

Around the Ranch

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THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF LAKEWOOD RANCH

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2023



NEW HOME IN RANCH DEDICATED TO ARMY VETERAN AND FAMILY – Retired U.S. Army veteran Lucio Gaytan and his family received a warm welcome during the dedication ceremony this summer of their new, mortgage-free home. The home was donated to Sgt. 1st Class Gaytan through the Built to Honor program, which recognizes and thanks military personnel who have been injured during their service. For more information see pages 12-13.

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- Brian Higgins, Owner, with son Kyle

Florida Hurricanes: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

The presentation of “Florida Hurricanes – What you Need To Know” was made by ABC7 Chief Meteorologist Bob Harrigan at the end of August, at Town Hall ... just days before Hurricane Idalia pushed past the Gulf Coast.

Harrigan, who has been the main face of Channel 7’s weather forecasts for over 30 years, spoke at the event organized by Lakewood Ranch CERT’s Karen Emanuelson. The Lakewood Ranch Community Emergency Response Team has become a major force in helping neighbors prepare for emergencies, as well as being the “other” first responders, who swing into action when a disaster strikes.

Harrigan, who is a Toledo, Ohio native and University of Kansas grad, is a certified broadcast meteorologist and has flown into hurricanes twice with the U.S. government’s hurricane hunter aircraft. He began his talk with a photo of the bridge to Sanibel Island, which was destroyed by Hurricane Ian last September.

He noted that while hurricanes are scary, preparation is the key! Harrigan said there are approximately 60 storms per year that are tracked, but only around 10% of those develop into a major storm.

Someone in the audience asked Harrigan about this “disturbance” that was, as of the morning of Aug. 26, sitting in the Caribbean off the Yucatan Peninsula.

Harrigan replied that he was actually concerned that this might develop into something nasty. He reminded his audience that 2018’s Hurricane Michael started out as a disturbance in the exact same location off the Yucatan, went north toward the Florida panhandle seemingly as a minor storm, then intensified just before it came ashore at Mexico Beach as a Category 5. Michael damaged 93% of the structures in that town and destroyed over 800.

As far as Lakewood Ranch is concerned, Harrigan said that the worst case scenario for Lakewood Ranch would be for the storm to hit around the latitude of State Road 64, which would put Lakewood Ranch into the upper right quadrant, meaning that Lakewood Ranch would be in the path of the strongest winds and largest amounts of rain. Manatee County has never been hit with a landfalling hurricane, although strong winds can have an impact even 100 miles from the center of a big storm.

Harrigan talked about how hurricanes are forecast, including the use of what we’ve come to know as “spaghetti models,” which show the expected path of a storm. The National Hurricane Center (NHC) uses hundreds of models, and the Global Forecasting System is updated every six hours.

Someone asked him about the idea that the “European models” appear to be more accurate than our American estimates. He admitted that the European models are actually more accurate lately, due to the fact that the Europeans have put a lot more money into their forecasting apparatus of late than has the United States. We are currently ramping up our spending on the technology needed, but we’re not as sophisticated as the Europeans at this point and, as a result, the U.S. is playing catch-up.

Harrigan noted that a major push for hurricane forecasting came from the U.S. Navy, which pushed for more and more accurate storm information in order to be able to move their ships out of ports that might be in the path of a major storm that could seriously damage those ships.

Regarding preparation, Harrigan cautioned people to not base their plans on prior experience. During Hurricane Irma, he said,



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

people in the Fort Myers area were told to evacuate, with a big storm surge expected. That surge didn’t happen, so many stayed put during Ian ... big mistake. Every storm is unique, and it is impossible to know exactly what will happen in a matter of hours. He commented that the national news outlets love big storms and cover them accordingly. He urged his audience to pay more attention to their local station’s forecast instead of the big networks, noting that conditions that may exist in Tampa are not necessarily going to be the same in Sarasota/Manatee. Prior to the arrival of Ian, he said, the Weather Channel people went to Clearwater, even though the U.S. government’s Global Forecasting System pegged Ian’s landfall correctly.

He did note that his station, even if they are knocked out, can provide information from one of their sister stations in, for example, Gainesville or Tallahassee.

Getting back to the subject of preparation, Harrigan urged his audience to make sure they had a battery-powered weather radio. This way, they can get alerts as they come from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the NHC.

Your cell phone is an important aid during a storm. Keep it charged and use texting to communicate. During an emergency, this works better than voicemail.

Also, keep your car’s gas tank filled since even if you are unable to go anywhere after a storm because of debris, etc., and you are out of power, you can use your car to charge up your cell phone! The most dangerous time for residents in a storm area is after the storm has passed. Trees may be down, powerlines may be knocked down, there will be a lot of debris in the streets. Stay put and stay safe.

Regarding storm surge, Harrigan talked about “Superstorm Sandy” that hit the New Jersey/New York area very hard several years ago. Once Sandy went out into the Atlantic, he said, the forecasters thought that they were done with it, and underplayed the surge from that storm as it went north. Also, prior to Ian’s arrival, the initial forecast for storm surge in our area showed Anna Maria Island as being completely washed over by storm surge. The NHC website has some interesting information on the subject of storm surge; check out NHC.noaa.gov.

To check out local conditions and possible official evacuation



orders, go to mymanatee.org or scgov.net, depending on which county you live in. County websites give the categories for evacuation, based on possible storm surge levels. By late afternoon on August 28, just two days after Harrigan told his Ranch audience that he was concerned that the disturbance near the Yucatan peninsula would develop into a big storm, Manatee County ordered evacuations for Hurricane Idalia for Zone A areas. To end his talk, Harrigan asked for a big round of applause for Lakewood Ranch CERT. LWR CERT instructor Jill Perlin then asked the audience: “Are you prepared?”

Her next question – do you have flood insurance? Most standard homeowner insurance policies don’t cover flooding. Do you know the difference between actual value and replacement cost? This is important! You may have paid a lot for your furniture 10 years ago, but what would it cost to replace it in today’s dollars? Probably a lot more. Make sure to take pictures of every area of your home. Having visual records will help in filing an insurance claim.

If you decide to evacuate, remember that if you wait until the last minute – you’re probably in trouble, especially if you figure on driving up I-75. Good luck dealing with a giant parking lot. Plus, be advised that if you do evacuate, driving on the “top half” of your gas tank is a good idea, as gas stations may be closed, or may run out of gas. The state has supposedly made arrangements to stage gas supplies so that stations don’t run out, but ... Also, if a gas station has gas but their power is out and they don’t have a generator, they won’t be able to pump fuel.

If you drive an electric vehicle, be aware that the batteries in these cars may react dangerously if exposed to flood waters, causing the vehicle to catch fire. If that happens, fire personnel will likely just let the vehicle burn.

Make sure that you have prepared your pets for the storm with food, meds, etc. If you plan to go to a shelter, you need to check beforehand to make sure that the shelter is pet-friendly – many are not. You will definitely need a kennel cage for your pet, even at a pet-friendly shelter.

To prepare for a disaster, get your house in order. Charge up your cell phone, and make sure that flashlights, lanterns and other battery-powered devices have fresh batteries. Having a flashlight with a high-powered light source won’t do you any good if the batteries are dead. Get extra cash, preferably in smaller bills, since convenience stores may not have power to operate cash registers.

If you try to drive right after a big storm, remember that it is extremely foolish to try to drive through a flooded area.

If you put up shutters, be careful taking them down.

Finally, what can you do to be as prepared as possible and to be able to help your neighbors? Join CERT, that’s what! The idea of CERT is “neighbors helping neighbors.” During a disaster, the regular first responders will be overtaxed, or may not be able to function due to damaged equipment or facilities. Your local CERT volunteers will take over as the local first responders until the professionals can function.

Lakewood Ranch CERT volunteers brought with them to the meeting all sorts of things they use to help their neighbors during a disaster. If the internet and cell phones are not working, they have a ham radio operation they can put into service as soon as it is safe to do so. They also had all sorts of information about CERT, info from FEMA, charts to help you plan your disaster preparation, and so on. With CERT, 20 hours of training can make you a lifeline for your neighbors.

Waterside Place Adds Two New Tenants; Announces New Openings

Two new tenants have been announced for Waterside Place town center, with both scheduled to open in the first quarter of next year.

Eatalia will be an Italian market that will specialize in imported meats, cheeses, olives and nuts, homemade bread, build-your-own charcuterie boards, fresh pasta and other grocery items, as well as a cold bar with various salad items. Eatalia will be for people who are “passionate about Italian cuisine, or anyone looking for a quick, quality-made bite on the go.”

The Wellness Space will offer an array of services, including mentoring and meditation with different modalities to create clarity. There will also be private and group coaching services for individuals, couples, family and children, as well as corporate services.

The newest dining spot at Waterside Place is Osteria 500, which opened at the end of July. Osteria 500 is an Italian restaurant featuring antipasto, salads, meat and fish entrees, and pasta dishes made fresh and in house. There are also numerous pizzas and paninis from which to choose. Osteria 500 has an extensive wine list, as well as specialty cocktails.

Other recently opened businesses include SHACK yoga + Fitness, Marmalade, featuring home décor, furnishings, and women’s apparel and gifts; Modish Salon, Capstan Financial Consulting Group, and Williams Parker Attorneys at Law. These



PHOTO BY RYAN ANGELL

recently opened businesses at Waterside Place join tenants Koré Steakhouse and cocktail lounge, Good Liquid Brewing company, O&A Coffee Supply, CROP Juice, Bay Area Aesthetics, Body Bar Pilates, 3Form Fitness, Kilwins, Paint Nail Bar, Lakewood Ranch Medical Group, Smith Law, Man Cave for Men, a luxury modern barber shop; Monkee’s, an upscale women’s boutique; Florida Provisions Co., a retail and bar concept; Forked, a breakfast, lunch, brunch and cocktails establishment; the John Cannon Model Experience Center, M/I Homes Design, M/I Homes

Financial, and M/I Homes Title Agency.

Still to open are Agave Bandido, a Mexican-American restaurant and tequileria; Deep Lagoon, a seafood & oyster house; Good Liquid Distilling Co., Duck Donuts, Cileone Jewelers, The Black Dog store, which will sell resort wear, and La Chic Boheme, offering spa services and treatments.

“Waterside Place is rapidly becoming a retail and dining destination with the recent openings we have had,” said Kirk Boylston, president of Lakewood Ranch Commercial. “We have gathered the best of the best in local and regional retailers and restauranteurs into a truly unique setting. There is a tremendous amount of waterfront dining, and community spaces for sitting and relaxing, whether you’re having a drink from one of our restaurants, working remotely, or just hanging out with family and friends. It is rewarding to all involved with this project to see all of the spaces activated and used for the many purposes that we were trying to accommodate. A number of additional openings will occur during September and October; the majority of the tenants will be open for business by year’s end.

“Our events continue to have a robust following and are continually fine-tuned and enhanced by our great events and marketing team,” Boylston said.

For more information about Waterside Place, visit WatersidePlace.com.

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PHOTO BY ERNIE SOLLER

Lakewood Ranch Newcomers Gather to Learn About Our Community

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

I met with a group of 20-plus newly-minted Lakewood Ranchers at a park this summer. They were there to learn more about what activities are happening in their new community of Lakewood Ranch, and I was there to report on their meeting with Chris McComas, director of the parks program for Lakewood Ranch Community Activities.

As an icebreaker, and to find out a little more about the people who'd come to the meeting, McComas asked all the attendees to tell the group where they'd come from, and a number of them also added certain reasons as to why they had made the decision to come to live in Lakewood Ranch.

One couple, who previously had moved from Chicago to Minnesota, where they had lived for 40+ years, commented that the last winter they spent in Minnesota had been horrible for nasty winter weather. They also noted that they liked to play golf, which, of course, is generally not in the cards in the northern Midwest in the middle of winter. Midwinter is, however, one of the best times of year to play golf in Greater Lakewood Ranch!

Another couple, who came from Washington State, commented that they had taken an earlier look at a well-known retirement community in the northern mid-Florida area, but decided that they couldn't take the omnipresent roundabouts and crazy traffic in that community.

While almost all the participants at the get-together were originally from outside of Florida (especially the Chicago area) and as far apart as southern California and New York, there was

one young couple who admitted that they were actually from Florida – he from the Lakewood Ranch area, and she from the east coast. They had previously been living in Fort Myers, but moved recently to Lakewood Ranch.

McComas talked about the fact that some of the park areas in Lakewood Ranch were county-owned, such as the park in east Greenbrook, while others belonged to the various Lakewood Ranch villages, such as Summerfield Park and Greenbrook's Adventure Park.

What this means for residents is that some activities can be scheduled directly through Lakewood Ranch Community Activities, while other events may need to get prior authorization from Manatee or Sarasota counties.

Some of the more popular activities for new residents to be on the lookout for include the consistently popular Music on Main, which takes place on the first Friday of every month on Lakewood Ranch Main Street. The street is blocked off, the restaurants are open, live music fills the air, people bring lawn chairs so that they can sit and enjoy the music, and there is a distinct possibility that if you go, you WILL see dancing in the street. Vendors will be there, and the proceeds from liquid refreshment sales go to a local charity.

There is also a really big event at Waterside Place every Sunday morning – the Farmers' Market. Marketgoers can pick and choose from a myriad of vendors and their wares. You can find food items ranging from paella to bagels, as well as fresh produce. You can load up on seafood, locally produced honey, etc. – even dog treats for your favorite pup. The list goes on and on. And, if you get tired of walking around and want a break, you

can grab a coffee and sit in the shade while enjoying the breeze off the lake, and watch all those marketgoers walk by.

The best advice? Go early before the crowd gets big, and before some items are in short supply!

McComas did give the newcomers a hint about parking at The Market: If you find that parking is filling up, go around to the area to the west of the beach volleyball courts. There is usually parking available there, and it is only a short walk to the Market area.

Speaking of Waterside Place, check out the yoga every Sunday morning at Waterside Park. And then there's live music at the Waterside Plaza every Friday and Saturday night from 6 to 9 p.m.

If you're unsure where to go for information, you can get on your computer or phone and visit lakewoodranch.com, and follow the prompts. Or you can go to mylwr.com. That works too!

And, for you avid readers out there who've just moved to Lakewood Ranch, you'll be happy to learn that the newest branch of the Manatee County Library system will be opening here in Lakewood Ranch this coming fall.

In addition, new residents are invited to attend new resident orientation meetings held several times a year at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall – check with the Town Hall for dates and times. You'll learn the ins and outs of our government system here in Lakewood Ranch, including the differences between a homeowners association (HOA) and a Community Development District (CDD), and how each type of organization functions in our neighborhoods.

Enjoy, have fun, and WELCOME TO LAKEWOOD RANCH!

Homes by WestBay Coming to Star Farms at Lakewood Ranch

Developer Forestar Group, Inc. is welcoming Homes by WestBay to Star Farms, a multigenerational lifestyle development located in Lakewood Ranch. Homes by WestBay, Tampa Bay's largest locally-owned, privately held homebuilder, is anticipated to unveil four new model homes at Star Farms at Lakewood Ranch, with a public grand opening event and sales release anticipated early in 2024.

Buyers will have the choice to build and personalize award-winning floorplans from the ground up or select from professionally designed quick move-in homes. Homes will range between approximately 2,100 to 3,500 square feet and will feature open floorplans ideally designed for the Florida lifestyle. Offering buyers 50- and 60-foot homesites, the builder's Innovation series includes five floorplans ranging from approximately 2,100 to

3,300 square feet. The Artisan series features 11 floorplans with options from about 2,500 to 3,500 square feet. Homes by WestBay plans to showcase four models, two on the 50- and 60-foot homesites respectively.

"We're thrilled to join the Star Farms and Lakewood Ranch family of builders and believe Homes by WestBay will offer our discerning homebuyers exceptional value for their investment," said Willy Nunn, Homes by WestBay's founder and president. "The Tampa Bay and Sarasota area is more than a market to us—it's home. Our floorplans are thoughtfully designed with the Florida lifestyle in mind."

Founded in 2009, Homes by WestBay designs and develops communities and neighborhoods in Pasco, Hillsborough, Polk, and Manatee counties. Homes by WestBay is a recognized Energy Star Market Leader,

earning the 2019 Platinum Builder Award from the annual Builder Achievement Awards program through 2-10 Homebuyers Warranty, and has received numerous other awards from the Tampa Bay Builders Association and the Southeast Building Conference.

Surrounded by the natural beauty of Southwest Florida, Star Farms at Lakewood Ranch is a multigenerational lifestyle community that offers a unique experience tailored to residents. The 700-acre, gated village is a "resort ranch hometown," featuring 1,500 single-family homes, paired villa retreats and townhomes with a variety of amenities, clubs and hospitality services. Star Farms is minutes from dining, shopping and cultural activities as well as top-rated beaches.

Visit www.starfarmslwr.com and join the VIP Club for the latest information.

2023 Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sale

Breathe new life into your landscape! Join Master Gardener volunteers from 9 a.m. to noon Oct. 7 for the 2023 Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Sale located at the Barbara Davis Educational Gardens, 1303 17th St. W., Palmetto.

The sale will feature Florida natives, pollinator plants, edibles, shrubs, ground covers, and more, all grown by Master Gardener volunteers. All proceeds from this event go to the operation and maintenance of the Master Gardeners' Educational Gardens and Greenhouse, and to support Master Gardener educational and outreach programs. The group's latest goal is to install an outdoor shade structure in the gardens so they can offer more hands-on learning opportunities during the hot, sunny months!



Tickets to the event are free and guests are required to register beforehand at [Eventbrite.com/e/spring-plant-sale-tickets-519160863117](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/spring-plant-sale-tickets-519160863117). Only cash or personal checks will be accepted during the sale.

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LAKEWOOD RANCH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

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We are just a few days away from the beginning of fall, which means we are nearing some of the most exciting events of the year! The Lakewood Ranch Community Activities team is excited to bring back BooFest, the Lakewood Ranch Mindful Triathlon, and New Year's Eve at Waterside Place.



Aliye Presley

Kicking off the excitement is the eagerly anticipated BooFest! On Oct. 27, from 6 to 9 p.m., the heart of Lakewood Main Street will be transformed into a captivating Halloween wonderland. This family-friendly event promises a spooktacular time for all ages. Make sure the little ones bring their trick-or-treat bags as our wonderful vendors and sponsors will be passing out candy throughout the night. Join us for performances, food and beverages, activities for children and families, and the Children's Costume Parade!

Next up, the Lakewood Ranch Mindful Triathlon! On Nov. 18, from 8 to 11 a.m., join us for a unique triathlon experience that has become a staple in our community. Now, let's clarify – this isn't your typical triathlon. The "LWR Mindful Tri" is a unique experience that combines physical activity with



mindfulness. Picture starting your day with a refreshing 5k run/walk that will get your heart pumping. Then, it's time to unwind with yoga and meditation sessions that will leave you feeling refreshed! Register for the LWR Mindful Tri at LWR-MindfulTri.com.

Last, but certainly not least – Lakewood Ranch's second annual New Year's Eve at Waterside Place! Join us at the Waterside Place Plaza from 6 p.m. to midnight on Dec. 31 to ring in the New Year! DJ Truth will be spinning high energy tunes and food will be available to purchase from Waterside Place restaurants and participating food trucks. Get ready to dance and end 2023 with friends and neighbors.

We can't wait to see you at our fall events! For sponsorships or other inquiries, feel free to reach out to us at any time by emailing info@lwrca.org.



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AROUND THE RANCH



New Mortgage-Free Home in Sapphire Point Dedicated to Army Veteran and Family

Retired U.S. Army veteran Lucio Gaytan and his family received a warm welcome during the dedication ceremony this summer of their new mortgage-free Pulte home. Attended by more than 250 guests, including PulteGroup employees and trade partners, Lakewood Ranch community representatives, state and local dignitaries, and neighbors, the ceremony marked the completion of the four-bedroom, three-bath home in Sapphire Point at Lakewood Ranch. The home was donated to Sgt. 1st Class Gaytan through PulteGroup's Built to Honor program, which recognizes and thanks military personnel who have been injured during their service.

"Lucio has given so much of himself to this country and we are proud to honor him," said Josh Graeve, president of PulteGroup's Southwest Florida Division. "We hope this home creates a lifetime of new and happy memories for Lucio and his family."

The professionally decorated home has more than 2,000 square feet under air. It features an extended gathering room, providing an activity table for art projects, homework and game nights, and a large, covered lanai with a swimming pool. The home also features wheelchair accessible halls and countertops.

"I stand before you as humble as I can be and grateful and thankful for my family," Gaytan said before the ribbon cutting for his home. "This is a great honor. A great weight from my shoulders has come off knowing that my family is going to be okay. Allowing us to do this is like a reset so we can start moving forward."

After PulteGroup identified the decorated Army veteran as a recipient for a mortgage-free home, Pulte first honored Sgt. Gaytan with a ceremonial groundbreaking this spring. Well-wishers lined the street as the family was escorted by a patriotic motorcade to their future home for the groundbreaking in early spring – coinciding with the 27th anniversary of Gaytan's enlistment.

Pulte also honored Gaytan in April during Notes of Love, an event attended by county and community leaders, the family's future Sapphire Point and Lakewood Ranch neighbors, friends, military veterans, trade partners, and representatives from PulteGroup and Building Homes for Heroes. Attendees wrote messages of appreciation, support and encouragement on the foundation, beams and drywall of the under-construction home.

Gaytan became the first in his family to join the U.S. Armed Services when he enlisted in February 1996 in Imperial Beach, Calif. He has often said, "There is no greater honor than serving my country." Gaytan completed tours of duty in Afghanistan, Iraq and received numerous military honors during his 22 years of distinguished service. He is the recipient of the Bronze Star Medal, Afghanistan Campaign Medal with four campaign stars, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal with a campaign star, Master Parachutist Badge, and the Air Assault Badge.

Gaytan was seriously injured in a 2005 parachute jump while training for deployment to Afghanistan. He completed the deployment and served in the Army until 2018. During his final years of military service, Gaytan joined the Warrior Transition Battalion, one of the Army's largest wounded warrior units, where he rediscovered his competitive spirit and relief from chronic back, spinal and leg pain while training for triathlons, wheelchair basketball and football.

As some of the newest residents in Sapphire Point, the Gaytans will also enjoy the community's recently completed amenity center which includes a resort-style pool, basketball court, dog park, playground, and clubhouse offering a fitness center and community room, as well as the active lifestyle and proximity to dining, shops and entertainment throughout Lakewood Ranch.



Your LWR Story

By Maggie Milne

Meet Elodie Waschke, Lakewood Ranch resident and business owner. Elodie was born in Brazil and loved her life there, her childhood, and her family. Elodie had visited the United States throughout her youth for vacations. She lived in California in the mid to late 90s after graduating college. California preceded her brief stint in Mexico when she opened a satellite office for her corporate employer. Thereafter, she returned to California for a fresh start and launched her own retail company.

Elodie met her German husband through work relationships while living in Brazil. Together they made the decision to move to Germany, at which point Elodie sold her Brazilian business; three retail stores. Their life in Munich, Germany, included launching a dental product company, which proved successful for the three years they stayed there. Excited to launch the same business in Brazil, Elodie and her husband returned in 2003.

Having lived in both Brazil and Germany, together their next move would be to a country they both knew and felt comfortable with. They chose the United States, Florida specifically. Of all the options throughout Florida, they moved to the Lakewood Ranch area in 2010 where they launched their newest dental supply office. Their daughter Grace made the move with them. Soon after settling into both home and work, in 2013 their daughter Julia was born at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center.

Their thriving dental supply company required another move for the family in 2014, this time to Hamburg, Germany. Elodie received an offer to expand their operation in Portugal for a few years prior to returning to Hamburg, Germany in 2020. A family matter in 2022 inspired the Waschke family to return to Florida, this time settling down in Lakewood Ranch.

The Waschke family chose Lakewood Ranch for several reasons. Elodie embraces the Lakewood Ranch lifestyle, one that encourages a balance of work, play, and recreation. Grace and Julia attend Lakewood Ranch Preparatory School and have made friends through school and their neighborhood, Lorraine Lakes. Elodie regards her community as one filled with opportunities for friendships.

While her husband stays busy working as an electrical engineer, Elodie manages operations for a culinary manufacturing company she started, Cake and Food. Through Cake and Food, she and her employees create Brazilian appetizers and sweets. Cake and Food products are available in

local establishments, cafes, and restaurants in and near Lakewood Ranch.

Elodie and her husband balance their life successes: work, family, their new home, and recreation as many parents do – intentionally and by planning. Fun the Waschke family enjoys includes being outside, getting to local beaches – Holmes

keeping foods safely stored during the shipment of her products, she emphasizes the fact that this shipping box is sustainable and reusable.

As for the Waschke future, Elodie knows the family has found their forever home in Lorraine Lakes. The high quality of lifestyle, social, recreational, and beauty – for Elodie these add up to



Beach specifically. Her daughters take dance classes with a local dance school. The Lakewood Ranch Farmer's Market is every Sunday at Waterside Place Town Center and Elodie goes as often as possible. Other ways she and her family spend their free time includes Music on Main the first Friday of each month at Lakewood Ranch Main Street town center. With their neighborhood amenity center now open, Elodie and her family only need more hours in each day to enjoy everything there is to enjoy about Lakewood Ranch.

Considering her future Lakewood Ranch life, Cake and Food just contracted with a German company for a specialty designed shipping box made with innovative technology that ensures the protection of Cake and Food perishable items traveling from Florida to other states, and other countries. Elodie is thrilled about the positive implications this will have for her company. For ice and

Lakewood Ranch being the perfect place. Elodie says she imagines spending chapters of her life here, ensuring her daughters graduate from their local schools, growing her business and retiring here.

If you want to contact Elodie her phone number is text/call 941-893-7458.

We would like to share Your LWR Story!

Include who you are, why you chose Lakewood Ranch, your Lakewood Ranch life now, and what excites you about your Lakewood Ranch future.

Send Your LWR Story and photos to yourlwrstory@lakewoodranch.com.

Lakewood Ranch CDD Boards Give Final Budget Approval

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

During their August meetings at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall, the boards of supervisors of Lakewood Ranch's Community Development Districts (CDDs) gave final approval to their fiscal year 2024 budgets, as well as approving changes in assessments to pay for budgeted items.

Assessments, in most cases, will be held to a minimum, with one district decreasing assessments, although there will be variances in certain areas. During the District 2 board meeting, a resident of Miramar asked why his assessment went up by 19%. Supervisor Mike Finney noted that the assessment methodology was adopted several years ago, and that, at that time, the Miramar condo residents got a large reduction in their assessments.

In an unusual move due primarily to costs incurred from the damages caused by Hurricane Ian last fall, along with significantly larger landscaping maintenance contract costs, the boards (with the exception of District 6, which sustained far less damage than other districts) also passed amendments to their fiscal year 2023 budgets. The amendments allowed for the movement of unused money for budgeted items and use of reserves to pay for such costs, a good portion of which may eventually be covered by reimbursement from FEMA (FEMA reimbursement may take a long time to arrive). These moves will help to prevent huge increases in assessments.

One of the "good news" items that is expected to positively impact the fiscal year 2023 situation is the fact that irrigation water usage has, at least to this point, been less than the originally expected amounts, meaning that the original budgets included larger dollar amounts for irrigation than will be needed, thus freeing up dollars to pay for a portion of the increased costs.

The costs per district for Hurricane Ian damages (rounded off) are as follows:

- District 1-\$264,000
- District 2-\$223,000
- District 4-\$201,000
- District 5-\$246,000
- District 6-\$8,000

RAINFALL

Operations Director Tom Merrell informed the boards that once again, rainfall in Lakewood Ranch was significantly below



Two of the latest additions to the District 6 board of supervisors, from left, Martin Ball and Martin Fugardi. PHOTO BY ERNIE SOLLER

average for July.

The normal amount of rainfall in July is 9.2", while reported amounts for July were generally between 3 and 6".

SAFETY TOWN

District 1 Supervisor Laura Fox reported that a Safety Town program for kids will be held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, Oct. 7. Kids will learn bike safety, home safety, safety in the water, etc.

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

Chief Financial Officer Susan Wiggins, who was hired last year for that position, has resigned. A search is now underway for a replacement.

PAVING

The Inter-District Authority has authorized payment for the repaving of the Town Hall parking lot.

Districts 2 and 5 approved paving on Masters Avenue. Some other Country Club paving projects will be pushed back due to cost considerations. It was announced a couple of months ago that paving costs have greatly increased over the last couple of years, far surpassing the reserves set aside for such projects.

Paving the parking lot at Adventure Park in District 4 will be pushed back until at least after the pavilion, which recently burned down, is rebuilt.

NEW CELL TOWERS

During the District 5 board meeting, resident Hilary Harter inquired about the cell towers that are being put up along University Parkway and Lorraine Road. Chairman Marty Cohn replied that they are apparently being installed on part of the county right-of-way, most probably by one of the major carriers.

SEE CDD, PAGE 16



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www.DansFanCity.com

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CDD FROM PAGE 15

Since the towers are not on District 5 property, the District has no say over their installation.

MANNED VS. UNMANNED GATES SURVEY

There has been a lot of talk lately in the Country Club on the subject of manned vs. unmanned security gates. District 2 residents Les Prysock and Ero Selander decided to put out a survey to residents of Augusta and Oakmont.

Of the responses they received, 12% voted for unmanned gates, while the remainder voted for either manned gates from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m., or manned gates 24/7.

After the residents presented their findings, Supervisor Tom Green commented that the perception of the security provided by either manned or unmanned gates is the same.

Unmanned gates are far less costly to maintain, but they have their own set of issues.

GREENBROOK ADVENTURE PARK PAVILION

The destroyed Greenbrook Adventure Park pavilion is expected to be demolished

in October, pending closure of investigations. The structure will be rebuilt using the original concrete pad, which will save a lot of money, and will be rebuilt using materials less likely to burn.

POOL HOPPING

A prank activity is apparently happening in Lakewood Ranch and was brought to the attention of the District 4 board of supervisors by one of their residents.

Greenbrook Rivers resident and security contractor Jim Beadel and his wife were awakened very early one morning recently by a group of young people who entered their lanai and hopped in and out of their pool before running away. Their activity was captured on a security video.

Breaking into pool enclosures for a quick dip and then running away is something the kids call pool hopping. These young people may not realize it, but they are putting themselves in potentially great danger by doing this.

Homeowners whose pools are targeted for this activity may feel that their homes are being invaded and react accordingly – possibly with deadly force.

Parents are cautioned to let their chil-

dren know that this is not only illegal but could result in serious injury or death.

AUDITS

Work has begun on the fiscal year 2023 financial audits for the Lakewood Ranch CDDs. The initial report from the auditors to Executive Director Zielinski indicates that no issues have been found.

POTABLE WATER TURNOVER IN DISTRICT 6

The District 6 board of supervisors, along with Executive Director Zielinski, are trying to get a definitive reading from Manatee County regarding the pending turnover of the District's potable water system. The District has spent a lot of time and money upgrading and improving their system in preparation for a turnover to the County. One concern at the county level is that of a recent large turnover in personnel at Manatee County.

NEW DISTRICT 6 SUPERVISOR

Martin Ball has been appointed as the newest District 6 supervisor. Ball moved into the area eight years ago after a career in medical sales. He played football for the University of Iowa from 1978-1982.

September Programs at Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch

Please note that all events will take place at the Chabad House at 5712 Lorraine Road, or at the virtual Chabad House at chabadofbradenton.com/zoom, unless otherwise noted.

Talmud Classes

Mondays, 7:30 - 8:30 p.m.

At the Chabad House and on Zoom
Explore the Talmud and its laws in its original text. No prior knowledge of the Talmud or Hebrew is necessary. Book fee: \$45.

Torah Studies

Saturday mornings, 9 - 9:30 a.m.

At the Chabad House
Participate in a fascinating class on the Torah portion of the week. Discover the mystical meanings and lessons behind ancient stories. Admission is free.

Weekly Shabbat Services

Friday nights, 7 p.m.; Saturday mornings at 9:30 a.m., Shabbat Kiddush at noon

At the Chabad House

Enjoy warm, family friendly services at The Chabad House. Saturday morning services are followed by a delicious buffet Kiddush.

Tanya Class

Thursdays, 9-9:30 a.m.

At the Chabad House and on Zoom
Delve into the secrets of the soul with Rabbi Mendy at this weekly Tanya class. Admission is free.

Yom Kippur Break Fast

Monday, Sept. 25, 7:57 p.m.

At GROVE, 10670 Boardwalk Loop Lane

Join Chabad of Bradenton for a delicious kosher Break the Fast feast of bagels, lox, cream cheese, cakes and more. All are welcome. There is no charge. Donations appreciated. Sponsor the Break Fast for \$1,000. Reservations are suggested.

Sukkot Under the Stars

Friday, Sept. 29, 7 p.m.

At the Chabad House

Celebrate the Holiday of Sukkot with Chabad of Bradenton & Lakewood Ranch and enjoy a delicious holiday dinner in the Sukkah! RSVP by Sept. 22. Suggested donation: \$18; sponsor for \$360.

For more information on any of the ongoing events or to reserve, call Rabbi Mendy Bukiet at (941)752-3030, email rabbib@chabadofbradenton.com, or visit the Chabad website at chabadofbradenton.com.



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Shhhhhh ... I Have a Secret; It's Italian Chardonnays

Though former full-time Wine Bro Patrick D has moved on to bigger and better things, he has become a Bro consultant regarding upcoming or unheard-of wine trends. During a recent discussion, he cued me into something I needed to know about: Italian chardonnays. I pushed my chair back momentarily and responded, “You mean California ... right?” Much in a whispered voice, as if he were giving me a stock tip, Patrick replied, “No, Italy, their chardonnays are mind-blowing.” With this unverified tip bouncing through my wine database, I thought it was time to explore what Italy had to offer in the competitive world of chardonnay wines.

I'm Vigo, The Unassuming Wine Bro (UWB) – a regular guy who loves everything about wine, including writing about it. I aim to explore the nuances of wine, share my adventures with you, and have a little fun along the way.

As I researched, I found that Italian chardonnay wines are known for their elegant and versatile characteristics that make them stand out from other white wines. The combination of the Italian winemaking tradition and Italy's unique terroir has created a chardonnay that's balanced, youthful, and aromatic. With all these positives, it's time to dive into this undiscovered white wine from the country where red wines are king.

Rating system:  Ratings are given on a 1-5 scale, with five being the highest.

2020 COLTERENZIO-SCHRECKBICHL

“LAFOA” CHARDONNAY SUDIRO-ALTO ADIGE

Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, \$25 U.S., 13.5% ABV

In fine white wines, the 2020 Colterenzio-Schreckbichl “Lafoa” Chardonnay emerges as an exquisite Italian Alps masterpiece that embodies the essence of its terroir and winemaking artistry. The 2020 vintage exemplifies the winery's commitment to producing exceptional wines that balance tradition and innovation. Upon pouring, the 2020 Colterenzio-Schreckbichl “Lafoa” Chardonnay has a luminous straw-yellow color, which captures the eye. On the nose, the 2020's aroma is a symphony of elegance with notes of ripe green apples, juicy pears, and a touch of citrus zest. On the palate, it's like drinking in cool, crisp Alpine air with a beautifully textured body exuding flavors that mirror its aroma. This is a wine to savor with good friends on a special occasion.

Vigo's rating:     

2022 CERAUD IMYR BIANCO VAL DI NETO IGT

Calabria, Italy, \$24 U.S., 13.5% ABV

We've traveled to the most southern area of Italy (The Boot) for this golden beauty, the 2022 Ceraud Imyr Bianco Val di Neto IGT. It captures the essence of its wild southern region with pale gold, which hints at the sun-soaked vineyards from which this wine originates. On the nose, its aroma transports you to the Mediterranean coast. The scent



2020 Colterenzio-Schreckbichl “Lafoa” Chardonnay
Sudtiro-Alto Adige



2022 Ceraud Imyr Bianco Val di Neto IGT



2021 Peter Zemmer Chardonnay Alto Adige

of ripe peaches mingles with vibrant citrus notes, creating an immediate sense of freshness. An herbal undertone provides a complex and inviting aroma profile. On the palate, it has an initial burst of tropical fruits, including pineapple and apricot, which is balanced by a zesty acidity that adds a lively vibrance to each sip. This wine was made for pool or seaside enjoyment.

Vigo's rating:    

2021 PETER ZEMMER CHARDONNAY ALTO ADIGE

Trentino-Alto Adige, Italy, \$10 U.S., ABV 13.5%

Some years back, Patrick D and I had a spirited discussion about wines under \$20, which ended with me stating, “If you look hard enough, you can find something good at or below the \$20 price range.” The 2021 Peter Zemmer Chardonnay Alto Adige is our magic unicorn that matches outstanding taste and penny-pinching price. Another jewel from the Alpine region of Italy, with its stunning landscapes and cool climate, the 2021 Peter Zemmer Chardonnay Alto Adige has gained recognition for producing wines of finesse, and this chardonnay is a prime example of that dedication to quality. On opening, it exudes a brilliant pale straw color, hinting at its fresh and vibrant character. On the nose, it has an inviting

and complex aroma. The scent of crisp green apples and juicy pears takes center stage, joined by a delicate floral bouquet. On the palate, it is a harmonious balance between its lively acidity and creamy texture derived from the oak maturing. Fruity with a hint of crisp apples and ripe pears, this is an inexpensive selection you can't deny.

Vito's rating:    

VIGO'S OVERALL IMPRESSIONS:

The secret is out and verified: Italian chardonnay is a legitimate contender versus California varietals. Crisp and fruity is a welcome change from its full-bodied and buttery California cousins. If you are up for something white and different, Italian chardonnay should be first chosen ... but keep it under wraps.

ATTENTION FANS AND READERS:

Like our Facebook page “The Unassuming Wine Bros,” follow us on Instagram @theinassumingwinebros, or email me at vigoloveswine@gmail.com. Let me know what you think about this article, these bottles, or suggestions for upcoming articles.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Quality Care and a Unique Birthing Experience

Chrissy Coney, RNC, BSN, CLC, Birth Designer,
Lakewood Ranch Medical Center

The Birth Designer program at the Women's Center at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center is a unique resource for maternity patients, offering support and guidance and helping to empower patients with the knowledge they need to create the birthing plan they desire.

"Understanding what our hospital offers is an important part of creating a birth plan," said Chrissy Coney, RNC, BSN, CLC, birth designer at Lakewood Ranch Medical Center. "One of my favorite things about this job is helping to ease fear or anxiety that patients have about labor and delivery. Patients often share at the beginning of our appointment that they are nervous or scared. But by the time they leave, they are excited and less anxious."

Answers to Your Frequently Asked Questions

What is a birth plan?

Birth plans help us to meet patients' wishes as much as possible. Some patients use their birth plan to firmly state their intentions for their hospital stay. Others use the plan as a "wish list" for what they would like to see happen during the birthing process. The plan helps to educate new parents on what the hospital can offer. We are aware that not all plans go accordingly. A birth plan can help us to understand the patient's values. With safety as the top priority, even when circumstances change, we can still try to accommodate the patient's



wishes. The birth plan also helps the nursing staff understand any special patient needs so that everything can be ready for the patient prior to admission. Examples include whether the patient has a special diet or allergies that require ordering special gloves, etc.

What type of information is included?

Your birth plan may include a list of individuals who you would like to be there for support during labor, pain relief options, positions you would like to try during labor and/or pushing preference for delayed cord clamping (Delayed Cord Clamping: A Guide for Healthcare Professionals, sph.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/112/2019/08/CGBI-4-Delayed-Cord-Clamping-2019.pdf), feeding preference for the baby or medications you would like the baby to receive at the hospital. A checklist with ideas of things to pack for your hospital stay can also be included.

Should I involve my doctor and, if so, when?

Absolutely! Involving your provider and discussing your plans for labor should happen at every prenatal visit so that your entire healthcare team is on board when it comes to delivery.

When should I finalize my birth plan?

Patients can start creating their plan at any time during their pregnancy. However, I recommend waiting until closer to the due date before finalizing a plan, in case of the unexpected, such as planning for a natural labor, but then learning that a medical induction is necessary. I usually find it most helpful to meet with patients between 30 and 32 weeks of pregnancy, when we typically have a good idea of how the pregnancy is going and can best anticipate and discuss possibilities. Patients also have the right to change their mind about

preferences at any time during pregnancy or the labor-and-delivery process.

What if my birth plan does not go as expected?

As they begin creating their birthing plan, I like to point patients to evidence-based research instead of general information that is not well-sourced by medical professionals. It's important to be realistic when considering every patient's unique birthing journey. During labor and delivery, it's sometimes necessary for patients and their healthcare team to make decisions on a minute-to-minute basis. These may not parallel what is in the plan, but they are ultimately what is medically considered best for mom and baby. Having open communication about expectations and the realities of labor and delivery usually helps to curb the disappointment a patient may have when the written birth plan does not unfold exactly as the patient imagined.

"Finally, the most important thing for both mom and baby is to be happy and healthy," said Coney. "The goal of the birth designer program is to provide patients with the most personalized experience possible, while always keeping safety as a top priority. I also encourage patients to attend our prenatal classes, which offer a wealth of valuable information for new parents."

To learn more about Lakewood Ranch Medical Center's maternity services, visit lwrmc.com/womenscenter.

Physicians are on the medical staff of Lakewood Ranch Medical Center, but, with limited exceptions, are independent practitioners who are not employees or agents of Lakewood Ranch Medical Center.



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Many Ways to Give Back

By Brittany Lamont,
President and CEO

The Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance is giving back to local non-profits through its sixth annual Alliance Gives Back Volunteer Days.

Alliance Gives Back is an opportunity for business and community members to volunteer at local non-profits during a three-day span. In the past six years we have been able to support over 100 non-profit projects with 1,000+ volunteers.

At this year's Alliance Gives Back you can help with anything from gardening to teaching kids, prepping for large events, packing donated food and even creating appreciation gifts!



If you're unavailable to volunteer, no problem! We've partnered with the Lakewood Ranch Community Fund again to allow those that aren't able to give their time, to donate their funds to our member non-profit grant applicants. You'll have the chance to see exactly where your money goes at our luncheon on Dec. 13!

EVENT DETAILS:

Date: Thursday October 5th through Saturday, October 7th

Location: locations and times vary depending on each project

Price: No cost to you to participate

If you have interest in learning more about Alliance Gives Back and how you, your family, friends and colleagues can participate, please visit our website at lwrba.org/Alliance-Gives-Back

THE (PET) DOCTOR IS IN!

By Erin Siems, DVM

You've probably heard the saying "Good vets talk to animals; great vets hear them talk back." I often hear my clients say "I just wish he could tell me what's wrong!" Well, a lot of the time our furry friends are "talking" to us, it's just hard to put together all the clues to know what they are saying. In other words, a growl is not always bad and a purr is not always good.

Many of us have seen that dog who "smiles" when excited. Their lips go up, typically their head goes down, sometimes their hair raises and they get a little butt wiggle. To an outsider, this can look like a snarling, dangerous animal but to the people who know him it is the expression of total joy. On the other hand, we typically associate a cat's purr with good feelings. Certainly the kitty who is rubbing on your leg and confidently strolling about fits that category. However, the kitty crouched in the corner with its ears back may be purring to try to calm its anxiety or fear.

In order to hear what our pets are trying to tell us we not only have to listen, we have to watch what their body language is telling us. If something is wrong, we often have to force



ourselves to first observe from a distance to allow them to "speak" to us rather than immediately try to comfort, which can interrupt the conversation they are trying to have with us. Sometimes the best way to get closer to your best friend starts with being more hands off. Most important, we need to pay attention to who they are when they are well so we can better understand and help them when they are sick.

Think of interpreting your pet's cues as learning a new language. It's not always easy to "get it" but the more you practice the more you understand. Just like a new language, if you keep at it you will be continually surprised with how much you didn't know and how fun it becomes to learn.

Dr. Erin Siems graduated from Ross University School of Veterinary Medicine in 2010, and has enjoyed working in both general practice and emergency care. She has been practicing in the Lakewood Ranch/Bradenton area for the past seven years. She enjoys general practice because it gives her the ability to build relationships with her patients and their families. Dr. Siems opened her own practice, Big Paws Animal Hospital in Lakewood Ranch, in May 2020. Email pet questions to reception@BigPawsAnimalHospital.com.

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Friday, November 17th @ 6PM

THE OUT-OF-DOOR ACADEMY

Sunday, December 17th @ 6 PM

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Every month at Lakewood Ranch, we celebrate the best local visual, musical, and performing arts the Sarasota region offers. Sights + Sounds, our newest signature event, will showcase theater, orchestra, acapella performances, art shows, and more!

Join us at our next event. Come for the show then stay for dinner and a drink at Waterside Place town center.

*Check out all of the events
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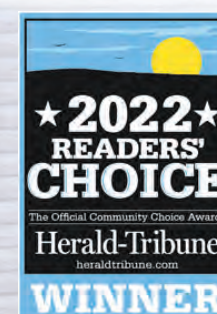
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The Florida Registration number for Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee is #CH1420. A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll-free (800-435-7352) or at www.800helpfla.com within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval, or recommendation by the state.



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