



Longboat Key News

January 26, 2024

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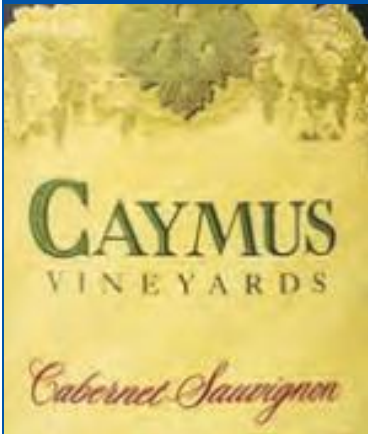
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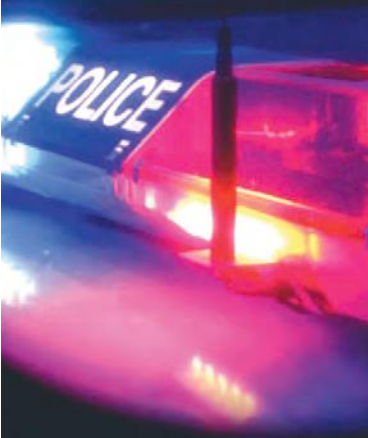
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reported
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Longboat Centre Shops sells for \$7.465 million

“We received significant interest in the asset despite many of the headwinds in the market right now.”

Marcus & Millichap (NYSE: MMI), a commercial real estate brokerage firm specializing in investment sales, financing, research and advisory services, announced last week the sale of Centre Shops at Longboat Key for \$7,465,000.

“Centre Shops of Longboat Key is a rare property that totals almost five acres and is located directly across the street from the Gulf of Mexico,” says James Medefind, senior vice president investments. “We received significant interest in the asset despite many of the headwinds in the market right now.”

Medefind, senior vice president in Marcus & Millichap’s Tampa office, had the exclusive listing to market the property on behalf of the Florida based seller.

Located at 5370 Gulf of Mexico Drive in Manatee County, Centre Shops of Longboat Key offers 37,880 square feet of retail space on a 4.67-acre property, just steps away from the beach.



The shopping center has a strong tenant history, with
See Sale, page 2

NewsWorthy

Lawsuit likely for Sarasota City Commissioner Kyle Battie

Sarasota City Commissioner Kyle Battie is facing a lawsuit after publicly singling out a private citizen during a meeting last week and accused her of racism

Battie described a screenshot he was presenting as “sick, abhorrent, and egregious.”

The picture he was referring to was of a post equating him to a gorilla that appeared to be posted by a woman named Kelly Franklin, who is a politically active in City Hall.

Later in the meeting, commissioners received emails that led them to conclude the image Battie presented was likely fake.

Franklin’s attorney, Richard A. Harrison, says his client did post a picture with a caption referring to gorillas, but the picture of Battie was photoshopped by an unknown individual over Franklin’s actual picture of gorillas that she posted while in Africa.

Battie likely faces a suit alleging defamation and intentional infliction of emotional distress.

Sarah Karon sworn in as Longboat Key commissioner

Sarah Karon was chosen over five others as the new District 5 town commissioner for Longboat Key on Jan. 22, replacing Debbie Murphy.

Karon was sworn in last week and will serve a 14-month term until March 2025, when a general election will be held. The person elected during the general election will serve until March 2026.

Sarasota County Transit to serve all of Longboat Key

On Monday, Jan. 29, residents, commuters and visitors in the Manatee County portion of Longboat Key will have a new transportation option: Sarasota County’s Breeze OnDemand service.

Earlier this month, the Manatee and Sarasota County commissions signed an agreement to implement Breeze OnDemand throughout the island.

As part of their regular meeting on Jan. 10, the Sarasota County commissioners unanimously approved the service change. The

See NewsWorthy, page 2

In Search of Dinner



Birds along the Bay Isles Beach Club. Photo by Leighton T. Allenby

Beth-El Farmworkers awarded transformative grant from Christ Church of Longboat Key

Christ Church (Presbyterian USA) of Longboat Key announced a \$40,000 mission grant to Beth-El Farmworkers Ministry of Wimauma to transform its food pantry for migrant farm workers.

The Christ Church grant will play a major role in the creation of a Client Choice Food Pantry. Acquiring commercial refrigerators, freezers, produce tables, and shelving racks, this new Pantry will allow clients to choose the foods

their family enjoys and are healthy alternatives to currently available foods. Through arrangements with local farmers, Beth-El will acquire fresh vegetables and fruits. This will help promote healthier eating habits and reduce food waste.

The new Food Pantry will totally transform the way Beth-El distributes food and will be a major help to those who rely on the agency for many of their meals. The new Pantry will have shopping carts,

reusable grocery bags, three commercial refrigerators, two commercial freezers, and other amenities.

The Client Choice Food Pantry is scheduled to become operational in the first quarter of 2024.

Beth-El will also offer educational materials and resources to clients to promote healthy eating habits and build nutritional meals.

In the past two years, Mission Grants from Christ Church of

See Church, page 2

Church, from page 1



Longboat Key have gone to Selah Freedom and Harvest House. These special grants are in addition to its ongoing support to other Mission Partners.

NewsWorthy, from page 1

listed on the board’s Consent Agenda of routine business matters that day.

The Sarasota County commissioners unanimously approved a resolution that amended the county’s budget for this fiscal year to include a total of \$833,813 for the new Transit service.

Since its launch in June 2021, the OnDemand service has provided more than 680,000 rides in Sarasota County, the release points out. “It’s a zone-based, curb-to-curb ridesharing service charging only \$2 per passenger.”

The hours of operation are Monday through Saturday from 5 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sundays from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. “The Breeze OnDemand system connects to traditional Breeze routes, creating a countywide mobility network,” the release adds.

“Get started with Breeze OnDemand by downloading the Breeze OnDemand mobile app or visiting breezetransit.net/breezeondemand,” the release adds.

To book rides over the phone, call 941-300-1553.

For more information on Sarasota County’s transit services, visit scgov.net/breeze.

Sale, from page 1

with 60% of tenants occupying their spaces for seven years or more. Under the current ownership, the property has undergone significant improvements, including new roofs, a revamped parking lot, modern finishes, and upgraded exterior lighting. Comprising five buildings, the property maintains a 95% occupancy rate.

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THE DIPINTO COLLECTION

1325 WESTWAY DRIVE - LIDO SHORES



\$ 15,000,000

Modern marvel overlooking New Pass in Lido Shores! Step into this tropical escape through the hidden courtyard that connects the three-bedroom main home to the secluded, two-bedroom guest house with an expansive sundeck, 60-foot wet-edge lap pool lined with royal palms and unique fire bowls, as the perfect introduction to a contemporary masterpiece.



Boasting all the amenities required for luxury living, this SMART home's inspired style highlights spectacular water views that stretch out to the Gulf of Mexico from just about every room of the nearly 6,600 square-foot interior. Stacked glass sliders create a seamless transition to outdoor living, opening to the glass-railing terrace, summer kitchen, built-in grill, and spiral staircase that leads down to the waterside hot tub. Boaters will appreciate the deep-water dock with multiple lifts.

NEW CONSTRUCTION TO BE BUILT



WEST OF TRAIL - HIGHLY DESIRABLE LOCATION \$9,750,000
Waterfront location, this custom home is situated on a quiet cul-de-sac steps to Siesta Key. Offering nearly 5,350 AC/SF, with an open concept floor plan, highly desirable finishes and touches, and 4-car garage, you will be impressed. Work with builder direct to create your dream home.

GULF FRONT NEW CONSTRUCTION



SEAWARD HOMES

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

Longboat Key Homeowners ...

I have a ready and able buyer looking to purchase an updated home; 4 bedrooms with en suites. Not necessarily on water. If you are looking to sell in the near future — let's chat.

NOW PENDING SALE



SEAWARD HOMES

SIESTA KEY • HIGEL AVE. \$16,995,000
Currently under construction and scheduled to be ready Fall 2023, this breathtaking 8,964 AC/SF residence is one of a kind, designed by DSDG. Gulf front property on one acre and offers a 2,000 SF roof terrace. Separate guest house and 8-car garage. No expense spared on this remarkable home.



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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.

Breeze On-Demand Transit

To: Longboat Key residents

For the very first time, Longboat Key will have a single source for our island transit needs with an on-demand service that runs from Coquina Beach/Manatee County bus stop to the downtown Sarasota Breeze transit location and anywhere in between! Think of it like an Uber, complete with an app to schedule rides, or book by phone. We can thank our two Counties for the funding to make this service possible! Scan the QR Code, Download the App, and start riding!

Susan Phillips
Assistant to Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Employee of the Year

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneider

Back when I was gainfully employed, I used to do various team building exercises. One of the recommendations out of that training was for managers to try to catch someone doing something right! I always liked that idea and made it a point to use that with my team on a daily basis.

I wanted to share with you that the Town has an employee that I continuously catch doing something right. The latest example was her flawless running of the Observer Tournament this past weekend where she showed up early every day and stayed late to make sure that the tournament came off without a hitch – and it did.

At a time when a lot of people are trying to see how little they can do, I see this employee

showing up early and staying late regularly to make sure the Tennis Center is ready to go when it is supposed to be.

This employee came into her current position with no real training on how to be a boss or manage all the disparate aspects of running a Tennis Center, but she was a quick study. She has assembled a team that now has significant tenure and a similar customer-oriented focus and she appears to have learned all she needs to know about attracting good talent, handling a retail operation, and maintaining a not insignificant physical facility with the many challenges it presents from its exposure not only to constant use, but also to the harsh elements of the Floridian climate.

I have been particularly impressed with her attention to taking appropriate care of the equipment at the facility. One benefit of this attention is because she takes the time to make sure the ball machine is regularly cleaned, the Tennis Center has only needed one ball machine, while over the same number of years, a neighboring facility needed to buy 3 machines, because the other facility didn't make the effort to properly maintain the machines. Not only is she mindful of the Town's assets, but she is also mindful of minimizing the Tennis Center expenses, such that she frequently performs these tasks because she has no one to hand them off to.

For these and other reasons, I would like to nominate Kay Thayer to be the Town of Longboat Key employee of the decade, year, month, week or whatever time period for which the Town may make awards. If there is no such award, then start one with Kay as the first awardee.

Please see that this gets to the appropriate people in the Town management. Kay tends to shun the limelight and can be uncomfortable with accolades; but she deserves many accolades, as she is an excellent example of an outstanding leader and employee to her own team and to all of the Town's employees. If I was still hiring people, I would want as many Kay Thayers on my team as possible!

David S Gutridge
Longboat Key

Employee of the Year

To: David Gutridge

This is high praise indeed for someone I know is not easy to impress. Kay is one of the Town's stars and has done a wonderful job with the tennis program. Thanks for recognizing her good work.

Ken Schneider
Mayor
Town of Longboat Key

See Letters, page 6

Restaurant Specials

Steak & Frites Tuesday Nights \$36.99

Wine Down Wednesdays
25% Off All Bottles of Wine

E. Guigal Rhone Wine Dinner
Thursday, February 8th, 2024 | 6:30pm
\$150 per person (gratuity and tax not included)

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Harry's Deli Valentine Menu
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Reservations Suggested





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February 4th Sunday Service 10:00 AM
Dr. Julia Wharff Piermont, Pastor

Men's Bible Study: Monday @ 9:00
Women's Bible Study: Wednesday @ 10:00

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INSTALLATION OF THE PASTOR

Sunday • February 4, 2024 • 4:00 PM



Dr. Julia Wharff Piermont, Pastor

This is an exciting time for Christ Church as we welcome Julia, our first full time pastor, to our congregational family and our surrounding community. This is clearly a time of new beginnings. To formally mark this special moment, a **Pastoral Installation Service** is planned for Sunday, February 4th at 4:00 PM. An Installation Service, a first for Christ Church, clearly underscores, in the eyes of God, the pastor's responsibilities to the church, and the congregation's responsibilities to the pastor, as we all seek to Grow in Jesus' Name. A reception will follow the service.

Visitors and Residents are Welcome

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\$4,995,000

6609 GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Coastal-inspired elevated pool home. This North Longboat Key 4 bedroom, 4 bath, 4,132 sf home with private beach access features views of the Gulf of Mexico and sunsets from wide covered decks and the third-level widow's walk. The main level is ideal for family gatherings and entertaining with ample seating in the kitchen, living room, dining area and wet bar. All bedrooms have ensuite baths. The Gulf of Mexico facing glass sliders open to an expansive balcony with a gas grill overlooking the pool, spa and lush array of mature tropical trees and landscaping.



\$1,250,000

569 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

100 ft. x 100 ft. canal front homesite in Sleepy Lagoon. Great location – perfect balance between beach/ICW. Updated seawall and 10,000 lb. lift. Topographical survey and geo-technical engineering reports available.



\$2,100,000



370 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #432 | LONGBOAT KEY

Delight in scenic views of Sarasota Bay in this custom-designed 4-bedroom, 4.5-bathroom PENTHOUSE in the gated resort-style Tangerine Bay community on the southernmost tip of Longboat Key. the spacious condominium features soaring ceilings, skylight, great room with gas fireplace, marble gallery for displaying artwork, and private gated courtyard. All bedrooms are ensuite. Sliding glass doors in the primary suite and great room open to a tiled terrace where you can start your day with a cup of coffee while watching the sunrise. An additional west-facing terrace boasts stunning sunset views.



\$4,495,000



648 BAYVIEW DRIVE | LONGBOAT KEY

Boater's dream property on oversized (19,994 sf) rarely available cul-de-sac end lot with a brand new 320-foot seawall located in Sleepy Lagoon, on the north end of Longboat Key. This location offers fantastic panoramic views of Bishops Bayou and the ICW. Situated on nearly a half-acre lot is a 3-bedroom, 4,157-SF home, which could be renovated or removed creating a build site for an incredible custom home.



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EditorLetters



Letters, from page 4 Office Development North of Broadway Background

To: Longboat Key Commission
The below project was briefly discussed at Monday’s meeting. Allen has provided the staff report for your information and a rendering below of what it will look like when completed. Please let Allen or me know if you have any additional questions.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager
Town of Longboat Key

Office Development North of Broadway Background

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
At the Commission’s meeting this past Monday there was discussion and interest in a Site Development Plan application that was heard (and approved) by the P&Z Board at their December 16, 2023 meeting. The request was for a proposed small office building (rendering below) located at 7016 Palm Drive (north of Broadway on one of the series of small lots that have docks located on them). The development met all of the Zoning District standards and did not require any variances. The P&Z Board has final approval authority of Site Development Plans.
Allen Parsons
Director Planning, Zoning & Building Department
Town of Longboat Key

Office Development North of Broadway Background

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
This is a bizarre use on these lots. We need to take a look at the zoning code.
BJ Bishop
Commissioner, Town of Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon Street and Drainage Initiatives

To: Longboat Key Commission
Attached please find a letter from the SLHA Board of Directors and Drainage Committee, expressing our hope that LBK’s planned phases for raising and leveling SL streets and improving drainage can receive the very highest priority from the Town in its budgeting, grant writing and execution cycles. We look forward to continuing our dialogue with the Town on this important issue.
John Connolly
Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon Street and Drainage Initiatives

To: John Connolly
Thank you for your letter regarding Sleepy Lagoon drainage initiatives. Having been on the job now for a year and having seen the flooding in that area and others around the Town, I concur that these continuing events are a top priority to address. I understand that Isaac will be addressing your association in the coming days and he will emphasize this point as well as he lives it first-hand every time the water is up as he can’t get into the front or the back of the Public Works complex.
My team will be looking at being more aggressive with our grant efforts and that is possible with the Commission approved and newly established grant coordinator position we’ve had in place now for six months. However, the needs are growing faster than the available grants and staff will be looking at our options to accelerate the design process so that we are “shovel ready” whenever additional funding becomes available.
Thank you for the continuing collaborative efforts with our Public Works team. Rising seas (or bays) are a huge challenge not just Longboat but coastal communities everywhere and by working together we can get this to the finish line.
Howard N. Tipton
Town Manager, Town of Longboat Key

Sleepy Lagoon Street and Drainage Initiatives

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton
Sleepy Lagoon is focused solely on the flooding of their streets so they have a hope to be able to drive in and out during flood events. The residents have been ‘on it’ for some years. 220+ homes.
John Connolly
Longboat Key

To: Hans Carl Clausen

Thank-you for your insightful and professional approach to addressing the traffic problem on Anna Maria. Presently there is no shortage of parking in Holmes Beach which actually provides excess parking. The County and State have both ignored the facts and fail to address another potential solution to this issue. Two past traffic studies conducted by the Urban Land Institute and FDOT recommend off-island parking with rapid transit transportation to the public beach. Neither report mentions a garage as a solution.
These facts pertain to the bill Governor DeSantis signed;
1. County can only build a garage on County owned land, the public beach in Holmes Beach and Coquina Beach in Bradenton Beach.
2. Any and all Holmes Beach site plan requirements were voided other than the 36 foot height limit.
3. No funding has been appropriated by the County or State.
4. No beach capacity report was ordered, no storm water or environmental reports were included in the bill.
5. The County estimates cost at \$30,000,000. for a 900 spot garage, which would eliminate the approximate 427 existing surface spots.
6. The County estimates construction would take two years. This project would strangle traffic at the most active intersection in Holmes Beach complicating traffic control for all.

See Letters, page 7



SEAPLACE • 2055 GULF OF MEXICO DR., #G2-102 • LONGBOAT KEY, FL



Three bedroom, two bath Longboat Key condo in coveted Seaplace. High end finishes throughout this 1,492 sq. ft. residence, including gorgeous polished travertine throughout all rooms and the double lanai, granite countertops in the kitchen with stainless steel appliances, lovely appointed bathrooms, custom lighting throughout, crown molding and plantation shutters in all rooms, as well as custom built closets. Primary suite is loaded with closet space, double sinks and separate shower room. Low condo fees for a large floor plan.
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The Meadows
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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 6

7. Holmes Beach has visibly marked all beach access streets intersecting Gulf Drive, has clearly marked all available parking places in the city and has loaded that information via a map on its website, in addition the City has negotiated availability of 2 church parking lots within the quarter mile perimeter of beach access locations.

8. City referred the availability of 2 parcels for sale which could have been utilized for parking over 2 years ago which the County failed to pursue.

9. Holmes Beach exceeds the number of parking places required under inter local agreements with the County and the State as required for beach renourishment funding purposes.

10. County would charge for parking, resulting in the City to follow suit, a change we prefer not to impose.

We believe parking garages which have always been prohibited in our city conflict with the small town, old Florida atmosphere which has been maintained and attracts residents and visitors from around the world.

As an alternative to a garage we believe widening the causeway (State Route 64, Manatee Avenue) to include a restricted lane for emergency vehicles and free rapid transit continuing across the new bridge to the public beach would minimize traffic and provide expanded parking for beach travelers.

The incentive of no cost parking and express lane access to the beach would encourage usage.

We await the County's decision and firmly believe the stated alternative provides a long term approach to managing traffic on Anna Maria with the continued growth in our region.

Terry Schaefer
Chair,Holmes Beach Commission

Tourism and parking

To: Longboat Key Commission

When COVID happened, and people were forced to “shelter at home”, I became a participant on the website “NextDoor”. I looked upon it as a social setting where neighbors and friends could gather still, as if in someone’s virtual kitchen. I imagined coffee and muffins being served, while everyone took part in a lively engaging conversation about our neighborhood.

COVID, for the most part, has passed. However, many of us still meet online. We recommend restaurants, stores, local handymen. We warn about coyote sightings.

One topic that frequently comes up: The tourists visiting our beaches and all the traffic challenges they bring.

Born and raised here, having enjoyed our soft white sandy beaches, our warm clear blue water - like no other beach in the world. And I’ve visited quite a few: the Mediterranean, the South China Sea, the Pacific... Our local beaches offer a luxury that really doesn’t exist anywhere else. Not even around Florida.

When I read NextDoor neighbors complaining about all the tourists I tend to mildly chastise them. I write: Aren’t “we” the problem? Haven’t “we” made Anna Maria & Bradenton Beach just so darn charming? And then we go and post photos of its fun & beauty online for everyone to see? Why are you so surprised our local islands have become a #1 tourist destination?

Without exaggeration, 100 percent of those who participate on NextDoor hate the proposed government traffic solution of building a single large parking garage on the island. They believe it will be ugly.

I tend to agree.

I may have mentioned this before, but I’ve worked for the largest architecture, builder/development, design, film and media companies in the world. I also taught at Parsons School of Design, considered one of the finest architecture/environmental design schools in the world.

If I may suggest an image of what I believe everyone is imagining this parking garage will look like, it could be this:

I think everyone will agree, to build something like this out on our beaches would be a truly ugly thing to do.

Something that could destroy forever all the charm, the human scale, the nature, the appeal of our islands that have taken generations of families to create. I don’t think even ol’ Salty Sol Fleischman could have imagined what his Anna Maria neighborhood was going to one day become.

Something as big and ugly as what’s depicted in this illustration may even wreck the local real estate market, putting a lot of people, both homeowners and realtors, at financial risk.

See Letters, page 8




Cindy Fischer

Exclusive Island Properties



2410 CASEY KEY ROAD
\$3,895,000

2 Beds
2 Baths
1,186 Sq. Ft.





680 BROADWAY STREET
\$1,995,000

3 Beds
4 Baths
2,009 Sq. Ft.





7030 POINSETTA AVENUE
\$1,975,000

2 Beds
2 Baths
1,402 Sq. Ft.





6960 POINSETTA AVENUE
\$815,000


2 Beds
2 Baths
1,461 Sq. Ft.





SOLD

5131 JUNGLE PLUM ROAD
\$9,300,000



SOLD

6957 LONGBOAT DRIVE
\$2,575,000



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Editor Letters



Letters, from page 7

Before something like this actually gets built, perhaps we should take a step back and try to imagine an alternative solution. Let's first consider the challenges of building a single tall parking garage anywhere on the island.

One initial challenge that I see right away is how this island stretches really far, from the tip of Anna Maria to Coquina. It is a long island. To build a single parking garage anywhere on this island would really only cater to a very tiny area, as I illustrate with the following maps:

With "X" marking the spot where a single tall garage building might be built, and the circle around each "X" being the only area that will be positively affected by such a structure. In sum: A single parking garage, no matter how big & tall, will only aid a very small area. It will not positively affect the rest of the island.

Building a single tall parking garage is not the solution. It will very likely be a very ugly design that will adversely affect the local area - especially the real estate market. It will not solve the parking challenges for most of the island. Possible 95% of the island will not receive any benefit whatsoever.

What if, instead, an alternative parking solution was considered, such as:

Why not acquire several small properties located throughout the island. And 'not' build a single tall huge structure, but instead erect a few small 2-3 story charmingly designed parking garages - 'peppered' around the island. Design these much smaller parking garages so that their facades, their exteriors, 'blend in' with the immediate local architecture. Each being different from the other.

Perhaps the following images of already existing uniquely designed smaller parking garages may convey what I mean:

By building 'mini' garages that will be located in various locations throughout the island this will provide more parking spaces in more areas that will be closer to more public beaches. The following map with various "X" locations suggest how this might take place:

Much more so than building one single possibly very ugly tall building.

This idea can be taken even further - by doing something that would place our local area even more on the map in an extremely positive way.

Each smaller parking garage could monitor how many cars are parked inside. As well, how many remaining spaces are available. This information could be made available on an APP that everyone can download. Visitors searching for a public parking space near to their favorite beach could immediately see, on this APP, which mini parking garage they could drive to and, at present, find a vacant space. With a sufficiently sophisticated APP, the vacant space could even be reserved.

A convenient, easy solution for our island parking - all in a nice handheld design.

What I am offering is just one alternative idea, to a proposal presently being forwarded by our local government that has, as far as I can observe, zero support from the local community because of its potential ugly and destructive presence.

Perhaps a workshop can take place where other alternative solutions can be imagined. From my own personal experience, urban and neighborhood design is the result of years of real training and extensive planning. Imagine, for example, someone performing surgery on your young child. Someone who has never been to medical school. Someone who has zero experience as a doctor or a surgeon. Imagine hiring someone to make out your will - and they've never been to law school. Your child would die. You could lose everything you've ever owned. That is often the result of what is called "plop architecture". People with zero training in urban or architectural design "plopping" buildings down any ol' place, making big decisions about placing big buildings anywhere they choose, without a true understanding of design.

Whatever is finally built, it will be there forever. Leaving a lasting impression upon those who will be forced to live with it. Including their disappointment if not their eternal resentment towards the individual and government body that "plopped" it down next to them.

So, in sum, will the island parking solution be a good one, a solution that everyone likes? A solution that really works?

Or not.
Hans Carl Clausen
Longboat Key

SARA Bulletin: Flooding Update

To: Longboat Key Town Manager Howard Tipton

Below is a recent update from Chris Goglia about flooding on St. Armand's. Do you know if the work on John Ringling Blvd began last night? I think this was to be three weeks of pole removal from 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. with closure of one of the two lanes. Should we give notice to our residents?

Ken Schneier
Mayor, Town of Longboat Key

SARA Bulletin: Flooding Update

To: Longboat Key Mayor Ken Schneier

Flooding update:

Last week, the County replaced the backflow prevention valves at our Pump Station PS 2005, located in the northeast residential quadrant at the intersection of N Washington Dr and Madison Dr:

I also had a phone conversation with Jason Brown, the County Stormwater Operations Manager. We covered a lot of subject matter, and my summary of this conversation at the bottom of this email is my best understanding and recollection of what we discussed.

But first, please review this brief summary of what we experienced in the past five months:

August 30, 2023: Hurricane Idalia passed to the west of us. While no significant wind impact, we were on the "dirty side" of the storm and experienced three-or-so feet of storm surge. This coincided with a king tide event and the result was significant flooding to Circle businesses and homes, primarily in the northeast residential quadrant. This may have been the worst flooding event on St. Armands in the 63 years since Hurricane Donna in 1960. Unfortunately, the electrical control panels for the five stormwater pump stations on St.

See Letters, page 11

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230 SANDS POINT RD Unit#3605	634	\$1,130,000	1	1	0	2	\$1,140,000
4900 GULF OF MEXICO DR Unit#201	1,561	\$925,000	2	2	0	67	\$819,000



1750 BENJAMIN FRANKLIN DR Unit#10F



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OnPatrol

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

Jan. 18 Vessel floating away

2:03 p.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol saw a 10 foot dinghy that had drifted away from his sailing vessel some-time during the night. A short time later he located a white 10 foot dinghy approximately one nautical mile south which matches the description of the boat. The dinghy was adrift and tucked into the mangroves int eh area of Bayou Hammock. Due to the water depth, Officer Connors was unable to retrieve, the owner had responded to the loca-tion, positively identified the dinghy as his and retrieved the dinghy without incident. Case clear.



Jan. 19 Lost cell phone

11:30 a.m.
Officer Swinford was dispatched to the area of Sloop Lane and Gulf of Mexico Drive in ref-erence to a lost/found cell phone. The complainant stated they left the found cell phone on a glove close to the roadway near the intersection. Officer Swinford arrived on scene and located the cell phone in question. Upon retrieving the cell phone, a man was in the area on foot and waved him down. The man said he had lost his cell phone and provided the proper passcode to unlock the device. Cell phone was returned to the owner and the issue was resolved. Case clear.

Jan. 20 Lost dog

4:23 p.m.
Officer Swinford was dispatched to the De Narvaez Drive in reference to a lost dog that was located. Moments prior to this call, Officer Swinford was flagged down by a woman stating her small white dog had got loose from Gulfside Road. Officer Swinford arrived at the complain-ant's address and the dog was confirmed to be that of the woman who had just flagged him down. Officer Swinford returned to Gulfside Road and informed the complainant where her dog was currently at. The dog was returned to the owner. Case clear.

Water main break

4:30 p.m.
Officer Pescuma responded to Sands Point Road for a broken water main. The officer spoke with the complainant and he said that he called a plumber for emergency repairs. The broken water main is on private property and the owner is making proper notifications. Case clear.

Jan. 21 Burglar alarm

Officer Ferrigine was dispatched to a burglar alarm on Hughes Street. The area of activation reported was the kitchen door. Officer Ferrigine arrived on scene and proceeded to the resi-dence. He conducted an exterior canvass of the residence and all doors and windows appeared secure. There was no keyholder responding and he returned to his job. Case clear.

Noise in the house

8:22 p.m.
Officer Mathis was dispatched to the 6100 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. The complainant advised dispatch that she believed someone was in her house. Upon his arrival to the location, Officer Mathis made contact with the complainant whom advised it was a false alarm. The complainant further explained that her sister had recently arrived home and everything was fine. Officers checked the residence for any suspicious activity or evidence of forced entry around the exterior of the residence before returning to service. Case clear.

Jan. 23 Citizen assist

10:31 a.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to Halyard Lane in ref-erence to a citizens assist. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with the complainant who advised a no wake zone sign was missing in the bay behind his house. The complainant advised that the sign has been missing at least three times since he has lived at the residence. The complainant advised that the sign has been missing at least three times since he has lived at the residence. The complainant was concerned with how fast the boats were traveling in the bay with the missing sign. Officer Miklos sent Officer Connors an email in reference to this case. While on marine patrol, Officer Miklos conducted a follow up in regards to the missing "Slow speed, minimum wake" zone. Officer Miklos located the single pile in Sarasota Bay, just off the end of Halyard Lane that said SSMW sign was bolted to. Officer Miklos forwarded the information to Public Works for repair and advised that it is located in a high priority area. Case clear.

Dog on the beach

12:44 p.m.
Officer Miklos was dispatched to the 2800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a dog on the beach by a caller who did not wish to meet with police. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with a small family with a dog. The family advised the animal was a service animal and had on a special harness. Case clear.

Jan. 24 Suspicious vehicle

12:05 a.m.
Officer Montfort while on patrol, observed a vehicle parked in the dark area of the parking lot of the 6800 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Montfort observed a man sleeping in the rear of the vehicle. Officer Montfort woke the sleeping man who said he had just arrived in town. The man stated he did not have a hotel for the evening and would be relocating to Siesta Key for vacation tomorrow. Officer Montfort advised the man that he could not camp within the confines of the town. The man left the area without incident. Case clear.

Jan. 25 Dog on the beach

11:15 a.m.
Officer Connors while on marine patrol in the area of Greer Island, observed a vessel approach the beach and a woman exit the boat with a dog in hand. Officer Connors advised the woman that dogs area prohibited on the beach per Longboat Key Town Ordinance. The woman returned to the boat and left the area. Case clear.

Found cards

12:25 p.m.
Officer Ramsaier responded to the 5700 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in refrence to found property. The resident said he found three articles of documents belonging to another resident. The documents found were a Florida Driver's License, a Bank of America debit card and an AARP card all issued to the owner. Officer Ramsaier attempted to locate the owner at his residence and was met with positive results. Officer Ramsaier returned the three documents to the owner. Case clear.

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Editor Letters

Letters, from page 8

Armands were surface mounted and got submerged by the floodwater, rendering them inoperable. Two of them may have already been inoperable for other reasons.

The County told us that it didn't matter that the pumps didn't work; that the stormwater management system was not designed to handle flooding from storm surge.

December 17, 2023: An unnamed winter storm caused significant flooding in the northeast residential quadrant of St. Armands. At 2:30am, the Sarasota Police Department issued an alert on their Facebook page stating that roadways on St Armands Circle were underwater and that the area was closed. Flooding was so bad that the Lutheran Church had to cancel all their Sunday morning religious services.

The County told us that one pump station overheated (PS 7010) and the storm drains leading to another (PS 2005) were clogged from vegetation/debris.

January 9, 2024: Another unnamed winter storm caused localized flooding between the Lutheran Church and the fire station.

The County told us that the check valves (backflow prevention) at Pump Station PS 2005 "are shot" and that they are not sure why Pump Station PS 7010 (located on the east side of the key in the median of John Ringling Blvd near the intersection with N and S Washington Dr) stopped pumping.

Pump Stations PS 2005 and PS 7010 seem to be the most problematic. Click here to view a map of St. Armands Key with the pump stations labelled. The County is still working on both per the pictures above and my notes below.

Following each of the above flooding events, the County was on-site when it was safe to do so and when they became aware of the flooding (someone has to call 311 to report it) or of malfunctioning pumps (reported electronically). The County brought in portable pumps whenever needed, has replaced and pole-mounted all electrical control panels, and is continuing to spend significant funds updating the St. Armands pump stations with new pumps, valves, panels, wiring, and pump outs.

We've learned a lot of information about the St. Armands stormwater management system over the past five months, but the following are just my notes from my most recent phone conversation with the County Stormwater Operations Manager:

There are two large generators on St. Armands Key: one behind the fire station that provides emergency power to PS 2005 and the pump stations on N Blvd of Presidents; one in the Fillmore Parking Lot that provides emergency power to PS 7010 and the pump station on S Blvd of Presidents

At some point in the past, it is believed that directional drilling was done that may have "nicked" the buried electrical and/or communication lines running from the Fillmore generator to PS 7010, and over time there has been a "hodge podge" of repairs done to these lines which has finally "reared its ugly head"

The County is planning to pull out these existing electrical and communication lines, do their own new underground

directional drilling from the Fillmore generator to PS 7010, and pull 1000' of new wire in a single "monolithic" pull (one continuous wire; no junction boxes combining multiple shorter lengths of wire)

The County expects this work to be completed by June 1st, before the next rainy season

The County has already spent \$500k on new pumps, \$120k on new panels and pump-outs, \$65k on new valves for PS 2005, and expects the upcoming electrical work to be another \$20k

The County must have obtained an easement from the City to place the generator on the Fillmore Parking Lot (it's near the back of The Met), and it will be interesting to see how that comes into play if the City ever tries to sell this parking lot to a developer again

The County only maintains the stormwater management system on St. Armands, but the City actually owns it. This means that if your street always has pooling water after every rainstorm, it would be the City's decision (and budget) whether or not to put in additional storm drains and connect them to the existing underground drainage pipes.

The County confirmed with the City that the City performs street sweeping once per month

A closing thought: All of us, especially those of us in the areas most prone to flooding in the northeast residential quadrant of St. Armands, need to call the County 311 number to report clogged storm drains, flooding during a storm, or even just water pooling adjacent to a storm drain, whenever you

see any of these things. County staff are supposedly on call 24x7 to come out here to clear storm drains or reset pumps. I encourage you to let me know when you do this so that I can follow up with the people in charge to discuss how frequently it happens and to make sure the County is responding.

Please let me know what further questions we should ask the County, or what more we should ask them to do for us, to ensure that our stormwater management system works as designed for future storms.

Chris Goglia
President, St. Armands Residents Association

Annual Meeting

To: Carol Erker

Buttonwood and Sleepy Lagoon are on the Town's high priority list for our flooding issues. Sleepy Lagoon has already asked for a staff member to come to their annual meeting to bring the neighbors up to date on the project. They have had residents at the meetings where this issue has been on the agenda.

I would suggest the Buttonwood HOA would be well served to ask for an update at the annual meeting from staff. We have new people and none of them are familiar with this project.

BJ Bishop
Commissioner
Town of Longboat Key

Longboat Key News

Sarasota City News

PO Box 8001

Longboat Key, FL 34228

941-387-2200

www.lbknews.com

Steve Reid, Editor & Publisher

sreid@lbknews.com

Associate Publisher

Melissa Reid

Columnists

Susan Goldfarb, Sig Hermansen,

Greg Rusovich, Blake Fleetwood

Sales

Lillian Sands

Steve Reid

ads@lbknews.com

Graphic Production

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What’s Happening at the Education Center at Temple Beth Israel

The next two months will be hopping at The Education Center!

SUSAN GOLDFARB
Contributing Writer
goldfarb@lbknews.com

The next two months will be hopping at The Education Center at TBI. There are 12 programs running each day, Monday through Friday, with concerts on Sundays. In addition to recurring courses such as yoga, qigong, Nordic walking, meditation, Supreme Court, world politics, watercolor, birding, nature walks, movie and book discussions, music and dance appreciation, film festivals, mah jongg, canasta, bridge, writing workshops, languages and world politics, there 75 % new academic, cultural and recreational events and programs every season, making The Education Center at TBI a unique place to be if you love to learn new things and enjoy exciting performances. As promised in previous columns, I will highlight some “not to be missed” concerts and learning experiences.

But before that I must ask everyone to consider joining us for our first FUNdraiser called KICKIN’ KARAOKE AND DANCING THROUGH THE DECADES on Saturday, February 10 from 8-10 PM. Come and sing your favorite hits from your best -loved singers and groups with a special tribute to Motown and Funky Soul. Dance through the decades from Swing to today’s top 100 or just come celebrate with those who do.

Carl Kurtyka, the center’s amazing technical director, who also sings and DJs professionally, will run the karaoke and spin the tunes. Have fun dressing up in your favorite decade outfit—spandex, go-go boots, tie-dye shirts, polka dot or poodle skirts, and win a prize for best costume. This Fundraiser will help support The Education Center for the future. Sponsorships are welcome, please contact us. Members \$50, Non-Members \$60, includes wine, champagne, sweets, and a great evening!

NEW ORLEANS JAZZ NIGHTS

Kid Dutch returns with his exceptional guest jazz artists. These popular concerts have been entertaining audiences at The Education Center for over a decade! They never fail to amuse and make you want to tap your toes and snap your fingers!

Tuesday, January 30, 8-10 PM
Tuesday, February 27, 8-10 PM

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Dr. Robert Vodnoy, conductor, composer, violinist, and educator who currently conducts the Chamber Orchestra of Sarasota and Whiting Park Festival Orchestra (IN)

Fridays 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Begins: 2/2 Ends: 2/9

Dr. Vodnoy will discuss the anniversaries of composers such as Smetana , Mancini, Puccini



and Fauré in his first lecture and devote the second half of his series to Chopin and his world.

ROMEO & JULIET—Why Does True Love Have to Be Tragic to Be True?

Jonathan (Jonny Epstein), actor and teaching professor of classical performance at the Asolo Conservatory of Florida State University

Fridays 11:00 AM-12:30 PM Begins 2/16 Ends: 2/23

Romeo and Juliet have remained the archetype of romantic love for centuries. This program will explore the reason for our fascination with this story. We are not banning Romeo & Juliet. LOL!

NEIL DIAMOND: Hitman!

Jay O’Brien, cantor, Susan Benjamin, musical biographer, and Robert Hanson, symphony conductor, composer, and musical director

Sunday, February 4 3:00-4:30 PM

This dynamic trio is back to bring you another blockbuster show! Remember their fantastic “HALLELUJAH! Leonard Cohen and Friends” from last season? It was a performance that everyone raved about for weeks and for which they earned a standing ovation! This season’s “Neil Diamond: Hitman!” promises to deliver the same impact. Audience members will get new insights into the life and work of Neil Diamond while also enjoying some of his many songs that have pervaded popular culture for over half a century. Come and delight in Neil’s hits and leave singing his familiar tunes. A champagne reception will follow.

THE MAN I LOVE—The Story of George Gershwin

Sandra Moulin, storyteller, musician, public speaker

Sunday, February 18 3:00-4:15 PM

Sandra Moulin plays the role of Gershwin’s muse and tells the story of their ten-year love affair. Performing such favorites as “Bess, You is my Woman,” and “The Man I Love,” Sandta weaves the most popular Gershwin tunes into this fascinating story of America’s iconic songwriter. Come sing along as you step back into the Jazz Age and enjoy the highlights of Geroge Gershwin’s life.

To register for any of these programs and events email us at edcenter@longboatkey-temple.org. Visit our website www.tbieducationcenter.org or call 941-383-8811.

Looking forward to seeing you! Susan Goldfarb, Program Director, The Education Center @ Temple Beth Israel



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WineTimes

Mainstream vs. Niche Wines

The mainstream wine buyer is looking for consistency. The buyer of niche wine is looking for qualities that may vary.

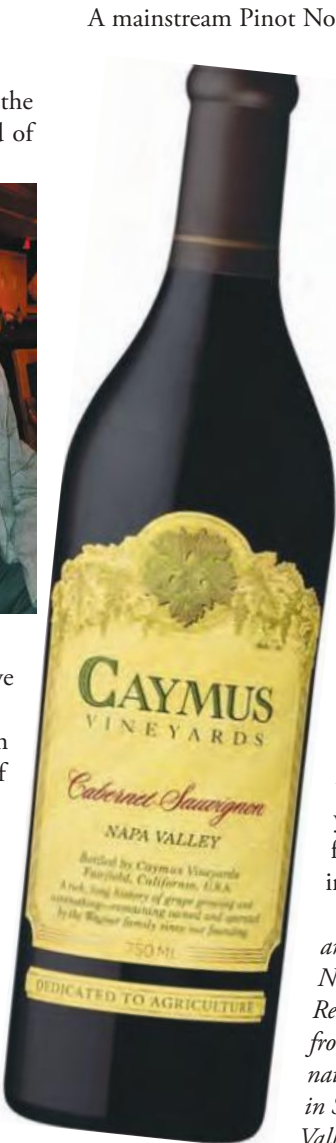
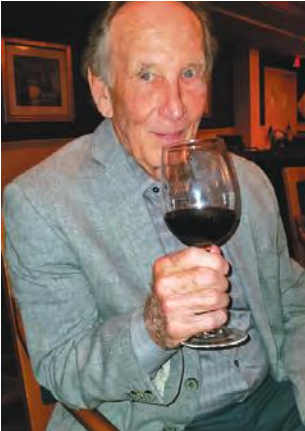
S.W. and Rich Hermansen
Guest Writers
wine@lbknews.com

The quality of mainstream wines in the USA, and abroad as well, has improved during the past several decades to a degree that people who know what they like can choose a brand of wine, as they would a brand of ketchup, and stay with it. For instance, for a wide range of fish appetizers and main courses, they may choose the popular mainstream Kim Crawford Sauvignon Blanc from the Marlborough region of New Zealand with no concern about the plots where the grapes in the wine are being grown or the vintage. Winemakers fine tune this wine to match the tastes of loyal buyers and by blending grapes from different plots or regions and manage to produce a very similar product year after year.

The mainstream wine buyer is looking for consistency. The buyer of niche wine is looking for qualities that may vary widely from one plot of grapes to another and from year to year: say, an edge of citric acidity up front and a slightly spicy and sweet taste in the finish. When paired with flounder, rock-fish, cobia, grouper, trout or another white-flesh fish, a suitable niche wine enhances the flavors of the dish. Pinot Gris from the Alsace ages to good effect for three years or more. The Trimbach 2017 Pinot Gris Reserve (\$33) enlivens the bland tastes of fresh saltwater or freshwater fish.

Niche wines offer options to discriminating diners. For a special occasion a mainstream diner may go for a prime strip sirloin steak at home on a grill or in a steakhouse. Prime beef has streaks of marbling fat running through it, and a tender, bordering on soft, texture. The most popular premier Napa Cabernet Sauvignon this year, the Caymus 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$79) pairs beautifully with a prime steak. Though young for a Cab, the tannins in the 2021 have softened, and they glaze fat and rare beef. The 2021 Caymus cab has the same qualities as the 2020 and the 2022 vintage waiting in the wings. Contrast this mainstream food-wine pairing with grass-fed beef and a niche wine. A niche wine does not have to be obscure in origin. The 2019 Ridge Cabernet Sauvignon Estate (\$73) comes from the renowned Montebello Estate in Santa Cruz mountains well south of Napa. A grass-fed steak tends to be firmer than corn-fed prime, with a crunch when you sink your teeth in it. The 2019 Ridge has 11% Merlot and a trace of Petite Verdot. This smooths the edges and adds depth to a big red wine. The sinew of this niche wine matches that of the grass-fed beef.

The desire to maintain consistency holds back the mainstream wine drinker who stays with a Cab when the peppery spice of a California Contra Costa Zinfandel matches better to pasta with a rich tomato sauce, the rich tannins of an Argentine Malbec fit the bill for a roasted pork loin, or the jammy heat of an Australian Shiraz holds sway when served with a rack of lamb. Each of the varieties has its own qualities and its own niche in the culinary spectrum.



A mainstream Pinot Noir such as a Lola or Lyric delivers a consistent taste from one year to the next when paired with grilled tuna, roast chicken, a partridge stew, or cheese plate. Winemakers blend Pinot Noir grapes from the Monterey coast, the Santa Cruz highlands, and the North Shore of California to balance the qualities of these regions. Yet this blending toward a common denominator for the sake of consistency sacrifices some of the unique characteristics of the Pinot Noir grape. By reviving winemaking techniques that mainstream wineries have discontinued, niche winemakers expand their palette of wine qualities.

Whole cluster fermentation of Pinot Noir grapes, for instance, adds stems and a few leaves to a vat of wine grapes. During fermentation the stems deepen the intensity of the red color of Pinot Noir wine and make it more robust. This occurs naturally. The winemaker does not have to doctor the wine with additives or interventions such as carbonic maceration (depriving fermenting grapes of oxygen to reduce acidity in wines).

The 2022 Willamette Valley Vineyards Whole Cluster Pinot Noir (\$20) gives us a good example of an interesting alternative Pinot Noir at a comparable price point to mainstream Pinot Noir. The wine may vary more from year to year, but in good years it excels. It has bright cherry and strawberry flavors with an earthy background.

We see less daring wine drinkers stepping up from bottom shelf wines and finding mainstream wines that give them consistent tastes year to year. More adventurous food and wine aficionados try to find better pairings of wines to foods. Results vary but usually prove interesting and enlightening

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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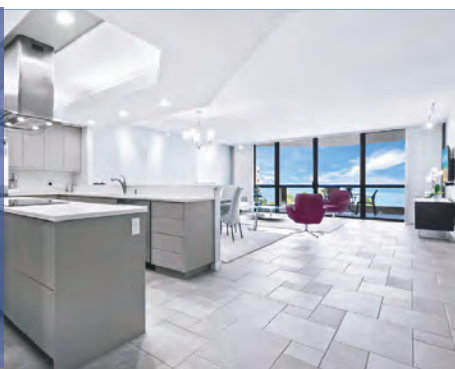
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