



Longboat Key News

February 13, 2026

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FREE

InsideLook



Implosion of a rising star ...page 15



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Path to beach turns gruff ...page 10

Massive Bridge and Roundabout Projects Set to Transform Longboat

STEVE REID
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For residents of Longboat Key, the view from the windshield is about to change dramatically. In a sweeping update on the future of island infrastructure, Town officials and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) have outlined a series of massive projects—from a new fixed-span Cortez Bridge to a roundabout at the north end—that promise to modernize travel but will require patience during years of construction.



According to a recent memo detailing the state of the island's

arteries, the next five to ten years will be defined by heavy machinery, detours, and ultimately, a free-flowing drive devoid of drawbridge delays.

Here is what you need to know about the road ahead.

The End of the Drawbridge Delay: Cortez Bridge Replacement

The days of sitting idle while the Cortez Bridge opens for boat traffic are numbered. The most significant regional investment on the docket is the complete replacement of the aging drawbridge with a 65-foot-

See Roadwork, page 12

From Red Carpets to Real Lives: The Soulful Evolution of Longboat's Marty Hurwitz

In a society that rewards talent with immense monetary compensation, walking away from the peak of success is a rare feat. But that is exactly what Marty Hurwitz did.

STEVE REID
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Shamans often speak of a transformative experience born of deep pain and insight. Psychologists know that when the shadow is brought to light, new growth can occur. Many of us know that after an injury, a business failure, or a personal crisis, we are faced with a choice: retreat, or birth a new idea.

In a society that rewards talent with immense monetary compensation, walking away from the peak of success is a rare feat. But that is exactly what Marty Hurwitz did.

Hurwitz, a Longboat Key resident, spent 25 years at the apex of Hollywood as an agent to countless movie stars, writers, and creative elites. Yet, he found his true calling not in keeping the Hollywood machine functional, but in helping the impoverished children of Sarasota find their own functionality. Last week, Hurwitz spoke to a



Marty Hurwitz and Mel Rhinelander

gathering at the Longboat Key Club Tennis Gardens, sharing a journey that took him from the glitz of the entertainment industry to the gritty realities of at-risk youth education.

Organized by Mel Rhinelander, a retired healthcare CEO and former champion tennis player, the event was intimate and unscripted. Rhinelander introduced Hurwitz by admitting that when they first met a decade ago at a tennis clinic, he didn't initially like Marty. But after a cup of coffee, they became fast friends. Rhinelander told the

crowd he was fascinated by Marty's Hollywood life, but deeply moved by his post-Hollywood evolution in Sarasota.

Hurwitz, speaking from the heart, began with a reflection on his path. "We are a product of our journeys," he told the audience. "It is one of the values of aging."

The Loafers That Changed a Life

Hurwitz's journey to Hollywood began, ironically, with a job inter-

See Marty, page 12

Race Against the Freeze: Mote Marine Battles Cold to Rescue Florida Icons

As a brutal winter cold front seized Florida in late January, plunging air temperatures into the 30s and sending water thermometers nose-diving, a silent crisis began to unfold beneath the waves.



While residents bundled up against the chill, Florida's most vulnerable marine giants were fighting for their lives.

In a heroic response to this environmental emergency, Mote Marine Laboratory & Aquarium has taken in nearly 30 critical patients in just a matter of days—launching a high-stakes rehabilitation effort for three cold-stressed manatees and 25 comatose sea turtles.

The Silent Killer: When Water Turns to Ice

For us, a cold snap is an inconvenience. For a Florida manatee or a green sea turtle, it is a metabolic catastrophe.

Data from the recent "bomb cyclone" event reveals that local water temperatures in bays and estuaries—where these animals forage—plummeted rapidly. When water temperatures drop below 68°F (20°C), manatees, which have surprisingly little body fat to insulate them, begin to suffer from Cold Stress Syndrome.

This condition is far more than just shivering. It is a physiological cascading failure. Their digestion shuts down, their immune system collapses, and their skin breaks out in white, frostbite-like lesions. Without warmth, they eventually become too weak to surface for air, leading to drowning.

For sea turtles, the threshold is even lower but the results are just as deadly. When water hits 50°F (10°C), they experience "cold stunning." As ectothermic (cold-blooded) reptiles, they instantly lose the ability to regulate their body temperature. Their heart rate slows to a crawl, and they enter a state of

See Cold Snap, page 6

RECORD BREAKER: Kiwanis Lawn Party Delivers \$123,900 for Children's Guardian Fund

It was a moment of celebration and record-breaking generosity this week as the Longboat Key Kiwanis Club presented the proceeds from their 2025 Lawn Party by the Bay.

Pictured here is the official check presentation, a snapshot that captures the culmination of a massive community effort. While the oversized check displays an impressive \$103,900, the club announced that the total "Lawn Party Impact" actually soared to a record-setting \$123,900.

Club leadership clarified that the final total includes two significant direct contributions made to the Children's Guardian Fund that accompanied the main check: a \$15,000 match from The Carter, and an additional \$5,000 donation from Ken Schneier and Cynthia Craig. This \$5,000 gift was a bonus contribution, separate from their already generous Platinum Sponsorship.

A Community Effort

Organizers noted that this year's success was driven by "100% participation" from the Kiwanis Club members, who contributed time, talent, and treasure to make the event happen.

"It was a pleasure working with Michael Garey and the entire Kiwanis Club of Longboat Key team to make December's Lawn Party such a success," said Danielle Gladding, President of the Kiwanis Club of Longboat Key. "As chair of the event, Michael deserves the main credit—he led with incredible dedication and energy. At the same time, it was truly a team effort from the whole Kiwanis Club that made this the amazing success it was."

Michael Garey, owner of the Lazy Lobster on Longboat Key and the event Chair, was equally elated by the outcome, crediting Gladding's leadership for sparking the momentum.

"While I've had the privilege of chairing the Lawn Party, this was absolutely a team effort in every sense of the word," Garey said. "Danielle's leadership as President—in getting people involved, her outstanding social media efforts, and the enthusiasm she inspired in our Club—was instrumental in making this year's Lawn Party special. The record-setting impact for the Children's Guardian Fund belongs to all of us, and to a community that continues to show up and support our all-volunteer efforts."

Beyond the leadership, the event featured a record number of restaurant partners, a feat credited to Restaurant Chair Michelle Waldron. The atmosphere was set by the musical stylings of Blues Pig, who donated their performance, and Gold Coast Eagle, which provided beverages. Vital logistical support was provided by a team of volunteers, most notably the freshman students from Cardinal Mooney High School.

Extraordinary Generosity

While the total number is staggering, one specific act of kindness stood out as the highlight of the event. Frank and Katherine Martucci, the winners of the event's raffle, stunned the crowd by donating back nearly \$18,000 in winnings. Organizers stated that this act "truly embodies the spirit of this event and our community."

Sponsors Make It Possible

The Kiwanis Club wishes to thank the incredible lineup of sponsors who made the 2025 Lawn Party by the Bay the most successful in history:

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See Kiwanis, page 3



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Katherine Martucci, Michael Garey, Danielle Gladding, Frank Martucci

Kiwanis, from page 2

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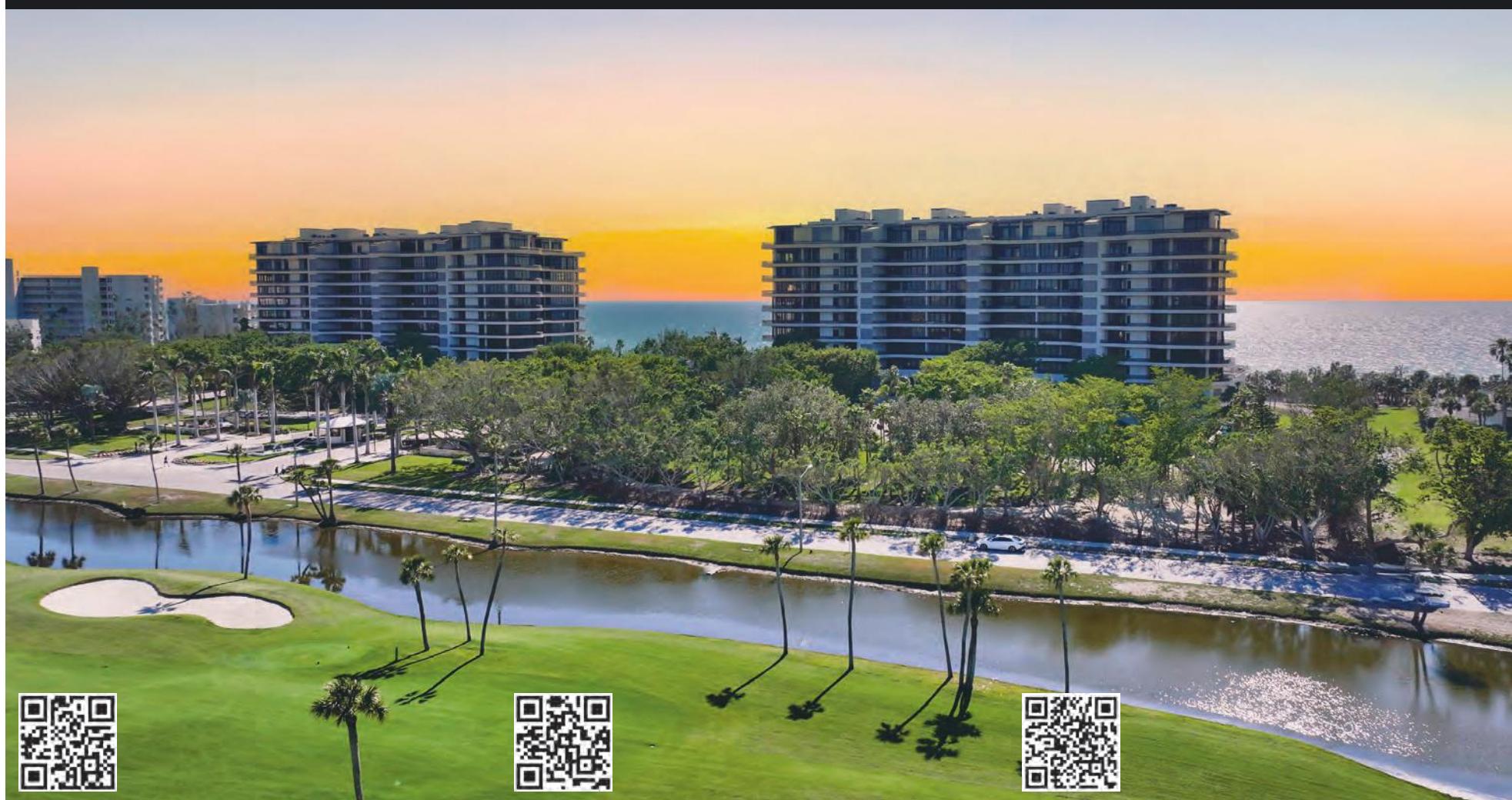
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Cold Snap, from page 1

forced hibernation, floating helplessly at the surface where they are vulnerable to boat strikes, predators, and pneumonia.

A Lifeline in Sarasota

Mote Marine Laboratory answered the desperate call.

The influx began with three young manatees pulled from the dangerously cold waters of Bear Creek in Pinellas County. On Tuesday, January 27, rescuers fought to save a young male. Two days later, on January 29, a young female and another male were pulled from the same chilling creek. These rescues were a massive coordinated effort involving the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Bishop Museum of Science and Nature, Eckerd College Search and Rescue, and ZooTampa.

But the freezing tides brought more victims. On Tuesday, February 3, a convoy arrived at Mote carrying 25 green sea turtles, transferred from Florida's east coast where the shallow lagoons had turned into icy traps.

"When cold-stressing and stunning occur, the ability to respond quickly and effectively is critical," said Lynne Byrd, Rehabilitation & Medical Care Manager at Mote. "Mote's facilities, protocols, and experienced staff allow us to provide high-quality rehabilitative care during periods when multiple species are impacted at the same time."

Stepping Up When Capacity is Critical

This rescue mission comes at a pivotal moment. Florida's critical care facilities for manatees are currently overflowing. Recognizing Mote's world-class expertise, federal and state authorities recently upgraded Mote's designation to a "light-critical care" facility. This crucial change allows Mote to accept patients directly from rescue sites, clearing a logjam in the system and freeing up space at primary hospitals for the most grave cases.

Mote is saving these animals without a safety net of their own. There is currently no designated federal or state funding for these specific emergency rehabilitations. Mote is diverting its own internal resources—money, staff, and medicine—to ensure these animals do not become casualties of the cold.

As winter's grip fluctuates, Mote Marine Laboratory remains a beacon of hope on the Gulf Coast, proving once again that when nature turns harsh, human compassion and scientific expertise can turn the tide.

DATA SNAPSHOT: THE BIG CHILL

- Air Temps: Dipped into the 30s°F across Central Florida.
- Water Threat Level (Manatees): <68°F triggers metabolic shutdown.
- Water Threat Level (Turtles): <50°F causes immediate paralysis (cold stunning).
- Patients: 3 Florida Manatees, 25 Green Sea Turtles.
- Status: Critical but stable under 24/7 observation.



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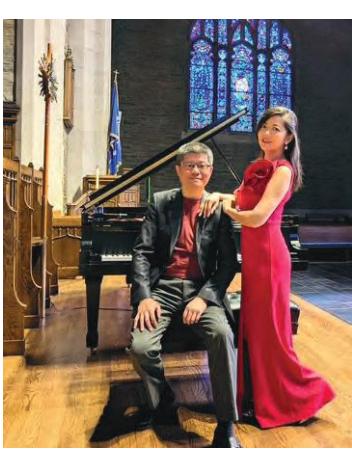
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South Palm News

SARASOTA
STILL IS
"SMILING UP TO
SUNNY SKIES"

VOL. 1—NO.001

SARASOTA, FLORIDA

WINTER/SPRING 2026

WHERE SARASOTA'S STORY BEGAN—AND BEGINS AGAIN

* * * * *

PRESERVING THE PAST, DEFINING THE FUTURE

BY JEFF LAHURD

Amid the plethora of downtown condominiums, the Mira Mar stands apart, for it was at this South Palm Avenue site that the foundation for modern Sarasota was laid over 100 years ago.

Seaward Development immediately recognized the importance of the Mira Mar Apartments and the former Mira Mar Hotel to the history of Sarasota. The Mira Mar Apartments were the catalyst to Sarasota's rapid transition from a fishing, ranching, and agricultural community into a stellar destination known nationally for attracting residents and tourists, a reputation still enjoyed. With overwhelming citywide support, Seaward Development will preserve the iconic apartment and return the building to its original condition. Thus, Mira Mar Residences will link Sarasota's colorful Roaring 1920s past to today's vibrant downtown for future generations.

JEWEL OF THE GULF, RISING

In the early 1920s, the Mira Mar Apartments and Mira Mar Hotel and Auditorium were constructed. As a result, Sarasota's growth exploded. A.B. Edwards, the city's first mayor, estimated that it would have normally taken 50 to 100 years to duplicate what happened in Sarasota in less than a handful of years.

The community had always offered an abundance of natural ingredients to be a go-to retreat for wealthy Snowbirds and tourists: the highly touted "Salubrious Climate," the sparkling jewel of Sarasota Bay at its downtown doorstep. Add the unblemished tropical beauty of palm trees, moss draped oaks, annual verdant foliage, unmatched white sand beaches, and a veritable cornucopia of game, fish, oysters, and clams for fishers and hunters alike.

Visitors characterized Sarasota as follows: "This is a tranquil village that provides limited appeal for



VIEW SHOWING THE MIRA MAR & SARASOTA HOTELS, SARASOTA, FLORIDA

those seeking fashionable pursuits and entertainment. However, individuals seeking respite from the demands of daily life will find its peaceful atmosphere conducive to rest and rejuvenation."

In 1922, Mayor Everett Bacon and the city council met with Canadian born businessman Andrew McAnsh. Determined, indeed, this gentleman was the real deal, renowned as a "town builder."

Underscoring his bona-fides, Wichita Falls banker Charles Davidson was quoted in The Sarasota Times, "The buildings Mr. McAnsh constructed in Wichita were better in every way... and are bringing in more revenue today than when built seven years ago. And we want McAnsh back there and we'll give him anything he wants. That's the kind of man he is." That same sentiment was shared by John F. Smulski, President of the Northwestern Trust and Savings Bank of Chicago, stating, "I am confident that Sarasota has significant potential for future growth. Andrew McAnsh is

assuredly going to put it on the map..."

Expectations ran high, and The Sarasota Times generated much excitement, regularly focusing on McAnsh, and his grand plans for Sarasota. As to why he chose Sarasota: "You ask me why I did not choose St. Petersburg, Miami, Palm Beach or some other place in Florida? All beautiful spots, but I like Sarasota above all else. And I have seen them all... Money is only a matter of convenience. I have all the money I need."

"But to know Sarasota and its people is to love both. No more cordial people could be found anywhere. That is honestly how I feel about it."



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VIEW SHOWING THE MIRA MAR & SARASOTA HOTELS, SARASOTA, FLORIDA

FROM VILLAGE TO VISION

BY JEFF LAHURD

When Sarasota broke away from Manatee County to form Sarasota County in 1921, the downtown area was defined by boarding houses, a hotel established in 1887 that had long since lost its former prestige, and a collection of one- and two-story wood or rusticated block structures housing residences and businesses. Near the foot of Main Street, the area around the bayfront suffered from the nascent fishing industry, marked by rundown shacks, old boats, tangled nets, flies, the smell of decaying fish, and whatever else washed onto the shore.

McAnsh sought major concessions before he would proceed—and got them.

Ordinance No. 312-A, “The City agrees to furnish water and electric service to the said Mira Mar Hotel and Mira Mar Apartments at no charge for a period of ten (10) years from the date of completion...” Sidewalk and street improvements were also promised.

Increasing expectations and illustrating what could lay ahead, on September 14, 1922, an architectural rendering of what his million-dollar hotel, temporarily called the Tamiami Inn, would look like, were revealed. Fronting Sarasota Bay, the elegantly beautiful hotel, incorporated the Mediterranean Revival style on a scale commonly associated with Miami and Palm Springs. The brick hotel would be fireproof, and “follow the Spanish and Italian style of architecture which lends itself so admirably to the enhancement of the tropical beauties of this section.”

The style was popularized throughout the state by the colorful architect Addison Mizner in Palm Beach. As the hotel offered an unobstructed view of Sarasota Bay, it was christened the Mira Mar—sea view. The Times put it: “[After] Years of hopes and rumors of a large modern tourist hotel for Sarasota, the indications now are that these hopes and rumors are to become realities.”

Ground was broken for the “Half Million Dollar Apartment House,” on October 5, 1922, and three weeks later a contract for the first unit of the new apartment house was let to the Carman Co., in what was the largest contract in the city’s history. Work began immediately and subsequently, the Mira Mar Apartments earned the moniker “the 60-day wonder” due to the continuous, round-the-clock effort required to complete.

The modern apartments were available in one, two, or three-bedroom units with optional maid service. While the hotel would be operated seasonally, the apartments were available year-round. McAnsh and his wife Bertha lived in one of the three-bedroom apartments. Their son Byron stayed there during his visits to town. Residing on site enabled McAnsh to welcome new guests, and chat with them, which he found rewarding. All 25 apartments received annual updates.



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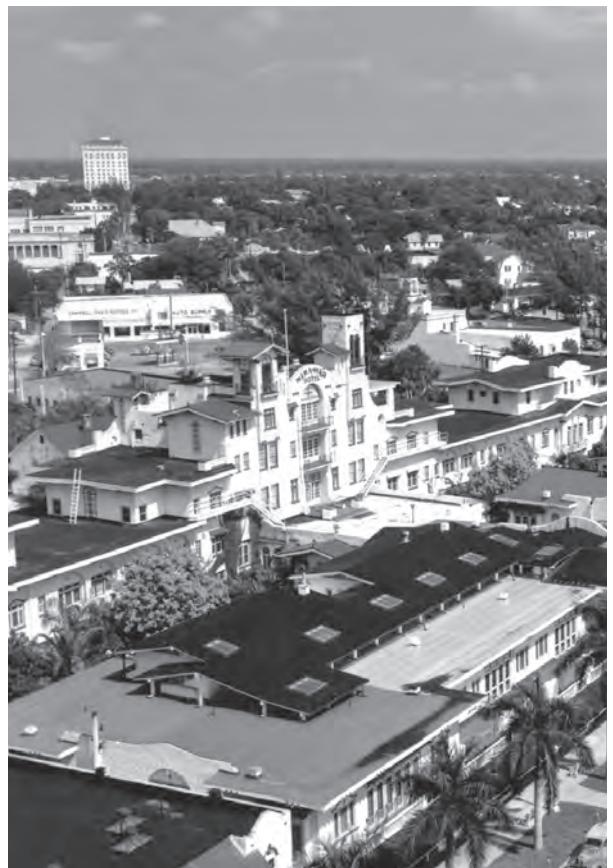
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TARPON FISHING IN SARASOTA



ANDREW MCANSH



MIRA MAR HOTEL

A CITY TRANSFORMED

BY JEFF LAHURD

Immediately businesses sought to rent space in the apartments' 18 storefronts. Catering to affluent snowbirds, Abercrombie & Fitch opened a winter-only shop for each season. With fishing still a major tourist attraction, and golf becoming more popular, Gardner-Noble, a sporting goods store opened at Mira Mar. Their large tarpon sign became a point of reference for directions to other merchants. Harry Green, a writer specializing in advertising materials, was among the lessees, alongside Manning and French who provided clothing which included dress shirts, arrow collars, and a comprehensive selection of men and women's apparel.

Well-known surgeon, Dr. Jack Halton, who specialized in diseases of eyes, ears, and throat relocated his office to the Mira Mar, as did a beauty shop, which offered "A becoming bob," the latest style for the younger set. A. B. Edwards relocated his real estate and insurance firm there. So too, real estate man, C. E. Rowland, "Choice Property—Sterling Values."

The Mira Mar Café opened with an advertisement that emphasized modern dining preferences, mentioning that customers would be attracted by the scent of Maxwell House coffee and freshly prepared eggs with Beech-Nut bacon. Dissatisfied with the food provided? "If you have any kicks coming, see us."

Shortly after the Mira Mar Hotel opened, the

adjacent Mira Mar Auditorium debuted on January 19, 1924, quickly becoming Sarasota's social and cultural hub. Its grand opening, billed as "The Event of the Season," featured coloratura soprano Josephine Lucchese, known as "The American Nightingale," baritone Robert Ringling of circus fame, and acclaimed concert pianist Margaret Carlisle.

The auditorium anchored a thriving arts scene that blended sophistication with modern flair. It hosted touring orchestras, jazz bands, and theatrical productions, drawing national and international talent. Highlights included Frieda Hempel, the "Jenny Lind of Today," and Russian bass Fedor Chaliapin, hailed as the "World's Greatest Opera Singer." Adventurer Lowell Thomas captivated audiences with his lecture "With Lawrence in Arabia," while the Tennessee Serenaders brought spirited dance music to flappers and hotel guests alike—complete with a novelty left-handed banjo player.

For certain guests, the second floor offered a complete gambling room, operated by Conrad and Locke which ran the Golden Horseshoe in Chicago. Locals were banned, but snowbirds could freely gamble their money away. The auditorium, anchored on Palm Avenue, became the site of choice for local entertainers, fashion and flower shows, meetings, political rallies, fund-raisers, card parties, lectures, and art exhibitions.

After the Mira Mar complex was completed the rapidity of downtown Sarasota's growth was truly breathtaking. Indeed, the capitalists that were promised to follow McAnsh's lead to invest in Sarasota, came.

Construction immediately began on multi-storyed banks and hotels, along with churches, schools, improved roads and highways, a much-needed hospital (now Sarasota Memorial), automobile dealerships, residential developments, upscale restaurants, and the opulent Edwards Theatre (presently the Sarasota Opera House).

Those wishing to make money on the escalating real estate market were set upon by the numerous high-pressure real estate agents who came for the same purpose. Capitalizing on the boom, the Sarasota Herald started its presses in October of 1925, and This Week In Sarasota followed suit. Full-page advertisements filled all the newspapers. By 1925, the Chamber of Commerce issued a booklet calling Sarasota the City of Glorified Opportunity. The county became a combination of the California gold rush, the Oklahoma land rush, and the Bear stock market. Prominent real estate man and civic leader, Roger Flory recalled, "There were stacks of checks by every cash register, smiles on every face, money in every pocket."



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A FUTURE WORTH BUILDING



VIEW SHOWING THE MIRA MAR & SARASOTA HOTELS, SARASOTA, FLORIDA

BY JEFF LAHURD

However, the devastating hurricane that struck Miami in September 1926, coupled with the onset of the Great Depression and the rationing restrictions of World War II brought Sarasota's booming growth to a halt. Banks closed, retail stores shut down, and newspaper ads were replaced by bankruptcy notices, going out of business sales, and public auctions. Concurrently, newcomers slowed to a trickle and city records indicated that more than half the taxes between 1926 and 1929 had not been paid. McAnsh and the Mira Mar complex were adversely affected, going into foreclosure and changing hands several times. In 1928 or 1929, he relocated his principal residence to Chicago, where he managed his business operations.

But the foundation he and the Mira Mar laid was firmly set, awaiting the end of the war for the

inevitable resurgence. After the war, returning service men and women came with their families looking for stability, not a quick way to make money. The look of Sarasota changed dramatically as a result of the new modernist movement established by the Sarasota School of Architecture, which garnered international recognition. Once again, Sarasota became a go-to destination for tourists and newcomers wishing to start their lives anew - young couples with families to raise and retirees wishing to spend their remaining years in the sunshine.

To effectively manage the city's forthcoming growth, the city commission decided to implement a new system of local government led by a qualified city manager. In 1950, Ken Thompson was sworn in as city manager. For the next 38 years he channeled the city's growth in a manner which rejuvenated downtown Sarasota by beckoning the wealthy. Thompson's mantra became, "Keep your industry, send us your industrialists,"

Street improvements—widening, resurfacing, renaming, and re-routing became a major goal.

To offer newcomers driving through town an opportunity to view beautiful Sarasota Bay, and, hopefully, entice them to stay, U.S. 41 was re-routed along the downtown bayfront on fill dredged up just west of Gulf Stream Avenue. Unfortunately for the downtown area, the growth into the county which offered national stores, took much of their business. Huge shopping centers and strip centers offered free parking and convenience. Luxury hotels such as the Mira Mar and John Ringling Hotel saw a shift in demand too as beachfront lodgings and modern upscale motels became more prevalent.

The Mira Mar Hotel, its sea view blocked by new buildings, took guests into the 1970s. After a short stint as a retirement facility and its age showing, the city believed the costs to renovate it too high. In 1982, it was demolished. The Mira Mar Apartments were converted to office and retail use, which remained for more than a century.

The building was preserved from demolition by Seaward Development who have committed to an extensive rehabilitation of the building and the restoration of its place along South Palm Avenue.

Andrew McAnsh, known as a town builder, died in Chicago on October 23, 1946.

If he were alive and could walk through portals of his "60-day wonder," and into the revitalized Mira Mar, this visionary gentleman would marvel at what has transpired since his first Sarasota appearance—oh, so long ago.



ANDREW MCANSH ON STICKNEY POINT BRIDGE



VIEW OF MIRA MAR FROM THE WATER



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On Patrol



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

Feb. 6

Citizen assist

8:15 a.m.

Sgt. Puccio was approached by an employee of the bank who stated that a black BMW had been parked in their lot since yesterday and was still present. She asked that Sgt. Puccio check the vehicle registration to ensure it was not stolen or abandoned and also verify no one was inside. At that time, Sgt. Puccio made a check of the vehicle and verified that in fact there it was unoccupied and not listed abandoned or stolen. Sgt. Puccio informed the bank employee that if they could contact a tow company. The vehicle was registered to a resident of Longboat Key. Case clear.



Trespass

8:31 p.m.

Sgt. Smith was dispatched to Broadway for a report of a battery that was changed to a trespass after an investigation. The caller reported a customer was intoxicated and had made inappropriate comments towards staff. The caller further advised the subject became involved in a verbal argument with another patron inside the restroom. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith made contact with the subject seated at his table. Due to the staff indicating they no longer wished to serve the subject, Sgt. Smith requested he step outside. The subject complied without incident. Officer Nazareno assisted and the man was provided a ride to Bradenton Beach. Case clear.

Feb. 7

Incident

10:33 p.m.

Sgt. Smith received a call in reference to a suspicious incident. Upon arrival, Sgt. Smith made contact with on site security who advised that a woman had allegedly taken a vehicle and driven it to the residential side of the complex, possibly striking a portable bathroom. Security stated they located the woman outside of the vehicle and that valet staff subsequently moved the vehicle to the front of the resort property. Security further advised that the owner of the vehicle was inside the building and upset that his vehicle had been taken. Sgt. Smith made contact with the owner of the vehicle inside the resort property. The owner said that the matter was no longer an issue after learning that the individual who had taken the vehicle was his girlfriend. He said he did not wish to pursue the matter further. Officer Nazareno and Officer Tillman searched the area where staff indicated the vehicle had been located. No evidence of a vehicle crash or property damage was observed. Sgt. Smith conducted a thorough inspection of the involved vehicle. The vehicle was covered in a thin layer of dust. Sgt. Smith checked the exterior of the vehicle and observed no signs of impact, damage or disturbance to the dust that would be consistent with a collision. There were no independent witnesses to a crash, no physical evidence of a collision, and no damage located. The woman later left the area with her sister and brother-in-law. At the time of Sgt. Smith's arrival, the woman was not in possession of the vehicle keys or custody of the vehicle. Case clear.

Feb. 9

Citizen assist

8:35 a.m.

Officer Miklos while on patrol check for a previously reported property damage, he was approached by an unknown woman wearing a blue coat, white pants with brown curly hair. The woman introduced herself and advised that she had a blog on Facebook where she was going to shut down the pedophiles, fallen angels and free masons. The woman did not state any thoughts of self harm, harm to others and was not intoxicated. At the time, due to no crime being committed, Officer Miklos completed the report as a citizen contact for future reference. The woman advised she lives at Gulf Bay Road. Case clear.

Dog

1:21 p.m.

Officer Butler responded to an animal complaint at Jungle Queen Way. The complainant advised that neighboring residents were allegedly allowing their dogs to defecate in her front yard while she was not home. The complainant stated she has video footage documenting the incidents and requested information regarding possible legal action. Officer Butler made contact with the complainant and explained applicable local canine waste ordinances as well as potential trespass statutes, depending on circumstances. The complainant said she has video footage documenting these incidents and requested information regarding possible legal action. Officer Butler made contact with the complainant and explained applicable local canine waste ordinances as well as potential trespass statutes, depending on the circumstances. The complainant stated she had previously spoken with dispatch and was advised to contact law enforcement if the issue occurred again. No suspects were present at the time of this response and no violations were observed. The complainant was advised on appropriate steps for future occurrences. No enforcement action was taken at the time. The incident was documented for informational purposes. Case clear.

Noise

5:15 p.m.

Officer Miklos was dispatched to Hibiscus Way in reference to a noise complaint. Sarasota Sheriff's Office dispatch advised the caller did not wish to meet with police but stated this is an ongoing issue with construction noise. Upon arrival, Officer Miklos came into contact with several employees who were working on a foundation for a new residence. Officer Miklos spoke to the complainant who provided his supervisor's phone number. Officer Miklos spoke to the man and advised them that construction work is permitted 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Saturday and no Federal holidays. The two advised they were not aware and would contact

their contractor. Officer Miklos issued a written warning. Construction was stopped for the day without incident, case clear.

Feb. 10

Found property

11:43 a.m.

Officer Butler responded to the 1000 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive in reference to a lost/property incident. Upon arrival, a passerby reported finding a Pennsylvania Driver's license in the roadway near the listed location and turned the property over to Officer Butler for safekeeping. The driver's license was identified and Officer Butler conducted a records check

through available databases, which returned no local records or alerts associated with the listed individual. The found property was taken into police custody and documented accordingly. No criminal activity was suspected. Case clear.

Feb. 11

Trespassing

9:11 a.m.

Officer Tillman responded to the 5600 block of Gulf of Mexico Drive for a reported trespassing. According to the CAD notes this is an ongoing issue with people gaining access to the beach from a condominium entrance. Upon arrival, Officer Tillman spoke with the complainant who was the property manager who stated that he observed a man and woman entering the property from Gulf of Mexico Drive. The complainant stated that the two were walking away from him and heading toward the beach. The complainant yelled at the two several times before confronting him on the path. The complainant stated that words were exchanged and the man pushed him in the chest to get around him, before returning back to Gulf of Mexico Drive. Officer Tillman advised the complainant in the future, to call the police and let the police handle the trespassers. Officer Tillman advised the complainant in the future, to call the police and let us handle trespassers. Case clear.

Feb. 13

Citizen assist

1:13 p.m.

Officer Martinson was dispatched to Bayfront Park for an abandoned vehicle. Upon arrival, Officer Martinson was flagged down by a woman as she was driving out of the parking lot. The complainant stated the green Mercedes SUV has been parked in the e-charging spot for two days and has not moved. Officer Martinson advised that the vehicle is not abandoned nor has it been parked in the spot for two days straight without moving because when Officer Martinson drove through the parking lot this morning the vehicle was not there. The complainant seemed surprised to learn that the vehicle was not parked there this morning so then stated the sign says there is a two hour parking limit and the vehicle has been parked there all day. Officer Martinson told the complainant he would check on the vehicle however, since the park is open Officer Martinson was limited as to what he could do. The complainant drove away. When Officer Martinson checked on the vehicle and the owner, the owner approached and asked if everything was okay. When Officer Martinson explained to him the situation and he was flabbergasted. The owner stated that he has been in the park the whole time playing pickleball and would have moved his vehicle if he had known or the person asked. The owner said he did not believe he had been parked there for more than two hours but stated he would move his car anyway. Case clear.

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Roadwork, from page 1

high fixed-span bridge.

Designed to create a “free-flow condition,” the project eliminates the bottleneck that has long plagued peak-season commuters. FDOT has already poured \$6.7 million into engineering and design, with the total construction cost estimated at a staggering \$129.9 million.

What to expect:

- Timeline: Bids for the project open in late March 2026. Construction is expected to begin three to six months later.
- Duration: Buckle up for the long haul—construction is slated to last approximately 3 years and 4 months, with a tentative completion date between late 2029 and early 2030.
- The Experience: Once finished, the new bridge will be built alongside the current one, eventually allowing drivers to glide over the Intracoastal without stopping.

Immediate Impact: Night Work on the Causeway

While the Cortez project is on the horizon, construction is already underway on the south end. Work began in January 2026 on the Ringling Causeway, specifically from Bird Key Drive to Sunset Drive.

This project is adding dedicated bicycle and transit lanes, upgrading drainage, and raising the seawall cap near Sunset Drive. For drivers, the immediate impact is nighttime lane closures.

Traffic Alert:

- Closures: Expect lane closures on weekdays and weekends from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.
- Speed: The speed limit will remain 35 mph throughout the construction zone.
- Finish Line: Completion is expected by early 2027.

The Broadway Roundabout and North End Resurfacing

The north end of the island is also getting a major facelift. What began as a plan for a simple roundabout at Broadway Street has expanded into a “Complete Street” corridor project covering 2,000 feet of roadway.

The project will elevate the road, improve drainage, and install a roundabout designed to slow traffic and provide safer crossings for pedestrians and cyclists. However, officials warn that the “Maintenance of Traffic” during the 18-month construction window will be “complex.”

What to expect:

- Timeline: Bids open in August 2026, with construction likely starting late 2026 or early

2027.

• Resurfacing Delayed: Consequently, the resurfacing of Gulf of Mexico Drive (GMD) from the county line to North Shore Road has been deferred to 2029 to avoid conflicting with the roundabout work.

Smoother Rides and Brighter Nights on GMD

For the southern and middle portions of the island, relief is coming sooner. A full-width resurfacing of SR 789 from Longboat Club Road to the Sarasota/Manatee County line is scheduled for the 2027 fiscal year.

This \$6.3 million project isn’t just about smooth asphalt. It aims to restore bike lanes to a minimum of 4 feet wide and install new reflective pavement markings (RPMs). Town staff noted that these small plastic reflectors will “help significantly at night,” citing the recent improvements at the Country Club Shores turn lane as a prime example of how much safer night driving can be with proper visibility.

The Battle for the Longboat Pass Bridge

Looking further north to the connection with Coquina Beach, FDOT is finalizing a study on replacing the Longboat Pass Bridge. The 1957 structure is nearing the end of its life, and FDOT has a clear preference: a high-span fixed bridge.

The numbers drive the decision. A high fixed bridge is estimated to cost \$138 million—significantly cheaper than the various drawbridge options, which range from \$176 million to \$194 million.

Get Involved:

FDOT plans to hold final public meetings on this topic on March 12 (in-person) and March 17 (virtual). Residents concerned about the design or wishing to influence the amenities are strongly encouraged to attend.

The “Complete Street” Dream

Finally, the Town continues to push for a “Complete Street” vision for the entire 10-mile stretch of GMD, featuring a 12-foot wide multi-use trail on the east side. While federal funding requires a lengthy study process, the Town Commission is exploring a bold strategy: funding and building segments of the trail locally to accelerate the timeline.

By breaking the project into chunks, the Town hopes to prove the concept and speed up the delivery of a safer, more walkable island, rather than waiting until the mid-2030s for federal aid.

Marty, from page 1

view in Texas. Armed with an MBA from the University of Michigan, he was recruited by Ross Perot’s team. Perot generally hired ex-military personnel, so Hurwitz was nervous. He showed up in a conservative blue shirt, red tie, and close-cropped hair. Despite not being military, he was offered the job on the spot.

But as he headed for the door, a staffer made one comment that altered his destiny: “Roscoe likes shoes that have laces.”

Hurwitz was wearing loafers.

He realized in that moment that he did not want to work in an environment where someone would define how he dressed before he had even started. He declined the offer and headed west.

“I worked in Hollywood for 25 years because Ross Perot did not like shoestrings,” Hurwitz said with a smile.

The Injury and the Epiphany

For two and a half decades, Hurwitz thrived in the entertainment industry, never missing more than five days of work. He learned that famous actors simply want to be treated like people, noting that “Hollywood is always suspicious of an agenda.”

But the frantic pace came to a halt on a tennis court. Hurwitz blew out his knee—a complex injury involving lost cartilage, a torn meniscus, and damaged ligaments. It was during the depths of that physical pain and forced reflection that a psychological reset occurred.

“It dawned on me that if I go back to the office, I will lose my soul,” he recalled.

Six months later, in 2002, he moved to Longboat Key. He didn’t want to go back to the way the industry was evolving. Instead, he turned his attention to a new cast of characters: struggling students in Sarasota.

“Habitude” and the Cycle of Poverty

Upon arriving in Florida, Hurwitz began a second, profound chapter. He started teaching high school, driven by a love for education, though he admitted he was “surprised by how many teachers did not like kids.”

In 2004, he founded Habitude, an organization committed to a “dovetail approach” of life coaching and academic tutoring. He formed interlocal agreements with the Boys & Girls Clubs and Habitat for Humanity to help those embedded in a cycle of poverty.

Hurwitz brought the same intensity to Newtown that he once brought to Hollywood. He realized that for at-risk kids, “access is critical.” The Boys & Girls Club made a difference because they provided transportation—a simple bridge over a massive gap.

During his talk, Hurwitz offered a searing analysis of the poverty culture that schools often fail to recognize. He described a system that removes choices and pins the impoverished to a lifestyle without opportunity.

He pointed out the “poverty tax” inherent in their lives: instead of a doctor’s office, families rely on the ER—the most expensive healthcare delivery system that immediately tags them with debt. He spoke of the “Buy Here, Pay Here” used car lots where imposters charge 25%

interest on \$500 down payments, knowing they will repossess the car a month later—sometimes selling the same vehicle 15 times a year. He spoke of rent-to-own furniture, where the poor pay for the most expensive, least protected housing imaginable.

“Teaching kids how to balance a checkbook will not undo their life,” Hurwitz said.

He noted that for Title I kids, the only meals they often get are at school. In this environment of scarcity, where furniture and cars are routinely taken away, the only constant remaining are their friends. That, Hurwitz explained, is why friendships are everything in poor communities.

The Power of “Someone”

Hurwitz’s philosophy is simple but radical. He realized that when students act out or become the class clown, they are simply seeking recognition. “Everyone wants to be a success at something,” he said. “Even if it’s being a clown, at least they are recognized.”

Through Habitude, Hurwitz worked to give these students a different kind of recognition. He focused on helping them identify their strengths, believing that success is based on developing good habits and positive attitudes.

“A person can survive and overcome having nothing in their life, but they cannot overcome having no one in their life,” Hurwitz said fervently. For many, Habitude provided that someone.

A New Script

Today, Hurwitz’s life looks very different from his days negotiating movie deals. For the past five years, he has served as an executive coach for the Sarasota City Commission, helping commissioners be more productive and intentional. He operates without a website, preferring human contact and referrals.

“The key is to lead life with values front-facing the world,” he said. “We could be victims, but we don’t have to live in victimhood.”

Reflecting on his evolution, Hurwitz says he feels more self-actualized than ever. “Of the many roles in life I’ve played, I’m most proud of being a parent,” he said.

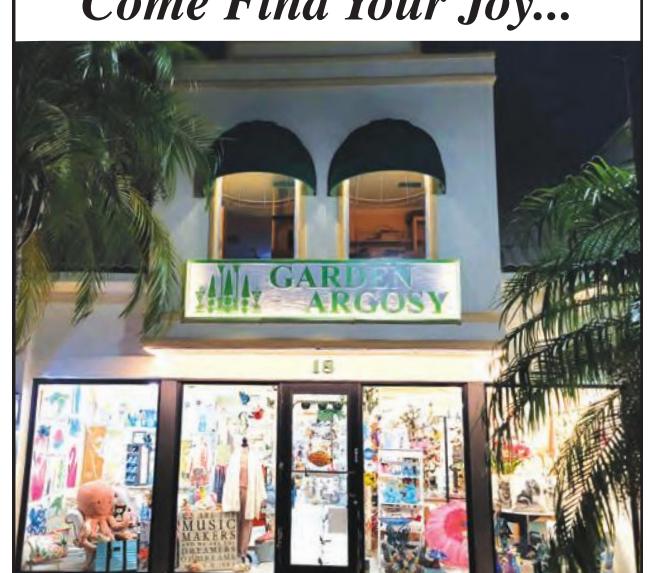
He views this chapter as the most important in his book. While he once served the most creative individuals in the world, witnessing a child break a cycle of destructive patterns and find their way into college or a career exceeds any monetary remuneration.

“Hope is a theme connecting the creativity of Hollywood as well as the creativity all throughout life,” Hurwitz said. “To be a writer is completely free. No one needs to give you permission.”

Marty Hurwitz gave himself permission to rewrite his own story. In doing so, he helped countless young people in Sarasota realize that they, too, have the power to choose their own ending.

Martin Hurwitz is the former Executive Director of Habitude and the founder of Transitioneering. He received his B.A. from Ohio Wesleyan University and his MBA from the University of Michigan.

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BreakPoints

Death from Above: How to Handle the Most Hated Shot

On the tennis courts of Longboat Key, there are two obstacles in the sky wreaking havoc on the uninitiated: the searing sun and a soaring lob. Often, they are conjoined.

STEVE REID
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At the Longboat Key Club, one of the constants is the complete disgust and hate some have for lobbers—especially among the net hoverers and self-appointed baseline specialists. I've witnessed appeals to have lobbers removed from tennis groups, only to relent the initiative, but continue the resentment.

The net denizens want to rush in after they serve, but their serves are often easily managed, giving the returner options—one being the lob. The face of someone beaten by an effective topspin lob is the face of a person watching their life slip away for a split second. Then, in doubles, the edict is “two side-by-side” at the net. The lob comes, and since the majority of the players are in their 70s, sprinting to the back of the court is traded for expletives. After the match you will hear, “I hate lobbers,” spoken as if they are a subclass of humanity, like an untouchable in India.

But here is the hard truth: Hating the lob won’t make it land out. The lob is not a breach of etiquette; it is a tactical checkmate. If you want to stop the cursing and start winning, you have to stop treating the lob as an insult and start treating it as a geometry problem.

Defending the Airspace

The first step in dismantling a serial lobber is positioning. The “net hoverers” mentioned earlier are often the architects of their own demise. If you stand on top of the net, practically breathing on the tape, you are begging to be lobbed.



The fix? Back up. In doubles, unless you are hitting a put-away volley, your default position should be slightly deeper, around the service line or just inside it. This gives you a few extra feet of buffer to track back for a high ball. It forces the lobber to hit a perfect shot to beat you, rather than just a lucky, shallow one.

Second, you must master the overhead smash. The lobber relies on your insecurity. They know that looking up into the Florida sun is disorienting. When the ball goes up, turn your body sideways immediately—point your non-racket hand at the ball. Do not backpedal; side-step or scissor-kick back. If the lob is too deep to smash, let it bounce. There is no shame in resetting the point.

Making the Lobber Lose

To beat the lobber, you must understand their psychology. Lobbers love rhythm, and they love when you provide the pace. They use your power against you. To break them, you

must disrupt their comfort zone.

1. Bring Them In: Most inveterate lobbers are baseline campers. They hate the net. Use drop shots to drag them forward. Once they are in the forecourt, their favorite weapon—the high, arching defensive ball—becomes useless. They will be forced to volley, often poorly.

2. Punish the Short Ball: A lobber needs time to get under the ball to lift it. If you hit deep, heavy shots to the corners, they are forced to scramble. A scrambling lob is usually a short lob, which is lunch for your overhead.

3. The “High-Low” Strategy: If you are stuck at the baseline exchanging moonballs, don’t try to blast through them. Wait for the right moment to hit a low, slicing shot. It is very difficult to generate a high, topspin lob off a ball that is skidding around the ankles.

The Pros Do It, Too

If you think the lob is “pushing” or “hack tennis,” look at the professional tour. The lob is a staple of the elite game, used not just for defense, but to turn a losing point into a winner.

Andy Murray is perhaps the modern king of the lob. He lulls opponents into a false sense of security at the net, only to flick a topspin winner over their heads that lands inches from the baseline. Lleyton Hewitt made a career out of the defensive lob, keeping points alive until his opponent made an error. Even Novak Djokovic, the ultimate baseliner, uses the lob to neutralize aggressive net-rushers.

On the women’s side, Agnieszka Radwańska was a magician, using the lob to dismantle power hitters who thought they had overpowered her.

So, the next time you are on the courts of Longboat Key and the ball goes soaring into the sun, don’t curse the player on the other side. Respect the tactic, adjust your feet, and smash it back. The only thing sweeter than hitting a winner is hitting an overhead winner off a lobber who thought they had you beat. The only thing they will return is an expletive while fetching the ball from the back fence.

MEMBERSHIP: Come Test the Waters.

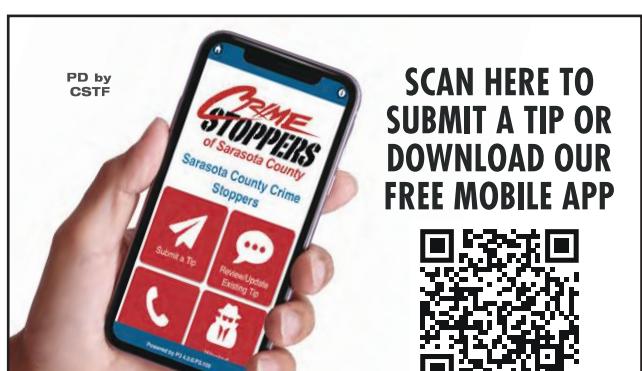

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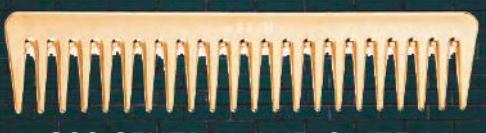
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Editorial Opinion



Pam Bondi: The implosion of Florida's rising Star

Vapid, soulless, deflective.

But at least Pam Bondi is an age-appropriate victim of Donald Trump and the late Jeffrey Epstein. But here is the distinction of consent: Pam Bondi chooses to be screwed by Donald Trump and the legacy of Jeffrey Epstein.

STEVE REID
Editor & Publisher
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Pam Bondi, in her ascension to power, used the obvious playbook that Donald Trump is not immune to: youth and good looks. And guess what? That's where she has lost her soul, lost her way, and in many ways is tossing aside the very responsibilities and significance of this country.

Witnessing Bondi carry on like a bad defensive ad campaign for Donald Trump is not like grasping for the railing of the Titanic. It is like grasping at the yellow orange wisp of hair on a drowning man who should never have been swimming in the waters of American government in the first place.

Medicine worse than the disease

I know many people like Trump as an antidote to the soft, wishy-washy Biden era, and the gender-neutral and police-hating era of Obama. And of course, it's refreshing to hear tough talk and to hear pro-business sentiments. But not at the cost of the Constitution, and not at the cost of our humanity, and not at the divisive cost of illegal acts that will be extremely hard to repair and undo.

When will people in this area and this district stop defending the defenseless, stop deflecting, and being little "Mini-Me" Pam Bondis every day? When will they finally say, "Maybe there's some merit to this?"

Are there really so many nascent, repressed males of an aging morphology who are going to defend this nonsense? Who have no shame? Who have no empathy? Don't they have granddaughters and daughters? I have four daughters: I wouldn't let Donald Trump walk near them.

So, without going into politics and the nuances of environmental policy, energy policy, the policy towards Israel or toward Ukraine, or all the differences we could have about Greenland or Canada, let's hone in on one salient issue that really goes to the heart of a man and his view of the world, and his view of the law, and his respect for the very establishment he is here to



STEVE REID



protect and defend — all the while he's eroding it.

Illness, shrillness and the life of a shill

It's unconscionable. I've never seen someone use all their powers, all their verbal illness and shrillness, to be a shill.

Yeats said the world would end not with a bang but with a whimper. But it won't be the whimper of the oceans rising over Florida; it won't be the whimper of principles being eroded day by day. It could simply be a moment in time when the whimper of a victim goes unheard and has to fight against, ironically, and be re-victimized again and again — by the President no less.

And if he's willing to victimize them, and if he's willing to defend this, and if Pam Bondi is willing to defend this, then hope erodes silently, softly, day by day, into the morass.

It's not the first time this has happened; just read about Nero, just read about the Roman Empire dissolving and the kind of leaders you get at the end of a historical cycle. This is not the beginning, and for those who think it's "Make America Great Again" or the beginning of a great new day, they don't understand history. What they have is attitude and opinions.

If we're going to come together, and if we can agree on one thing in this country, it should be this: we need an independent Justice Department that will prosecute sex offenders against minors and will stop being a political front. Because when that's gone, this whole great experiment has slipped away.

Eroding a generation

On a personal note, I have four daughters and two sons, and instinctively, I'm repulsed by the example of an Attorney General defending sleaze — which is basically the old-fashioned word for all of this.

Actually, this is way beyond sleaze, defending these kind of exploitative relationships is nothing short of disturbing and sadly eroding any belief or faith children would have in a system that is there to protect people.

A President should be honorable; he should be a point of light. Bill Clinton, too, hurt his reputation, but this transcends anything that has been seen in American history.

And then I thought, it is not just my daughters, it's my sons who also are affected.

Is this the example of powerful male behavior that we are going to show? And is this the example of how you should use power in your life when you're in a position of power? It erodes everything we teach our children and everything we should be feeling about ourselves and each other.

It is time to stop defending the indefensible and stop aligning yourself as if we're in a football match choosing sides. There are no sides here; everyone's losing. Everyone is being pulled into this—the entire nation, the entire world—and we're spinning slowly, sadly, into a Sargasso Sea for which there is no boat, no life raft, no bobber—just a whirlpool plunging ever further downward.

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