

News Worthy

Local Artisan Passes

Elizabeth Geisler, who taught basket weaving for 10 years at the Longboat Key Center for the Arts, and who was chosen to display her artistry at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, died of cancer Sept. 23, 2006, in Sarasota at the age of 83. Geisler took up basket weaving about 25 years ago after attending a church fundraiser that included a class in basket weaving.

She enjoyed experimenting with different plant materials native to Florida, including palm fronds, pine needles, tree twigs and sheaths from philodendron leaves. She made bread baskets, handbags, vases and umbrella holders, and her favorite form was the Nantucket-style baskets reminiscent of those created by New England fishermen.

In addition to her daughter, **Theresa Paris**, Geisler is

survived by her husband of 61 years, **Charles**; two other daughters, **Aura Dez** and **Jane Lynn "Raya" Geisler** of Santa Fe, N.M.; a son, **Fritz Geisler** of Palm Harbor; and 11 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Plans for a memorial service are pending.

UnGala Gala

On Oct. 21 the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art will hold the 2006 UnGala Gala. The Gala will celebrate 21 years from 6 p.m. to midnight, and this year's theme, as is customary, will remain undisclosed until guests arrive at the Ringling. The event will be catered by Mattison's Culinary Group, bars by Longboat Key Club, and have cutting-edge entertainment and dancing. Tickets: \$250. Advance ticket line: 358-3180. Information: 359-5700, ext. 2801.

Power, from Page 1A

"The cost is not as high as we thought it would be," St. Denis said. "It's not about telephone or cable lines; it's just about power lines."

The commission was deciding on whether to vote for a further study that would cost about \$130,000. St. Denis said that cost could amount to between \$10-\$11 million at a later date to implement the changes.

Longboat Key has spent time looking at a study done in the town of Jupiter Island where, after eight years of discussion with FPL officials, the Town obtained preliminary costs for a conversion program for their nine-mile barrier island, much like Longboat Key, with only 600 utility customers. Jupiter Beach, using a little-known provision in state regulations, agreed to pay for a study to obtain an engineering estimate of the potential cost.

The underground lines might not be as valuable as thought. According to a study, underground facilities are not as accessible to winds and debris-blown damage, but they are accessible to water intrusion and local flood damage which can make repair time even more costly.

Underground line damage occurs less frequently than overhead, but requires more time. Following recent hurricanes, studies have shown that the areas that took the longest to repair had underground lines.

FPL has said it is not opposed to underground service. Already, more than one-third of neighborhood power lines in Longboat Key are underground, but they are trying to make sure customers understand the circumstances involving a conversion.

Commissioners elected to delay funding for the study until staff begins discussions with FPL to determine costs of a conversion program. Vice-Mayor Lee Rothberg

Spoll, from Page 1A

That's down the road, but I want to see the concept before we act. I like the idea. It's a healthy one and a needed one, but it will make for a lot of work for the Chamber (of Commerce)."

Spoll insisted that the group would be citizen-driven and that the Chamber would only work as a buffer. He also said the discussions were still in preliminary stages.

Commissioner Bob Siekmann urged that the Commission look at other models from other similar towns before making a decision. Commissioner Jeremy Whatmough agreed, saying that the plan should proceed and the idea should be brought up again after further study.

Webster ended it all with a laugh.

"If you set it up the way we want it, we'll look at it positively."

said he was in favor of underground service as long as it is financially correct.

"It would be prudent for the Town and for new construction to provide underground services," Rothberg said.

Commissioner Jeremy Whatmough said he is concerned that all districts receive the same treatment.

"It has to be centralized in all areas (of Longboat Key)," Whatmough said. "It has to be wherever lightning decides to hit."

It was cautioned that underground wiring would come at an additional cost to homeowners, but Commissioner Peter O'Connor brought up aesthetics that would be helped if the lines were buried.

"This is a planning issue we have to deal with, but (the lines) have us perpetuating the ugliness."

Trees, from Page 1A

sidered unattractive palms in the median. He offered moving the palms to the side of the road, as well as another

public place. Problems involving Brazilian Pepper trees were the trigger to the controversy, he said.

John Summers, vice-president of the Emerald Harbor Association said he didn't want any regulations as to what residents could do with the trees in question.

"There's not much positive positive effect and people don't want it," Summers said.

Summers has maintained that it shouldn't be the EHA's responsibility to landscape Town property.

"Trees located on the premises of an individual resident owner of a single-family dwelling are not covered by most parts of this regulation," Summers said.

Commissioner Randy Clair said the Commission would review the tree ordinances.

"We need to decide if it is appropriate to strengthen or weaken the ordinances," Clair said. "We need to establish what the policy is going to be and decide what we really want here in our Town."

Clair added that the Town would have to decide a way to keep its natural tree canopy.

The Commission sent the issue back to the Planning and Zoning Board for further review, mostly whether to strengthen or weaken the current ordinance.

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