

# KeyOpinion

## The Road to Darkness

The Longboat Key Planning and Zoning Board members are embarking on a major project. They intend to write a report that will set out a vision of the future for the Town. To do this, they intend to bring on board a consulting group at a minimum cost of \$50,000.

If press reports can be trusted, the consultants they are hiring have previously worked with similar communities, specifically Sanibel Island among others. I wish them luck, but even the personal magnetism and charisma of Andres Duany, who hypnotized the entire community of Sarasota, would find Longboat Key a tough challenge.

From time to time, the P&Z board has held open meetings with the goal of bringing citizens together in a common cause. It hasn't worked so far, and now more than ever there is an ever widening gulf between two opposite forces — the merchants and those who thrive on tourism, and the homeowners who think that they must find a scapegoat every time they are stuck in traffic.

## GreenReport

By Al Green

As a result of this divide, we have allowed certain clichés to overtake reality and this will make our newest venture even more difficult.

For example, the merchant group blames the deterioration of business on two major points. One is the disappearance of tourist facilities and they point to the Holiday Inn as the poster boy culprit. They then tend to place almost equal blame



on the town's policy of minimum monthly rentals in residentially-zoned areas.

On the first point, business was going south way before the Holiday Inn closed so it is hard to place the blame at that door. Common sense tells you the closing of the Holiday Inn along with others isn't going to help but it wasn't the original trigger.

As far as the rental situation, the numbers don't hold up. We have about 10,000 residential units on the key. Over 8,500 are condos that have rules on residency that are in almost all cases more restrictive than the Town's law. Of the remaining individually-owned homes, many are also regulated by homeowners associations and once again, we have always had the 30-day restriction so this is not the problem.

I cannot tell you all the reasons our commercial activity has declined. However, it must be noted that as bad  
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## LongboatLetters

Longboat Key News encourages Letters to the Editor. Please mail, e-mail or fax to one of the following: 5370 Gulf of Mexico Drive, Ste. 210, Longboat Key, FL 34228; e-mail: [sreid@lbknews.com](mailto:sreid@lbknews.com); fax: 941-387-8288. We also print letters sent to Town Hall that address Key issues.

### Media Frenzy

Dear Editor:

I've read dozens of articles about the Valerie Plame leak matter. The mainstream media is having a feeding frenzy on this; you would think it was bigger news than Pearl Harbor. I am from Ohio and while visiting my Mom in Bradenton I came across Tom Burgum's article. This is the best assessment of the matter I've seen anywhere by a mile. Well written, comprehensive and accurate for sure, but best of all is his analysis. If the leftist media weren't so fixated on Bush bashing, few would have heard a word about this matter, it is media exaggeration and overkill to the nth degree. If the truth were of interest to anyone, the investigation would center on Joe Wilson and his wife's preconceived intentional plan to smear the President. I did not expect such excellent work from a

free weekly paper I'd never heard of. If I was publisher of the New York Times I'd name Burgum Editor In Chief tomorrow and six months from now the paper would be worth reading again. The Times has not one writer on staff with Burgum's talent and even if they did, the Times would never print anything so truthful that flies in the face of their agenda.

**Gary Hetrick**  
Medina, Ohio

### Cheney is Mentioned

Dear Editor:

In his Key Opinion column "Who is Joe Wilson — and What Did He Really Say," which appeared in your Nov. 4 issue, Tom Burgum is critical of questions raised in the media and others concerning what role the Vice President's office may have played in the Valerie Plame case. He writes: "This entire clamor is based on an indictment which, given careful reading, shows that the Vice President was never mentioned nor was there any detailing of secretive operations. In fact, special prosecutor Fitzgerald went to special pains to say the indictment is "exactly what it says, no less no more."

Paragraph 9 of the First Count of the indictment (Obstruction of Justice) reads as follows: "On or about June 12, 2003, LIBBY was advised by the Vice President of the United States that Wilson's wife worked at the Central Intelligence Agency in the Counter proliferation Division. LIBBY understood that the Vice President had learned this information from the CIA."

Further sections of the indictment also refer to the involvement of individuals in the Vice President's office in addition to Mr. Libby:

Paragraph 5 of Count One: "On or about June 9, 2003, a number of classified documents from the CIA were faxed to the office of the Vice President to the personal attention of Libby and another person in the Office of the Vice President."

Paragraph 18 of Count One: "Also on or about July 8, 2003, LIBBY met with Counsel to the Vice President in the anteroom outside the Vice President's office. During their brief conversation, LIBBY asked the Counsel to the Vice President, in sum and substance, what paperwork there would be at the CIA if an employee's spouse undertook an overseas trip."

Paragraph 19 of Count One: Not earlier than June 2003, but on or before July 8, 2003, the Assistant to the Vice President for Public Affairs learned from another government official that Wilson's wife worked at the CIA, and advised LIBBY of this information."

All of these findings set forth in the indictment refer to dates prior to the publication of Robert Novak's column outing Valerie Plame.

It appears from the text of the indictment that the "clamor" is based on much more than errors in reading the indictment. It is also clear, Mr. Burgum's "careful reading" of the indictment notwithstanding, that the Vice President is indeed mentioned.

In the closing paragraph of his column, Mr. Burgum writes: "It is not all the Democrats' fault if they are guilty of reading more into the Libby indictment than is there." Seems to me that simply reading what is in the indictment is a sufficient basis for all Americans — not

only Democrats — to have some questions about the office of the Vice President.

**Daniel Idzik**  
Longboat Key

### Animals Help Us Live

Dear Editor:

I finally found the other part to the article as I was looking for more about the dog Buddy. You have some really interesting articles and good reporters there at your paper. I am having a ball going back thru your past papers. Thanks so much for printing animal stories. It matters a lot as so many people have them and love them — they really do help people live longer and happier. Have a most wonderful day!

**Hedy Nobil**  
Clearwater

### Stop the Bark

Dear Editor:

I read with great interest your trials and tribulations with your dog. I applaud your devotion to the beast but would make a suggestion that might work and save you a lot of money at the same time.

I have included a link: [www.countrysidepet.com/level.html/icOid/2089](http://www.countrysidepet.com/level.html/icOid/2089) that sells a collar that sends a spray into a barking dogs face. It is humane (if it doesn't bother you that you are dousing your dog with citronella), safe, and effective. Try it, you might like it.

**Dan Kriser**  
Longboat Key

### Fence the Beast

Dear Editor:

I really like The Manatee River News. Your "River Opinion" article was enjoyable, descriptive and at times funny. However, Buddy is not just barking too much, but he should not be off your property, wandering into yards of others people, or being on the road after dark.

Surely, with all the money you have spent so far, you could create a fenced area so Buddy could safely be outside for short periods of time, or under supervision, or inside at other times.

Buddy is in danger, and I hope you work out this area of adventure to included the fenced yard, perhaps a crate for bedtime, and more one-on-one. He sounds like a great pup, keep him safe and healthy.

Thanks again for the story.

**Dolores Sauer**  
Palmetto

### Muzzle the Noise

Dear Editor:

I enjoyed your article on Buddy. He must be some precious dog for you to put up with him. He does look very cute.

One article I read about from a dog trainer on how to keep a dog from barking that is easy to do is to put a muzzle on him at night. He will whine a bit but it would solve that problem. Wonder if you have tried that?

Hope all those shoes in the picture aren't for real.

**Mrs. Richard Ritter**

## Longboat Key News

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