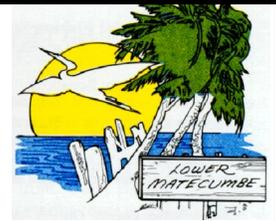


Matecumbe Neighbors



Newsletter of the Lower Matecumbe Key Association

Email Address: LMKANews@gmail.com

April 2014

Monday April 21 LMKA Meeting

When: Monday April 21, 2014; 6:30 pm

Where: Islamorada Library, next to the Upper Matecumbe Fire Station

Get Ready for your Sewer Hook-up

Wayne Gwilliam of MCF Construction, Inc. will talk about what to expect when hooking up to the sewer system from your house, and what you have to do to prepare.

Reynolds Water will soon be putting in the main transmission lines on Lower Matecumbe to carry wastewater to Key Largo for treatment. They have already installed the pipes 40 feet below the channels under the bridges on the fill. Work on the collection systems in our neighborhoods will be started after that. Once Reynolds has the transmission lines complete and the collection systems installed, property owners will receive notices to hook up. Don't wait until the last minute to learn what you should do in advance and what happens once you receive the notice. The entire wastewater system is to be operational by December 2015 and according to reports, Reynolds is running ahead of schedule.

Mr. Gwilliam will explain the process required to get your home hooked up to the sewer lines, whether you are connecting to the vacuum collection system in the right of way for property owners at the lower end of the island or if you are scheduled to have a grinder pump on your property for those from MM75.3 to the north end of the island.

Flood Insurance Update

Late last month President Obama signed the Insurance Affordability Act into law, a bill that will provide the National Flood Insurance Program rate relief for thousands of Keys property owners. The bill will mitigate some of the huge rate increases that were the result of the 2012 Biggert-Waters Flood Insurance Act of 2012. However, the Insurance Affordability Act offers protection mainly to primary homeowners, not the owners of second homes and commercial properties.

Enacted on Oct. 1, 2012 Biggert-Waters was passed in an attempt to stabilize the \$24 billion National Flood Insurance Program deficit. But there were unintended consequences, sticking many Keys residents with staggering insurance premium hikes. The worst case documented was for homeowners in the Lower Keys who bought a house for less than \$200,000 in 2012 and received a flood insurance bill of nearly \$50,000.

The newly passed law will restrict policies from having annual premiums that exceed 1 percent of the total coverage. Almost every Keys mortgage holder depends on the National Flood Insurance Program for affordable flood insurance with maximum coverage of \$250,000. That means the highest annual premium for Keys property owners could be \$2,500.

Most importantly, sale of the home or new policy purchase were removed as triggers for rate hikes. In addition, buyers inherit the last existing rate paid by a seller and then will receive rate increases based on the type of property... either primary homes or secondary and commercial properties.

The bill does include what Fair Insurance Rates in Monroe (FIRM) Executive Director Chic Wagner has called "sweeping reform for primary homeowners."

FIRM is a grassroots organization formed in 2006 to fight against excessive, discriminatory and unaffordable insurance rates. You can join for free at <http://firmkeys.org>

You are encouraged to contact the Islamorada Village Council .

Email Village Clerk, Ariana Lawson, at ariana.lawson@islamorada.fl.us and ask her to distribute your email to council. It is so important for the council to hear from you—both with complaints and with compliments. They represent the residents and taxpayers of Islamorada and want to know what you are thinking.



Mayor
Ted Blackburn



Dave Purdo



Mike Forster



Vice Mayor
Deb Gillis



Ken Philipson

Party Beach



Residents of Lower Matecumbe continue to lobby for relief from the noise, confusion and inappropriate behavior of hundreds of boaters anchoring in the shallow waters on the bayside of Lower Matecumbe on weekends... especially holiday weekends in the summer. So far there has been no action taken to improve the quiet enjoyment for locals living nearby. Those impacted are not likely to give up their fight for peace, quiet, and environmental oversight.

Lower Matecumbe Key Association Statement of Purpose

The Lower Matecumbe Key Association, Inc. shall actively work to preserve and enhance the quality of life and environment through participation and democratic process by the residents.

Goals shall include:

1. Monitoring activities such as zoning and construction.
2. Communicating with all members to alert them to potential problems or opportunities.
3. Coordinating the efforts of the individual neighborhood associations on common objectives.
4. Providing an open forum for presentation and discussion of issues.
5. Taking appropriate action on behalf of the membership.

Board of Directors:

Hermine Zavar, Dennie Zettwoch, Rosemary Duke, Jacquie Dozier, Fernando Franco

Newsletter: Sue Miller, editor

Email address- LMKAnews@gmail.com

The opinions in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of the Board of Directors of LMKA.

Articles with opposing points of view are encouraged.

Bits and Pieces

Garbage Can Reminder: The new cans for household garbage and recycling with Advanced Disposal imprints are the only containers that will be picked up by Advanced Disposal. Loose items, garbage bags, or other garbage cans will not be picked up. This change does not apply to yard waste. If you sometimes have more household trash than fits in the can provided, you can purchase a second can from Advanced Disposal for \$65. Any time you use the additional can you will be billed \$5.25. Extra recycling cans are free. Most find that with two pick-ups each week, a single household can for household trash is more than adequate, especially if you recycle.

Spread the word. Many folks are not following the rules and the garbage is left on the street!

Sea Oats Beach Barricades are Gone: The barricades along Sea Oats Beach have been removed and “no parking” signs are up. So far the signs seem to be working and the beach vistas look beautiful again! The small dunes at Sea Oats Beach are the only tiny protection there is for the highway during storms. It is critical that we do all we can to protect the dunes and encourage the growth of native vegetation. Parking on the dunes is detrimental. With the highway being just a few feet from the ocean, there have been numerous tropical storms and relatively minor hurricanes over the last decade that have resulted in sand and debris covering the highway and temporarily blocking access to points south. There remains a serious concern about what will happen when a major storm hits.

Netflix TV Series Being Filmed in Islamorada: A new television series with no name yet but a star-studded cast began shooting in Islamorada recently. The 13-episode drama commissioned by Netflix stars Kyle Chandler, an Emmy-winner for Friday Night Lights, and Oscar-winner Sissy Spacek. Shooting is expected to run through September. The Netflix crew spent a day filming at Robbie’s this week.

"It's a series where everything takes place in the Keys so we expect it to be predominantly shot in the Keys," said Rita Troxel, director of the Florida Keys & Key West Film Commission. "The Keys will be like another character, appearing as themselves."

Netflix's "psychological thriller" centers on an island family "whose secrets and scars are revealed when the black-sheep oldest brother returns home." Spacek plays the Rayburn family matriarch, with Chandler as the stable middle brother.

Norbert Leo Butz, a two-time Tony winner for Broadway's lead actor, appears as a boatyard owner who considers himself the waterfront community's unofficial mayor. Ben Mendelsohn (The Dark Knight Rises) has been cast as wayward brother Danny, with Linda Cardellini (Mad Men) as a sister.

Netflix, now best known as an online service that provides streaming video to subscribers, has increased its original programming that includes the award-winning House of Cards series with Kevin Spacey. The Keys series is being produced by Sony Pictures TV.

New Community Character Task Force: The Village Council established a Community Character Task Force to gain insight into residents' and business owners' desires related to the community character of Islamorada that should be preserved as future development occurs. The Task Force is interested in hearing from the public – residents, business owners and other interested parties to gather ideas and input about the unique community character of Islamorada that people want to protect and enhance.

Following community input, the Task Force will discuss strategies regarding commercial development regulations in an effort to help preserve the desired community character of the Village. The meeting schedule can be found on the Village website. Those unable to attend Task Force meetings may submit input to Planning Director Cheryl Cioffari by email: cheryl.cioffari@islamorada.fl.us.

Exceptional March LMKA Program

“Being Prepared When EMS Comes” was the Lower Matecumbe Key Association program for the March 19, 2014 meeting. This outstanding program was put on by the Islamorada Fire Rescue Chief Terry Abel and Volunteer Firefighter and Lower Matecumbe resident Larry Zettwoch.



LMKA members who attended went away feeling very secure knowing that in case of emergency, Islamorada has extremely skilled medical and fire professionals who are just minutes away on our island. And they have quality equipment to assure the best service.

Chief Abel demonstrated the portable Medtronic LifePak 15 which the Islamorada paramedics have available for medical emergencies. The Islamo-

rada Fire Department is one of the first departments in the country to utilize this state of the art equipment. Within minutes a victim can be hooked up to the device which can do an EKG and measure things like blood pressure, oxygen in the blood, respiration. The EKG results can be printed out within seconds and can be transmitted via cell phone to a hospital emergency room or medical specialist. Based on the results and the medical protocol they follow, the paramedics are able to determine within minutes whether the victim should be transported directly to a Dade County trauma center by helicopter and have the victim in the helicopter and on the way in less than 1/2 hour of the 911 call.

To assist the paramedics, residents of Islamorada are asked to fill out a form called the “File of Life” and attach it to the refrigerator to provide critical information to paramedics in case they are called for a medical emergency. The form provides information for contacting relatives, medical data including your doctor, your medications, special medical conditions, allergies. The forms will be available at any of the Islamorada fire stations. It is simple to fill out and could save valuable time in an emergency. They also suggested keeping one of the forms with you when traveling.

Other good news from Chief Abel.... Islamorada residents may see their homeowners insurance rates lowered because of the diligent work of the fire rescue department. Insurance Services Office (ISO) determines the price of fire insurance in a community using a 1 to 10 rating system with 1 indicating the best fire services a community can get. ISO recently completed their latest analysis of the local department and lowered the village rating from 4 to 2. When the Lower Matecumbe station was added, the ISO rating was lowered to a 4 because of the close proximity of a station to all areas of the village.

There are approximately 50,000 fire departments that are rated throughout the country and only 700 have ratings of 2 or better! The village department was given the improved rating for installing additional hydrants, documenting Islamorada’s extensive training program, adding staffing, and increasing the number and extent of fire inspections.

While roads are torn up for sewer construction, additional fire hydrants will be installed.

Of the 24 fulltime paid firemen covering Islamorada’s three fire stations, 12 started their careers as volunteers for the Upper Keys fire departments. Several served for more than a decade as a volunteer before going on the payroll. Islamorada residents should be very proud.

Newtown survivors commission Keys artist for special project

Larry Herlth to build replica of little boy's favorite lighthouse

BY DAVID GOODHUE

Lighthouses guide ships to safety and help vessels navigate unharmed through maritime channels. Since the days when they were truly needed, they've come to symbolize a beckoning to comfort, hope and security. But to Ben Wheeler, a Sandy Hook Elementary School first-grader, lighthouses were just really cool. Being a lighthouse keeper was among the top three professions Ben wanted to try when he grew up -- paleontologist and architect being close behind.

But Ben will never get a chance to be anything other than the 6-year-old little boy he was when he was among the 20 young children murdered by Adam Lanza on Dec. 14, 2012, as they sat helpless in their classrooms. Lanza also shot dead six school staffers before turning his gun on himself.

When Ben was alive, the Wheelers, like many Newtown families, visited the beaches of Eastham, Mass., during the summer. The highlight of the trips for Ben was visiting Nauset Light, a 48-foot-high lighthouse that represents to many the Cape Cod National Seashore. "He loved all lighthouses, but Nauset was his favorite," said Carla Tischio, a family friend of the Wheelers who is a fifth-grade teacher at Reed Intermediate School in Newtown.

In Ben's memory, friends and family -- including teachers, clergy, counselors, social workers and parents -- started a non-profit called Ben's Lighthouse. The group is dedicated to helping Newtown's young people cope psychologically and emotionally with the traumatic aftermath of the 2012 massacre. At group events, a moveable, 20-foot lighthouse painted green and white -- Sandy Hook's school colors -- is erected to symbolize Ben's love of lighthouses and to embrace what the group calls "the light that shines in all of us."

But Ben's Lighthouse is in the process of being replaced with a permanent one -- a 20-foot-tall, 7-foot-across replica of Nauset Light that will stand on the playground of Trinity Episcopal Church on Newtown's Main Street. They commissioned Islamorada's Larry Herlth to build the lighthouse. Herlth, 54, is known locally as Lighthouse Larry for his detailed replicas of the historic lighthouses that dot the reef off the Keys.

Nicole Porter-Wilcox, a Ben's Lighthouse member, read about Herlth in several newspapers and met him while visiting the Keys. She told him about Ben's love of lighthouses and from there, the project got started. Herlth volunteered to build it at no cost for his labor or materials.

"We had looked into getting a lighthouse structure for the playground after [Ben's] death, but they were too expensive," Tischio said. "A few months after we had given up hope, this offer came like a little miracle from Florida."

"I'm not an obsessive lighthouse guy, but I am obsessed with saving our lighthouses to preserve our maritime history, and not just in the Keys," Herlth said. "Some of these were built 10 years before the Civil War. These are historic gems."

Starting with Careysfort Light, which was built in 1852, and ending with Fowey Rocks Light, built in 1876, Herlth notes that Keys lighthouses are special because they exemplify America's transition from Industrial Revolution-era to Victorian-era architecture. Herlth's two models of Sombrero Light welcome drivers at the north and south city limits of Marathon. One also adorns the lobby of First State Bank of the Keys' Rock Harbor branch. A 20-foot model of Alligator Light sits in front of the Kaiyo Grill in Islamorada.

He calls the Nauset Light project his most special. "I will never in my life do something this important artistically. I am unbelievably honored," Herlth said this week.

When talking about the project, for which he is not accepting money, Herlth sometimes gets too emotional to continue speaking because of the unthinkable tragedy that prompted its commissioning. "This has impacted everyone in America. It is Small Town USA," Herlth said. "The last thing you would think is something like this would happen when you send your child off to school. It's mind-blowing."

Continuation

Larry Herlth to build replica of little boy's favorite lighthouse

Herlth praised the Ben's Lighthouse organization for trying to help Newtown families manage their grief. Herlth and his wife Keira have two daughters -- one is a high school senior embarking on college next year, the other is a 26-year-old graphic designer. The massacre, he said, hit home.

"If you're a child, how can you not be afraid to go to school after that," he said. "And for the parents, how can they not be afraid to send their children to school."

Herlth plans to have the lighthouse finished by July. While he is not accepting payment, he is getting some help funding the materials, and would accept more. He estimates the project will cost around \$10,000 to \$15,000 in materials, some of which have to be sent to a machinist to shape.

Days after speaking with an employee at Home Depot in Marathon about the project, Herlth received a call from the hardware giant saying it would supply all the materials he needs.

The inside of the lighthouse will be large enough for people to enter. Herlth hopes to have an event before shipping it off to Connecticut where Keys children can sign a section of the interior. The inside will also have a white chalkboard that Newtown children can use to write down their thoughts.

"The reason behind all this is that lighthouses across the board project good light," Herlth said. "There's safety in it. It's about protection, and kids should feel safe."

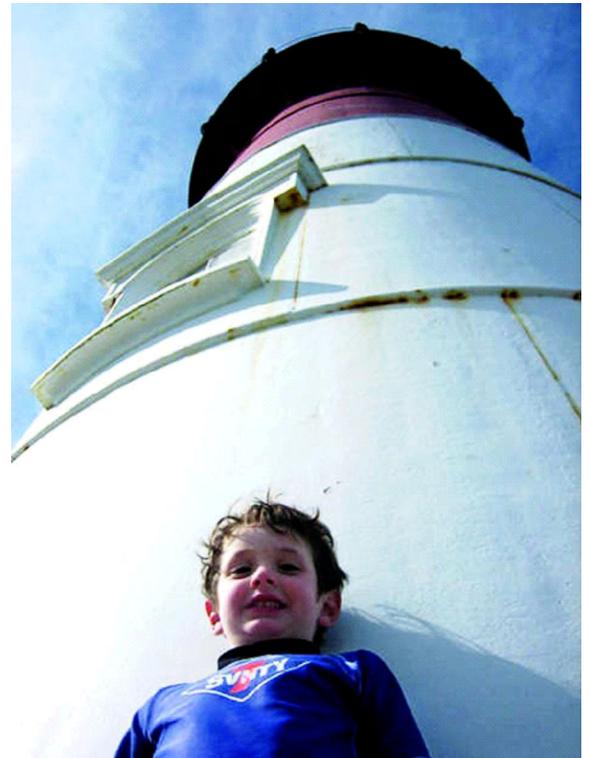
The top inside of the lighthouse will be made of cobalt blue glass with 20 small stars signifying the children Lanza killed and six larger stars for the murdered adults.

"I think it's an extraordinary opportunity for the Keys to really touch and let this community know that we feel what they feel and we're there," Herlth said. "This could have happened anywhere."

Even though the Nauset Light replica is not built yet, much less arrived on the Trinity Episcopal Church property, the people of Newtown, especially members of Ben's Lighthouse, are already sending their gratitude.

"It is through these acts of kindness that we reveal ourselves as beacons of hope to others in need" Tischio said. "The people of the Keys are sending a lighthouse, but they are also acting as a lighthouse to us."

To find out how to donate to Larry Herlth's Nauset Light project, call him at (305) 394-3334, email him at Conchpmi@hotmail.com or go to Lighthouse.Larry.com. All money that is left over will be donated to Ben's Lighthouse. To find out more about Ben's Lighthouse or to donate, go to Benslighthouse.org.



Ben Wheeler stands in front of Nauset Light, the 6-year-old's favorite lighthouse. Wheeler was among the 20 children killed in the Dec. 14, 2012 Newtown, Conn. shooting.

President's Corner

We are sad to report that Donna Gleason has resigned from the Board of Directors of LMKA after serving as our most recent president.

Donna served on the board for nearly a decade, providing her energy, enthusiasm and valued insight to the organization. Rarely do we find such dedicated individuals so willing to give their time and provide the vitality and expertise to an organization for such a long time.

We thank you, Donna, with all of our collective heart!

Tom Brokaw said %t's easy to make a buck. It's a lot tougher to make a difference.+ Donna has definitely made a difference.

Volunteers don't get paid but certainly not because they are worthless. Volunteers like Donna are absolutely priceless.

Membership Application/Renewal

First Name(s): _____

Last Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Local Address: _____

Phone (local): _____

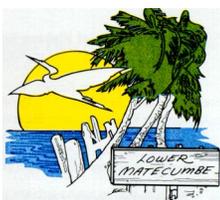
Other phone: _____

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