

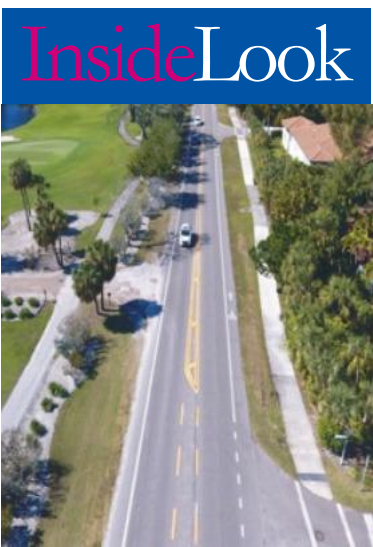


Longboat Key News

March 7, 2025

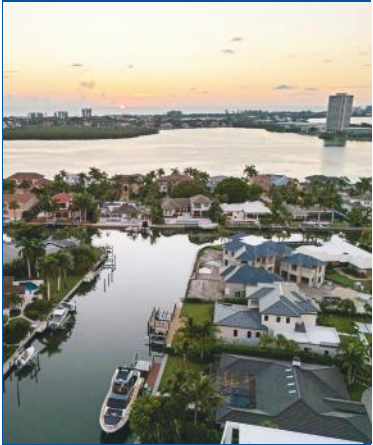
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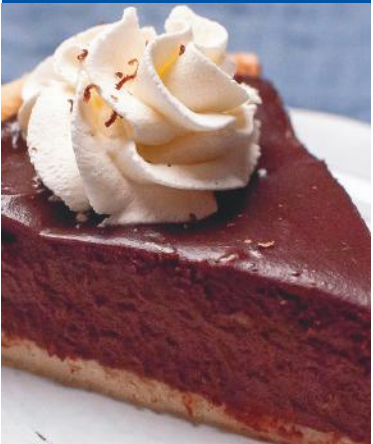


InsideLook

Residents riled over turn lanes ...pages 12,13



Bird Key home closes at \$4.25 ...page 11



Sweet expansion in Sarasota ...page 2



Suspicious spot to take a nap ...page 10

Saving the Ocean’s foundation

Although the drama from hurricanes and red tide can eclipse the slow changes in the waters surrounding Sarasota, the reality is the international scientific community and especially Mote Marine Laboratory are working on several levels to preserve and restore the threatened and depleted coral reefs.

Coral reefs are facing unprecedented die-offs on a global scale, making it essential to restore them with resilient, genetically diverse corals that have the best chances of surviving and reproducing.

However, this effort hinges on the survival of our native corals, which must be safeguarded before they disappear.

Mote plays a critical role in preserving the genetic diversity of coral reefs and other marine life, ensuring their survival in the face of escalating threats like thermal events, ocean acidification, and disease. As a cornerstone of Florida’s Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative, Mote’s International Coral Gene Bank has achieved milestones in

See Oceans, page 15



Sarasota restaurant scene serves up exciting options

Sales of food, wine, beer, and spirits are trending upward on warm nights during the early season here in Sarasota.

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

Sales of food, wine, beer, and spirits are trending upward on warm nights during the early season here in Sarasota. We see young women in summer dresses walking toward downtown. Young men follow not far behind in their beachy shirts and shorts.

People on the street tend to be older than the college spring break crowd. Sarasota’s larger share of seniors walk from high-rise condos and apartments or drive in and either take advantage of valet parking or the large parking garages. Locals enjoy the cooler days of the early season; tourists from the North wear short sleeves in temperatures that locals find brisk.

Downtown Sarasota has seen more than its share of restaurant closings and vacant spaces. Emerging shopping centers east and south of the City of Sarasota have drawn shoppers away from downtown.

A complicated process for paying for street parking and reluctance to use high rise parking garages turned off many shoppers.

Increases in leasing costs have forced some locations to close. The Hurricanes during late October and early November 2024 didn’t help by raising doubts about how quickly the area would recover and

See Dining, page 8



Former board members oppose New College takeover of Ringling

A local group is pushing back against a proposal for the New College of Florida to take over the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art.

Citizens to Protect the Ringling, which is made up of former museum board members and supporters is speaking out ahead of the upcoming legislative session.

This comes after Gov. Ron DeSantis’ budget proposes transferring control of the Ringling Museum from Florida State University to New College of Florida.

The move would end the 25-year partnership between the iconic Sarasota museum and FSU. While New College President Richard Corcoran supports the proposal, which looks to consolidate stewardship of other state university campuses within proximity of the liberal arts college, critics of the plan disagree.

Meanwhile, Florida State University’s Board of Trustees has revised bylaws to give FSU officials more involvement with the Ringling Museum.

In a recent meeting last week, FSU Trustees said the change has been in the works for all of its organization and is unrelated to Gov. DeSantis’ proposal to transfer Ringling’s management to New College.

The governor’s plan also includes ceding control of the USF Manatee-Sarasota Campus and the Historic Asolo Reparatory Theater to New College.

Waves of praise for Longboat continue

On the heels of a top beach ranking for Siesta Key, Longboat Key is also gaining national recognition as a premier travel destination. Travel + Leisure named it the best island to visit in the South for 2025 and Forbes included it among its “Top 12 Travel Destinations for 2025”—placing the barrier island alongside global destinations like Amsterdam and the Maldives.

Despite last fall’s hurricanes, which took a big toll on waterfront properties, forcing evacuations and leading to flooding, the island’s appeal persists. With its southern end in Sarasota County and its northern end in Manatee County, it boasts tranquil beaches, luxury accommodations and an overall laid-back atmosphere. The recent opening of the St. Regis Longboat Key Resort, Marriott International’s 9,000th property, has further elevated its profile. The St. Regis, which includes six restaurants, a saltwater lagoon featuring a “wildlife experience,” a spa partnership with La Mer and luxury condos, also set a local record with the most expensive real estate sale in Sarasota and Manatee counties—ever.

But the island’s draw extends beyond its high-end resorts and million-dollar homes. The village of Longbeach was founded in 1885 and offers a rare glimpse of vanishing Old Florida, and the island is also home to the infamous and architecturally notable Ohana estate and “Waterslide

See News Shorts, page 2

News Shorts, from page 1

House.” Popular restaurants include Mar Vista, Maison Blanche, Whitney’s, Shore, Euphemia Haye, Harry’s Continental Kitchen and Longbeach Café. It’s also the U.S. headquarters of the media platform Rumble.

Yoder’s Expands with New Coffee and Mini-Pie Shop in Sarasota

Yoder’s Restaurant & Amish Village, a Sarasota institution renowned for its homemade pies, is set to launch a new venture: Yoder’s Pie Craft Coffee Company. Scheduled to open in February 2025, this new establishment will offer locally roasted coffee paired with miniature versions of Yoder’s beloved pies. The name “Pie Craft” pays homage to Sarasota’s Pinecraft neighborhood, home to a significant Amish and Mennonite community, where Yoder’s has been a staple since 1975.

The initial phase of Pie Craft’s opening will feature a food trailer located in Yoder’s former produce area, providing indoor seating adjacent to the trailer and an outdoor garden space. Future plans include transforming the current deli market into a redesigned coffee and dessert shop, while maintaining offerings of baked goods and take-home meals. Additionally, a coffee roaster room with exterior viewing windows is slated for construction in 2025, enhancing the customer experience by showcasing the roasting process.

Fastest ocean liner turning into Florida reef

The SS United States, the world’s fastest ocean liner and 100 feet longer than the ill-fated RMS Titanic, has entered the Gulf on its way to becoming the world’s largest artificial reef off Florida’s Panhandle.

Still holding the record for being the largest passenger ship built in the U.S. at nearly 1,000 feet long, the vessel was purchased by Okaloosa County in October and will be sunk off Destin-Fort Walton Beach.

The ship had been docked in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania for nearly 30 years before beginning its final voyage Feb. 20, guided by four tugboats.

SS United States is headed for Mobile, Alabama for cleaning and renovation before it’s moved off Destin-Fort Walton Beach in Florida to become a new marine life habitat. The exact location has not been revealed.

On the way to the Gulf, the liner hugged the South Florida Coast and was spotted Wednesday off Palm Beach County Feb. 26.

After a remediation process in Mobile expected to take about a year, SS United States will be towed south of Destin-Fort Walton Beach to be sunk. A date and location have not been revealed.

“Before her deployment in the Gulf waters, all of the environmentally unsafe materials will be removed. This includes all non-metal items, wiring and fuel. She will have holes strategically cut around the ship to ensure she lands upright as she is submerged. Passages will also be opened allowing for marine life to thrive in and around the ship. All of the preparations in Mobile are in close collaboration with multiple environmental agencies including the Department of Environmental Protection and Environmental Protection Agency,” Destin-Fort Walton Beach’s website states.

At 990 feet, the SS United States is more than 100 feet longer than Titanic.

To reduce weight and increase speed, more aluminum was used to build SS United States than any other previous project.

As a result, SS United States moved almost as fast in reverse as Titanic was able to move forward, according to the SS United States Conservancy.

This expansion coincides with Yoder’s 50th anniversary, marking a significant milestone since Levi and Amanda Yoder founded the restaurant in 1975. Over the decades, the business has grown from a modest eatery on Main Street to a multifaceted establishment at 3434 Bahia Vista St., encompassing a restaurant, market, and gift shop. Known for its hearty Amish home cooking and exceptional pies—such as the popular peanut butter cream and seasonal pumpkin varieties—Yoder’s has become a cherished destination for both locals and visitors.

The idea for a coffee and dessert shop has been percolating at Yoder’s since before 2005. Initial blueprints considered converting the existing gift shop into a coffee and dessert space, but the timing wasn’t right. Renewed inspiration in 2018 reignited the vision, leading to the forthcoming realization of Pie Craft.

Yoder’s Pie Craft Coffee Company will be located at 3404 Bahia Vista St. For more information and updates, visit their official Facebook page.



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\$3,900,000- Country Club Shores
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109 GARFIELD DRIVE UNIT 201 | LIDO BEACH
\$1,999,999 - Walk to Lido Beach
3 Beds 2 Baths 1,993 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



3408 FAIR OAKS LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
\$2,999,999 - Bay Isles
5 Beds 5 Baths 4,510 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



3927 SOMERSET DRIVE | SIESTA KEY
\$2,100,000
3 Beds 3 Baths 2,758 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Jules Mackie 773-704-14383



3131 BAYOU SOUND | LONGBOAT KEY
\$2,299,999
3 Beds 3 Baths 3,023 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



3318 BAYOU SOUND | LONGBOAT KEY
\$1,599,999
Bay Isles 3 Beds 2 Baths 2,675 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



1050 LONGBOAT CLUB RD #704 | LONGBOAT KEY
\$999,999 - Privateer
2 Beds 2 Baths 1,400 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



585 CUTTER LANE | LONGBOAT KEY
\$3,499,999 - Country Club Shores
4 Beds 2 Baths 3,602 Sq. Ft.
Contact: Nicholle DiPinto McKiernan 941-928-2922



PENDING
3480 BAYOU SOUND | LONGBOAT KEY
\$4,499,999 - Newly Built Construction
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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.

Mobile Home Parks - Recent Permitting: Status Update

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Tip- Following up on the Feb. 20th meeting with residents of the Twin Shores and Gulf Shore mobile home parks. The applicant & homeowner of the initial permit submittal (that was intended to serve as a model for approx. 50 other mobile home unit owners, that will be seeking to elevate their mobile home units to approx. 4 ft. above the ground) met with staff this past Monday afternoon (3/3) and submitted updated application materials.
That revised permit submittal was approved yesterday (3/4), which is a 1-day turnaround time! I want to thank Patti, Neal and the Building Division team for this excellent customer service and incredible processing timeline.
With this ‘model’ submittal and plan documents now established, we anticipate the submittal of multiple additional permits (in batches of approx. 10 at a time), from other unit owners and their contractor, to do similar work. Staff will continue to prioritize their review, with very quick turnaround times anticipated.
Allen Parsons
Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key

Mobile Home Parks - Recent Permitting: Status Update

To: Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Director Allen Parsons
Allen, I wanted to extend my gratitude for your team’s efforts in reviewing and issuing these initial building permits and managing the necessary documents for our mobile home park residents. Your efforts to both the administrative and psychological parts of this job will allow those folks to move forward, and I’m certain they’re all very grateful, as we are, thanks again for you and your team’s hard work.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Town Manager Executive Assistant Position

To: Longboat Key Department Heads
Good morning! After interviews with four very capable internal candidates, and careful consideration, Isaac and I are pleased to share with you that Savannah Cobb has been selected to be the next Executive Assistant for the Town Manager’s Office.
With a degree in Public Relations from the University of Florida (go Gators), Savannah has demonstrated during her time with the Town Clerk’s Office her many abilities under a variety of conditions, including hurricanes. While her lifelong knowledge of the community and the personal connection she has had to this organization (virtually her entire life) is an added strength, it was her skills and performance under fire that made her our top choice. While any key personnel transition can be a challenge, we are confident that Savannah will be able to fill the large shoes left by Susan, that she will be up to the tasks ahead, and we are confident that she will excel in her newest role. Please join me in congratulating Savannah on this promotion.
See Letters, page 6





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Editor Letters



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Letters, from page 4

Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Town Manager Executive Assistant Position

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
This is very good news. I know Savannah will do a wonderful job.
Penny Gold
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Town Manager Executive Assistant Position

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Wow! A big congrats to (mom) Savannah. A more levelheaded and sold dedicated person would be hard to find. Very proud.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Town Manager Executive Assistant Position

To: Longboat Key Commission
Understanding that the Executive Assistant in the Town Manager’s Office works closely with the Commission and the public, I wanted to share this exciting news.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Country Club Shores Homeowner Association meeting

To: Kathy Callahan
Kathy thank you for the invitation to the homeowner’s association meeting last night, and congratulations on finding your successor. It was really good to see everyone again. I think James will do a fabulous job for all of us. At the meeting someone inquired about a volunteer
See Letters, page 12

Official Ballot

Town of Longboat Key General Election

March 11, 2025

Boleta Oficial

Elección General del Pueblo de Longboat Key

11 de marzo de 2025

• **Instructions:** To vote, fill in the oval completely (●) next to your choice. Use only the marking device provided or a black or blue pen.

• If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Do not cross out or your vote may not count.

• **Instrucciones:** Para votar, rellene completamente el óvalo (●) adyacente a la opción de su elección. Use solamente el instrumento para marcar que le proporcionen o use un bolígrafo de tinta negro o azul.

• Si usted comete un error, solicite una boleta nueva. No la tache, pues en ese caso su voto podría no contar.

Town Commissioner

At-Large Seat 1

Comisionado del Pueblo

Escaño 1 en General

(Vote for One) / (Vote por Uno)

☐ Steve Branham

☐ Deborah Murphy

Referendum Questions

Preguntas de Referendo

Approving a State Revolving Fund Loan to Finance Construction of a Subaqueous Wastewater Line

Shall Town of Longboat Key be authorized to borrow money through a State Revolving Fund loan, not exceeding \$33,000,000, bearing interest not exceeding maximum legal rates, maturing over a term not longer than 25 years, payable from revenues of the Town's water and sewer utility system and a backup covenant to budget and appropriate legally available non-ad valorem revenues, to finance the design and construction of a subaqueous wastewater line across Sarasota Bay?

Aprobación de un Préstamo del Fondo Rotatorio Estatal Para Financiar la Construcción de un Conducto Subacuático de Aguas Residuales

¿Habrà de estar autorizado el pueblo de Longboat Key para tomar dinero prestado a través de un préstamo del Fondo Rotatorio Estatal que no exceda los \$33,000,000, generando interés sin exceder las tasas legales máximas, venciendo dentro de un plazo no mayor de 25 años, a pagarse con los ingresos del sistema de servicios de agua y drenaje del pueblo y un copromiso de respaldo para presupuestar y asignar ingresos no ad-valorem legalmente disponibles, para financiar el diseño y la construcción de un conducto subacuático de aguas residuales a través de Sarasota Bay?

☐ Yes (For Loan)
Sí (A Favor Del Préstamo)

☐ No (Against Loan)
No (En Contra Del Préstamo)

Referendum Regarding Town Commission Meetings

Shall Article II, Section 13, of the Charter of the Town of Longboat Key be amended to allow the Town Commission to cancel the Town Commission's July regular voting meeting with advance notice of at least thirty (30) days prior to the meeting date?

Referéndum Con Respecto a las Asambleas de la Comisión del Pueblo

¿Habrà de enmendarse el Artículo II, Sección 13, de los Estatutos del Pueblo de Longboat Key para permitir que la Comisión del Pueblo cancele la asamblea de votación regular de julio de la Comisión del Pueblo con previo aviso de por lo menos treinta (30) días de anticipación a la fecha de la asamblea?

☐ Yes - For Adoption
Sí - A Favor De La Adopción

☐ No - Against Adoption
No - En Contra De La Adopción

Referendum Regarding Acting Town Manager Appointment

Shall Article III, Section 3, of the Charter of the Town of Longboat Key be revised to address a potential conflict with the Constitutional prohibition on officers holding dual office and allow the Town Manager or Town Commission to appoint a qualified individual to serve as acting Town Manager in the event of the Town Manager's temporary unavailability or inability to act?

Referéndum Con Respecto a la Designación de un Gerente Interino del Pueblo

¿Habrà de corregirse el Artículo III, Sección 3, de los Estatutos del Pueblo de Longboat Key para atender un conflicto potencial con la prohibición Constitucional a los oficiales con cargo dual y permitir que el Gerente del Pueblo o la Comisión del Pueblo designe a un individuo calificado para servir como Gerente interino del Pueblo en el evento de que el Gerente del Pueblo no esté disponible temporalmente o no sea capaz de actuar?

☐ Yes - For Adoption
Sí - A Favor De La Adopción

☐ No - Against Adoption
No - En Contra De La Adopción

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Sarasota City News

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The Downtown Sarasota Dining Scene

Dining, from page 1

what might happen in the future. The doctrinaire denials of climate change by the State Legislature and the DeSantis Administration merely added to the anxiety within the business community.

The arrival of a few warm days during the February pre-season dispelled some of the gloom. Owen’s Fish Camp in Burns Court welcomed a crowd that filled their Old South inspired veranda and courtyard. The fact that the restaurant has added a full bar to their drink menu might explain the jam-packed house, but the diners seemed more in a celebratory vibe than a idrown my sorrows mood. We also learned from Mark, one of the owners of the Fork and Hen restaurant on Tamiami Trail next to Ringling College, that they are moving in a few weeks to the former location of the late lamented Made Restaurant on Main Street close to Mediterraneo. Restaurant/Bars are beginning to fill empty spaces in the downtown and the immediate vicinity.

The cluster of restaurants on and around South Lemon Avenue near Main Street has developed as an area that will support restaurant/bars similar to those found in upscale, high traffic areas in big cities. Beso offers a different take on Spanish tapas with a drink list rich in Amari, the bitter herb liqueurs popular in Italy and Spain, as well as craft cocktails. The rub about Amari has to do with the notion that many men tend to enjoy Amari such as Cinzano Dry Vermouth, Amaro Nonino, and Cynar as an apÈritif or digestif, while many women prefer other drinks, and some women abhor the taste of Amari in general. Despite this, Beso has the atmosphere of a date night and girlsí night out place. A rectangular bar occupies the center of a high ceiling mail room with an indoor balcony with tables hovering above. The general manager Patrick and manager Troy have trained bartenders and servers to offer customers a fine dining experience.

We have found during several visits to Beso an exceptional fusion of Amari, Sherry and other fortified wines, and Spanish wines with generous servings of house specialty Tapas on small plates. The perfectly grilled Pulpo (octopus) has a saffron potato mousse base spiced with paprika vinaigrette. The Trucha con Fabada (local sea trout in a white bean broth flavored with the Serrano jamÛn favored in Madrid) has a fresh taste of the sea in an earthy broth. The Carrillada de Tarnara (braised beef cheeks in PX Sherry with saffron potato mousse) tastes richer than falling off the bone braised short rib. We could go onÖ. The menu offers other interesting house specialties as well as the standard items on a Tapas menu.

The Negroni Beso cocktail, made with the milder Amaro de Etna instead of Cinzano, works well as an apÈritif. In addition to Cava sparkling wines, Beso has a full-bodied white Madai Godello and a robust red J. Palacios iPetalosí Mencia, both from Bierzos, Spain, to pair with fish and red meat dishes.

Beso, along with the neighborhood Vino Bistro tapas bar in the Rosemary District and Offshore Tapas and Wine in the Voco Hotel, give those in the Downtown Sarasota area nearby choices among different tapas venues. Disfrutad de las tapas, amigos.

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 Otego 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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OnPatrol

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

Feb. 28 Suspicious

10:00 a.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to the 4200 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a suspicious person sleeping on a bench in front of the condominium building. Prior to arriving on scene, dispatch informed the officer that it was a 70 -year-old woman wearing a beaded denim/ black jacket and blue jeans. Additionally, the caller stated that the woman knocked on the complainant’s door asking to charge her phone. Upon arriving on scene, Officer Pescuma observed the woman standing near the bench on the side of the condominium building. Upon making contact with the woman, Officer Pescuma advised her for the reason he was there that he had received a call she was sleeping on the bench and wanted to make sure she was okay. The woman had a duffle bag with her and she said that she was dropped off and was waiting for a ride. Upon receiving her identification, Officer Pescuma conducted a FCIC/NCIC check which alluded that she has a warrant out of Hardee County for violation of probation and possession of paraphernalia. Officer Pescuma confirmed with Sarasota Sheriff’s Office dispatch that her warrant was active with Hardee County and took her into custody for an active warrant and transported her to Manatee County Jail. Case clear.

Found purse

12:41 p.m.
Officer Zunz responded to the front desk of the police department to respond to a citizen who was turning in a found purse from Bayfront Park where they found it. Officer Zunz inspected the contents of the purse and found a Massachusetts driver’s license an made contact via telephone with a member of the purse owner’s family. The family member contacted the purse’s owner and she verified that yes, she had lost her purse. She arrived later at the police department and received her purse with all the contents intact. Case clear.

March 1 Citizen assist

11:04 a.m.
Officer Van Dyke responded to Emerald Harbor Drive in reference to a citizen assist call. Upon arrival, Officer Van Dyke spoke with the homeowner and her husband. She advised that she believes an HOA member has been entering onto her property in order to report her pool to Code Enforcement as it has yet to be repaired from Hurricane Milton. Officer Van Dyke advised her that a trespass warning may be issued if a Police Officer observes a subject on her property going forward. Officer Van Dyke advised her to contact code enforcement directly regarding the pool as the issue is likely to be remedied. Case clear.

Construction

8:38 p.m.
Officer Troyer was dispatched to the 6700 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive on the report of a suspicious incident. The Sarasota County Dispatch Center had reported an unknown package was scattered upon her patio when she returned home. Upon arrival, Officer Troyer met with the complainant who said when she returned home after approximately three days, she observed what appeared to be a package or unknown item scattered upon her patio. The complainant was concerned of an unknown animal or person who may have done this. Upon looking at the debris, Officer Troyer observed the debris was construction material packaging. The complainant said her building was under construction as a new roof was being put on the building. The packaging was consistent with roofing material as well. Based upon his investigation, Officer Troyer noted it appeared as if the roofers were throwing the materials off of the roof and were not cleaned up afterwards. Case clear.



March 2 Tenant

4:41 p.m.
Officer Pescuma was dispatched to Chatham Drive in reference to a civil disturbance regarding a tenant not vacating after the end of the lease as of Feb. 28. The complainant stated that he cannot get in contact with his tenant to discuss vacating the residence since the lease ended. Officer Pescuma advised that this is a civil matter however he will assist in establishing communication with the tenant’s relatives who are currently staying at the residence to help care for the tenant. Upon arrival, Officer Pescuma made contact with the grandson of the tenant and said the reason for being there and advised the relative that the homeowner has been trying to get in contact with the tenant. The homeowner wanted to know how soon they will be vacating the residence whereas the homeowner will be moving back into his home to prepare to sell. Officer Pescuma arranged a merged phone call with the tenant and homeowner so they can communicate expectations moving forward. The two made an arrangement for the residence to be vacated as of Mar. 6. The two were satisfied with the mutual agreement between the two. Case clear.

March 3 Traffic Stop

12:55 a.m.
Officer Troyer while on patrol noticed the car in front of him did not have any front headlights illuminated. Officer Troyer conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle in the 5000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Upon stopping the vehicle and contacting the driver. Officer Troyer asked the driver to provide the vehicle’s registration and proof of insurance. The driver was able to provide the information. Officer Troyer observed burned suspected marijuana cigarettes in the center console of the vehicle near the vehicle’s shifter. Officer Troyer also noticed the burnt smell of suspected marijuana which emitted from the vehicle as the driver side window was rolled down. Officer Troyer cleared the driver for any wants and warrants and confirmed she had a valid Driver’s License. Officer Troyer asked if there was any marijuana inside of the vehicle and the driver informed there were a THC vape pens inside of the vehicle. Officer Troyer subsequently had the driver exit the vehicle. Officer Troyer once again asked the driver if there was any marijuana in the vehicle, to which the man informed Officer Troyer there was marijuana in a mason jar. Officer Troyer conducted a probable cause search of the vehicle due to the observations. The driver also said the marijuana was not hers, however, she was the sole occupant of the vehicle. Upon searching the vehicle, Officer Troyer located a clear jar with a green leafy substance inside which was consistent with marijuana. Officer Troyer also located two black cylinder container which contained two suspected marijuana cigarettes with a green leafy substance inside of them as well. Officer Troyer also located the two vape pens which the driver said were inside of the vehicle. Officer Troyer field tested the green leafy substance inside of the jar and the THC vape pen roadside. Both items turned a purple color which indicted positive for marijuana. Officer Troyer weighed the loose green leafy substance which consisted of a total weight of approximately 15.82 grams. Officer Troyer also weighed the suspected marijuana cigarettes containing a green leafy substance which weighed in at approximately 2 grams for a combined weight of approximately 17.8 grams. Officer Troyer placed the driver into custody and transported her to the Manatee County Sheriff’s Office Correctional Facility. Upon arrival, and beginning the intake process inside of the correctional facility, Officer Troyer was informed by Manatee County Sheriff’s Office Correctional Deputies, they located a pink vape pen inside of her purse. Case clear.

Altercation

7:00 p.m.
Officer Tillman responded to the 4300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a reported verbal dispute. Several people witnessed the complainant and a man and a woman get into a verbal dispute on the sidewalk of the condominium complex. It was determined that the dispute started over trimming the bushes at the complex. The couples began yelling at each other before witnesses separated all parties. Nothing physical occurred, merely verbal conflict among neighbors. Case clear.

March 5 Parking

9:22 a.m.
Officer Van Dyke responded to the 5300 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a suspicious vehicle. A man approached the officer and said that a vehicle parks in the dedicated drop off lane in the early mornings, then departs. He said that he was a business owner and would appreciate if Officer Van Dyke looked into it. As the officer and man were speaking, they noticed that the vehicle was currently parked in the mentioned location. Upon further investigation, the dark blue Toyota sedan belonged to a man who was dining in the restaurant. Officer Van Dyke went into the restaurant to verify if it belongs to him. Officer Van Dyke asked the man to move his vehicle to a proper parking space and he complied. Case clear.

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777 JOHN RINGLING BLVD Unit#2	882	\$500,000	2	2	0	9	\$463,000
3521 FAIR OAKS LN	4,048	\$2,395,000	4	4	1	10	\$2,275,000
3030 GRAND BAY BLVD Unit#396	2,925	\$2,250,000	3	3	1	3	\$2,000,000
360 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#332	2,949	\$1,625,000	3	3	1	0	\$1,650,000
3455 BYRON LN	2,507	\$1,300,000	3	2	1	2	\$1,300,000
7165 LONGBOAT DR N	1,352	\$835,000	2	2	0	453	\$800,000
1945 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#M2-313	1,265	\$799,900	2	2	0	1	\$795,000
4330 FALMOUTH DR Unit#308	1,342	\$598,500	2	2	0	39	\$580,000
575 SUTTON PL Unit#T-4	1,450	\$579,000	3	2	1	23	\$579,000
620 FOX ST	1,672	\$595,000	2	2	0	49	\$567,000
1945 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#M2-206	928	\$510,000	2	2	0	65	\$475,000
2721 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#607	675	\$495,000	1	1	0	152	\$457,500
569 SUTTON PL	1,198	\$375,000	3	2	0	165	\$305,000



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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 6

organization that may help with our environmental efforts and ecology. The group is LBK Citizens Green team.
PS- Thank you for all your hard work as our president. You did a great job and your love and concern for our community always shined through.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner, Town of Longboat key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Yes sir, very good point about season! Because FDOT is over large districts, we regularly remind their teams about the on-the-ground realities of our road in peak season. Gulf of Mexico Drive (SR 789) experiences such a drastic change to the roadway’s drivability, we are regularly bringing that back to their attention as we discuss projects we would like done on the road, or changes to the roadway, like the one we are proposing with the median adjustments. Thank you!
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Longboat Key Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman
Thank you. We need to ensure the ultimate solution makes sense. In addition to enabling turns across traffic into side streets, we must enable safe exit across traffic onto Gulf of Mexico Drive south.
Perhaps we are not an “urban” area?
I appreciate all the Town is doing to help. But cannot imagine anyone from FDOT ignoring the reality of our two months of very heavy traffic when scheduling this project?
Bill Kimbell
Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Bill Kimball
Mayor Schneier is correct. The Florida Department of Transportation (“FDOT”) owns and maintains Gulf of Mexico Drive (SR 789). Curbed medians are a standard roadway treatment on urban roadways to help separate traffic and also avoid the use of center turn lanes as long merge and acceleration lanes. As the entity having jurisdiction over the road, the FDOT would not issue a permit nor fund the construction without the medians incorporated as part of the design. The Town staff is actively working with our engineer and FDOT on a version that shortens the median ends to provide more vehicle space in the center lane area. We will need to see how FDOT responds to that, but our goal is to shorten the medians to provide more space for more fluid 2-step turning maneuvers.
Isaac Brownman
Assistant Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Bill Kimbell
It’s an FDOT project for which they are paying. When they’re ready to go, so must we be.
Ken Schneier
Mayor, Town of Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Thank you for your response. I do not understand “...is outside of our control.” How can you/we not have the ability to manage our own town projects? Bill On Wed, Mar 5, 2025, 12:50 PM Kenneth Schneier <kschneier@longboatkey.org>
Thank you for your response. I do not understand “...is outside of our control.” How can you/we not have the ability

to manage our own town projects?
Bill Kimbell
Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Bill Kimbell
Meetings are being held among Assistant Town Manager Isaac Brownman, Commissioner for CCS Gary Coffin, contractors and members of the CCS community to address concerns about the medians with the expectation that they can be reduced in size. The timing of this project, in the works at the request of CCS residents for 7 years, is outside of our control.
Ken Schneier
Mayor, Town of Longboat Key

Gulf of Mexico Drive

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
Mayor - I have been made aware of the plan to include curved medians in the Country Club Shores turn lane project. This is a colossal mistake which will make things worse not better. Everyone seems to agree, yet the project is starting. In season, no less. How do we stop this before the money is spent and a bad situation is made worse? Please stop this project!
Bill Kimbell
Longboat Key

Proposed GMD Center Lane Curbed Median Planters Design

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Gary Coffin
Thanks Gary but I don’t understand about scheduling. I don’t know how long this project will take but surely we’ll past hurricane season unless they omit the center islands and just add the middle turn lane. This is already March. The center turn lane is of course a good idea but the center islands are unnecessary in our opinion.
Bob Gault
Longboat Key

Proposed GMD Center Lane Curbed Median Planters Design

To: Bob Gault
Bob, I would be happy to meet with you on site, if you’d like to discuss your concerns as I have done with many residents of Country Club Shores. As far as the timing for the project is there ever really a good time, if they wait too long then we’re in the middle of hurricane season and potential evacuation issues. There are a lot of concern’s, it’s Longboat, our community is loved by residents and all that visit, looking at the big picture for the future I’m fairly sure we’re on the right road.
Gary Coffin
Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

Proposed GMD Center Lane Curbed Median Planters Design

To: Bob and Shannon Gault
The south end turn lane plan was initiated at Country Club Shores’ request before my time and has taken forever to design, fund and now implement. It has been the subject of detailed discussions before the Commission and otherwise for years, with plans available to all. I understand from Howard, Isaac and Charlie that the Town’s important relationship with FDOT would be severely damaged by our calling a halt to this work at this late stage and that the entire project would likely not resume. (A total complete streets revival of GMD like you recommend in your note is currently in the works with FDOT). I also understand that there will be an opportunity to address and hopefully remedy the neighborhood’s concerns as work begins, and that staff has committed to undertake those discussions. Let’s take a breath and try to resolve your issues without burning down the house.
Ken Schneier
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

Proposed GMD Center Lane Curbed Median Planters Design

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier
In our opinion, not to mention the good observations in the newspaper Editorial, these proposed new median curbed islands will be dangerous obstructions on our busy two-lane GMD. Simply unnecessary safety hazards. Good intentions, wrong answer.
The center islands will limit the ability to safely drive around trucks or cars pulled over on the side of the road, and

See Letters, page 13

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Letters, from page 12

to give bicyclists more room as we safely drive around them. People will drive into the median curbs accidentally if they slightly sway left.

Landscapers with trailers and delivery trucks will be forced to drive over them as they have make tight turns out onto GMD from East and West side neighborhoods etc.

All of this not to mention starting this project in the high traffic season, no excuses for that. The FDOT is in charge of scheduling not the contractors and the Town certainly should have a say in scheduling.

The FDOT must simply focus on providing a safe third center turn lane. Also, GMD looks like hell since the hurricanes so FDOT should re-landscape both sides the length of GMD with trees and lawn that have been destroyed by hurricanes and debris.

We all want the our beloved LBK landscaped ambience restored on GMD asap.

Back to the drawing board...again, please! Thank You for your consideration and service,

Bob and Shannon Gault

Longboat Key

Barrier Island Complete Street Stakeholder Meeting Details

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Mike Haycock

Please find attached Meeting Invite for the upcoming Barrier Island Complete Streets Stakeholder Meeting 2, along with the Presentation from the first stakeholder meeting which was held in August 2024. Nina followed up with Colleen Ross regarding adding you and the rest of the team to the stakeholder mailing list. Below are the Project Managers details for the Complete Streets Project, Please let us know if you need anything else.

Adam Rose

Project Manager

Florida Department of Transportation District One

Author Luncheon

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Thanks so much, Tip. It is beyond wonderful to see how much the Sarasota County community loves our libraries. Nothing beats generosity in action!

Sarah Karon

Commissioner

Town of Longboat Key

Author Luncheon

To: Longboat Key Commissioner Sarah Karon

Congratulations on such a successful luncheon. In your role as the Chair of the Library Foundation, the community continues to respond in a very generous way to support today's libraries and all the good things that Renee and her team are working to achieve.

Howard N. Tipton

Town Manager

Town of Longboat Key

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Oceans, from page 1

coral restoration and marine conservation. Mote says some of these achievements include:

- Advancing Cryopreservation Technology
- Integrating cutting-edge methods to enhance and preserve biodiversity by creating genetic “time capsules” for coral species, ensuring their survival and resilience.

Restoring Coral Communities

Partnering with NOAA and the Department of Interior to develop and test methods to restore mesophotic and deep benthic coral habitats injured in the Gulf of America (Gulf) by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

Preserving Endangered Coral Survivors

Collaborating with Shedd Aquarium, The Reef Institute, and the University of Miami to safeguard genetic material from the last known staghorn coral survivors in the Dry Tortugas following Florida’s record-breaking 2023 thermal event.

Securing DEP Funding

Receiving support from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to expand infrastructure and capabilities for coral restoration and conservation.

Coral reefs are facing unprecedented die-offs on a global scale, making it essential to restore them with resilient, genetically diverse corals that have the best chances of surviving and reproducing.

However, this effort hinges on the survival of our native corals, which must be safeguarded before they disappear.

Mote plays a critical role in preserving the genetic diversity of coral reefs and other marine life, ensuring their survival in the face of escalating threats like thermal events, ocean acidification, and disease. As a cornerstone of Florida’s Coral Reef Restoration and Recovery Initiative, the Gene Bank enables the propagation of resilient coral genotypes for future outplanting efforts.

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Leveraging Cryopreservation Technology

Mote is one of the few institutions in the world leveraging cryopreservation technology to protect the future of coral reefs. This work began through training in Hawaii with Dr. Mary Hagedorn of the Smithsonian Institute.

Cryopreservation is a process which involves freezing coral sperm at ultra-low temperatures in an effort to create a genetic “time capsule” that theoretically preserves their viability indefinitely. This cutting-edge method is a game-changer for coral conservation, enabling the storage of genetic material from rare, vulnerable, or hard-to-propagate coral species. By banking these genetic resources, Mote ensures that future generations can benefit from the diversity of coral species, even if those species currently face near extinction.

Unlike traditional propagation methods, cryopreservation offers the potential to preserve and utilize coral genetic material across decades, or even centuries, allowing for the restoration of genetically diverse coral populations even if the wild populations have been lost.

This technology allows scientists to mix sperm and eggs (gametes) from corals that are geographically separated or reproduce at different times of the year. By doing this, they can increase the variety of genetic traits in coral populations. Greater genetic diversity makes these corals stronger and better equipped to adapt to both current and future changing conditions. This approach gives restored coral populations a better chance of long-term success.

“Preserving genetic diversity is fundamental to the resilience of marine ecosystems,” said Dr. Erinn Muller, Director of Mote’s International Coral Gene Bank and Associate Vice President for Research. “The Gene Bank is invaluable in our efforts to protect the future of coral reefs and other vital marine species.”

Mote joins NOAA and Partners in Studying Mesophotic and Deep Benthic Communities

Mote is collaborating with NOAA and the Department of Interior to work on the Coral Propagation Technique Development (CPT) project within the Mesophotic and Deep Benthic Communities (MDBC) restoration portfolio. The project is supported by over \$28 million over eight years and represents a pioneering effort to directly restore MDBC habitats in the Gulf.

MDBC ecosystems are critical to ocean health, as they provide a home for an abundance of invertebrates, fish, and other marine life. When these ecosystems are harmed—like during the 2010 Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill—it can cause a chain reaction, disrupting nearby environments. This happens because many marine species depend on the supply of larvae from these communities. These deep-sea habitats, similar to shallow coral reefs, act as refuges and collection points (“sinks”) for larvae released during spawning. If disrupted, these habitats could no longer support the settlement of larvae or provide critical resources to ecosystems further down-current. Such disruption could also affect genetic diversity and population dynamics, impacting not only MDBC but also the Gulf’s broader marine ecosystems.

By developing innovative methods for coral cultivation, recruitment, and transplantation, Mote aims to contribute to this project addressing critical knowledge gaps and help scale up restoration efforts to meet the magnitude of the injury caused by the DWH oil spill.

This project combines field testing in natural MDBC habitats and lab-based coral cultivation to develop effective propagation methods using innovative techniques like coral fragmentation and transplantation. It emphasizes collaborative planning, expert coordination, and long-term monitoring to enhance coral recruitment, survival, and sustainability.

Collaborating with Shedd Aquarium to Preserve Coral Bleaching Survivors

Mote received living coral fragments from the last known staghorn coral survivors in the Dry Tortugas following Florida’s record-breaking 2023 bleaching, which were collected by Shedd Aquarium. Shedd scientists discovered and rescued the corals and transported fragments to Mote and other institutions across Florida. The arrival of these rare specimens at the Gene Bank is a pivotal step in preserving genetic diversity for this critically endangered species.

The staghorn coral fragments now reside alongside other genetically significant specimens within the Gene Bank, benefiting from advanced life support systems and expert care.

DEP Grant Supports Gene Bank and Coral Restoration Expansion

Mote has received funding from the Florida DEP to expand its critical role in coral restoration and conservation. This funding will support the construction of additional infrastructure, including advanced life support systems to enhance the Gene Bank’s capacity for holding and propagating genetic material from priority coral species such as mountainous star coral (*Orbicella faveolata*) and grooved brain coral (*Diploria labyrinthiformis*).

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