitchen

5:20 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to Sands Point Road in reference to a snake in someone's kitchen. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with two hotel employees who showed Officer Miklos into the kitchen. The two employees and Officer Miklos attempted to locate the snake with negative results. The employees were advised that Animal Services begin working at 8 a.m. Case clear.

Fire

9:48 p.m.
Officer Martinson was dispatched to the 3100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a report of a fire in trash can and palm trees. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson noted that Longboat Key Fire Department were already on scene in the beach access parking lot. Fire Department informed Officer Martinson that prior to their arrival, a bystander had already put out the fire in the trash cans. Officer Martinson spoke to the man who stated he was on the beach with his friends and family when he noticed flames coming from the trash cans at the beach access. The man and others in his party were able to put the fire out using a water hose from



the resort and buckets of water from the ocean. The man stated he did not see who started the fire, but observed fireworks in the trash cans when he put out the fire. The man is staying at the resort nearby. Officer Martinson took photos of the damaged trash cans, palm trees and picnic table and later property inventoried the SD card into evidence at the Police Station. Longboat Key Fire Department stated they would be notifying Public works about the damage to the Town's property. No one on scene had any suspect information and there were no visible video cameras at or around the beach access parking lot.

July 3 Citizen assist

6:16 p.m.
Officer Martinez was dispatched to the 1900 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in regard to a citizen assist. Upon arrival, Officer Martinez met with the complainant who stated she received an unusual package in the mail. The complainant stated the package contained several bottles of dietary supplements that she did not order. None of the bottles appeared tampered with or open. Officer Martinez advised the woman to check with family/friends in case someone sent it to the complainant's address on accident. Officer Martinez advised the woman she could return the package to the postal office if she did not want to keep the package and its contents. Case clear.

July 4 Bird in fishing line

7:39 a.m.
Officer Connors responded to the 4600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a Great Blue Heron entangled in fishing line. Upon arrival, Officer Connors observed the Heron to have fishing line emanating from the beak area and chafing around the neck area. The reporting party advised that the Heron has been hanging around the pool area for the last 24 hours and he's now starting to act lethargic. An attempt to assist the Heron was negative. Animal services was notified as well as the local wildlife center. Case clear.

Overtaken kayak

5:45 p.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol in Longboat Pass, observed a person on a kayak struggling to make way in the strong outgoing tide. The kayaker eventually fell off his kayak and was retrieved by Officer Connors and a good Samaritan who was in the area. Officer Connors assisted the kayaker and his overturned kayak to the shore of Coquina Beach without incident. The kayaker was fatigued and uninjured. Case clear.

July 5 Noise complaint

5:45 p.m.
Officer Martinson responded to Seabreeze Avenue when he heard sounds of a chainsaw coming from the rear of the street. Officer Martinson made contact with the man who was in the rear of the location loading tree and bush cuttings into the bed of a black Ford F-150 pickup truck. Officer Martinson advised the man that the use of a power equipment for yard work ends at 5 p.m. and there he is in violation of the Longboat Key noise ordinance. The man apologized and stated he was unaware of the town noise ordinance. The man stated he would stop using the chainsaw and after he was done picking up the remaining cut down tree and bush branches he would be leaving. Case clear.

July 6 Citizen assist

1:31 p.m.
Officer Miklos responded to 7300 block of Gul of Mexico Drive in reference to a piece of wood that had broken off a nearby dock. Officer Miklos spoke with the caller via telephone and advised him he would contact the Public Works Department. Officer Miklos contacted a Public Works employee who advised to send an email to Public Works and they will send a street division to pick up the piece of wood. Officer Miklos emailed the Public Works Department advising them of the call and location. Case clear.

Suspicious person

8:09 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 2800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a suspicious person call regarding a man with a bike yelling at the beach area. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith and Officer Nazareno made contact with the male subject. The man stated that he fell on his bike on the beach, became frustrated and yelled towards the water, but not at anyone directly. The man didn't exhibit any behavior that would indicate any mental illness and didn't meet the criteria for the Baker Act. He stated that he doesn't wish to harm himself or others. The man left the beach area without any incident and no crime was observed or reported. Case clear.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

Staff has been in contact with John Reilly, who is the Director of Agronomy for the Longboat Key Club. As of last week, Mr. Reilly advised plantings have been staged (cost \$5K) and the Club is caring for them until they can be put in the ground. He indicated that the soil where the plants are to be planted is stone and roots. He purchased an auger (\$3K) and when it arrived it was broke. He has returned it and is awaiting a new auger to finish. He did not know when the auger will be delivered but, assures when it does the plants will go in. All plants are native and should spread quickly. We will continue to stay in contact with Mr. Reilly regarding the status. Case is still open.

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

Community Discussion

To: Town Clerk Trish Shinkle
The Town of Longboat Key is hosting a community conversation with our residents from the Manatee County portion of the Key, to provide insights, input and recommendations on a potential Community/Learning Center at Whitney Plaza. The Manatee County Commission will consider the lease of the Whitney Plaza space at their July 25, 2023 fiscal year 2023-2024 budget planning meeting. The community conversation will be held on July 12, 2023 at 2:00 pm at Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road.

The discussion with the Manatee Commission and School Board has been developing over the past year and looks to see an investment from both agencies back into Longboat Key and its residents. It is an incredible opportunity to see a partnership that will enhance the quality of life for our north island residents. The more focused we can all be on what we'd like to see, the greater the opportunity to realize that vision and that's the primary driver behind this community conversation. So the agenda for the meeting is to gather or reaffirm ideas on use, services, and programs and to develop talking points around them that can then be shared with the County and the School Board.

Can't make the meeting on July 12? Please feel free to send an email with your ideas to the Town's Support Services Director Carolyn Brown:cbrown@longboatkey.org We want to hear from everyone!

For Paul and the North End Coalition Board, we're asking for your help to get this invitation out to your members and ask each of them to share it with their respective communities.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Longboat Key

Community Discussion Invitation

To: Paul Hylbert
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Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

Visit Sarasota County

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission
May 2023 visitation for Sarasota County decreased compared to May last year but we do have to remember that 2022 was an incredible record-breaking year! We are continuing to see our international visitation coming back very strongly which is great news.

Here are all of the numbers comparing May 2023 to May 2022. Please have a wonderful 4th of July weekend celebrating this wonderful country of ours.

May 2023 compared to May 2022
Visitors in paid lodging were 140,610 a drop of -1.5%
Direct visitor expenditures were \$156,037,800 an increase of 3.6%
Lodging occupancy was 66.1% a decrease of -9.3%
Lodging average room rate was \$251.17, an increase of 5%
There were 276,400 room nights sold, a decrease of -2.2
Virginia J. Haley
President Visit Sarasota County

See Letters, page 12



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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 11

Town Manager Updates

To: Longboat Key Commission

Town Initiatives

Snapshot Commission Recess

The Longboat Key Town Commission takes recess from regularly scheduled meetings during July and August each year. They resume regular meetings on September 11 at 1 p.m. It remains a busy time for all as we continue to advance projects, wrap up our Budget process, and prepare for the next fiscal year.

The Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (FY24) Budget Process continued on June 30 at 9 a.m.

The first Budget Workshop was held on May 15 and the second on June 20th continued the discussion to identify and fund the Commission's priority projects for the upcoming fiscal year. On June 30th the Commission set our maximum millage rate for FY24. They will meet again September 11 and September 26 (both at 5:01 p.m.) to hold public hearings to set the millage rate for the Town, and formally adopt the FY24 Budget.

Roundabout

Gulfstream and US 41 Roundabout Construction Project is finally wrapping up Construction started in mid March 2021 and it's great to see all lanes open, and construction equipment moved out. Gulfstream Roundabout Landscaping begins in July when construction and final acceptance are complete and will include mowing and installation of plant material and art.

Mosquito precautions

Remove mosquito habitats. Eliminate standing water in rain gutters, planters and buckets and keep your swimming pool water treated and circulating. And avoid getting bitten. Use EPA registered mosquito repellents when necessary, cover exposed skin with long-sleeved shirts, long pants, socks. Stay indoors when possible, especially if there is a mosquito-borne disease warning in effect. Yellow bug lights are not repellents but tend to attract fewer mosquitos than white lights (they are also great during turtle nesting season). Cover gaps in walls, doors, and windows to prevent mosquitos from entering your home.

It's hot outside

There has been a bit of a heat wave throughout our region. Try to schedule outdoor work, exercise, and sports during morning and later afternoon hours. Important to hydrate – drink water even if you don't feel thirsty! Never leave kids, older people, or pets in cars as temperatures inside parked cars can double within minutes.

Town Center Project, Phase 2 is nearing completion

The pavilion/stage construction continues toward completion. Grab your calendar and "Save the Date" for November 11 at 3 p.m. for our Veterans' Day Celebration and Karon Family Pavilion Ribbon Cutting!

Greer Island Spit Removal and Canal 1A Dredging

The Town's contractor, Coastal Dredging Company is preparing to mobilize in mid-July. Turtle and shorebird nests delayed the start of the project but construction can begin now.

It's Sea Turtle Nesting & Shorebird Nesting Season

You've seen beach-fronting lights turning yellow or red this time of year to minimize disorientations when turtles are nesting or hatching. Also remember that pets are not allowed on Longboat Key beaches – only trained service animals with leashes. Please remove furniture from the beach, cover holes, and leave only your footprints. More at www.longboatkey.org

Recycle Right

Recycling Cart Stickers are here! Waste Management and the Town are providing stickers for recycling carts to help identify what can, and can't be recycled. Get yours at Town Hall, Monday- Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Fertilizer efforts

June 1 – Sept 30 ban on use of fertilizers containing nitrogen & phosphorous. June 1 - September 30, at least 50 percent slow-release fertilizer is required. The stormwater runoff during rainy season can wash fertilizers from our lawns into Sarasota Bay & Gulf waters. The fertilizer's nitrogen & phosphorous runoff can cause harmful algal blooms such as red tide. Check out Town Code Chapter 102, Fertilizer Management for more information on training requirements for applicators, and Fertilizer-Free Zones!

Howard Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Roof question

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

Larry will be back Wednesday but I wanted to give you some information on what is called a ballasted low slope roof systems. It is allowed and addressed in the 2020 Florida Building Code Chapter 15 section 1504.4 and 1504.8. and 1519.12.2 . The building Mr. Lamb is talking about is 1515 Ringling. This was re-roofed in 2001 (3,000 sq. ft. permit # 2020648) and 2007 (1100 sq. ft. permit #20073618) The requirement is for a minimum 50% of the aggregate to be embedded in the bitumen. I have included the code reference above. When these roofs are aged or heavily trafficked, the aggregate does become loose. Changing the Florida building code is a long tedious process and typically takes years. Local adoptions for code changes are even more difficult to get through. I have include a paragraph below from Florida Housing finance explaining Code adoption and maintenance. Please let me know if you need any more information.

“Florida Building Code Adoption and Maintenance The Florida Building Code is adopted and updated with new editions triennially by the Florida Building Commission. Statutorily created to implement the Florida Building Code, the Commission is housed within the Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR). It is a 27-member technical body responsible for the development, maintenance, and interpretation of the Florida Building Code. The commission also approves products for statewide acceptance. Members are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate and include design professionals, contractors, and government experts in the various disciplines covered by the Florida Building Code. While adopted and updated every three years, the Florida Building Code may be amended annually to incorporate interpretations, clarifications and to update standards. Minimum requirements for permitting, plans review and inspections are established by the Code but local jurisdictions may adopt additional administrative requirements that are more stringent. Issues before the Commission are vetted through a workgroup process where consensus recommendations are developed and submitted by representative stakeholder groups in an open process with several opportunities for public input. Eleven Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) which are constituted consistent with American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Guidelines review proposed Code changes and clarifications of the Code and make recommendations to the Commission. These TACs include: Accessibility; Joint Building Fire; Code Administration/ Enforcement; Electrical; Energy; Mechanical; Plumbing and Fuel Gas; Roofing; Swimming Pool; and Special Occupancy (state agency construction and facility licensing regulation”

Michael Taylor
Deputy Building Official
City of Sarasota

New Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Now that the new Gulfstream Roundabout is completed a few thoughts:

- Still no signs at Fruitville saying Fruitville
- Directional signage is incomplete. No signage before or entering the Roundabout. Only when exiting which is way too late.
- Traffic light at Sunset remains totally miss timed.

Given Sarasota is the 2nd top city for inbound moves it would be nice to welcome new residents with correct signs. They are already totally confused by our roundabouts which are very rare elsewhere. Wishing everyone a safe and Happy 4th.

Steve Helpern
Sarasota

New Roundabout

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch, Steve Helpern
We were planning to install a Fruitville Roundabout Ahead sign on the west side of SB US 41, but the scaffoldings for the Quay project will not allow that at this time. This will have to be installed by FDOT after scaffolding is removed. NB US 41 has a very tight corridor with several signs that are required, to avoid sign clutter it is best to avoid any optional signage, hence no street name signs.

The traffic light at sunset has multiple timing plans throughout the day depending on the time of the day and traffic. If you are referring to the backups during the season, it is an issue with the heavy volumes. Even if we program unlimited green for traffic coming off the bridge, that traffic will be locking up Gulfstream Roundabout and create a gridlock, so it is better to meter the traffic at Sunset signal which also helps traffic on Sunset enter Gulfstream, which is significant as well during the season. This intersection is being constantly monitored and adjusted regularly by FDOT and the City, but unfortunately the traffic during the tourist season is significantly higher than the capacity of this corridor. As you may be aware, the same situation exists at the Anna Maria Bridge and Stickney Pt bridge during peak tourist season.

We appreciate your patience and support throughout the construction of this project. I know you had a front row seat for all the inconveniences and impacts caused by construction, so a special thanks to you for putting up with us for last 3 years. With all the impacts gone, traffic should be flowing a lot smoother than before. Thanks again and have a wonderful July 4th.

Pinky Pakalapati
Project Engineer
CDM Smith

New Roundabout

To: CDM Smith Project Engineer Pinky Pakalapati
Thank you Pinky for your comprehensive and timely response. I appreciate your consistent professionalism and thoroughness, especially when communicating with those outside of the field of transportation (like me).

Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

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Zinfandel: America’s low-hanging fruit

Italian immigrants planted Zinfandel vines in many of the dry and scrubby areas of Northern California during the late 19th Century.

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

We opened a bottle of the 2019 Ridge Pagani Ranch Zinfandel (\$40). Even though we anticipated a great wine, it exceeded our expectations. Tasting this wine makes it easy to understand why Zinfandel has become the uniquely American wine. America owns the varietal in the global wine market; virtually all Zinfandel exports originate in California.

Those connected to the wine industry tend to think globally; nonetheless, “America First” makes good sense when it comes to the Zinfandel varietal. We cringe when we hear Italians call Zinfandel an American Primitivo. Americans must defend its unique varietal against attempts to draw false equivalents. Above all, the California Zinfandel clones have a unique taste profile that distinguishes Zinfandel from other varietals.

*One red wine has a certain tell:
a California Zinfandel.*

We hasten to add that a California Zinfandel has little in common with the mass market White Zinfandel. Dry and robust, the Ridge Zinfandel benefits from a couple of hours at rest after removing the cork. It opens up with distinctive tastes of dark and red berries and stone fruit: touches of blackberry, plum, and cherry jam. The Ridge Pagani Ranch Zinfandel has small proportions of Petite Sirah (6%) and Alicante Bouschet (4%) that deepen the purple hue and nip of tannic acid in the wine. The nose reminds us of herbs and spices. Ridge Pagani Ranch has the signature “tell” of the Zinfandel grape: a lingering hint of black pepper in the finish.

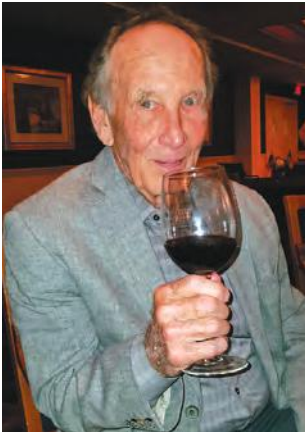
Old Zinfandel vines are responsible for the intense and complex flavors of the wine. The old vines in the Pagani Ranch vineyard in Western Sonoma County remind us of Bonzai trees. Thanks to rigorous pruning and thinning, they have large and gnarly trunks, sparse leaves, and few clusters of grapes relative to the size of the vines. The original old vines on the Pagani Ranch range in age from 110 to 130 years. Italian immigrants planted Zinfandel vines in many of the dry and scrubby areas of Northern California during the late 19th Century. Neither the Zinfandel clones nor the Primitivo clones originated in the countries where they have become popular. Genetic matching shows that they descend from a Croatian grape called Crljenak Kaštelanski that dates back to 6000 B.C.

Premier Zinfandels have much the same aging potential as premier Cabernet Sauvignon or Pinot Noir. In addition to classic pairings with grilled beef, pork, lamb, and game, Zinfandel also matches up beautifully with pasta in a red marinara or puttanesca sauce and with dark chocolate.

The Pagani Vineyard has a cooler climate than many other regions within Sonoma County. Zinfandel wine from the Pagani fruit does not have as much of the hot (high alcohol), jammy tastes as wines from hotter regions such as the Lodi Valley. The Ridge Zinfandel from the Pagani Vineyard sources all of its grapes from that one vineyard. This makes it an Estate wine even though Carlisle Vineyards and Winery, not Ridge, owns the Pagani Ranch. The Ridge spec sheets on the web serve as a wonderful example of how to inform wine buyers about the grapes in the wine and the processing of the grapes from crush to aging in the cask. Ratings of the 2019 vintage hover in the 92-94 range.

Looking for very good Zinfandel at a lower price point? You can choose from a number of high quality wines. The 2023 San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition lists the 2019 Maker Wines Zinfandel (\$13) as “Best of Class” in the least expensive category. The wine-maker, Janell Dusi, combines grapes from two old vine, dry-farmed, sustainable vineyards in the lauded Paso Robles region of California. The catch? Maker Wines packages premium wines in 250ml cans and sells a six-pack (=2 750ml bottles) for \$78. Not a bargain unless one prefers a single-serving container.

Another Chronicle “Best of Class”, this one in the under \$16 price category, the 2019 7



Deadly Zins Zinfandel from the Lodi region of California has the big, jammy, hot wine tastes that many wine buyers love and European wine advocates decry. We think of it as not a bad choice for BBQ’s and summer evenings outdoors, but we know that it may overpower more subtle tastes in food.

An earlier vintage of the Cline Ancient Vines Zinfandel (\$16) from the Contra Coastal County region east and north of San Francisco earned a spot on the Wine Spectator’s annual 100 Best Wines list. The 2021 vintage has the same appeal. Sourced from a cooler

region, it has a more muted taste profile than the Lodi Zinfandels but retains the essential Zinfandel attributes. Drink now or hold. Highly recommended.

*Oh Zinfandel
Drink it here or ship away to sell:
the California Zinfandel,
ambassador of American wine.*

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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Sherry ‘Nef’ Price is a USPTR certified professional. She played at IMG and Division 1 College.
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Orchestra, from page 1

dozens of other arts organizations. Sarasota Orchestra is facing challenges in securing performance and rehearsal dates due to the region’s arts and cultural infrastructure limitations. There are simply not enough calendar dates available for Sarasota Orchestra and the many other arts organizations in our region, and additional high quality space for acoustic music is needed to serve a larger, more diverse population with a wider array of experiences. The new Music Center will also provide much-needed space to expand opportunities for Sarasota Orchestra’s youth education programs, which are at capacity.

Why is Fruitville Road the right location?

So many things make Fruitville Road the perfect location for our Music Center. The site’s centralized location and proximity to Interstate 75 increases accessibility to arts and cultural experiences for residents across the region and visitors worldwide, serving as a gateway to the nearby downtown Sarasota area. Most significantly, this location enables us to build at a height up to 110 feet, which is necessary for optimal acoustics and enables the necessary cubic volume to maximize sound reverberation. The Fruitville Road location also offers protection from coastal vulnerabilities, which limits related construction and insurance costs, as well as service disruptions. Our site also provides ample space for parking and easy access, which we

know through our research and many discussions with patrons is critically important.

How is a concert hall different from other venues in the area?

Concert Hall Concert halls are built with the specific intent to optimize acoustic (non-amplified) performances. In a concert hall, the audience and musicians share the same room without separation from the stage. When built at the appropriate height, a concert hall creates the volume of space necessary to enable sound reverberation, physical sensations, and a truly immersive musical experience.

Performing Arts Hall

Multipurpose performing arts halls are built for productions like Broadway shows that support theatrical sets and amplified productions. In a performing arts venue, a proscenium arch frames the stage and the space above and around the stage is open to fly lofts and storage for theatrical sets. By its very design, a performing arts hall structure built for Broadway



shows compromises acoustics to facilitate very different types of productions than are typically held in a concert hall. If you have any additional questions about the Music Center, email: questions@sarasotaorchestra.org.

Manager, from page 1

as the town heads into a hurricane season. The transformers are reportedly not compatible with the mid-island phases of the project and therefore the overhead power lines must

remain until the new transformers arrive.

The value of blame

Positioning and leveraging is part of a Town Manager’s job and Tipton made clear that the additional cost of replacing transformers and any delays ought be paid by FPL. He said that all of the other undergrounding efforts such as taking down the old Comcast cable lines and the installation of light poles can continue unabated.

Banking on a roundabout

Another conundrum arose recently in Town Hall when the Florida Department of Transportation told the Town that its planned roundabout for Broadway and Gulf of Mexico Drive is not viable in its current form and will take additional funds and engineering if the Town wishes to proceed. The problem is all in the banking. According to the Town Manager, the bend in the road between Longboat Pass Bridge and Broadway is banked at about eight degrees and would need significant redesign and reconstruction to work with a roundabout at that location. The problem is drivers in that banked section of road, are

naturally driving at too fast a speed to safely enter a roundabout. Tipton says the Town would have to decrease the grade and remove the bank to what is called a “crowned” road that presents some issues.

A banked road conveniently drains on one side allowing a clear lane free of flooding during storm events. If the banking is removed, the road must be elevated and drainage on each side must be engineered. It also adds a road construction project to the \$2.2 million roundabout project.

What particularly irked Longboat Key leaders and Town Staff over the past two weeks is the fact that the Town has all along submitted its engineering documents to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the agency said nothing until the plans were more than 90 percent complete. When asked if the Town will request that FDOT pay additional funds beyond the \$1.6 million it has pledged to contribute to the project, Town Manager Tipton responded, “Absolutely. It is now a bigger project, there is a gas line we wanted to avoid on one side of the road, which will present difficulty, but we really do want to see this done. We want to see the ability for pedestrians to be able to cross safely.”

Mayor Ken Schneier has indicated that the Town will have to look at its options, which include the possibility of a red light. But a red light appears dubious.

“FDOT has said pretty clearly they are against a red light at that intersection; they want to see a roundabout. We want to work closely with them up and down the island, beautifying Gulf of Mexico Drive, slowing down traffic and making the roadway safer for pedestrians,” said Tipton.

Later than sooner...

The Town Manager said it has been “an amazing experience” over the past five months he has held the position. “I just wish I had done it sooner,” Tipton added referring to his newfound job in the scale , intimacy and intensity found on Longboat Key.

Longboat Key News
Sarasota City News

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