



Longboat Key News

June 6, 2025

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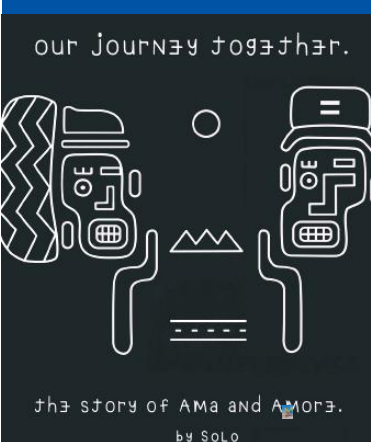
InsideLook



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Longboat Library reaches milestone approval from County; final design next

Longboat Key resident, United States Congressman and founder of Sarasota Ford Vern Buchanan offered to donate \$1 million toward the library enhancements. The library will bare his family name.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
sreid@lbknews.com

Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton is breathing as if the weight of an entire public library was lifted from his shoulders.

In many ways, Tipton's feeling is justified following the news that on June 4, a long-anticipated vote by Sarasota County went the way the Longboat Key Commission and Tipton had hoped.

And the decision was multifaceted. The County agreed that Longboat's fundraising had reached its goal of \$3.5 million and now the design phase for the public library can move forward.

Longboat successfully raised the \$3.5 million to pay for the custom enhancements to the core library, which the county is build-



ing at Town Center Green between Publix and the public tennis center on the Island.

Additionally, Sarasota County

agreed it would relax the requirement of 25% of the Library's total cost of a projected \$14 million be
See Library, page 2

DeSantis signs bills allowing hotel, business property owners to have police eject squatters

"What we've seen is hotel guests just not pay and squat in the hotel."

Gov. Ron DeSantis signed two bills on Monday that allow hotels and business property owners to have police remove squatters.

Under SB 606, police can remove a person from a hotel and arrest them after receiving a written notice that they need to leave if they fail to check out on time and refuse to pay for their stay. Similarly, SB 322 allows a business space owner to submit a form to the local sheriff to remove someone unlawfully occupying the property without a lease.

"What we've seen is hotel guests just not pay and squat in the hotel," DeSantis said during the bill signing ceremony in Sarasota. "This forces the owner of the hotel to go through basically a traditional eviction process."

Retail property owners will have to pay the sheriff's office for serving the removal notice to the people squatting and for law enforcement to stay while the people leave. However, the alleged squatter can sue for wrongful removal and collect damages if any of their belongings are damaged, and recover their attorney fees.

Both measures go into effect on July 1.

Hotels and restaurants will have to inform guests about any service charges, such as automatic tips, on their menus and receipts under the bill sponsored by St. Augustine Republican Tom Leek.

Gil Reyes, Suncoast chapter president of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association and general manager of the hotel where the ceremony took place, thanked the governor for signing the bill.

"This legislation is a win for Florida's hospitality industry," he said. "It brings our laws in line with current practices, offers clear guidance, and supports both property rights and consumer understanding again."

St. Armands and City parking garages to remove gates, scan car plates

The gates will be removed from all three Sarasota City parking garages, which include the ones on Palm Avenue, State Street and St. Armands. There will also be a few different ways to pay.

"Parking rates will not change. They will stay exactly the same as they currently are today," said Harvey. "What will change is how you pay. You will be able to utilize the same exact technology on the street, now will be inside of the garage. [For] example, we will have ParkMobile app that we have on the street. We will be bringing a new app, which is Passport, and for people who don't want to utilize the app, text to pay or use the QR code, we will have an option that they can walk up to a pay station and use a physical credit card as well."

The changes will take place on
See Parking, page 2

Fish Farm for 20,000 redfish approved off Sarasota

For the last seven years, Hawaii-based Ocean Era has been working to bring a fish farm demonstration to Florida's Gulf Coast. Last month, the Environmental Protection Agency approved a permit that allows the company to move forward with its plans.

The demonstration project calls for up to 20,000 red drum or red fish in a net pen with multiple mooring anchors. The fish farm would be located in the Gulf about 40 miles off the coast of Sarasota County in water that is about

"The pen will be designed so that it can be submerged 30 to 45 feet below the surf surface, so at night or when a storm is coming through, the net pen can be submerged," said Ocean Era founder Neil Anthony Sims. "We think as people look at this, they're going to come to understand this is a great opportunity for producing delicious seafood, for creating employment opportunities and it is going to be a spectacular fishing location. Whenever you put structure out in the ocean whether it be a fish farm or an oil rig or a fish aggregating device, fish will gather around that and I think the Florida fishing community is going to really love offshore aquaculture."

Sims says he hopes to show the Gulf Coast community that offshore aquaculture is a safe and sustainable option for growing and harvesting fresh seafood locally.

"At the moment, we are importing red drum from Mauritius on the other side of the planet. They are farming them there and now they are shipping the fish back to us here. That makes no environmental sense in terms of the carbon footprint of those fish, but it is also jobs that we could be creating here in the US," said Sims.

Ocean Era's efforts have not come without pushback. Environmental groups have joined forces to express their opposition to the project. One of those groups is Suncoast Waterkeeper.

Executive Director Abbey Tyrna says there are a number of concerns that she and others have about the project, which would be the first of its kind in the Gulf.

"Not only is there a concern for nitrogen pollution, which is something that local governments on the Suncoast have worked really hard to eliminate from our waters, now this is a direct input into our waters of nitrogen that fuels harmful algal blooms. That is a prominent concern, but then also the disease that are known to spread from these farms into the wild population."

Parking, from page 1

Tuesday, June 17, and you will have 15 minutes to pay. If you don't pay within that timeframe, you'll receive a parking citation.

Parking enforcement will also be extended to operate from 7:30 a.m. until each garage closes. The current hours of operation are:

- Palm Avenue Garage, located at 1289 North Palm Avenue – 7 a.m. to midnight Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday-Saturday.
- State Street Garage, located at 1538 State Street – 7 a.m. to midnight Monday-Thursday and 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. Friday-Saturday.
- St. Armands Garage, located at 57 North Adams Drive – 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 8 a.m. to midnight Friday-Saturday.

Also, the City of Sarasota plans to install cameras at the entrance and exit to monitor license plates.

Library, from page 1

required for the naming rights of the library.

Longboat Key resident, United States Congressman and founder of Sarasota Ford Vern Buchanan offered to donate \$1 million toward the library enhancements for Longboat Key if the county would agree to name the entire library after the Buchanan foundation. The county agreed on June 4, and so now the plan is moving forward.

Town Manager Tipton was tasked with spearheading fundraising for the project. Tipton met with Vern Buchanan and his wife, Sandy, as well as the library officials and said that Vern seemed absolutely thrilled that the project is moving forward and was excited to participate.

As for the fundraising, \$3.1 million was donated by 12 people with Buchanan being the largest donor.

Mayor Ken Schneier and his wife, Cynthia, are major donors to the Library construction as well.

For Ken Schneier, It became an important, almost legacy project to see through. He I just started on the Commission eight years ago when the Town had a formal agreement with Ringling College to build and operate a community art center on Longboat at the same location. That agreement fell through when fellow commissioners disparaged the Ringling organization on several occasions in meetings and in writing. The two then-commissioners,

Ed Zunz and George Spoll, at one meeting questioned the commitment and trustworthiness of Ringling. Soon after, Ringling President Larry Thompson called then Town Manager Tom Harmer and informed him that Ringling was pulling from the agreement and that the fundraising environment had become difficult and uphill.

Schneier is pleased that after seven years, an agreement with the county has been forged, the fundraising completed and much of what the Town has sought for so many years is finally coming to fruition.

“That really motivated me,” said Schneier.

There are details to still be worked out such as the leasing of the Longboat Key land to the county for a 50-year term, but the town manager does not believe any of these housekeeping issues will present problems.

The real threat is simply the fact that the estimated cost of the project is a calculation created more than a year ago by Sarasota County. As Longboat knows recently when it built a performance pavilion at the Longboat Key Town Center Green, the cost escalated from a projected \$500,000 to almost \$800,000 when the bids came in.

In this situation, although it is going to bid for cost, the contractor is already been chosen and Swift Construction has been chosen.

So what is next? Tipton says the really meaningful next act is the county will develop detailed designs for construction. The Town, says Tipton, will have tremendous input into that process, especially regarding the Longboat Key enhancements. The enhancements include a community room that can seat more than 200 for an event, or a class, or a lecture or a meeting. The other enhancement is an outdoor seating area, a terrace of sorts, that will be covered and will be a community gathering area where residents and visitors can read, surf the Internet on their devices as well as lazily sip on cappuccinos since there is talk of a coffee bar going into the project.

The library in total will be about?? Square feet and construction is slated to begin in the spring of next year.

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Solo the Artist Pop-Up Tour Comes to Sarasota for One Night Only



Following the success of his debut tour in 2023, Los Angeles-based multidisciplinary artist and actor Darnell “Solo” Kirkwood is returning to Florida with a bold new creative experience – and it all begins in Sarasota. The first stop of his Discoveries Along The Way Pop-Up Tour will take place on June 17, 2025, at Cirque St. Armands Beachside for one exclusive evening only from 5–8 PM, in partnership with Hampton Water Rosé.

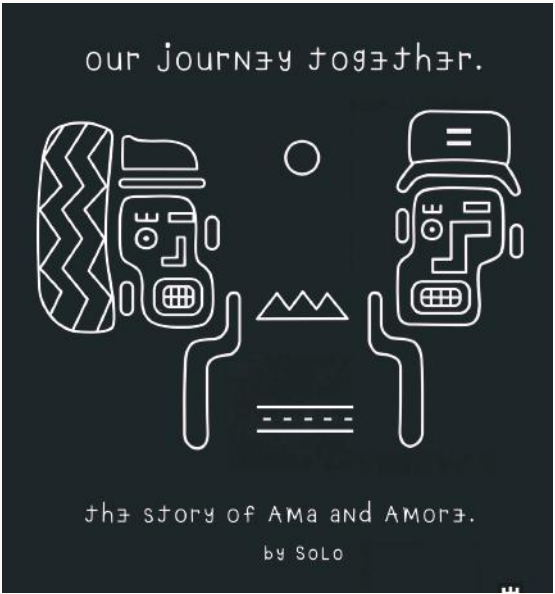


Widely appreciated for his expressive abstract work, Solo the Artist (Darnell) uses color, movement, and personal narrative to explore identity, transformation, and emotion. Often described as “color therapy for the soul,” his art invites reflection and conversation in unexpected ways. A former NCAA athlete and working actor, Darnell brings a dynamic presence to both canvas and community.

Now in its second year, this elevated experience is curated by Swish Creatives, a Canada-based creative marketing agency. Each stop has been thoughtfully designed to blend art, atmosphere, and audience through storytelling, interactive moments, and one-on-one artist meet-and-greets.

“This year is about deeper connection and creating space for emotion through art,” says Darnell. “Each piece tells a layered story, and I’m grateful to once again share this journey with guests across Florida.”

Guests can expect a layered experience where art becomes a catalyst for connection and conversation.



June 17 at Cirque St. Armands Beachside

From 5–8 PM, the lobby will transform into a curated, gallery-style experience. This immersive pop-up invites the community to explore expressive abstract works, connect through layered storytelling, and engage directly with Solo the Artist in a setting designed to spark conversation and reflection.

A FREE flow-through event open to the public.

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.

Let’s Talk Longboat

To: Longboat residents
Mark your calendars for the next Let’s Talk Longboat on Tuesday, June 17, 2025, at 3 p.m. at Bayfront Park, 4052 Gulf of Mexico Drive.
This month, Town Manager Howard Tipton and Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman will be joined by Planning, Zoning & Building Director Allen Parsons and Fire Chief Paul Dezzi.
As always, the primary focus of this monthly series is to talk about what’s on your mind — so bring your questions, ideas, and concerns.
See you there!
Savannah Cobb
Executive Assistant, Town Manager’s Office
Town of Longboat Key

Grant Question Follow-up

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Exactly what I needed. With the craziness in Tallahassee and future revenue depletion I think we have to be prepared to look at our biggest costs - personnel. This more than clarifies what the earning power is here.
Last year we authorized a position for finance (I think) for collection of canal funding. We did not fill that job did we since canals have been pushed back?
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Grant Question Follow-up

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
In response to your further question regarding grants, here is the history of grant revenue with backing out prior beach funding (Al Browder), FEMA (Ronica Jackson) and ARPA (Pandemic).
To be fair to Kalee’s workload, she has been involved in support of the beach grants since 2023 when she was hired, but just not the lead on LGFR. Outside of beach funding, I believe every other grant we have been and are now pursuing is directly her work as lead coordinator and pursuer. Before we brought her on board, Public Works staff were pursuing smaller grants where they could on the side, but woefully below Kalee’s productivity level and volume of grant pursuit and follow-up capacity with their other day job responsibilities. As an example of how this now works, Charlie sits on LMS but Kalee actually goes after the grants and does all the research, application, coordination, etc.
We also know that the timing of grant awards varies by year and by what’s available to go after. For instance, we know that Kalee’s grant application for Manatee County’s resiliency program was approved by the County Commission in May of this year at \$1.3 million, but it hasn’t been officially awarded yet and so it is not included in the numbers for 2025.
Lastly and as noted previously, Kalee’s grant management coordination and reporting is also a large responsibility and takes up a significant amount of her time. Please let me know if you have any additional questions.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Annual Crash analysis

To: Longboat Key Commission
The following is provided for your information. Please let interim Chief Rubino know if you have any questions.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Annual Crash analysis

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Attached please find the semi-annual crash analysis requested by former Vice Mayor Haycock. Additionally, the 2024 yearly report has been incorporated into this analysis. The comprehensive report was prepared by Sergeant Lee Smith, Brooke Green, and Ivan Zunz, who have done an exceptional job. Should you have any questions or require further clarification, please do not hesitate to reach out.
Frank Rubino
Interim Chief of Police
Longboat Key Police Department

Grants

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I have not found any specific meeting or formal motion that officially ended the distribution of grant funds to community organizations. It appears this may have been a result of the economic challenges that began around 2007, impacting both local governments and individuals. According to Finance records, the last grant awarded was in Fiscal Year 2007, in the amount of \$3,700, to a single agency—the Art Center.
There are meeting minutes that reflect that Commissioners had varying opinions regarding the distribution of these grants. Here is a link to that file: Grants
Sandi Henley may have some other documentation, but nothing made it to the Clerk’s office at the end of the grant program.
Trish Shinkle
Town Clerk
Town of Longboat Key

Status update as requested regarding Bayfront Dog Park handicapped dog sign

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier, Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
I am writing to provide a status update on the newly erected handicapped dog space sign at Bayfront dog park. First, let me say a huge thank you for allocating the parking space and the sign. It has made a world of difference for the owners of the handicapped dogs who have limited mobility issues. It was an innovative move and one that had very little, if any precedent.
As requested, I would like to update you and make an additional suggestion.
As you recall, early this year, the Commissioners and you voted to allocate 1 handicapped dog parking space in front of the dog park at Bayfront with limited conditions. One of those conditions was that the space be used only for purposes of drop off and pickup between the hours of 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. and between the hours of 4 p.m.- 7 p.m.7 days a week. With some

See Letters, page 5

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Letters, from page 4

minor infractions, this has been mostly a workable solution with 2 exceptions:

1. The rules posted on the fence to regulate owners indicate that dogs must be within voice control at all times. The park sign is in direct contradiction with the new parking space sign which requires owners to drop off/pick up then move their vehicle so that the space can be used by another handicapped dog owner or other vehicle, This leaves the dog and owner out of voice control; and

2. It is not workable for dog owners, whether owning a handicapped dog or not, to leave a dog unattended in the park with other dogs while going to find another parking space that may not be available due to the congestion and popularity of the park. Some owners do not have other people in their households to assist in that task.

Therefore, please consider making this spot a dedicated spot, even if only during those limited hours. Thank you again for resolving the parking space dilemma. I truly appreciate the work you do for our town

Debi Nettlow
Longboat Key

Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board Meeting Packet

To: Longboat Key Executive Assistant to Town Manager Howard Tipton

Hi Savannah, could you please copy slides four through nine and 70 through 81 from the link below and put them in a separate electronic file for me? Also, if you could print all those slides as well and I'll pick them up at town hall no later than tomorrow morning?

Steve Branham
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board Meeting Packet

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Steve Branham

Here are the extracted pages. Printed copy is ready for you at Town Hall.

Savannah Cobb
Executive Assistant to Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board Meeting Packet

To: Longboat Key Town Clerk Trish Shinkle

Below please find a link for the May 19, 2025 Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board meeting to begin at 9:00 a.m. and held at the Double Tree by Hilton located at 8009 15th Street East, Sarasota, Florida. Please note an "in person quorum" is required for the MPO Board meeting.

You may access the MPO Board Agenda Packet through this link: <https://www.mympo.org/files/284/2025/2525/MPO-Meeting-Packet-5-19-2025.pdf>

Please let me know should you have any questions.

Nanette Eubanks
Assistant Clerk to the Board
Sarasota/Manatee MPO

Longboat Club Rd Nuisance property

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

We are writing to once again ask the Town to intervene in requiring the owner of 971 Longboat Club Rd. to remedy the dangerous property conditions that exist on the property. We live at 961 Longboat Club Rd. and the next-door property poses serious safety risks, especially in view of the hurricane season, now upon us.

As you can see from the attached pictures, the lanai at 971 Longboat Club Rd. is literally falling down. In addition, there are loose and broken roof tiles ready to fly off the roof, and there is loose metal flashing on the roof ridge and vertical siding. Previously, when we alerted town officials to the conditions, they simply wrapped a bungee cord around a portion of the pool cage door. The Town code enforcement official who stopped by our door asserted that the owner of 971 Longboat Club Rd. would be reroofing, but the owner of the property has been maintaining for years that she would reroof. Nothing has happened in the intervening time and we now need the Town to take action to remedy these dangerous conditions before someone is hurt and/or property is damaged.

Sherry Dominick and Craig Wright
Longboat Key

Longboat Club Rd Nuisance property

To: Sherry Dominick and Craig Wright

Sherry and Craig: I am forwarding your note and pictures to Howard. Allen and Bryan with the hope that the problem on your neighbor's property goes on the short list for code enforcement. I understand from your call that in last year's storms, this neighbor's ficus hedge fell into your pool from lack of maintenance, so this is not a theoretical issue. With hurricane season here and your neighbor elsewhere, some quick attention seems warranted.

Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Club Rd Nuisance property

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Thank you for your prompt attention in helping to remedy the dangerous conditions at the neighbor's property. One clarification: the ficus trees fell across our pool fence and into our pool back in Storm Ian, not last year.

Sherry Dominick and Craig Wright
Longboat Key

Longboat Club Rd Nuisance property

To: Sherry Dominick and Craig Wright

Thanks for following up & including the photos of the current conditions. Staff spoke with the property owner again this morning. The property owner indicated that she had signed contracts for the roof, pool cage, and landscape repairs/clean up. She also stated that she has been waiting on the insurance company. Staff informed her that if she had signed contracts, she should have the contractors apply for applicable permits. She indicated she would do that. A new Code Enforcement case has been opened (#CE-VIO25-00041). If the property is not adequately maintained & applicable permits are not submitted within 30 days, the case

See Letters, page 6

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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 5

will be scheduled for a Special Magistrate hearing, which can lead to the levying of daily fines.
If you have any questions, etc. please feel free to reach out to Code Enforcement Officers, David Woods or John Simmons directly (941-316-1966). If you send an email to codeenforcement@longboatkey.org it will reach both Code Enforcement officers.
Allen Parsons
Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Club Rd Nuisance property

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons
Thanks for your quick response and follow up. In the interim, and in view of the serious hazards posed imminently by the loose lanai metal and roof tiles, what actions will the Town take to secure these objects now? Please let us know. It is not enough for the Town to urge the owner of 971 to have contractors pull permits. As we all know, construction and repair projects take a long time here on the island, even if the permits are pulled promptly. Thank you again for your attention to this problem and your detailed response.
Sherry Dominick and Craig Wright
Longboat Key

Start of Hurricane Season, June 1 – Let’s Stay Prepared

To: Longboat Key Residents and Business Owners
We are officially in Hurricane Season and we recognize that many in our community are still recovering from last year’s impacts. While recovery continues, it’s essential we also look ahead and stay prepared for what may come.
The Town of Longboat Key is here to support you. Below are several important resources and services available to help you prepare:
Sandbag Operations
Our Public Works team will assist residents and businesses with sandbag filling the first Thursday of each month from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. at the Broadway Beach Access (100 Broadway St).
Bring your own bags to fill, or with proof of residency, receive up to 10 bags per household/business.
Scheduled Dates:
• June 5
• July 3
• August 7

• September 4
Additional dates will be announced if a storm approaches. Questions, please contact our Public Works Department at 941-316-1988.
Emergency Notifications: Alert Longboat Key
If you’re not already enrolled, sign up to receive emergency alerts: Alert Longboat Key Registration
Or email your name, address, phone number(s), and preferred email(s) to scobb@longboat-key.org.
Need help registering? Call us at 941-316-1999.
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Prefer not to use social media? Visit our website for all updates: www.longboatkey.org
Re-Entry Decals
Pick up Red Resident Decals at: (During regular business hours Monday – Friday 7:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.)
• Town Hall
• Planning, Zoning & Building
• Public Works
• Police Department
• Fire Department (Station 91 – 5490 GMD)
Green Business Decals are available at:
• Police Department
• Fire Department (Station 91)
More info: Re-Entry Process Info
If you have questions or need assistance, please reach out to the Town Clerk’s Department at 941-316-1999. We’re here to help.
Stay safe and stay prepared,
Town of Longboat Key, #LBKStrong
Tina Adams
Fire Administration & Communications Manager/PIO
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 8

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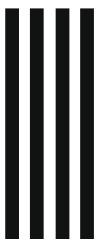
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Sunday: 12pm-5pm



Going east on Fruitville Rd. make a U-Turn at light (Lakewood Ranch Blvd.), then make a right on to Coburn Rd. Go around the circle to Fruitville Commons Blvd., pass Cooper's Hawk and you will see Clive Daniel Home on the right.



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 6

Buttonwood Drive

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop

Following up: Staff inspected the system during installation and confirmed that construction was consistent with the approved drainage system. Staff visited the site this morning with heavy rain and witnessed the drainage system working for this property. It was observed that the majority of the water is from GMD and that this will be hopefully reduced by the final grade and drainage system Brista is installing as part of the coordinated commercial project. As you're aware the Town has also started the design of drainage improvement for the whole neighborhood, which should help too.

Allen Parsons
Planning and Zoning Director
Town of Longboat Key

Observation about your newsletter

To: David Ashburn

I do appreciate your newsletter and find it helpful. Thank you. I do wonder, however, why there are no women on your executive team? Your list of contributors seems to grow, but curiously, only males are added. There is no need to reply; I just wanted to bring this observation to your attention.

Penny Gold
Commissioner. Town of Longboat Key

Observation about your newsletter

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Penny Gold

Thank you for your email. We are glad you find our newsletter helpful.

Greenberg Traurig is, and since its founding has been, committed to fostering a culture where all are welcome and are provided opportunities to grow personally and professionally, regardless of identity. Led by Senior Vice President and Shareholder, Nikki Lewis Simon, our Engagement, Culture & Opportunity Team (Engagement, Culture & Opportunity | Our Firm Pages - General Content | General Content | Greenberg Traurig LLP), routinely works with our firm leadership and our many offices to host online and in person events that reflect our efforts to engage with persons of all backgrounds and cultures. We would welcome the opportunity to invite you to attend these events, especially those in the West Central Florida area. Please let us know if we may send invitations to those events, to you.

David Ashburn
Managing Shareholder
Greenberg Traurig

April Tourism Numbers from Visit Sarasota County

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission

Happy Monday! I hope June is off to a great start for you.

Sharing April tourism numbers with you below. Fiscal year-to-date visitation continues to decrease, and while visitor spending in April was up a bit, fiscal year-to-date spending is still down about 3%.

Here are the tourism numbers comparing April 2025 to April 2024:

Visitors were 115,700 compared to 120,800 in 2024
Visitor direct expenditures were \$183,768,700 compared to \$174,210,500 in 2024
Lodging occupancy was 68.0% compared to 65.5% in 2024
Lodging average room rate was \$348.60 compared to \$314.87 in 2024
There were 311,500 room nights sold compared to 313,400 in 2024
As always, if you'd like to see additional research, or more information on our marketing and sales efforts, do not hesitate to reach out!

Hope you get the chance to dine at one of the participating Savor Sarasota Restaurant Week restaurants over the next few weeks. You can check out a list of participating restaurants and their menus at the link below. You can also learn how you can win prizes simply by dining out (exploring the Flavor Trail!) and sharing your experience and photos on social media! Happy dining!

Erin Duggan
President/CEO
Visit Sarasota County

April Tourism Numbers from Visit Sarasota County

To: Visit Sarasota County President Erin Duggan

Erin, Thank you for the report. I'm not sure why I haven't asked for this earlier, but can you carve Longboat Keys data from your report?

Gary Coffin
Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

April Tourism Numbers from Visit Sarasota County

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin

We can break it out – but it then makes the sample size for each “area” really small. (Sample size of intercept surveys.)

One good way to track data by area – is by looking at collections.

You can do that specific for LBK here:
Tourist Development Tax Downloads | Sarasota Tax Collector
Then click on Report “by Location” : Collections by Location - Sarasota Co. Tourist Tax (last updated yesterday.)

LMK if you need anything specific as I'm always happy to work with our research firm to pull whatever is needed.

Erin Duggan
President/CEO
Visit Sarasota County

Longboat Key Freedom Fest 2025!

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Are you doing freedom fest in 2025? Please send info/details. I have this from last year:

Longboat Key: The Annual Freedom Fest on Longboat Key takes place at Bicentennial Park with a Parade, Food, Games. Celebration begins at 9 a.m. with a parade, then into the park with games and crafts for the kids, a butterfly release, waffles with strawberries and whipped cream, ponies, the famous “Hot Diggity Dog” contest sponsored by the Longboat Key Rotary Club–Prizes awarded for most patriotic, most creative dog costume, and for best owner and dog combination. Kids are welcome to decorate their bikes, wagons, and themselves and march in the parade. Call for additional information. 941-383-2466. Bicentennial Park, next to Town Hall, 501 Bay Isles Road, Longboat Key, FL

John Dial
Longboat Key

Longboat Key Freedom Fest 2025!

To: John Dial

Yes, please see attached. The Longboat Key Chamber of Commerce sponsors the event, but I have attached their letter to the Town Commission regarding the event. If you have additional questions, you may contact the Chamber through this link: <https://business.longboatkeychamber.com/events/details/longboat-key-s-4th-of-july-freedom-fest-1301585>

Trish Shinkle
Town Clerk
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 12

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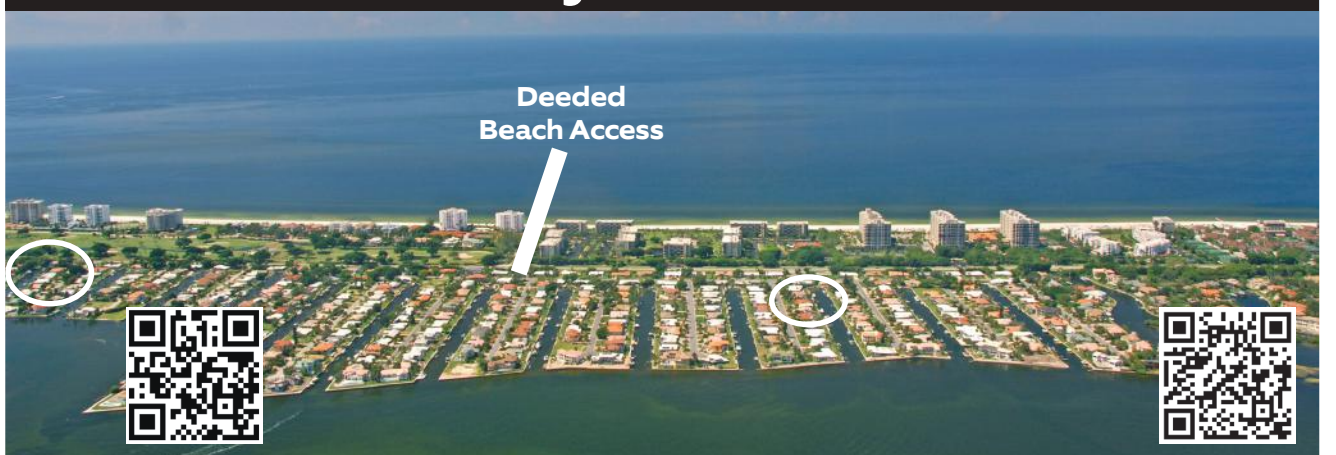
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Tangerine211.com

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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.

May 30 Gate

6:49 a.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to Bay Isles Parkway for a damaged property report. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno met with a Security Officer who stated that the gate arm at the west-bound gate at Bay Isles Parkway was damaged by a Penske truck. The damage was estimated at about \$1,500. Officer Rierson also said that the driver who works for the express lines left his contact information. Case clear.

May 31 Animal

4:30 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to North Shore east of the bridge for an animal complaint call regarding dogs on the beach area. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno observed the dogs in the water by the boats anchored east of the bridge. Officer Tillman announced to the P.A. system for the boat owners to keep the dogs out of the beach area. Delayed response was due to the draw bridge being raised. The caller did not wish to be seen or contacted. Case clear.

June 1 Citizen

2:29 p.m.
Officer Barrett was dispatched to two vessels anchored close to the beach off of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Upon arrival, Officer Barrett observed two vessels properly anchored approximately 50 yards off the beach. The owner of one of the vessels walked into the water and from a distance stated that he and another vessel anchored their vessels off the beach and swam to shore to visit some friends. Neither vessel was in violation of any state laws or local ordinances and the complainant did not wish to be contacted. Case clear.

Citizen

6:03 p.m.
Officer Miklos and Officer Tillman were dispatched to the 4600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a missing persons call. Sarasota Sheriff's Office dispatch advised that the caller stated that her son went for a walk on the beach in an unknown direction and has not returned. Sarasota Sheriff's Office dispatch advised the time lapse was approximately one hour. Sarasota Sheriff's Office advised that the man was approximately 5'3" with a slim build wearing a blue hat, a black swim shirt, and black shorts. Officer Miklos advised Officer Tillman of the description and he said he believed he just saw him on the Police Department Polaris walking north on the beach. Officer Tillman responded to the beach on the Polaris while he made contact with the caller. While enroute, Officer Tillman advised that he located the man on the beach and was enroute back to Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Miklos met with the caller and advised her that her son had been located. Case clear.

Vehicle

8:39 p.m.
Officer Miklos while on patrol near the 6000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive when he received a license plate alert for a vehicle traveling north from Bay Isles Parkway. The vehicle, a white Honda drove past his location and confirmed the expired registration via an NCIC/FCIC check. Officer Miklos initiated a traffic stop via emergency lights and met with the driver in the 6500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. The driver and passenger didn't speak English and the stop was completed via a translator. The driver advised he didn't have a driver's license and the vehicle was not his. The driver provided a picture of his Nicaraguan Passport. At this time, Officer Miklos requested an additional unit to respond while he attempted to use the rapid ID device. The Rapid ID device was left in 'submitted' status and didn't provide a return. Officer Miklos conducted a check of the driver which returned with no wants or warrants. The driver was issued a criminal citation for driving without a valid license and issued a Manatee Court date. Additionally, the driver was issued three warnings for expired registration, no proof of insurance, and no registration certification. Case clear.



June 2 Boat

12:00 a.m.
Officer Troyer was dispatched to the Longboat Key Police Department for a civil dispute. Officer Troyer spoke with the complainant who said that on April 4, he made arrangements to sell his fishing boat to a man and the man did not have all the money up front in the amount of \$6,000. The complainant made arrangements for the man to pay \$1,000 over the course of six months, then the complainant would relinquish the boat to the man. On the fourth the man had paid the complainant \$1,000, then on April 8 he made another payment of \$700. On May 27, the man showed up to the complainant's house in the evening banging on the front door. The complainant said the man was requesting his money back as he could no longer make the payments. The complainant said the man "threatened" him by saying the complainant would be hearing from the man's attorney. The complainant also said he was going to keep the money because of the time he was deprived to sell the boat, only for the man to back out. Officer Troyer informed the complainant this was a civil issue they needed to dispute in court if they felt the situation needed to be handled in a court. Officer Tillman informed the complainant there didn't appear to be any criminal acts, but the man showing up to his house at 9 p.m. was suspicious. The complainant didn't have any further contact with the man after either. The complainant only wished to report the incident for documentation purposes. Case clear.

Welfare

1:11 p.m.
Officer Mathis was dispatched to Fair Oaks Lane in reference to a welfare check. The caller contacted 911 in reference to not being able to reach his mother via telephone for several hours. Upon his arrival to the location, Officer Mathis made contact with the mother who was unaware of the numerous missed phone calls due to the fact she had inadvertently left her cellphone on silent after church services were done. The mother advised everything was fine. Officer Mathis then assisted the woman with her cellphone as well as checked her home for proper service. Officer Mathis spoke with the son and reported his findings. Case clear.

June 3 Citizen

10:45 a.m.
Officer Troyer was dispatched to Longboat Club Road on the report of a signal 13V changed to signal 67. Petty Officer Phillips with the U.S. Coast Guard contacted the dispatch center and requested a unit check for a large yellow tub washed up on the beach. Officer Troyer contacted the Petty Officer while enroute to which she reported they received a complaint about a marine item washed up on the beach. Petty Officer Phillips and U.S. Coast Guard District needed more information about the item. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer observed a large metal item washed up onshore. The item appeared to be approximately 20 feet long and approximately 4 feet wide and appeared to have washed up from a large cargo ship. Officer Troyer didn't observe any identifying markings on the item, nor did he observe any hazardous waste coming from the item. Officer Troyer contacted the U.S. Coast Guard District and spoke with Lieutenant Harrison. Officer Troyer provided Lieutenant Harrison as much on scene information as possible for removal. Officer Troyer provided Lieutenant Harrison with Public Work's contact information so they could coordinate removal. Case clear.

June 4 911 call

4:11 p.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 4600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive unit 13A for a 911 hang up call. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno made contact with the hotel manager to inquire if there was anyone staying in the unit. She said that the owner of the unit was staying at a different Unit and called her cell phone. The owner of the unit advised she didn't call 911 and that there was no phone connected in the unit.

June 5 Citizen

11:00 a.m.
Officer Nazareno was dispatched to the 2500 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a citizen assist call. Upon arrival, Officer Nazareno made contact with the complainant who said that on June 5, at approximately 11 a.m. he was running and crossed the crosswalk at the intersection of Harbourside Drive and Bay Isles Parkway when a tan Range Rover almost struck him as he cleared the intersection. He further said that the vehicle was stopped at the stop sign prior to him crossing the crosswalk. The complainant didn't report any injuries from the incident and no collision took place. The complainant provided a photograph of the vehicle and Officer Nazareno made contact with the driver of the vehicle who stated that she was stopped at the stop sign behind the crosswalk lane and had cleared the lanes prior to the complainant running the crosswalk. She stopped and had asked if he was okay and left the area after the man signaled he was okay and walked away. She did not report any collision. Case clear.

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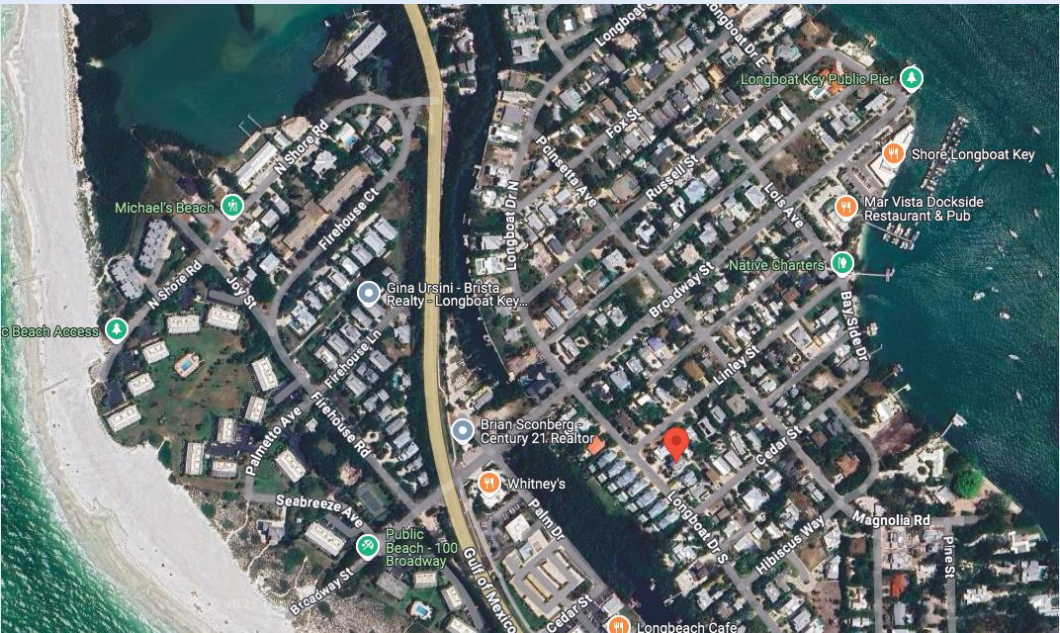
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1045 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#205	1,819	\$2,249,000	3	2	0	16	\$1,900,000
3303 SABAL COVE CIR	3,200	\$1,950,000	4	3	1	37	\$1,750,000
4234 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#H2	1,150	\$795,000	2	2	0	78	\$740,000
2203 HARBOURSIDE DR	2,352	\$750,000	3	2	1	135	\$725,000
2016 HARBOURSIDE DR Unit#332	1,192	\$599,000	2	2	0	24	\$555,000
3740 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#116	861	\$440,000	1	1	0	13	\$435,000



6940 LONGBOAT DR S



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Letters, from page 8
Senate Bill 180

To: Governor Ron DeSantis
Please veto Senate Bill 180, which if enacted will hinder local efforts to protect FL coasts from future storm threats.
A veto is particularly important to Longboat Key where a recent ordinance gave citizens in flood prone areas the ability to raise their homes and boat docks above standard height requirements. SB 180 would retroactively void these improvements and halt future resiliency efforts for 3 years.
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Thank You

To: Deputy Regional Affairs Director Paul Cameron
We would love to have you here for the final pole event. I will share the constituent services info with individuals who continue to have difficulty with property insurance issues.
We remain concerned about FEMA funding and staffing as hurricane season is upon us. Repayment of expenses from prior storms is critical to be prepared for future weather.
I will be sure Savannah and Howard know you will join us for the Final Pole removal. All of our Commissioners will be there and want you to meet all of them.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Thank You

To: Deputy Regional Affairs Director Paul Cameron
Thank you so much for coming down to meet with Howard and me yesterday. Delightful to meet you and Ned

and truly appreciated the candid conversation we had.
Do not hesitate to reach out if I can do anything to help you or the Senator and we look forward to seeing you in LBK for some of our civic activities.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Thank You

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I appreciate the kind message! It was my pleasure to meet you all and learn from your wealth of experience.
I'm reaching out and ask if you all would be okay with me joining for your Final Pole Farewell event on June 23rd? Completing all four project phases to move all electrical wires underground is an awesome accomplishment ahead of the upcoming hurricane season. I would like to be there in support!
I also wanted to talk about the citizens you all mentioned having problems with property insurance. Although I don't know if we may be able to help, I'd like you to at least offer the residents of Longboat Key our Constituent Service's team assistance: casework@moody.senate.gov. There is a chance we can work with the State Insurance Department to help with any disputes. That email can be used for all other issues citizens may have too.
Cameron Paul
Deputy Regional Affairs Director
Office of U.S. Senator Ashley Moody
Tampa

Buttonwood Drive

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen

Parsons
Allen - the original plans for this home had a swale at end of driveway. Someone allowed this to be changed. Every time it rains the water comes onto and across the road. The neighbors are spending a lot of money to keep this out of their yard but it does not solve the Buttonwood problem.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Budget

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
A citizen made an interesting comment to me regarding our discussions the other week and the email that followed regarding our Grants position - "You did not ask the right question", they said. Your question should be "how much money was raised from grants before a full-time position was hired and what is the net difference before you had a grants writer and now that you do?"
I recognize that a grants position also takes a lot of the coordination/verification off the plates of other staffers who have full time positions without monitoring grants and any net improvement is a big gain.
So, can we see the grants numbers before Kaylee and since Kaylee?
BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Budget

To: Longboat Key Commissioner BJ Bishop
I can try and pull some reports from our ERP based on object code. Just not sure how meaningful it will be.
Some grants we get every year such as WCIND Sarasota. But we never received anything until Kalee was here on the Manatee side.
Then you have the FEMA Storm related reimbursements. The amount depends on the severity of the storm and then there is the timing - how many years did it take to get the money in.
Then you have Al Browder who is consistently working with us to get the Beach FDEP 28% reimbursements. That is based on timing of major nourishment cycles and those could be some large dollars. I will see what I can find.
Susan Smith
Finance Director
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 13

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Letters, from page 12

Proposed Parking St. Regis employees

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Penny Gold

I have seen and heard a lot of misinformation regarding the proposed parking lease from the St Regis. I feel strongly that we should pursue this idea providing some concerns are addressed i.e.. hours, perhaps money, possibly a gate strictly for their own use and most importantly an opt-out clause.

Personally, I just don't see a downside in trying to hammer out a suitable agreement.

Despite the fact that the money isn't a lot, whatever we can get will benefit all Seaplace owners!

I really don't see much risk at all.

The fact is that we are a "gated" community, however, we can be accessed from the beach and road by anyone walking. It has always been that way and always will be (short of building a moat around the property!

Also, realistically the St Regis employees who would be reporting for work would not be using our pools or amenities. Nor would they be likely to do so after a long shift at work.

To summarize, I just want to reiterate strong support to you and the board in considering this.

Thank you!

Joan Grunstra

Longboat Key

Saharan dust on the horizon

To: Longboat Key Commission, Sarasota City Commission

As some of you might know, I was born in the Middle East and lived there with my family for the early part of my life. My father was a Master Sergeant in the US Army, and my mom worked for a Federal Agency. They met and married in Athens, before taking their newly created family on to Turkey and Iran, and then back to Greece, before eventually heading back to the States. While there, we experienced a number of sandstorms, which can be quite unnerving. I have been back to the Middle East several times, both on vacation with my own family and also while working in locations such as the Sultanate of Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A few years ago, I was caught out in a sandstorm north of Jeddah and had to take off my shirt and wrap it around my mouth, nose, ears, and eyes until the event died down. You see, it's not really sand in a sandstorm; it's more like a dust storm. The sensation of experiencing a sandstorm is like if you were to empty a full vacuum cleaner bag into an operating fan.

Just last week, while my wife and I were in Crete on a long-planned vacation, we landed in the city of Heraklion after an all-night ferry crossing from Piraeus. When we came ashore, it looked like the entire town had been covered with a thick layer of brown dust, as shown in the two photos from the front page of the local newspaper -

Notice how thick and "sticky" that layer of dust was – it sticks to the bus window, even though it's a vertical glass surface! So where did it come from? The Sahara Desert. Now, keep in mind that Crete is more than 200 miles north of Africa, and that the Sahara Desert doesn't come right up to the Mediterranean Coast. The city of Heraklion is actually on the north shore of Crete, and that dust cloud had to go over the substantial mountains that extend across the entire island. That thick layer of dust came more than 200 miles of ocean, and crossed a mountain range, in order to coat the streets and houses and cars, and fishing boats of northern Crete.

Why should this concern here in Southwest Florida? Well, like we highlighted back in 2022, there is a link between Saharan dust and the initiation of red tides - Director's Note: Outlook for red tide? The picture below is one I took of the Arabian Desert, just west of Riyadh a few years ago. That pinkish hue reflects an abundance of iron in that "sand".

The Saharan Desert has similar deposits of iron-rich sand and dust, and right now, there is a huge plume of Saharan Dust that is migrating to the west, across the Atlantic and towards Florida and the Caribbean - Massive Saharan dust plume to reach Southeast this week producing vibrant sunsets, sunrises | Fox Weather. This massive cloud of dust is expected to reach us by the end of the week. Short term, it should mean that we should have some really beautiful sunsets! And these air masses tend to reduce the development of hurricanes - Saharan Air Layer - NOAA/AOML.

But...the dusty air masses are not going to be great for those with asthma or those with

chronic lung diseases. And remember that iron? Well, it turns out that deposits of iron can help fuel the growth of a microscopic phytoplankton species called "sea sawdust" – more formally known as Trichodesmium. When iron-rich plumes of Saharan dust make it to the Gulf, they can provide the "limiting nutrient" (iron) for Trichodesmium. So why is that a problem? Because that species can "fix" nitrogen. Which means, it can take the biologically inert di-nitrogen gas that makes up 78% of our atmosphere, and turn it into a form of nitrogen that can be used by another species of phytoplankton, Karenia brevis, which is the organism that gives us red tide blooms - Toxic Algae Blooms and African Dust.

To be clear, we have always had red tides in Florida, dating back to the times of the Calusa and Conquistadors. And we have always had plumes of Saharan dust tracking across the Atlantic, for longer than Florida has housed people, including the predecessors of the Calusa.

However, human changes to the atmosphere are increasing the intensity of dust storms from the Sahara, thus increasing the frequency that harmful red tides can be initiated offshore in the Gulf of Mexico - Climate change affects Saharan dust storms — Harvard Gazette.

And, as we now know, if a red tide bloom is initiated out in the Gulf, and if that bloom is then transported closer to our shores, then the excessive nitrogen loads from our developed watersheds can make those red tides larger, stronger, and longer lasting, as outlined in various studies that SBEP has worked on the past few years – 1) Nitrogen-enriched discharges from a highly managed watershed intensify red tide (Karenia brevis) blooms in southwest Florida, 2) Initial estuarine response to inorganic nutrient inputs from a legacy mining facility adjacent to Tampa Bay, Florida - ScienceDirect, and 3) Red tide durations and nitrogen loads.

So...enjoy the sunsets over the next few days – they should be quite nice. But if the Gulf waters get covered by a layer of Saharan dust the next few days like the town of Heraklion got covered by Saharan dust last week, we could have a red tide event on the horizon.

Hopefully not, but better to be forewarned and not have it come to pass than to have such an event pop up on us without any warning.

Dave Tomasko

Executive Director

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program

Saharan dust on the horizon

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Executive Director Dave Tomasko

Thanks Dave! I've copied the Interim City Manager and Mr. Jeffcoat on this email as well.

Jen Ahearn-Koch

City Commissioner

City of Sarasota

Saharan dust on the horizon

To: Sarasota Bay Estuary Program Executive Director Dave Tomasko

That "dust" sounds concerning and not a like a very healthy or pleasant experience!

Jen Ahearn-Koch

City Commissioner

City of Sarasota

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WineTimes

Trio of Venues in Dive Wine and Spirits

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

“Dive” had two meanings: blue lighting and TV screens showed underwater scenes shot by divers, and upon seeing the rows of assorted bottles behind the bar we immediately characterized it as a “dive bar”.

The area south of Phillippi Creek on the Sarasota Tamiami Trail attracts visitors from the Clark Road exit on I75 to the east, from downtown Sarasota to the north, from Venice to the south, and from Siesta Key to the west via Midnight Pass Road and Stickney Point Road.

On a field research trip, we found an interesting bottle shop that deserves mention. In the Merchant’s Pointe strip mall alongside Detwilers Farm Market at the intersections of Stickney Point Road, Swift Road, and Clark Road, judging from the exterior of Dive Wine and Spirits, it appears to be merely another one of the many beer, wine, and liquor stores in the Sarasota. The surprises show up when you go inside.

We asked the guy at the front counter about the Dive Cocktail Den. He directed us to a middle aisle lined with shelves. It came to a dead end at a steel door that appeared to be the entrance to a storage room or a cooler. We looked right and left and saw only walls. After hesitating for a moment, we slid the heavy door open. We knew that we had found the Dive Cocktail Den. It had a speakeasy feel. A large bar filled much of the space, with a few tables at one end and the other. “Dive” had two meanings: blue lighting and TV screens showed underwater scenes shot by divers, and upon seeing the rows of assorted bottles behind the bar we immediately characterized it as a “dive bar”.

Our first impression did not hold up after we checked the list of drinks. The bartender, James, hand-crafted basic cocktails such as the Proper Sour (Amaretto, Bourbon, Lemon, Bitters, Egg White) and Jungle Bird (Rum, Pineapple, Lime, Aperitif). We decided to try something more exotic, an Amaro Sazerac (Sother Teague Amor y Amargo, House Amaro Blend, Peychaud’s Orange Bitters, Chartreuse Vegetal). James swirled the Chartreuse in the glass. The Sazerac Bar in New Orleans uses Absinthe to make its eponymous Sazerac. He poured the Chartreuse from the glass into a small tumbler and passed it to us. He then set the Amaro version of the Sazerac in front of us. The bitter herbal flavors made a refreshing Aperitif.

We noticed a coastal menu from the “pop-up” restaurant and bar on the side of the bottle shop closest to Clark Road. We confirmed that the Hive Bar served a different menu than the Dive Cocktail Bar. We went back through the steel door. On the way we noticed excellent selections of wines on the shelves. The hand-written shelf labels below the bottles added a touch of elegance to the displays.

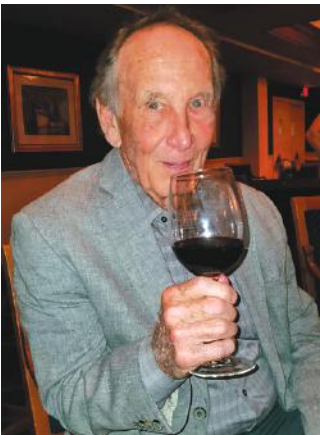
When we entered the Hive Bar, I asked whether it had been reserved for a private party. No,

they assured me. People at separate tables interacting with people at other tables and at the bar may be regulars who greet other regulars. We sat at the bar and ordered plump baked oysters and a grilled octopus salad with a decent Pinot Grigio.

It took us time to explore the three different venues in the one location. It makes sense the way the staff has integrated them. The Dive Cocktail Den has a theme of aperitifs to prepare for dinner. The bottle shop offers great selections of wines. The Hive Bar offers a modest corkage fee for wines bought in the bottle shop and served in the Hive Bar.

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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