



Longboat Key News

January 20, 2023

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InsideLook

Longboat seeks to register and track home rentals

Island leaders seek to control code violations and track rentals in residential zones.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

It is axiomatic: a good neighbor is a quiet neighbor.

A good neighbor does not party late at night, hurling bodies through the air and splashing into pools while getting drunk and then driving to and fro throughout the

night. Good neighbors do not leave trash and crank obnoxious music throughout the night.

But these are exactly the kind of

See Rentals, page 3

Who will design, run new Library on LBK?

The plan for a Sarasota County Library in the heart of Longboat Key is rapidly taking shape.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

On Jan. 23, Longboat Key Town Manager Tom Harmer will give the most detailed report to date on exactly what the County will pay for, how much control the town will have over programming and architectural design, and what the next steps between are for the two governmental entities.

Specifically, Harmer has crafted along with Sarasota County Principles of Agreement that with the Commission approval and County Commission approval, will govern the process and the project.

The first principle is that Longboat Key would lease the site for the library facility for 50 years and “extensions will be provided.”

The Town will have input and its residents would be part of a process to provide input into the architectural design of the future facility, but the Principles of Agreement clearly state that the County will run that process and will ultimately decide on the architecture, operational needs, management and scheduling of all activities within the future facility. The Principles of Agreement state that there will be “no additional oversight committee beyond current Sarasota County Advisory Board.”

The Town can request enhancements to the library facility beyond whatever base specifications the county wants, but the funding would have to be paid by either Longboat Key or through fundraising.

The Principles of Agreement does anticipate the establishment of “Friends of the LBK Library,” which would work with the existing library volunteers.

So in short, the County would design, build, program and operate the facility, and the Town will provide input on those aspects as well as the acreage which runs between the Public Tennis Center and the Publix

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From stage to Silver Screen
...page 12



Did contractor cheap out?
...page 4



What is really in your wine?
...page 13



Unsafe at every speed
...page 10

Waterfront Listing



By Bob Parrish

Raising a glass with Mote

After a long-awaited postponement due to Hurricane Ian, Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium's inaugural Sharktoberfest event went off without a hitch Saturday, Jan. 14.

Guests age 21 and older experienced Mote Aquarium as never before, savoring a highly anticipated lineup of craft beers, food, live music and other festive delights.

Doors opened at 6 p.m. for the VIP Tasting event, where guests enjoyed six selections from local brewers against a beautiful waterfront backdrop in the New Pass room of the Mote's Keating Marine Education Center on City Island, Sarasota.

The main event was held from 7–10 p.m. in Mote Aquarium's courtyard.





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Rentals, from page 1

complaints that Longboat Key Code Enforcement says are so ubiquitous on the otherwise serene island that it wants to register and track all potential rental residential properties.

On Monday, Town Staff will recommend to the commission that it adopt a Residential Rental Registration Program.

Similar programs are in place, says staff, on Anna Maria, Holmes Beach, and in Bradenton. Staff says it wants these programs so it can have an organized and fact-based approach to regulating the negative impacts from Airbnb and VRBO rentals.

The Town of Longboat Key is unique in that it does not allow more than one rental within a 30-day period in residential zones. In other words, any homeowner in a residential zone can rent for a weekend or a month, but only to one party in a 30-day period. The problem for town staff and code enforcement, which receives hundreds of complaints generated by the impacts of rentals, is that without a registration it has no way to track what exactly is going on in any given property.

“In order to pursue Code Enforcement there has to be evidence that a property is being rented for some form of compensation. There further has to be proof of the length of a rental in order for there to be a violation of the Town’s short-term rental requirements,” said Planning, Zoning and Building Director Allen Parsons.

What Town Staff is proposing is for any property in a residential zone that rents for less than six months at a time would be required to register with the Town, pay Tourist Development Taxes and receive a residential rental certificate of registration all applicable tourism taxes will have to be shown as collected and paid.

The registration process will require contact information of a Designated Responsible Party who will be responsible for responding to inquiries or complaints.

An element of the registration program designed to offer relief to neighbors is the requirement, if adopted, that all cars or vehicle traffic associated with the rental unit, be parked on site of the property.

Another requirement will be that all owners of rentals will be required to place the Town Certificate of Registration number in all advertisements, whether in print or on the internet.

Town Staff has identified about 1,300 properties on Longboat Key that are engaged in rentals currently that would be subject to these new requirements. The cost for the staff to administer this program, which will include inspections, is proposed to be covered by the two existing code enforcement positions in town and the adoption of fees to cover the costs.

Parsons says the next step if the Commission wants to move forward, is to develop a Fee Resolution to define the cost to the rental property owners.

“Staff is recommending adoption of this program as a proactive measure,” wrote Parsons in his memo recommending that the commission move forward with the program.



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Open House for Town Manager Harmer’s Retirement

Join the Town on February 6 between 10 am to 12 pm at Longboat Key Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road for an opportunity to say goodbye to Tom Harmer and thank him for his 5 years of service to Longboat Key and its citizens.

Harmer announced his retirement in June 2022 and February 6 is his last day on the job. Tom has often stated “It has been an honor to finish my 38-year public service career here on Longboat Key.”

Tom will be moving to Winter Garden to be closer to his two sons and three grandkids and is looking forward to enjoying his retirement with his wife Dee.

If you have questions, please contact Susan Phillips, Assistant to Town Manager at sphillips@longboatkey.org or 941-316-1999, x 1212.

Library, from page 1

Plaza for the County facility.

The idea of a County library is the evolution of a now-decades long plan to build a community center, which morphed into a Town Cultural Arts Center, which has now taken firm root as a future County Library.

The Town five years ago negotiated with the Ringling College of Art and Design to build a Community Art Center that Ringling would manage but would be built through fundraising. That plan fell apart when Ringling President Larry Thompson decided it was not viable following criticism and questioning of the Ringling organization by previous Longboat Key Commissioners.

Since the Ringling departure, the Town Commission embarked on activating the site and moved an historical building from the Village, secured about \$800,000 for a pavilion and stage that is currently under construction that will hold concerts and public activities on the site. The library is planned as an additional enhancement with the hope that the entire project will constitute a de facto Town Center that previous commissions said is lacking on the island.

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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.

The Roundabout Contractor Just Cheaped Out

To the Editor:

In the correspondence recently published about the roundabout disaster, no one seems to have taken issue with the contractor's excuse that gosh they just could not get anyone to deliver "small amounts of concrete" other than at peak rush hour during high season. That is no excuse for mismanagement that could have cost the life of someone desperately needing to get to the hospital. In the absence of natural disaster, every commercial transaction is possible at a price. What happened here is that the contractor just cheaped out. They could have either paid more or ordered more in order to get their concrete delivered at night. The contractor's choice shows they neither respected nor feared the City and State authorities responsible for this contract. Don't tell us you will notify us next time. The City and State authorities should be telling us they will never let this happen again, or people will be fired, financial penalties will be imposed, and injunctions will be obtained.

Jeffrey A. Jannuzzo
Longboat Key

Broadway traffic calming

To: Longboat Key Vice Mayor Maureen Merrigan

Hi Maureen. Thanks for forwarding. While we only have feedback from the Broadway committee, and not from the entire Longbeach Village, here is some initial feedback:

- We were surprised that Public Works has decided on a street paint plan without any consultation with any Longbeach Village resident.
- The feedback so far is that street paint is not desirable to either slow traffic or improve the Broadway aesthetics. It will create and emphasize the straight shot speedway that is there now. We haven't encountered any resident in favor of street paint for sharrows, travel lanes, or crosswalks.
- While we have heard that many think Broadway is a neighborhood street, it is in fact primarily a restaurant feeder street. The vast majority of the Village residents turn on Longboat Drive North or South. Of the 2512 cars per day that use Broadway, probably 2,000 of them are going to the restaurants (patrons, service, deliveries, and employees - for the restaurants that have a total of 354 dining seats).
- Public Works is proposing a yellow line between what would be the travel lanes. This would put the yellow line about 10 feet from the north curb and 20 feet from the south curb. We think that would look weird and ugly as the parking lane rarely gets used but is clearly visible to drivers when vehicles are parked along the south curb. We think it is much safer and better to encourage traffic to the middle of Broadway. Since the former painted white lines were removed a year or two ago, traffic has moved over from the north side curb toward the

center making mail delivery and residents' use of mailboxes less hazardous.

- We like the other options Kimley Horn offered and what they have done in other neighborhoods.
- if your objective is to start small and cheap then we suggest stop signs or speed bumps, circular or traditional, at the 3 intersections. This would address the speeders and also be aesthetically acceptable.
- We believe that common courtesy would have been to communicate with the Broadway Committee in response to the meeting held in April 2022.

Pete & Carla Rowan
Longboat Key

Broadway traffic calming

To: Longboat Key Vice Mayor Maureen Merrigan

Additionally, since cost is a priority concern, the Village Residents will gladly finance and properly install the stop signs we request. Thank you for your consideration of safety within our neighborhood.

Carla Rowan
Longboat Key

Broadway Traffic Calming

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Tom Harmer

Did Town communicate with north residents?

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Longboat Key

Broadway traffic calming

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

Commissioner Bishop, thanks for the email. Isaac met with the residents when they presented their request for traffic circles. Back in November he updated them to let them know once he had a chance to complete his review he would be briefing the Town Manager first and would then follow back to brief them on the findings and any recommendations and next steps. I did ask him to let me update the Commission on the report and his plans before he sent it out to the residents since the residents have also reached out directly to commissioners over the past couple of months on their request. He did send an update to them and offer to meet and discuss.

Thomas A. Harmer
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

One percent tax

To: Longboat Key Commission

Late yesterday, I presented the Town's request for additional TDT dollars from Sarasota County associated with the addition of the new 1% tax (6th Penny). The Tourist Development Council unanimously supported the request. The Interlocal Agreement approved by the Town Commission will now go to the Sarasota County Commission for final action.

Tom Harmer
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Emergency water line repair

To: Longboat Key Commission

On Saturday evening I notified the Commission of an emergency water line repair that required a shutdown of the water main along a portion of GMD (north end) to allow the crews to make the repair.

I received several questions about the water line break that occurred- see response below and email from Public Works.

Was this related to the schedule value repair in the Sleepy Lagoon neighborhood on Thursday, January 12th? (No, this was an emergency repair that was unrelated to that planned work)

Did the staff notify the restaurants in the area? (I understand the restaurants were notified that a water shut down was imminent)

How long was the water shut off in the area? (approximately 1 hour).

Thomas A. Harmer
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

North end water line break

To: Longboat Key Commission

I was notified that our Public Works crews are working diligently to perform an emergency water line break repair on the north end of the island. Areas impacted that will experience little to no water pressure are within the areas of the 6900 block of GMD to General Harris Street. At this time, they believe any shut down necessary for the repair will be for a short duration and they will advise residents if a boil water notice will be required for any areas impacted.

Tom Harmer
Town Manager
Longboat Key

North end water line break


To: Longboat Key Town Manager Tom Harmer

The two events were unrelated. The Jan. 12th event was planned valve replacement. Cause appears to be age of the service line corporation stop valve and possibly combined with temperatures over the weekend; no hits or break related to construction activity.

See Letters, page 5


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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4

Yes, I understand that we notified the restaurants that water shut down was imminent and to store some water.

Outage was about 1-hour, which was very quick from our perspective due to the main having to be shut down.

The outage area expended from the bridge south to the General Harris area, though, we received some emails from south of there and we are investigating how the water was affected further south. Please let me know if any questions.

Isaac Brownman
Director Public Works
Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Key North 1-9-2023 Meeting Minutes

To: Longboat Key North members

Not currently on my schedule, I have a business here to operate and I tend to watch the weather

Before making plans except with holidays where I don't have a choice.

What is going on that day, an association or north end meeting?

Either way, I'd like to talk to them before then because of the loss of the Broadway center turn lane coming from the south, when the roundabout goes in.

The probability for making afternoon traffic snarls significantly worse

For people needing to get to the west side of GMD is recognized by the DPW, but not many people know it will happen, aren't thinking about it, and the city or other roundabout proponents aren't telling people about losing the turn lane.

At the same time, the city is recommending a new center turn lane for the south end of the key to alleviate traffic next to the golf course where residents wait in traffic before they can get to the street the live on. Why does a center turn lane work for them, but losing one doesn't hurt us?

I love roundabouts, we have many up here, but this one is basically a four way stop sign that will have a worse impact on those of us who can currently move past the stand still traffic of midafternoon to early evening, and get home as much as thirty to forty minutes earlier by being able to turn left at Broadway. We won't be able to do that when the turn lane disappears. We will sit in the traffic I've been using that intersection for 47 years and the traffic has been getting worse and worse. The roundabout doesn't help anyone when the traffic is at standstill. So, if possible, their phone contact info would be helpful.

Dave Baughman
Longboat Key

Longboat Key North 1-9-2023 Meeting Minutes

To: David Baughman

Maureen will be here for second cup of coffee that today. If you were here, it would an opportunity to talk with her. I do not have their information. Debbie Murphy is taking Maureen's seat as commissioner very soon. She may be able to answer some of your questions. I will reach out to her and see if she is able to provide me with any contact information.

Thank you!

Taylor Roof
Office Administrator
Longbeach Condominium

Longboat Key North 1-9-2023 Meeting Minutes

To: Taylor Roof

You aren't authorized to give contact info of an association board member to an owner? I can hunt for it in the roster, but something is wrong here. I shouldn't have to spend air fare to talk to my representatives. I've previously sent two emails that include Murphy about the roundabout with no reply, so can someone tell me what this association represents?

David Baughman
Longboat Key

Longboat Key North 1-9-2023 Meeting Minutes

To: David Baughman

I apologize for any misunderstanding that may have arisen related to your concerns regarding the construction of the Broadway roundabout.

I believe the project has been approved by the Town of Longboat Key awaiting preliminary plans from the Florida Department of Transportation. I'm unclear as to whether or not there will be an opportunity for further community input regarding the construction design and the turning lane you are concerned about. I have no definitive timeline to offer as to when those plans might be received by the Town of Longboat Key.

I recommend you send an email to Maureen Merrigan to see what additional information she may be aware of concerning the construction of the Broadway roundabout. She can be reached at Mmerrigan@longboatkey.org.

Please feel free to email me or call me to discuss any issues you feel I may be useful in helping you resolve. My term as Commissioner for District 5 begins in mid-March.

Debbie Murphy
Longboat Key

Taste Test Results

To: Sarasota City Manager Marlon Brown

Today, Commissioner Arroyo requested a copy of the drinking water taste/odor results. Attached is a memo sent to the City Manager's office on 8/13/19 in response to a request

See Letters, page 7

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Editorial Opinion

Time for America to move on...

Several videos have surfaced showing “Middle Class Joe” proudly backing his sleek, vintage, dark green 1967 Corvette Stingray into the now infamous garage.

GREGORY RUSOVICH
Guest Writer
Rusovich@lbknews.com

President Joe Biden: “Let me — they’re — I’m going to get a chance to speak on all this, God willing, soon, but as I said earlier this week, people — and, by the way, my Corvette is in a locked garage. Okay? So, it’s not like they’re just sitting out on the street. But at any rate —.”

Questioner: “So the material was in a locked garage?”
The president: “Yes, as well as my Corvette.”

Ah yes, the good ole Corvette defense. Problem is, as constitutional scholar and attorney Jonathan Turley observed, “The Corvette standard doesn’t actually appear in the Federal Register, although Corvette did have a slogan for many years that ‘It’s like a car only better.’”

Several videos have surfaced showing “Middle Class Joe” proudly backing his sleek, vintage, dark green 1967 Corvette

Stingray into the now infamous garage. Several boxes of files are shown in the background. Voila, we have found the crime scene! The reckless storage of these classified documents, along with at least two other batches of highly sensitive materials held at separate Biden locations, raises serious legal concerns.

The principal law that Biden appears to have violated repeatedly is 18 USC 793, which makes it a crime to remove national defense or classified material with the intent to retain it in an unauthorized location. A garage, home and private office are clearly unauthorized as they are not secure from incursion. Interestingly, the president’s personal attorneys conducted the searches for the files even though



RUSOVICH

they do not have active security clearances. So, what was their directive, look but don’t read? Additionally, several other crucial questions emerge. Who else had access to these classified documents? How could these highly sensitive documents have been handled in such a careless manner? Why did Biden have the documents? When exactly were they discovered and reported?

Hunter Biden, while addicted to drugs and paying prostitutes tens of thousands of dollars, lived at the Delaware residence off and on for several years. According to the New York Post, he even falsely claimed in a separate rental application that he owned the Delaware home (and garage). As the younger Biden is under federal investigation for influence-peddling schemes involving shady foreign actors, and has had unfettered entry to the home and garage, there is a legitimate concern that nefarious individuals may also have had access to America’s secrets. Who else besides Hunter entered the residence?

House Republicans are demanding to know who visited the home over the roughly five-year period in which the classified documents were stored in the garage (yes President Biden, next to your Corvette). The Secret Service maintains that no visitor logs were kept at the residence. Did the Secret Service maintain its own records? Considering the reckless disregard in the placement of classified material, as well as Hunter Biden’s open access, a full review of visitors, security protocols and national intelligence assessment is required. There are also questions centered on foreign donations and visitors to the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement. Classified documents — including some believed to be top secret — were found in the Penn Biden office used by Biden after his tenure as vice president.

The president needs to take full responsibility for this dereliction of duty. In a September interview with CBS’ Scott Pelley, a righteous Joe Biden scolded former President Donald Trump’s handling of classified documents in Mar-a-Lago: “How that could possibly happen, how anyone could be that irresponsible.” Well, now you know, Mr. President.

Equally disturbing is the timing of the Justice Department’s announcement of the existence of classified documents initially found at the Penn Biden Center. Just this past Monday, the White House disclosed that the president’s personal attorney uncovered an entire batch of classified documents there on November 2. The National Archives informed the Department of Justice of the discovery on November 4. The mid-term elections were on November 8. So, both the White House and the Department of Justice suppressed this information until January 9. Once again, crucial information was withheld prior to a national election. White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre’s insistence that the White House is being “transparent” is absurd. Public distrust against President Biden is growing as the latest Quinnipiac poll reports a dismal 36 percent approval rate. The American people deserve real transparency.

Nothing in the current Biden document scandal excuses former President Trump’s negligent handling of classified material. Yet, there was an unequal response by the FBI and the Department of Justice to the respective cases; the feds raided Mar-a-Lago in full force while the same institutional leaders allowed Biden’s personal attorneys to delicately review Biden’s files. Sound like equal treatment under the law? Nonetheless, both men violated the spirit and content of the law. And now the Department of Justice has appointed independent counsels to review both cases, laying the groundwork for further political turmoil.

These scandals demonstrate yet again that it is time for America to move on. The need for different leadership is a clear mandate. But neither man need worry. Joe still has his cherished Corvette and Trump retains his palatial Mar-a-



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 5

from Commissioner Brody. The memo summarizes the results of the taste tests and survey data. The City Manager's office forwarded this memo to that entire commission on 8/13/19. Please let me know if you have any questions and/or need any additional information.
Bill Riebe
Utilities Director
City of Sarasota

Ringling Boulevard

To: Sarasota City Commission
I work on Ringling Boulevard. Every day, I am witness to people driving motor vehicles in the bicycle lane. It's much more dangerous now than ever before. Perhaps something can be done to protect the bicycle lanes. I enclosed a few pictures of what I see on a daily basis. It's not easy to photograph. many more violations exist that go unnoticed, of course, as I don't just look out my window all day.
A. Getty
Sarasota

Oak tree cut down without permit

1. An oak tree at 1100 University parkway lot 35 was cut down without permission.
2. The diameter was about three feet
3. I would like to now what penalty will the lot owner face?
4. And does he have to replant trees?
5. The tree was a beautiful tree and. Could be 100 years old.
6. It is my understanding the law was broken in this case and the city is going to provide a permit after the fact...this is a cover up...why is this allowed?
7. So if you cut down any tree in Sarasota without a permit its ok a permit will be issued after the fact and everything is now ok?
David Picone
Sarasota

Oak tree cut down without permit

To: David Picone
Thank you for the email about a tree being cut down without a permit. I have copied the City Manager, Deputy City Manager, and staff on this email to respond (and copy me as well please). Thank you for bringing this to my attention.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Oak tree cut down without permit

To: Sarasota City Senior Arborist Don Ullom
Will you please check out this report of a tree being taken down without permit?
Thank you.
Myra Schwarz
General Manager Development Services
City of Sarasota

Oak tree cut down without permit

To: Sarasota City General Manager Development Services Myra Schwarz
Mick has a case already in the works, and a notice of violation went out last week. A permit is required for an after the fact removal of a tree. We try to work with owners to bring their sites back into compliance before the first code hearing. Until we hear back from the property owner, we will monitor the site for permits of any type.
Donald Ullom
Senior Arborist
City of Sarasota

Bath and Racquet Club CPA Analysis

To: Sarasota City Parks and Recreation General Manager Candie Pedersen
Below is how I would do this analysis. The Future Land Use Map amendment requires a level of service analysis. I assume that a level of service worksheet was previously provided to

See Letters, page 8



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BIRD KEY

526 BIRD KEY DRIVE | ACTIVE LISTING \$2,895,000

399423-1

EditorLetters

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Parks and Recreation. If not, I have attached the full set of worksheets associated with this application.

Table F identifies the City’s adopted LOS for parks and recreation as a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 resident population. This is adopted in the comprehensive plan. The estimated residential population, which includes potential population change resulting from the amendment, is listed as 54,643 in the worksheet. The comprehensive plan states the city has 750.98 acres of parkland.

Divide the population of 54,643 by 1,000 = 54.643 (this is the amount of parkland per 1,000 persons.) Divide total parkland of 750.98 by 54.643 = 13.74 acres per 1,000 person.

Since 13.74 acres per 1,000 is greater than the adopted standard of a minimum of 10 acres per 1,000 persons, the city will have sufficient park acreage if this plan amendment is approved by the City Commission.

I can include this calculation on the spreadsheet in the future if you would like. I don’t include LOS calculations as the various departments want to perform their own analyses and use their own methodologies. Please let me know if you need additional information.

David L. Smith
Planning Department
City of Sarasota

Bath and Racquet Club CPA Analysis

To: Sarasota City Parks and Recreation Director Jerry Fogle
Parks and Recreation use the calculation provided by David Smith below. Based on that calculation, Parks and Recreation approves projects for park concurrency.
Candie Pedersen
General Manager Parks and Recreation
City of Sarasota

Bath and Racquet Club CPA Analysis

To: Sarasota City Parks and Recreation Director Jerry Fogle
Thanks Jerry. Commissioner Ahearn-Koch is copied so that she is aware of the calculation example using Bath and Racquet, and that acres of parkland per 1000 population is tracked to be compliant with the Comp Plan.
Marlon Brown
City Manager
City of Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments

To: Sarasota City Commission
Good afternoon and Happy New Year! I am writing to you regarding the proposed Bahia Vista Apartments project, located at 2650 Bahia Vista Street.
My husband and I have lived in the Arlington Park neighborhood for over 27 years, and in the City of Sarasota for the better part of 50 years. We were both career firefighters for the City of Sarasota, and I was stationed for many years at Fire Station #2 on Waldemere Street.
Along with many of our neighbors here in Arlington Park, we have been opposed to the double density increase requested by the developers of this property for many reasons, including the increased traffic in an already congested area of Bahia Vista and Tuttle, the pass-through traffic (already an issue due to schools and those trying to avoid Bahia Vista and Tuttle), and the precedent that this increase in zoning will create.
If you look at the businesses bordering the Arlington Park neighborhood, you will see many of those businesses currently zoned for medical/institutional use. There are dental offices, medical offices...the lab where I get my blood work done each year. I have several neighbors who walk to their doctor’s appointments. These offices surround our single family residential neighborhood and are one or two stories in height. Some of them are busy during the day, but quiet at night. Allowing the developer’s requested change to the Comp Plan and the increase in zoning of the property to RSF-7, or 50 units per acre, is not only incompatible with everything surrounding it, but will also set a precedent for nearby businesses to tear down their buildings and add more four story plus apartment buildings which add nothing to the quality, functionality or beauty of our neighborhood.

I have seen many changes to the neighborhood over the years, but it has, for the most part, been a family-oriented, single family, affordable neighborhood. Allowing for this development and future developments like it, will negatively affect this neighborhood’s character, and will not add the affordable/attainable housing that the developers wish to dangle in front of the Commission.

We understand that more housing is needed, but feel this is not the way to do it. We support the current Future Land Use designation of 25 units/acre (which will be up from the current 9 units/acre) and implore you to hold the developers to this standard. Please don’t compare us to downtown, and please vote against the proposed changes.

As a Commissioner, you are a steward of our City’s present and it’s future. Allowing these changes to the Comp Plan and zoning will not foster a better quality of life here; in fact it will do just the opposite. It is my hope that you will consider the present and future impact of the decisions you make regarding this project, not only for this neighborhood, but for all the surrounding neighborhoods.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email and for considering what is truly best for Arlington Park and for the City of Sarasota.
Mary Boutieller
Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments

To: Mary Boutieller
Thank you, Mary, for your thoughtful email per this Land Use request and for your engagement in the process. Community and neighborhood participation are crucial as the City continues to grow.
I seem to recall, during the Planning Board meeting, you mentioning the 9 units an acre ... and Mr. Freedman questioning where that originated ... could you please let me know what you are referencing or where you are seeing the current allowance of 9 units an acre? I would really appreciate it.

I hope you plan on attending the City Commission meeting on January 17 and I also hope that you take the time to submit your email comments to the City’s “eComments” which become part of the permanent record.

I really do appreciate you taking the time to reach out to me about this. And, as always, please feel free to request to meet with me anytime.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Thank you so much for your response. The reference to 9 units per acre is for the current zoning of that property - which is MCI - Medical, Charitable, Institutional (which was brought up in the first application for this property, I believe).

The zoning permitted under the Future Land Use designation is RMF-5 (25 units per acre), which is applicable to the developers’ use of the property going forward. I was hoping to highlight/compare what the property is currently being used for - 9 units/acre, to the request to rezone to RMF-7 - 50 units/acre. It is a substantial increase from the current zoning.

I hope this clarifies your question. Please let me know if I can answer anything else. And yes, I’m planning to be at the Commission meeting.
Mary Boutieller
Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments
To: Mary Boutieller

Just checked the zoning code online and I found MCI to be 25 units an acre see photo and link.
I am curious where you saw 9 units per acre?
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
I saw that too and it confused me, as I’m pretty sure that MCI used to be 9 units/acre. I may be incorrect, and I’ll forward this email to Rob and Flo for more feedback; however, I believe the property in question used to be zoned MCI - 9 units per acre. When the developers first proposed Arlington Commons (the precursor to this project), it was going to change the zoning from MCI of 9, past the RMF-5 designation of 25 units per acre, with the request for 50 units per acre. It seems that somewhere in the last three years of trying to dissuade this project, something has changed. Is it possible that the MCI designation was changed? I know from looking at the City website that MCI is no longer going to be used.
I’m sorry for the confusion, and certainly do not want to speak about something that is incorrect. I’ll hope to have some kind of clarification before Tuesday’s meeting.
Thank you for taking the time to inquire further. I know you are busy and appreciate it.
Mary Boutieller
Sarasota

Proposed Bahia Vista Apartments

To: Mary Boutieller
I am copying the City Manager and Deputy City Manager on this email to hopefully provide insight into the history of MCI’s number of units per acre and if it changed from 9 to 25 ua recently or at all and if it ever was or is 9ua.... I would like clarity on that as well.
Jen Ahearn-Koch
City Commissioner
City of Sarasota

Police/Citizen Volunteer Harassment

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Good afternoon Mayor. Forgive me if I do not provide any specific etiquette or format required in writing to you. I’ve never contacted a government official before and so I apologize if I am in error in my letter in any way.
I’m contacting you because I am being collectively harassed by members of Sarasota Police Department, by way of utilizing Citizen Volunteers and others to carry out directives. First, let me be firm in letting you be assured that nothing I am stating in this email is exaggerated, fictitious, or in a vengeful manner. I have used proper steps in chain of command and have been denied adequate action in providing relief from numerous rights violations, falsified police reports, illegally detained, smear campaign, and gaslighting.
This has been going on for four years now and over this time I have been targeted by Sarasota Police Department along with citizen volunteers and others sympathetic to Law Enforcement. I am not going to be detailed entirely because you will end up receiving a short novel in your inbox. I have filed Police Reports before I was aware that they were responsible. I have also filed Formal and Informal complaints to said Agency. All of which were not responded to at all. Most recently I was told my complaint was untrue and threatened with arrest before being kicked out of the SPD Lobby. The officer stood out of his seat withing 45 seconds of my request to file a report and began screaming at me in a unprofessional and volatile manner before being subdued by a coworker. They have collectively denied me adequate ability to receive proper service provided any citizen. I have been arrested once and charged twice with crimes that were retaliatory in measure. One of which was entirely fabricated the other was strategically coerced. I have sent emails to FBI, FDLE, ACLU, DOJ amongst others and received 1 reply denying me service. The others I did not receive a reply at all. The people involved in this have my phone cloned thus possessing complete control of it. They have shown me this in a boastful manner as they control my notifications, erase messages as I’m typing them, rearrange apps, and most notably imply intimidation by circling around my house with vehicles producing loud exhaust when I do any type of research in reporting them or direct contact such as this email I’m currently writing. They have slandered my name throughout my entire neighborhood along with

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EditorLetters



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stores that I frequent. My social life is severed along with my family relationship. My life has been threatened on numerous occasions by members directly involved or collaterally in fashion. I simply cannot believe what I’ve gone through and what I am experiencing by the people we bestow our trust to provide safety in our communities. From what I’ve witnessed this is an organization with a chain of command and no oversight. They have exploited all weaknesses in our laws and circumvented or completely violated processes and procedures in this attack on me. I spend almost my entire day and night trying to capture evidence to expose these people. What I’ve gathered in four years is evident that their operational intention hinges on making it extremely difficult if not impossible to capture. I am targeted thus psychologically attacked every minute as I am outside of my house by using various sights and sounds to convey there harassment. I never realized that you can be attacked without being physical. I never thought that you could be harassed by a certain sight or sound when used in a specific manner. That is what’s been going on every single day. Not only has it affected me mentally but degraded my life entirely. Nobody believes me when I say this is happening as they stop whenever I am not alone. Law Enforcement is involved so they have intentionally blocked or been unresponsive to my complaints and have used other tactics to ensure I not receive support. I simply cannot believe this is happening to me in the United States of America in 2023. I’m a citizen of this country and do not deserve to be treated in this manner. They are completely aware of their actions and intentions. When you can convey an attack upon someone using car horns, loud exhaust, bright lights, etc. this has been designed to achieve success while avoiding justice. This is wrong and unbelievably disgusting in nature. Why would I Garner this attention? I’ve done nothing even if there was a justified reason to have a renegade force of criminals in uniform. There is a pandemic in that of Fentanyl overdose, the sexual predator database is growing like the national debt, and so when I am targeted by a group with organizational prowess, all I can think about is for what? Really? They are so hellbent on getting my attention to continue the degradation of my life and thwarting my attempts at exposing them. It’s just disgusting. It really is.

I need help from this ASAP. I’m not mentally impaired or exaggerating or falsifying one single word. I mean I couldn’t make this up. I know it’s not something you hear every day but that doesn’t make it untrue. There is no reason at all that I should have to go through this every single day of my life. It has affected my employment, my social life, and my enjoyment of life, completely. I didn’t wake up and intend to take time out of your day which I can only imagine is hectic in its own in tending to issues. I have enough media evidence to show their actions along with paperwork and timelines to coincide with my accusations. Why am I having such a problem gaining the attention of anyone to even show this evidence? Please help me stop this from happening to someone else. This needs immediate attention and is ridiculous in nature. Thank you very much for your time. I look forward to hearing from you. Have a blessed day.

Jeremy Versakos
Sarasota

Potential project at MLK Park

To: Sarasota City Commissioner Jen Ahearn-Koch
Hope you and your family had a nice holiday break. And looking forward to our upcoming Policy Board meeting.

Related to the SBEP’s various programs, I wanted to run something by you, to get a read on the City’s level of support for a potential way forward for a proposed project at MLK Park. As you likely know, the City owns the property where this park is located, and there have been plans to “do something” for the park for years. Christine Quigley, who works for the SBEP, has been coordinating with various community stakeholders for a long time to help determine what kind of projects they’d like to see happen on that site. This community-led effort has resulted in a consensus about changes that the community would like to see at the park.

Some of these changes are right in the wheelhouse of things that the SBEP is promoting, and with which we have prior experience implementing. For example, the community would like to have the park do a better job with treating the runoff from local roadways, and to have a more natural shoreline, and to have a fishing dock and kayak launch. Those are all consistent with CCMP guidance. And...the SBEP has the funds – right now - to work with the community to take such a project through the design and permitting phases, and should have – in October of 2023 – access to sufficient funds to implement such a plan. There are other organizations, such as Sarasota BayWatch, which also have funds that could be used for shoreline restoration at this site.

Yesterday, we had a great meeting with community stakeholders and with the City, represented by Candie Pederson and others. I think, however, that the SBEP has not fully communicated to City staff that we can actually help out in a large way with moving forward with a project at this site. So my question is – is the City okay with us taking such a high profile role? Candie and I spoke on the matter, and we thought it was good to get guidance from higher up the org chart, and since you’re our Policy Board representative for the City, I figured I’d reach out to you.

The City of Sarasota has so much more that it is doing for bay restoration than this park alone – wastewater and stormwater retrofit projects, etc. that I figured since we have the funds and experience with doing a project on the scale of this, we might as well chip in and do our part.

Please contact me with any questions or concerns, or guidance as to how to best move forward here.

Dave Tomasko

See Letters, page 14



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OnPatrol

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

Jan. 12 Noise

3:30 p.m.
Officer Tillman responded to a resident at the Police Department who had a noise complaint. Officer Tillman spoke with the resident who said that for the past couple of days a person has been playing a saxophone at Durante Park. The concerned citizen stated that the saxophone player is back on the trail near the Bay and the noise is disturbing his afternoon walk. Officer Tillman proceeded to the approximate area and believe the saxophone player had stopped playing prior to Officer Tillman's arrival. According to witnesses, the saxophone player appeared to have been a beginner and was struggling with some key notes to Frank Sinatra's "New York, New York." Witnesses also stated that he only plays for about five minutes a day. Officer Tillman was unable to locate the person violating the town ordinance. Case clear.



Officer Miklos was dispatched to Old Compass Road in reference to a water main break in the front yard. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with the complainant and observed a steady stream of water coming from the backflow preventer. Officer Miklos contacted Public Works and advised them of the incident. Public Works advised that the homeowner would need to call a plumber since the Town's responsibility ends at the water meter box in the ground, not the backflow preventer. Officer Miklos advised the homeowner that she would need to have a plumber come out and take a look at the leak. Nothing further.

Jan. 16 Boating

9:54 a.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol in the area of Sister Keys, observed a motor yacht outside of the Intercoastal Waterway aground. Officer Connors radioed to the captain who advised that he was in no need of emergency services and was awaiting commercial towing assistance. Case clear.

Jan 13 Traffic hazard

2:44 p.m.
Officer Miklos responded to the 2400 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive near Bay Isles Parkway when he observed multiple vehicles going around a cardboard box in the middle of the lane. Officer Miklos removed the box from the street as a passing by a vehicle pulled off next to Officer Miklos. The driver took possession of the box and advised he would dispose of it.

Animal complaint

6:34 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 4200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a possible injured bird. At 7:11 p.m. Sarasota Animal Services took custody of the injured bird and transported it to Wildlife Center of Southwest Florida. Case clear.

Jan. 14 Citizen assist

9:31 a.m.
Officer Puccio responded to Reclinata Drive in reference to a neighbor across the street cutting tile on Saturday. Officer Puccio made contact with the complainant and advised him that there is no violation occurring as work is allowed per town ordinance on Saturday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. The complainant thanked Officer Puccio for the information and needed no further assistance. Case clear.

Electric wire

9:46 a.m.
Officer Miklos responded to the 4000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a downed electrical wire. Upon arrival, the electrical wire was laying across the driveway and not impeding traffic. Longboat Key Fire Rescue arrived on scene and advised the resident not to go near the wire and that FPL was notified with an estimated arrival time of 30 minutes or less.

Citizen assist

1:53 p.m.
Officer Martinson responded to the 6500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on a call of a citizen assist. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson observed water bubbling up from the ground in the easement in front of the residence. Officer Martinson spoke with the homeowner who stated the water was turned off to the house and so were the two backflow pipes and water was still coming up from the ground. The homeowner stated the break in the water pipe must be coming from town property. Officer Martinson contacted Public Works and stated he would responded to the scene. Case clear.

Jan. 15 Citizen assist

5:00 p.m.

Citizen assist

12:46 p.m.
Officer Tillman responded to the 2500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a citizen report of a roadside drain grate not covered. Officer Tillman responded and was able to put the grate back in its original location. However, the grate did not appear to be loose and public works was notified and made aware. An orange cone was placed over the grate for safety purposes. Case clear.

Jan. 17 Citizen assist

8:35 a.m.
Officer Tillman responded to the 4500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a report of a truck and trailer that was illegally parked at the location. Upon arrival, Officer Tillman observed the vehicle parked on the graveled private property. Officer Tillman called the complainant back and advised him that the vehicle was on private property. The complainant seemed to be unhappy with the response. Case clear.

Jan. 19 Information report

8:00 a.m.
Officer Martinson responded to Main Street Sarasota in reference to a fraud complaint. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson met with the complainant who stated he was the victim of a fraudulent check being cashed from his bank account. The complainant stated his personal bank requested a report from the police station. Due to the incident taking place out of Longboat Key jurisdiction, Officer Martinson advised the complainant that he would file an information report and provide him with a case number per the bank's request. Case clear.

Jan. 20 Suspicious person

6:51 a.m.
Officer Tillman responded to a suspicious vehicle at Dream Island Road. According to dispatch the vehicle is described as a brown Dodge van. The vehicle is known to the area as newspaper delivery. The complainant was advised of the situation. Case clear.

Noise

7:37 a.m.
Officer Tillman responded to Longview Drive in reference to construction noise before 8 a.m. Officers arrived on scene and could not verify the noise complaint due to the arrival time. Case clear.

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EditorialOpinion

Loan forgiveness, crypto, education and migration

The Student Loan Program is one more disaster perpetuated by Congress which resulted in \$1.7 trillion of debt due mainly to the fact that the loans were handed out like candy sticks with no risk assessment on repayment.

BILL ALLEN
Guest Writer
allen@lbknews.com

In my previous column I briefly mentioned that President Biden had cancelled about \$450 billion dollars in student loan debt and transferred it to taxpayers and that I would write further on the subject this week.

The Student Loan Program is one more disaster perpetuated by Congress which resulted in \$1.7 trillion of debt due mainly to the fact that the loans were handed out like candy sticks with no risk assessment on repayment. Joseph Biden, the consummate politician needed votes during his critical South Carolina campaign and did what he has done all his life by promising to cancel some form of loan debt without considering whether he would have the power to do it.

So he is elected, decides to bypass Congress and cancels about \$450 billion of debt basing it on a law that is not solidly grounded for his purpose. A Federal Judge has ruled that Biden's plan for cancellation is unlawful and added that Biden was ignoring the constitution and needed to recognize the separation of powers in our constitution.

The Supreme Court will hear arguments on the case in February. I predict that if he loses the case he will tell the debtors that he tried his best and that they should vote for him anyway.

Changing subjects; I have just read a New York Times article with a headline that reads "Sikh Marine Recruits Can Wear Beards at Boot Camp." The ruling was by a Federal Appeals Court but no mention on whether it would be appealed.

I am a wartime veteran who is not a religious person but who fully respects the religious rights of others but the military should be an exception. I went through basic and advanced Infantry Training during which there was maximum emphasis on conformity and team building with no allowances for individual preferences and this applied to all aspects of appearance, behavior and obedience to rules and regulations. These were the conditions that led us to our remarkable victory in World War II. I also believe that this ruling will be divisive and will lead to others who will invent reasons why they should be the exception to the rule.

Crypto currency

Moving on; The question I ask is whether there is a connection between "the loss of a moral compass and the growth of stupidity?" In this case I believe that there is and here is why.

I am pretty sure that most have heard of "crypto." I do not know a lot about it but read two articles which reported on the connection between crypto and celebrity sports figures.

The articles reported on the fact that many of these athletes had been paid to endorse crypto to their adoring fans. They were mostly in the NFL and NBA but also included professional tennis players. Most of them are millionaires but I would bet that some of them cannot do basic math.

So, here are those who have lost their moral compass giving investment advice to those who are stupid enough to follow it and lose large amounts of money. I rest my case.

Education

Next is more on Education; I have written often about education which focused primarily on our mediocre K-12 system which just received the worst grades ever from the assessment known as "the nation's report card". Today, I offer comments on our "higher education system" which has numerous problems particularly with freedom of speech and expression on campus.

There is an organization named "The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression" which conducts assessments of these rights on 208 college and university campuses. The ratings reflect the opinions of students who self-identify as conservatives and liberals.

The results are available online and here are comments on the results:

- The highest score of the 208 is the University of Chicago which is 77.92 out of 100; the University clearly notifies students that freedom of speech and expression are not just preferred but required.

- Kansas State, Purdue, Mississippi State, Oklahoma State and Cleremont McKenna are in the top 5. Florida State is # 15.

- Below average schools include Cornell, Williams College, Fordham, Boston College, Princeton and Harvard; they all score in the 30s on the 100 scale which is pretty bad.

Among those who score in the 20s are Tufts, Vassar, Middlebury, Yale and Georgetown and are rated "poor."

- The lowest of all 2008 went to Columbia University which had a score of 9.91 of 100 and was rated Abysmal. Think it might be a reflection of the fact it is in New York City?

"Fire" also rates the number of cases when speakers are rejected from campus and/or disrupted while attempting to speak. A majority of these rejections are from far left groups.

As you will see if you look it up the assessment is conducted in a very professional manner.

It is a sad state of affairs when the First Amendment rights of Americans are under attack on so many College and University Campuses.

Speaking of New York; It is hard to tell whether Illinois or New York has the most corrupt legislature, but I think that the tie may have been broken. As reported in the New York Times the New York State Legislature has just awarded themselves a \$36,000 pay increase which results in making them the highest paid in the United States. Just one more reason for some people to move back to New York.

Migration patterns

Speaking of moving, The Census Bureau has just released their annual report on U.S. migration from one State to another.

The Washington Post not only reported on the migration patterns but also offered opinions on the reasons behind them. A summary of the Census Bureau report is as follows.

- The five States with the most people leaving are California, New York, Illinois, New Jersey and Massachusetts which are all "blue States with high taxes, cities falling apart, unaffordable housing and strong public labor unions.

- The five that people are migrating to are Florida, Texas, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee which are all "red" States with lower taxes, more affordable housing and public labor unions that are under control. They are all "right to work states" which means that workers cannot be forced to join and pay dues to a labor union in order to get a job. They are also among the top 10 tax friendly States according to Kiplinger and all in the Southeast.

To those who leave these rotten States, come to Florida and want to turn Florida into New Jersey I repeat my offer to provide support for your relocation.

I am reading disturbing reports from several reliable sources on what is described as a "mental health crisis" in America, particularly among young people. I also read a report in the New York Times magazine section about huge numbers of gun related deaths of children, particularly black children. I will report on this subject in a future column.

A friend gave me a bottle of good wine for my 94th birthday along with a list of significant events that took place in 1928 which included the birth of Shirley Temple and Mickey Mouse which placed me in good company. Wishing all a healthy and happy 2023.

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WineTimes

What’s in your Favorite Wines?

A winemaker may legally choose from a frighteningly long list of additives to use to doctor wines.

S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
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Earlier we mentioned our concerns about “doctoring” of wines to increase their popularity. Our concerns have to do mainly with wines in the current \$9 - \$22 tier. Buyers of \$3 - \$8 bestselling “bubble gum” wines - boxes, jugs, Barefoot, Sutter Home White Zinfandel and the like - know what they are getting. Buyers of \$9-\$22 wines made from Chardonnay, Cabernet Sauvignon, Pinot Noir, Syrah, and other premier grapes may expect that they are tasting something close to a true expression of a famous varietal, when sadly they are tasting a doctored version that mutes the distinctive character of the varietal and place, and overlays a buttery/vanilla, or a touch of sweet fruit, or adding or suppressing acidity.

As a rule winemakers keep their grape sources and production techniques as trade secrets. Only a few notable exceptions come close to being fully transparent. Most provide sales pitches that leave buyers in the dark about what goes on in the winery. National and regional governments focus on health and safety issues. Journalists have to delve deeper into practices affecting the quality of wine.

We do not question the ancient practice of blending wines from different grapes to improve the color, taste, or other attributes of a base wine such as Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, or Cabernet Franc; winemakers in the Bordeaux region of France have perfected the art of blending small quantities of wines made from Malbec grapes, to add lush dark fruit flavor and color, or from Petit Verdot grapes, to add acidity in tannins and color, to the base wine. Similarly, a Bordeaux white wine often blends wines made from Semillon and Sauvignon Blanc grapes to balance mellow tastes against sharp acidity. Bordeaux standards limit the number of wine varieties allowed, while in the Rhône Valley twenty-two varieties make the list of traditional blending wines. Blending differs from doctoring of wines in that blending, if done correctly, enhances a wine. Doctoring treats an ailing wine to correct defects in grapes or in making of wine.

A winemaker may legally choose from a frighteningly long list of additives to use to doctor wines. Different countries and certifying organizations may impose more restrictions, but they may also loosen restrictions and risk being excluded from selling wines in countries that enforce their restrictions. The Wine Folly website at <https://winefolly.com/deep-dive/wine-additives/> gives a useful overview of wine additives and why and how winemakers use them.

Examples of uses of additives would turn off many wine buyers if they knew what was being added to their favorite wines:

- To prevent a wine from spoiling due to contamination, many winemakers add sulfur to wine. Federal regulations in this case require labelling the wine “Contains sulfur” to protect the small percentage of persons with acute sensitivity to that chemical. (Even when winemakers do not add sulfur, wines contain naturally occurring sulfur);

- Some winemakers rely on native yeast to ferment sugars in wine and produce alcohol. Others replace native yeasts with special yeasts to control the fermentation process (often to introduce yeasts that tolerate wines higher in alcohol by volume [ABV].) Regulations require the ABV value on the label. If greater than 14.5%, the winemaker is likely adding a special yeast;

- Winemakers supplement tannins in red wines directly by adding tannins or indirectly by exposing the wine to oak. To avoid the expense of aging wine in oak barrels, some winemakers soak oak chips in wine. Buyers don’t see this touted on labels or in advertising;

- Say a winemaker has a wine vintage that looks thin and tastes too dry (for the mass market). Blending a small quantity of a Malbec with a Bordeaux wine or a Mourvèdre with a Rhône wine would add the desired deep color and lush stone fruit flavors. A thin and dry Pinot Noir, on the other hand, presents a different problem. A Pinot Noir blended with another wine would likely lose its light and cherry essence. A too easy expedient for mass market wines: simply add an extremely small quantity of a grape or wine concentrate that would turn the wine a deep purple color, and perhaps add enough sugar to increase its appeal to buyers in the \$9 - \$22 tier. None of the big players among Pinot Noir producers for this tier has stepped forward to admit to adding a concentrate such as Mega Purple to the Pinot Noir, but rumors abound. What’s in your favorite wines? Much of the time, we do not know.

Basic spec/tech sheets for popular wines would answer our questions. Paul Draper, wine-

maker emeritus at Ridge Vineyards, set the standard for spec/tech sheets for the great Ridge wines (See <https://www.ridgevine.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/17CRE-bg.pdf>). The Ridge spec sheets describe what goes into the wine and how it is made. Ridge ties sustainable production of grapes and wine as the key to wines that capture the place where they originate and the features of the varietal. More on sustainable farming and full-disclosure wine spec/tech sheets in the near future....

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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