

Town departments, organizations meet Longboaters at open house

The outdoor community market and open house was held at Longboat Key Bayfront Park with a dozen vendors.

By [Sidra Wali](#) | 10:00 a.m. April 17, 2023



Janelle Wagman, owner of Coastal Creations Décor, stood alongside her designs made of wood and resin.

Photo by Sidra Wali

LONGBOAT KEY

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The town of Longboat Key held a community open house and mini-market April 15 at Bayfront Park, located at 4052 Gulf of Mexico Drive.

There were eight nonprofit vendors available to answer any questions, as well as four outside vendors: Maine Line Food Truck, Coastal Creations Décor, Painting with a Fish and Spiked Pickles. In case you couldn't be there, here's what was on offer.

Town of Longboat Key

Trish Shinkle, town clerk, offered information about services such as notary assistance and handling business receipts.

Lisa Silvertooth, HR manager, recruits for all open positions for the town of Longboat Key. She explained there were plenty of employment and volunteer opportunities available.

Fire Chief Paul Dezzi provided information for the community about the Fall Prevention Program. It focuses on preventing slips and falls by following a checklist that includes tips such as adding nonslip backing to rugs and never

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using a chair as a step stool.



Brooke Green, police service technician; Josh Connors, marine officer; and Taylor McLelland, administrative assistant, stand by the town booth to inform the public about identity theft and fraud.

Photo by Sidra Wali

Brooke Green, a police service technician, provided information about how to deal with phone scams, identity theft and how to avoid fraud.

Susan Smith, finance director, offered information on various aspects of finance such as a guide to adopted budgets, code of ethics and property tax.

Julie Anderson, office manager for public works, brought information about lesser-known parks in the area that community members might like to visit, e.g. Quick Point Nature Preserve and Durante Park.

Allen Parsons, director of the Planning, Zoning and Building Department, explained the importance of the sea turtle protection ordinance, which will be active May 1 through Oct. 31.

Susan Philips, assistant to the town manager, provided information about hurricane evacuation and the emergency notification system that alerts community members of any emergencies in the area. Members can sign up for the system on LongboatKey.org under the “Alert Longboat Key” tab.

Longboat Key Garden Club



Garden Club member Debra Sauers and chair Steve Phillips inform community members about their organization's values and the annual Arbor Day picnic.

Photo by Sidra Wali

Debra Sauers, garden club member, explained that the objectives of the club are to stimulate the knowledge and love for gardening and preserve the natural beauty of Longboat Key. The Annual Arbor Day picnic will be held on April 28 at 11:30 a.m. at the Bayfront Park pavilion. For more information, visit LBKGardenClub.org.

Sarasota County Library

The county library promoted library and county services at the open house as well as informed the public about an upcoming event called “Bach to the Future” at the Selby Library, located at 1331 1st Street, on April 29 at 2 p.m. An award-winning cellist, Steve Kramer, will be performing classical music.

Longboat Key Bicycle Association



Emmanuel Charron, board member of Longboat Key Bicycle Club Association, answered questions about safe riding.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The association promoted not just safe riding but also raised awareness for drivers to be conscientious when bicyclists are present. The association noted some drivers veer into the bike lane, which is a safety hazard for those on bicycles.

Longboat Key Rotary Club



"Josh" the Otter and administrative secretary Janet Shapiro promoted water safety.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The club shined a light on how it serves the community through various projects such as the annual “Hot Diggity Dog” parade, Adopt-a-Highway cleanup, field trips, and more. Josh the Otter was also present at the open house spreading awareness about water safety. For more information, visit LongboatKeyRotary.org.

Paradise Center



Suzy Brenner, executive director of The Paradise Center, and Lahni Brenner, chief greeting officer, explained there are activities all year round at the center.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The Paradise Center promoted activities that happen year-round that the community can enjoy such as Nordic walk classes, pickleball, Zumba and more. Lahni Brenner, chief greeting officer, was also present to make sure community members were aware of what the center offered. For more information, visit TheParadiseCenter.org.

Sarasota Bay Estuary Program



Larry Lackey, member of the citizens advisory committee, promoted the well-being of Sarasota Bay.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The program partners with local governments to address issues like red tide and promote the well-being of Sarasota Bay. The program has been protecting and restoring the bay since 1989. Its goal is to improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat and enhance the natural resources of the area for use and enjoyment by the public. For more information, visit SarasotaBay.org.

Longboat Key Turtle Watch



Cyndi Seamon, Marcela Terrell, and Sam DiGiammarino, members of Longboat Key Turtle Watch, educated the public about sea turtle conservation.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The organization has 50 members that educate the community on sea turtle conservation. Members mark the nests as well as gather data after the eggs hatch. They do this through acquired permits. Members work to keep the beaches clean and dark to ensure sea turtles are not harmed. At the community open house, they promoted their “Adopt-a-Nest” fundraiser where community members can adopt a nest. Anyone interested can visit LBKTurtleWatch.org.

Longboat Key Library



Helene McNerney, volunteer at Longboat Key Library, offered free books at the market and open house.

Photo by Sidra Wali

The library was handing out free books to those interested as well as providing information on how to become a member. The library itself runs on the power of volunteers; if people are interested in joining, they can visit LongboatLibrary.org.



AUTHOR

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Sidra Wali is a staff writer for the Longboat Key Observer. She's worked as a newspaper reporter and written for several publications and organizations as a freelancer.

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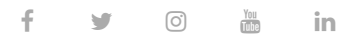
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