



Around the Ranch

AROUNDTHERANCH.COM

THE COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER OF LAKEWOOD RANCH

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2024



RANCH NITES RETURNS IN OCTOBER - Ranch Nite Wednesdays, Lakewood Ranch's favorite mid-week tradition, returns October 2 to Waterside Place. The event, which runs weekly through the end of May, is held from 6-9 p.m. and features live music, food trucks, cocktails, and the largest recreational cornhole league in the country! Dogs are welcome, but must be kept on a short leash. Photo by Ryan Angell

INSIDE:

**CHAMBERLIN'S
OPENS IN LWR**

Page 4

**COMMUNITY
ACTIVITIES**

Page 8

**LWR ALOHA UKULELE
CLUB "UKEFEST"**

Page 14



Life Planning Law Firm
Elder Law & Estate Planning
Peace of Mind Begins with a Plan



14375 Tamiami Trail • North Port
 1671 Mound Street • Sarasota
(941) 914-6000
www.LifeLawFirm.com

Wills • Trusts • Probate • Powers of Attorney
 Estate Planning • Medicaid • Deeds • VA Benefits

Your Legal Documents...Will They Work in Florida?

Successful Estate Planning requires periodic fine tuning to ensure that your legal documents work the way you want them to and when you need them the most. Changes in your personal circumstances, health, financial situation, location, tax planning, and testamentary intentions have a direct impact on your estate plan and its ability to achieve your goals. This is why we encourage a comprehensive review of your legal documents on a regular basis. Our goal is to offer you the peace of mind that you wish to protect you, your loves ones, and your assets will be fulfilled.

10 Reasons to Update your Estate Plan:

1. Changes in your Health	7. Changes in Beneficiaries, Advisors or Family
2. Changes in Financial Status	8. Death of a Spouse
3. Move to a new State	9. Birth of Grandchildren
4. Changes in State or Federal Laws	10. Changes in Charitable or Gifting Intentions
5. Retirement	
6. Change in Marital Status	

Consultations are Always Free !



Attorney Kevin Pillon received his Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University Law Center and has been practicing law since 1990. He is licensed to practice law in Florida & Washington, DC and is also a Certified Public Accountant. He is a member of The Florida Bar, Washington DC Bar, American Academy of Estate Planning Attorneys, National Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, National Elder Law Foundation, Florida Academy of Elder Law Attorneys, Life Planning Law Firms Association, and the Florida Institute of Certified Public Accountants. Kevin recently obtained his National Certification in Elder Law (CELAR®) from the National Elder Law Foundation, and he is accredited by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Editor:
 Lisa M. Barnott
lisa.barnott@lakewoodranch.com

Contributing Writer:
 Ernie Soller
efsoller@hotmail.com

Proofreaders:
 Sue Chaney
 Chris Westlake

Community Programs:
 Keith Pandeloglou
keith@lwrca.com

Graphic Designer:
 Kim Collister
kcollister@localiq.com

Editorial Board
 Lisa M. Barnott, Rex Jensen, Sue Chaney

Phone Numbers
Community Services Town Hall:
 941-907-0202

LWR Common Area:
 Maintenance Requests, 941-727-0899

Lakewood Ranch Medical Center:
 941-782-2100

Manatee County Government:
 941-748-4501

Sarasota County Government:
 941-861-5000

Lakewood Ranch Post Office:
 941-758-3537

Community Website:
myLWR.com

Around the Ranch offices are at 14400 Covenant Way, Lakewood Ranch, FL, 34202. The editorial phone number is 941-757-1542. The e-mail address is aroundtheranch@lakewoodranch.com.

Advertising Sales/Circulation: Around the Ranch is published by Lakewood Ranch Media which is solely responsible for its content. The Herald-Tribune is responsible for the printing, distribution and sales production of this newspaper. The articles and editorial viewpoints contained in this publication are written solely by Lakewood Ranch Media with the assistance of the Community Services Office and other offices in Lakewood Ranch, none of which are associated with the Herald-Tribune.

The contents of the Around the Ranch newspaper, including information by Around the Ranch correspondents, and other material contained in Around the Ranch are for informational purposes only and do not render medical advice or professional services. The information provided through Around the Ranch should not be used for diagnosing or treating a health problem or disease. Articles contained in this newspaper are not a substitute for professional care or services. If you have or suspect you may have a problem, you should consult a professional service provider. Never disregard professional medical advice or delay in seeking it because of something you have read in Around the Ranch.

 **Herald-Tribune**
 media group

Around the Ranch is an advertising supplement produced by the Advertising Department of the Herald-Tribune Media Group. To advertise, call 361-4000.



The Handyman Company



A Trusted Company Since 1999
 One Year Warranty
 Guaranteed Price

Residential & Commercial

- Handyman Jobs
- Doors & Windows
- Soffit, Facia & Deck Repairs
- Carpentry & Fencing
- Drywall & Painting
- Flooring & Much More...

SAVE \$50
 OFF OF ANY JOB
OVER \$250
 Not valid with other offers.
 Expires 9/30/24

100% SATISFACTION GUARANTEED

941-548-1888

The-Handyman-Company.com





FO-3824219



INCREDIBLE DEALS! 12 MONTHS NO INTEREST*

PICK UP TODAY OR NEXT DAY DELIVERY AVAILABLE



STYLISH LEATHER
Leather sofa. Matching loveseat & sleeper available. Also in Blue or Gray.

SOFA
\$799⁹⁹



EXPRESSIVE BEAUTY
Queen headboard, footboard, rails, dresser and mirror.

QUEEN SET
\$1099⁹⁹



BOLD STYLING
Contemporary design. Includes table, two chairs and a bench.

4-PC
\$599⁹⁹



FIRM SUPPORT
Serta® Classic Queen Firm Mattress. All sizes available.

QUEEN MATTRESS
\$399⁹⁹



*On purchases \$300 or more with your The Furniture Warehouse credit card made between September 18, 2024 and September 17, 2025. Interest will be charged to your The Furniture Warehouse credit card if the promotional purchase is not paid in full within 12 months, by September 2025. Qualifying purchase amount must be on one receipt. Down payment of tax and delivery. Minimum monthly payments required. For new accounts: Purchase APR is 29.99%; Minimum interest charge is \$2. Existing cardholders should see their cardholder agreements for their applicable terms. Subject to credit approval. Furniture must be delivered within 60 days on all financing offers. All prices include the coupon savings or any promotional discounts. Previous purchases excluded. Cannot be combined with any other promotion or discount. Promotional offers exclude Hots Buys, floor models or clearance items, sales tax, furniture protection plans, warranty, delivery or service charge. One discount offer per household. All in-stock items are available for same day pick up or next day delivery if there is delivery capacity. See store for more details.



SOUTH SARASOTA 5252 S. Tamiami Trail (at Phillippi Creek) 941-260-9601
NORTH SARASOTA 4027 N Washington Blvd (Hwy 301) 941-351-8600
BRADENTON 1100 Cortez Rd W (corner US Hwy 41) 941-749-6069
ELLENTON 5814 18th Street East (across Premium Outlets) 941-479-7900
VENICE 550 S Seaboard Ave (on 41 Bypass) 941-485-3211
PORT CHARLOTTE 1241 El Jobean Rd (across Sam's) 941-764-8700
Stores Hours: Mon-Sat 9-9, Sun 11-6





PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



Chamberlin's Natural Foods Opens in Lakewood Ranch

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Lakewood Ranch is fast becoming the “town with everything.”

We have great restaurants, loads of shopping opportunities for both clothing and accessories, varied grocery store chains, golf, soccer, parks, etc. ... and even cricket!

Let's take a look at the newest addition to the class of “varied grocery store chains” in Lakewood Ranch ... Chamberlin's.

Chamberlin's was founded in Orlando in 1935, and now has stores in six different Florida towns, so the brand has been around in our state for a while, and that indicates staying power. So something must be pretty good here.

The Chamberlin's sign at its new Lakewood Ranch store proclaims “Natural, Wholesome, and Trustworthy.”

The “natural” part of the wording on their store sign should give customers a clue as to the type of items to be found at Chamberlin's. Another slogan of the store is “All Natural ... All Aisles.”

My wife and I decided to make a foray into the world of Chamberlin's a short while ago, and found a modern, well-lit store that offers a variety of grocery items, and a few other things as well.

After all, when you walk into Chamberlin's, one of the first things you'll see is a large counter filled with very nice-looking organic produce. Indeed, they advertise that they carry 100% organic produce. Interesting.

With the knowledge that this store was into the “healthy lifestyle” sort of food items, I decided to stretch things a bit to see if I could find a couple of my favorite not-necessarily-healthy snack items.

OK, I admit that to having an occasional hankering for items like Cheetos and those rippled potato chips that can scoop up

more of my favorite chip dip. Were they available at Chamberlin's ... not surprisingly, no.

And that might just be a good thing, since those particular items are, I'm sure, on the proscription list of every cardiologist.

On the other hand, Chamberlin's has air-fried kettle corn which, arguably, is much higher on the “approved food” list of your doc – and mine. And, as for other snack-type foods, if you are like me and love chocolate – especially dark chocolate – Chamberlin's has “Endangered Species Dark Chocolate,” with flavors like cinnamon, cayenne and cherry, and caramel sea salt. I also saw a double chocolate truffle Larabar. Hmmm ... Sounds like I'll have to try several varieties.

Chamberlin's has a bulk food bar, with items like dried mangoes (one of my favorite dried-fruit snacks!). They also have ready-to-serve hot meal items, such as blackened chicken breast, “Sixty South salmon filets,” and grilled chicken breast. There's also a salad bar, and an olive bar, with all sorts of tasty olive treats. Chamberlin's also has a great selection of cheeses, from cheddar out of Ireland, to gruyere from Switzerland, to Parmigiano/Reggiano from Italy, to lots of other choices.

The fact that Chamberlin's has such features leads me to mention the alternative dine-in/dine out opportunity which Chamberlin's offers. Yes, there are dining tables both inside and outside of the Chamberlin's store, so if the weather is conducive to outdoor dining, you can do just that – or not.

They have free-range eggs, grass-fed beef, wild Alaska salmon, etc.

If you're into Asian food, you might want to check out Chamberlin's selection of Asian food items. Don't forget the ramen bar – complete with numerous different foods that you can add to

your ramen meal.

And, if various healthy supplements and vitamins are your thing, Chamberlin's has a large assortment of those items. They even have a bio-based hair color.

With all those food items to choose from at Chamberlin's, you may feel the need for a little bit of liquid refreshment to go along with your meal. Never fear, Chamberlin's has a goodly amount of choices in that department, from wine to interesting libations such as something called “Liquid Death.” Relax, it's flavored sparkling water.

I asked my wife what she liked about Chamberlin's. She said the deli area, the fact that the store offered samples of certain items, the hot food bar, the take-home healthy food, and the fact that the store had lots of staples, so you didn't need to go elsewhere for some of the normal necessities.

She also commented on the cheerfulness of the staff members she encountered, as well as their desire to be helpful.

To make your Chamberlin's shopping more friendly, the store has a web site (Chamberlins.com), that you can use to check on what items are on special at the Lakewood Ranch store for that week.

There's a big sign painted on one wall at the Lakewood Ranch Chamberlin's. It reads: “Hard Core Health...No Junk, No Joke.” Sounds like a plan.

The Lakewood Ranch Chamberlin's store is located at 6574 University Parkway, just down the way from Owen's Fish Camp. Hours are 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily. The hot bar is available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 4 to 7 p.m. For more information visit chamberlins.com.

Check it out!

Budgets Passed, Expect Assessment Increases

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Everyone knows prices have risen sharply over the last four years since Covid came on the scene. Turn on your TV, or check your e-mail, and you'll see and hear comments from various politicians – either offering their prescription for taking down prices or accusing their political opponents of being responsible for it all.

One thing, however, is pretty clear – prices for goods and services have gone up and, short of a major recession, they aren't going down any time soon.

The Lakewood Ranch Community Development District boards of supervisors passed their fiscal year 2025 budgets at their August board meetings, and residents can expect increases in their CDD assessments.

Boards have tried to pare increases to a minimum, but items such as landscaping costs and staff salaries are all up.

A while back, Lakewood Ranch was having problems retaining staff members in a competitive labor market. After taking a comparative look at staff salaries, the Inter District Authority (IDA) authorized salary increases for the staff members. Since then, job openings have become rare.

The cost of paving has gone up dramatically and has been exacerbated by the fact that, as has been frequently mentioned by Executive Director Steve Zielinski, there are fewer paving contractors available to take on jobs than there were several years ago. On top of that, Manatee County has made pavement projects a priority, which makes it harder for The Ranch's districts to contract for smaller local jobs.

In order to try to save pavement dollars, Lakewood Ranch has authorized a pavement management study that will identify areas of highest concern, to develop priorities for future paving projects. This report is due to be issued in September.

In any case, residents can expect assessment increases. Some districts have elected to use reserves to offset some increases.

District 4, for example, is using reserves to help pay for the replacement of the Adventure Park Pavilion, which was destroyed by a fire on July 4, 2023. It is expected that this project will cost around \$500,000. This situation has been made worse due to the fact that the District's insurance carrier, through some sort of "Catch 22" policy, has at this time authorized payment of approximately only one quarter of the original insured replacement cost – just over \$50,000 for a structure that was insured for four times that amount.

FEMA

Lakewood Ranch's Town Hall staff are continuing to work with FEMA to get authorization for paying for cleanup cost incurred by our districts as a result of Hurricane Ian in September of 2022. The Lakewood Ranch requests for compensation are now in final review at FEMA.

REVISION OF INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR UPKEEP OF MASTERS AVENUE

Have you ever wondered as to just what sort

of data is being collected by the cameras at the Country Club gates? Well, one thing that is collected is a tally of whose vehicles are using certain gates.

A result of this data collection has provided Districts 2 and 5 with information that a higher percentage of District 2 residents are using Masters Avenue than had been previously thought. (Districts 2 and 5 jointly pay for the upkeep of this road.)

With this new data in mind, the interlocal agreement between Districts 2 and 5 has been revised. Formerly, the agreement had District 2 paying 45% of the costs of the upkeep of Masters Avenue, with District 5 paying 55%.

The new agreement, ratified by both district boards, has District 2 paying 56%, while District 5 will now pay 44%.

RAINFALL, ETC.

Operations Director Tom Merrell reported that Lakewood Ranch received around 10 inches of rain in July. Then Hurricane Debby came to town during the first week of August and dumped around 17-1/2 inches of rain in two days – the most rain ever recorded here! Merrell noted that this total was possibly somewhat inaccurate, since the huge rainfall overwhelmed the rain gauges.

Lakewood Ranch didn't see the type of damage that we saw during Hurricane Ian – such as downed trees, but there were flooded streets, a portion of the berm around Hero's Nest Lake was breached, and more than a few residents experienced flooding in their homes.

With all that rainfall, work on projects such as the re-decking of the bridge at Adventure Park, and the lake bank erosion mitigation on Lake Uihlein has been delayed.

COMMISSIONER TURNER TO APPEAR AT TOWN HALL

Manatee County Commissioner Ray Turner, who lost in the August primary, will again visit the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall at 2 p.m. on Oct. 9.

Town Hall staff and the district board supervisors have made it a priority to make sure that county government officials be made aware of Lakewood Ranch's concerns.

LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENT

District 6's board passed a measure to greatly enhance the District's landscaping – especially around street median islands – based on a proposal put forth by Cepra Landscaping. The project is expected to cost approximately \$80,000. Part of the project will involve replacement of older vegetation that is no longer in good shape.

NEW RESIDENT ORIENTATION

A new resident orientation will be held at 5 p.m. Oct. 9 at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall. Attendees are asked to call the Town Hall to indicate their attendance, prior to the meeting. This meeting is not only for recent move-ins, but is open to any resident who'd like to know better how Lakewood Ranch functions as a community.

Summer Sale-A-Bration

ENTIRE SHOWROOM



UP TO

1/2 OFF



Now Thru Sept. 30th

NEW MODELS!

Introducing the NEW Fjords Verona!





Monte Carlo

FREE Leather Care Kit

(\$40 value) One per family. No purchase necessary. Expires 9/30/24

We are the area's number one choice for quality leather furniture.

Our gallery consists of a beautiful collection of leather furnishings from all the top brands. When you choose Sarasota Leather Gallery, you know you're getting the industry's finest at the lowest prices possible. With our furniture, we guarantee that your home will be the talk of the town!

\$300-\$500 OFF

any Fjords chair or sofa

\$1000-1500 OFF

any Fjord's sectional

- 100% Top Grain Leather
- 2 year leather warranty
- Lifetime warranty on frames
- Many colors to choose



LEATHER GALLERY

and

BEDDING CENTER

941-993-1057

GUARANTEED BEST PRICING • LIFETIME WARRANTY • FREE FINANCING

5251 S. Tamiami Trail (U.S. 41)

(1.5 Miles South of Bee Ridge Road)

M-F 10-7, Sat 10-6, Sun 12-5

SINCE 1984 • WE SHIP ANYWHERE • LEATHERGALLERY.SARASOTA.COM

QUALITY ISN'T EXPENSIVE, IT'S PRICELESS

THE (PET) DOCTOR IS IN!

By Erin Siems, DVM



Happy National Service Dog Month! Thanks to Dick Van Patton for getting the ball rolling on this important celebration of just how much these working dogs do to improve their human companions' lives. In 2008 Dick Van Patton visited a guide dog school and was inspired by the hard work and dedication of the dogs, staff and recipients. He partnered with Petco to start fundraising for the schools, which later blossomed into a whole month to celebrate these efforts every September.

Service dogs are specially trained to perform certain tasks to assist where their human companions have difficulty or are unable to complete, such as retrieving objects, detecting the onset of seizures, navigating the difficulties of post-traumatic stress and reminding people to take their medication. Their training often starts when they are just a few days old with sensory enrichment, and can continue for 1-2 years before they are ready to transition to full working life. These service dogs live with their humans as companions as well as workers.

The Americans with Disabilities Act recognizes service dogs, which are different from emotional support dogs, and gives them special access to most businesses, public housing, schools and emergency shelters.

We are fortunate to have one of these special schools right in our area. Dogs Inc. (formerly Southeastern Guide Dogs)

is located in Palmetto and trains guide dogs for people with limited vision as well as service dogs for veterans coping with PTSD and other trauma disorders. They depend heavily on their dedicated volunteers to provide these amazing dogs free of charge to the person in need. Dogs Inc. has their own rigorous breeding and training program that selects dogs for health and temperament.

They follow up this training with an alumni support program. They have volunteers who help in all aspects including breeder hosts so their breeding dogs are kept in a home environment, puppy raisers, administrative and dog training on campus, fundraising and many more. If you are interested in learning more about how to help, contact them or search online for one of the many other places who support service dogs.

It is important to respect that service dogs have an important job to do and are not always allowed to be touched when working. It is ok to ask the handler, but don't be offended if they ask you to restrain. Sometimes the biggest reward is just to acknowledge how both the dog and handler work together and their inspiring bond.

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@BigPawsAnimal-Hospital.com.

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 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

Thursday mornings, 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.

Chabad Hebrew School of the Arts
Sunday, Sept. 22 and 29, 9:30 a.m. to noon.

At the Chabad House
Give your child the experience of a lifetime at CHS featuring an outstanding curriculum, professional and warm teachers, hands-on lessons, CKids motivational system, and an innovative Hebrew reading Aleph Champ program.

CTeen BBQ and Drum Circle

Tuesday, Sept. 24, 7 p.m.

At the Chabad House
Join CTTeen for a delicious BBQ and interactive drum circle! \$25 or CT-teen members free. CTTeen annual membership is \$225.

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



Hot & Cold Deli SANDWICHES

Soups & Gourmet Salads

Serving Boar's Head Quality Products

Call Ahead Ordering
941.500.1082
Door Dash Available

Family owned & operated

NOW OPEN 10am-4pm

Parking available off Town Center Pkwy.
Offering Loyal Customer Reward Program.




SAN MARCO PLAZA
8225 Natures Way Suite 111, Lakewood Ranch, FL 34202
Work Trucks & Trailers Welcome!
www.lakewoodranchdeli.com

Apply Online at www.duetteanimalrescue.org

ADOPT A RESCUE CAT

Truman



Male, 11 Months, Tabby & White

Mittens



Male, POLYDACTYL
HEMINGWAY CAT Tuxedo
3 Years

Timmy



Male, 2 Years Tabby Tiger

Duette Animal Rescue Team

Don't Let Hurricanes Break In. Shield Your Home With **ARMORVUE** Window & Door

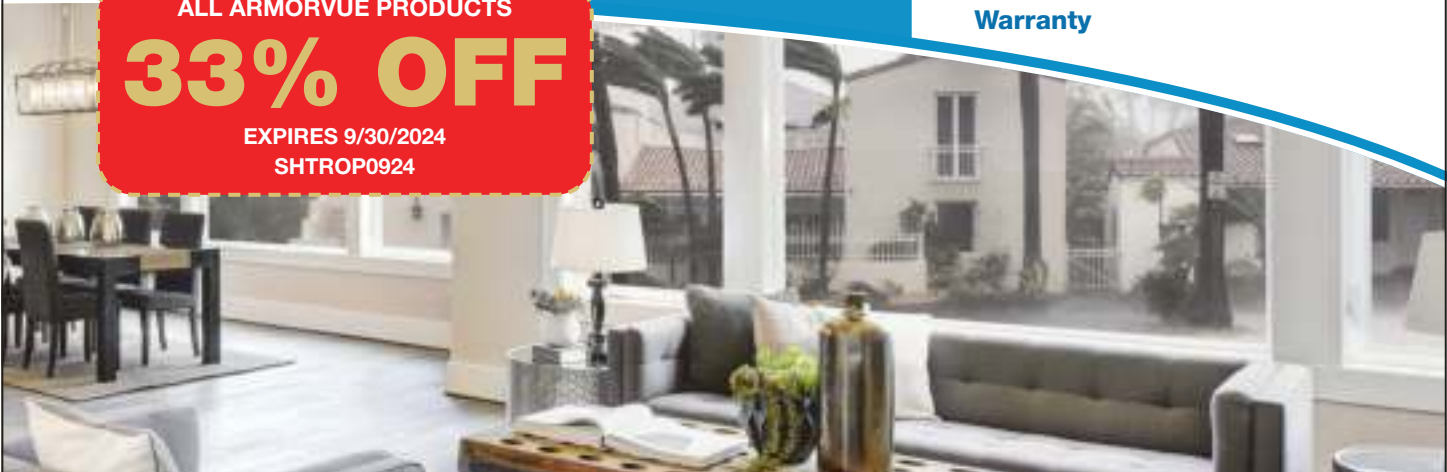


**0% INTEREST, \$0 PAYMENTS FOR 12 MONTHS*
OR LOW MONTHLY PAYMENTS**

Trust the Experts at **ARMORVUE**
The Clearly Stronger Choice For You

- ★ Category 5 Impact Rated
- ★ Non-Impact ★ Energy Star Rated
- ★ Noise Reducing
- ★ Increased Security
- ★ Lifetime Limited Transferable Warranty

ALL ARMORVUE PRODUCTS
33% OFF
 EXPIRES 9/30/2024
 SHTROP0924



Everyone associated with this company was 5-star! They kept me informed of every step and explained the process. The windows are beautiful and I couldn't recommend them more!
 - Lisa K.

BRING IN YOUR MEASUREMENTS AND PICTURES FOR ON THE SPOT PRICING.

(941) 223-8263
Sarasota

www.armorvue.com
 7509 Pennsylvania Ave
 Suite 101 Sarasota FL 34243

Mon-Fri 9am-5pm • Sat 9am-2pm

CALL, CLICK, VISIT OR SCAN



Location	Width	Height
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

*Subject to credit approval. Loans for the GreenSky® consumer loan program are provided by Synovus Bank, Member FDIC, NMLS #408043, without regard to age, race, color, religion, national origin, gender, disability, or familial status. GreenSky Servicing, LLC services the loans on behalf of your lender, NMLS #1416362. nmlsconsumeraccess.org. GreenSky® is a registered trademark of GreenSky, LLC and is licensed to banks and other financial institutions for their use in connection with that consumer loan program. GreenSky Servicing, LLC is a financial technology company that manages the GreenSky® consumer loan program by providing origination and servicing support to banks and other financial institutions that make or hold program loans. GreenSky, LLC and GreenSky Servicing, LLC are not lenders. All credit decisions and loan terms are determined by program lenders. GreenSky.com



LAKEWOOD RANCH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Building a true sense of community, through memorable events and social clubs.

By Danielle Bugel

As the summer sun sets and the autumn air begins to set in, Lakewood Ranch Community Activities (LWRCA) reflects on the incredible success of our summer Parks & Rec programming. This year, our diverse range of activities brought together families, friends, and neighbors, fostering a sense of community and connection that truly lights up our vibrant area.

In just June and July alone, we've hosted over 2,000 residents who enjoyed a fantastic lineup of programs that catered to all ages and interests! From lively games of bingo to spirited rounds of cornhole and rejuvenating Yoga in the Park sessions, the community rallied together to make summer unforgettable. Our Parks & Rec team worked tirelessly to ensure that each event was not only fun but also a safe environment for everyone involved. The positive feedback we received only strengthens our commitment to providing exceptional recreational experiences!

With the success of summer in the rearview mirror, we are thrilled to unveil our exciting fall programming. This season brings both weekly favorites and new opportunities for learning and social engagement. Whether you're looking to improve your health, explore new hobbies, or simply unwind with friends and family, we have something for everyone!

Join us weekly for your favorites, like tennis, bingo, cornhole, Sunset Volleyball, and Yoga in the Park. With familiar faces and fresh challenges, these programs will continue to create lasting memories and foster community spirit.

This fall, we are introducing new and exciting Parks & Rec programs that we like to call our Featured Fall Programs! These programs are designed to engage participants in enjoyable and enriching experiences:

- **Newcomers Meetup:** A welcoming gathering aimed at helping new residents connect with the community.
- **Soccer Stars:** Perfect for young athletes keen to develop their skills and make new friends.
- **Intro to Pickleball:** Learn this exciting sport that combines tennis and badminton!
- **Gentle Yoga with Sound Meditation:** Find your zen with calming practices ideal for relaxation.
- **Family Kickball:** Fun for all ages, gather your family and friends for a friendly game!
- **Learn to Fish:** Get introduced to the joys of fishing in our scenic local spots.
- **Basketball for Kids:** A great way to encourage teamwork and sportsmanship among young players.
- **Intro to Disc Golf:** Learn the basics of this fun and growing sport!
- **Basketball for Adults:** Join fellow enthusiasts for some friendly competition.
- **Volleyball for Seniors:** Stay active and meet new friends during our relaxed games.
- **Sunset Stretch by Jazzercise:** Enjoy stretching as the sun sets—perfect for relaxation!
- **Mobile Plant Clinic:** Get expert advice on plant care in our community gardening initiative.

- **Strides 360:** Challenge yourself in a full-body fitness class while engaging your toddler in their stroller!
- **Pilates in the Park:** Strengthen and tone in a fun outdoor environment.
- **Kids Yoga:** Cultivate mindfulness in our younger community members in a playful setting.
- **Teens Yoga:** A calming activity tailored for teenagers to help them cope with stress.
- **Kids Cornhole:** A modified game for our younger participants, great for coordination.
- **Bracelet Making:** Get creative and crafty in this fun arts and crafts session!
- **Thanksgiving Centerpieces:** Prepare for the holidays with beautiful seasonal crafts.
- **Ornament Making:** Create personalized ornaments to celebrate the winter season.
- **Faith Yoga Flow:** Integrate spirituality and movement for a unique yoga experience.
- **Intro to Bachata and Salsa Dancing:** Get your groove on with exciting dance lessons!
- **Strength+Mobility+Balance:** Engage in a 55+ dynamic fitness class.
- **Soft Play Toddler Time:** A fun, safe environment for our youngest community members to explore.

All programs can be registered for at LWRCA.org. We encourage everyone to take advantage of these wonderful opportunities to learn, grow, and connect with others in our community!

In addition to our fall programming, we are excited to announce two Signature Events that promise to be highlights of the season: Youth & Teen Fishing Tournament happening October 5, and BooFest on Main Street happening October 25!



On October 5th, gear up for a day of fishing fun at Lake Uihlein! Youths and teens aged 5-19 are welcome to join us for an exhilarating morning of fishing. Hosted by the Lakewood Ranch Anglers Club, this event is not only about catching fish but also about building friendships and enjoying the great outdoors. Cast over to LWRCA.org to register and secure your spot and mark your calendars for this fin-tastic event!

On October 25, get ready for BooFest on Main Street – our biggest and most popular annual event! From 6 to 9 p.m., join us for a night filled with food, drink vendors, exciting activities in the Kids Korner, a live DJ, and a lineup of vibrant performances, and lots of trick-or-treating for your little ghouls and goblins! BooFest is promised to be a spook-tacular family evening of fun!

For both Signature Events, we are accepting sponsors! For sponsorship opportunities or inquiries, please email Danielle@LWRCA.org.

As we transition into fall, we invite everyone to embrace the joy of community, engage in our varied programming, and celebrate the change of season together. We can't wait to see you at our events and programs. Let's make this fall one to remember! See you around The Ranch!

PRESENTING SPONSORS



SUPPORTING SPONSORS



“Beyond The Dark” Shows at Lakewood Ranch Cinema

Dogs Inc. Program Shows the Evolution of the Organization

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

I was recently contacted by Lydia Baxter, who is the media relations manager for Dogs Inc. (formerly Southeastern Guide Dogs), about coming to a screening of a new movie about Dogs Inc. and what this local organization can do for people.

First of all, we in Lakewood Ranch have a long history of supporting this fantastic effort to train dogs. Quite a number of volunteers here in our community have gotten involved as puppy raisers, or have taken multiple other volunteer positions with Dogs Inc.

It is not uncommon to see a group of puppy raisers walking their charges around the Lakewood Ranch Main Street area. A couple of years ago, I witnessed a group of puppy raisers taking their dogs through the Fish Hole miniature golf course. Most were quite well behaved, although I did get a shot of one dog sticking his nose into a putting hole. After all, they were still puppies at heart.

Back in 1982, the year that Dogs Inc. was founded, the first emphasis was that of assistance to people with vision issues, in order to provide guide dogs for those who were blind or otherwise vision challenged. This continued to be a primary focus of the organization until, later on, the leadership of Dogs Inc. became aware of an additional sort of need, that of returning military personnel, members of our armed forces who may have come back from a war zone, but for whom the war zone has never left them.

The movie, “Beyond the Dark,” illustrates the work of Dogs Inc. in a special way. First of all, audience members are given heavy-duty blindfolds, so that they cannot see anything. The movie sound track then takes them to a busy urban street corner. The sense of sight that most of us take for granted is absent entirely. All you can hear are traffic sounds, sounds coming from all around you. It is totally confusing ... and very scary.

The next portion of the movie gives a totally different set of experiences. Again, the world goes dark, but now what you hear are the sounds of battle. Small arms fire, automatic weapons, explosions, soldiers yelling to their comrades, temporary silence, and then it starts all over. Again, very different from what most of us have experienced, and also, again, very scary.

A couple of Dogs Inc. folks were on hand at the Lakewood Ranch screening with their dogs, to talk about their experiences and how their dogs had enabled them to live much better lives.

Katy McCoy remembered her panic and anxiety when, as a young girl at Scout camp, she was out on a dock on a lake at the camp as night fell. Katy found that with her severely compromised vision, the darkness closed in, and she could not see anything in the dark, and was grateful for the helper who managed to take her hand and brought her off the dock to safety.

Later on, while living in Washington, D.C., she stepped off the escalator at a Metro stop, and bumped into another woman who, not realizing Katy's lack of sight, began screaming at her.

After connecting with Dogs Inc., her dog, “Bristol,” as Katy puts it, “ran and jumped into my life.” Katy will tell you that Bris-



tol both physically and mentally helped her out of the darkness. She'll also tell you that the dogs “change lives - they changed mine!”

In 2009, Dogs Inc. pioneered its Service Dog Program for Vets. Service members were coming home from war zones with PTSD, and it was ruining their lives.

Sean Brown spent seven years in the U.S. Army, was wounded in combat and had multiple surgeries. His PTSD was so bad that he had a hard time getting and keeping a job. The war nightmares were so bad that he was afraid of going to bed.

He heard about vets getting help via service dogs, and learned about Dogs Inc. through Assistance Dogs International. Sean contacted Dogs Inc., and found, to his surprise and joy, that there would be no charge for his service dog, Nick!

That is one of the great things about Dogs Inc. Unlike many other dog training organizations, Dogs Inc. does not charge the person receiving an assistance dog for the cost of the dog's training. They rely on donations to make sure that helping those who need a dog does not become a burden on the recipient.

For Sean, his interaction with Nick has enabled him to become an ambassador for Dogs Inc., and he now travels around the country telling folks about the great programs offered.

Several years ago, I met a PTSD-diagnosed Air Force vet who addressed a meeting I attended. His Dogs Inc. service dog was at his side, and you could tell that if he began to get a bit nervous, the dog would nudge him, as if to tell him, “You're OK. I'm here for you.” It was a memorable experience.



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



In the military, the talk is of the “mission.” At Dogs Inc., the mission is the dog, and the mission is the people. Not one service dog recipient from Dogs Inc. has committed suicide.

It is truly amazing to see what these dogs can be trained to do for their partners. For example, a trained Dogs Inc. dog can sense traffic movement, even if the human partner cannot, and will pull back so as to prevent the human from entering traffic or walking in front of a moving car. One dog that was at the movie showing had been trained to pick up his human's credit card from a flat floor, if his partner should drop it.

The guide and service dogs of Dogs Inc. enable people to live better, productive lives, through their interaction with their well-trained bundles of love.

Consider volunteering and/or donating to Dogs Inc. Contact them at dogsinc.org or by calling them at (941)729-5665. They are always ready to show you around their campus, and tell you more about their dogs, and how the dogs take people “Beyond the Dark.”

Three Cheers! C'est La Vie! Is Now Open in Lakewood Ranch!

French Bakery/Café A Welcome Addition to Our Community's Food Palette

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

What do you think of when someone mentions a French bakery, or, for that matter, a French café?

When I think of a French bakery, it is a mental vision of a little bakery around the corner from the small hotel where I stayed in Paris about 25 years ago. I found it one morning when wandering the streets of the neighborhood quite early in the morning. I had to wait a few minutes for the bakery to open – it was that early. On opening the door to the shop, I was welcomed by the warm smell of freshly baked breads. As I had to fly out later that day, instead of a baguette or a loaf of heartier bread, I chose to purchase a few croissants and small pastries that I shared with my companions upon returning to our hotel.

As for my café memory from that trip, it is of a small corner place in a mountain town called Bourg St. Maurice, which was the last stop on the rail line that extended into France's Alpine ski country.

I can't remember the name of the café, but I remember a small place with seating both inside and out, and a long bar on one side of the main area that was covered in galvanized steel. The food was marvelous. We went back several times during our stay.

Well, now Lakewood Ranch has a bakery/café which aims to provide the experiences one would find in Paris and the Alps.

C'est La Vie! in Lakewood Ranch, like my favorite café in Bourg St. Maurice, is a small place that offers both inside and outside seating. I counted seven tables for two and three tables for four inside (note that these tables are small enough that they can be combined to provide for larger groups of diners), plus several more outside under an overhanging roof that provides shade for outdoor diners.

The inside décor has a warm and friendly feel, with buttery yellow walls and, as if to delineate the restaurant area from the kitchen and bakery side, the ceiling tiles in the latter area are alternated yellow and white.

As you walk into C'est La Vie! the first thing you may notice is the bakery/pastry counter(s). There are baskets of baguettes ready to take



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER



home and feast on. You'll also find croissants, various types of rolls, and sweets, too.

Further down the line you'll come to the "holy grail" of C'est La Vie! This is the magical location of their fancy French pastries. This is also where the drooling starts. You'll see one scrumptious pastry after another, one more taste-tempting than the last one you considered.

But wait! Unless you're going to take your food home, you haven't eaten a meal yet, and the choices are rather good ones.

My wife and I chose to eat lunch at C'est La

Vie! and neither one of us was up for a great big meal. She chose a croissant sandwich called, for those of you who are fans of the French Revolution, The Bastille. The Bastille consisted of a croissant, ham, cheese (served cold) and a serving of potatoes (instead of the potatoes, you can have a garden salad or a cup of soup). There are also sandwiches that can be ordered hot.

I decided to choose something different ... like a salad. My choice was the C'est La Vie! salad, which included prosciutto, chicken, pastрами, tomato, hearts of palm, kalamata olives,

romaine, mushrooms, cheese, basil and olive oil. It was GREAT – and quite large and filling. My salad was fresh, and the various components worked well together, with all the various flavors combining into a tasty experience.

Now comes the other part of the story. If you're going to a French café/bakery, do you think that you'll be able to pass up a fantastic pastry dessert? Of course not!

My wife chose a chocolate/caramel pastry that consisted of a layer of chocolate cake topped with a layer of caramel mousse and a layer of chocolate mousse, topped with a thin layer of chocolate and little fragments of chocolate.

She ate it with gusto, but managed to only eat half, bringing the other half home for me to indulge in! Yes!

As for me, I could not resist the combination of chocolate and orange that I'd spied in the refrigerated display case. It was everything I'd hoped for – here again there was a layer of chocolate cake, topped with more chocolate interspersed with pieces of orange, topped with chocolate and garnished with a couple of delicate slices of orange.

Fantastic! I ate the entire piece before leaving.

My wife was so impressed with the pastry offerings at C'est La Vie! that, knowing that we were going to have a guest for dinner, and after we paid our lunch bill, she made a substantial investment in ... more pastry! (Our guest was duly impressed!)

C'est La Vie! Lakewood Ranch is open Tuesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. They offer breakfast items with a French flair, such as crepes, omelettes, and the like, from a very extensive menu.

Beverages range from soft drinks to wine and beer, and I was quite pleasantly surprised to find that C'est la Vie! Lakewood Ranch serves one of my favorite Belgian beers – Leffe, a beer that was first made as an "abbey brew" by monks in the 13th century!

C'est La Vie! Lakewood Ranch is located at 9118 Town Center Parkway, right behind the Walgreen's pharmacy, in Lakewood Ranch. For more information call (941)961-0111 or visit CestLaVieLakewoodRanch.com.

I'm looking forward to my next visit.

LWR Supervisors Take Classes in Ethics, Public Records Training, and the Florida Sunshine Law

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

The State of Florida has recently made it mandatory for public officials – including supervisors of independent special districts (such as Lakewood Ranch's community development districts or CDDs) to get themselves informed, on a yearly basis, about ethical standards for public officials, aspects of public records, and the requirements of Florida's Sunshine Law. The new requirements mandate four hours of training classes in these areas per year.

Two sessions of such classes were set up by the attorneys who advise the CDD/IDA boards: Christian T. Van Hise, Andrew Cohen, and Scott Rudacille.

The first session, on ethics, took place at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall, by Van Hise.

He began by quoting the Florida Constitution's Section 8, Article 2, which states that a public office is a public trust. The people, it says, have the right to secure and sustain that trust against abuse.

Van Hise noted that the basic concept is that the public can trust public officials, adding that any public official who breaks the public trust for private gain shall be liable to the state for all financial benefits obtained by such action.

There are requirements for prohibitions, as well as disclosures. Public officials are prohibited from taking bribes. A public official may accept gifts, but there must be an understanding that the gift is not in exchange for a favorable vote. Use of property, a below normal interest loan, or anything that indicates that the official's vote is for sale, is prohibited.

Any gifts of more than \$100 in value must be reported to the Ethics Commission and are part of the public record.

Public officials are also prohibited from giving out privileged information to individuals if that information is not available to the general public.

Nepotism (showing preference for family members) is not allowed, as is having an employment relationship with a company which is doing business with the public official's board.

If an official sees a potential conflict of interest, he or she must disclose that conflict, and recuse themselves from voting on an issue which involves the conflict.

Our CDD board members must file a financial disclosure form, "Form 1," with the State of Florida. A much more involved disclosure form, "Form 6," has recently been made a requirement for other government officials, including elected municipal officials.

After the Form 6 requirement was instituted, Van Hise noted, over 100 Florida officials resigned their posts rather than filing their form.

Failure on the part of officials to file these forms can result in the imposition of a \$25/day fine. Whether an official has complied with the financial disclosure requirement can be verified by citizens by contacting their county supervisor of elections.

Failure to file these forms may result in the official being dismissed from office, given a public reprimand, or disqualified.

Officials are also required to file an additional form if and when they leave office.

Andrew Cohen gave a presentation on Florida's "Sunshine Law."

- The law is based on the right of the public to observe all discussions and deliberations taken by a public board.
- The law requires that meetings of such boards or commissions must be open to the public.
- Reasonable public notice of such meetings must be given.
- Minutes of those meetings must be taken.

A "meeting" is defined (for CDD districts) as a discussion about and deliberations on district business by two or more members of the same board (whether that meetings is formal or casual) relating to a topic that is pending before the board or that is foreseeable to come before the board for action. Such meetings must be open to the public!

A potential "meeting" can be a discussion, an e-mail, a position paper reflecting board member views, a phone conversation between board members, any communication, debate, social media posting, text message ... any communication which may have been relayed to a fellow board member through another individual. The rules apply to existing board members as well as members-elect to the same board.

Generally, board members who may meet with District staff are not subject to the Sunshine Law requirements for those meetings. Discussions between board members and their attorney are subject to the Sunshine Law. An exception may include sessions between a board and their attorney regarding pending litigation or labor negotiations.

"Open meetings" involve accessible facilities, discussions which can be heard by all, no secret votes, and the right of the public to be there and hear all discussions. The public must be offered the right to express their views at such meetings before votes are taken.

A district board may choose to set rules as to civility, as well as time limits for public comments. A board may also add items to an agenda after publishing a meeting notice. Legal notice of public meetings must be published at least seven days in advance, unless a meeting is called due to an emergency.

MINUTES MUST BE TAKEN

Minutes of the meetings may be brief, but must contain information on items discussed, as well as any action taken by the board, and must be available to the public in a timely manner. The minutes do not have to be verbatim, and there is no requirement that they be recorded.

PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF THE SUNSHINE LAW

A "knowing violation" is punishable by 60 days in jail and/or a \$500 fine. Violations of a non-criminal nature can incur a \$500 fine. Violation of the Sunshine Law can be the cause of removal

from office. Any action taken in violation of the Sunshine Law is VOID!

In the case of a civil action, the law provides for the recovery of attorney's fees for violations. Cohen gave an example of a costly violation of the Sunshine Law: A judge found the City Council of Venice violated the law via e-mails. The judgement amount was over \$777,000 in attorney's fees and costs to the plaintiffs. By the time all was settled, the total cost to the City of Venice in judgmental and attorney fees was over \$2,000,000! Violations can be very costly.

Bottom line ... Discuss district business ONLY at a public meeting. If you are a district supervisor, and you meet another member of your board while shopping for a new car, you can discuss horsepower, performance, and styling of the cars, but you don't dare talk about district business!

PUBLIC RECORDS

Scott Rudacille's comments on public records included Section 119.011(12) of Florida Statutes:

"Public records means all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, tapes, photographs, films sound recordings, data processing software, or other material, regardless of the physical form, characteristics, or means of transmission, made or received pursuant to law or ordinances or in connection with the transaction of official by any agency."

He gave a couple of examples: A supervisor sends a personal message to her husband regarding dinner. This is not a public record because it has nothing to do with district business.

Another example is that of a supervisor who sends an e-mail to the executive director's personal e-mail with a request to add an item to the next meeting's agenda. This IS a public record, since it deals with official business of the district.

PRIVATE ENTITIES

Private entities can become subject to the Public Records Act when they are "acting on behalf of" a public agency. Records of services performed for a public entity may need to be included in the public record of that public agency.

Any contract between a public agency and a private contractor after July 1, 2016 must include a notification that advises the contractor that if questions arise regarding public records, the contractor is advised to refer the matter to the custodian of public records.

AVAILABILITY OF RECORDS

Public records must be made available for inspection and possible copying on request, within a reasonable time period. The state has established a schedule for how long records must be kept.

PENALTIES

There are penalties for violating public records laws, similar to those for violations of the Sunshine Law.

If you have a question about any of these laws, consult your district's attorney, before possibly running afoul of the law.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Understanding Fatigue, Boosting Energy and Feeling Better

By Lori Boyd
Marketing Director, Lakewood Ranch Medical Center

We all experience feeling tired and a lack of energy at certain times in our lives; however, there's a big difference between feeling tired and chronic fatigue. Family medicine physician, Rushiv Patel, DO, explains the differences, shares some causes and suggests things you can do to help you feel more energized.

1. WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN FEELING TIRED AND CHRONIC FATIGUE?

Feeling tired can be a common, temporary state that everyone experiences from time to time. Chronic fatigue is much more persistent and is more likely to be attributed to a medical condition that can affect a person's quality of life.

2. WHAT CAN CAUSE FATIGUE?

Common causes of fatigue include lack of sleep, poor dietary choices, sedentary lifestyle and mood disruption. Your primary care physician will likely screen you for these and other factors. Talk to your doctor about how you are feeling both mentally and physically. Your doctor can then make personalized suggestions about sleep quality, healthy food choices and exercise that is right for you and can help to boost

energy levels and get you to feeling better overall.

3. WHAT MEDICAL CONDITIONS CAN CAUSE FATIGUE?

Many medical conditions can cause fatigue including thyroid issues, anemia (low red blood cells), diabetes, anxiety and depression. I recommend talking to your primary care physician about any fatigue concerns you may have so that an individualized diagnostic plan can be made; and if it's determined that an underlying medical condition is contributing to your fatigue, your doctor can get you started on a treatment plan.

4. WHAT CAN YOU DO TO GET MORE ENERGY (SLEEP TIPS, MORE ACTIVITY, BETTER DIET, ETC.)

Some of the suggestions your physician may make to help boost energy levels include prioritizing quality sleep by sticking to a consistent sleep schedule for both the time you go to bed at night and the time you wake up in the morning. Creat-



Rushiv Patel, DO

ing a restful environment can also help. For example, make sure the room you sleep in is quiet, cool and dark. Increase physical activity with regular exercise and incorporate movement throughout the day. Eating balanced meals, staying hydrated, and avoiding excessive caffeine and sugar are some other ways to help reduce your fatigue. Manage stress through relaxation techniques and maintain mental well-being by engaging in enjoyable activities and seeking support if needed.

If you need a primary care physician, call Lakewood Ranch Medical Center's physician referral service at 800-454-8215 or visit lwrmc.com.

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. The hospital shall not be liable for actions or treatments provided by physicians. For language assistance, disability accommodations and the nondiscrimination notice, visit our website.



100+ VENDORS + STREET FOOD + LIVE MUSIC + KIDS' ZONE = SUNDAY FUNDAY

VOTED THE #1 FARMERS' MARKET IN FLORIDA – AGAIN!*

MARKET PRODUCE | MEAT & POULTRY | FRESH FLOWERS | FRESH BREADS & BAKED GOODS
LOCAL HONEY | PREPARED FOODS | COFFEE & TEAS | SPECIALTY GIFTS & TRINKETS

* American Farmland Trust and the Farmers Market Coalition.



EVERY SUNDAY, 10AM - 2PM YEAR-ROUND @ WATERSIDE PLACE

1561 LAKEFRONT DRIVE, LAKEWOOD RANCH, FL 34240 | FOLLOW OUR SOCIALS  

FOR A LIST OF OUR VENDORS, VISIT THEMARKETLWR.COM

A HUGE THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS: HERALD-TRIBUNE + LOCAL10





By Britany Lamont, president and CEO

Kick-Off Networking This Fall at Tradeshaw Tailgate

School is back in session and football season has kicked off. Your neighborhood chamber of commerce, the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, is hosting a Tradeshaw Tailgate event at 4:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 19 at Robarts Arena in Sarasota. This is a great way to connect with local businesses on their products and services. Enjoy networking, lite bites and visit over 80 booths. Interested in exhibiting? we have limited spots available.

Additionally, we are excited to welcome our August members:

- Bishop West Real Estate
- Brea Lakewood Ranch Apartments
- Chase Carpenter - KW Realty Select
- Combined
- Communica PRO
- Custom Concepts Painting
- Hall Darling Design Studio
- Independent Jones
- KPC Strategies
- Music Compound
- Paint Srq
- Pierce Group Loans
- Powered by Loan Factory
- Trademark Roofing
- TWEEDS
- Whiskey Joe's Bar & Grill
- Manatee River

For more information on the Lakewood Ranch Business Alliance, visit lwrba.org or call (941)757-1664.

M/I Homes at Sweetwater in Lakewood Ranch Supports Cancer Research with \$140,000 Donation

M/I Homes recently announced the successful sale of a benefit home in the Sweetwater Village of Lakewood Ranch, as part of an initiative to support cancer research through Pelotonia, a national non-profit organization dedicated to ending cancer. This effort resulted in over \$140,000 being raised for innovative cancer treatments and research.



An integral part of this effort was the contribution of over \$12,000 from Schroeder-Manatee Ranch, Inc., the developer of the Lakewood Ranch community.

"Lakewood Ranch is proud to partner with builders who prioritize philanthropic causes," said Sandy Shahinian, vice president of sales and marketing for Lakewood Ranch Communities. "We are thrilled to support this initiative and contribute to the proceeds that will be donated from the sale of this home."

"M/I Homes is proud to support Pelotonia, an incredibly impactful and mission-driven organization dedicated to funding cancer research that is extending and saving lives," said Greg Crawford, president of M/I Homes Sara-

sota division. "This was a community effort, and we are grateful to all of the people and companies that made this donation possible."

The achievement was celebrated at an event in August when M/I Homes recognized the participating vendors and trade partners, and where Eric Olsavsky, vice president of community

engagement and partnerships for Pelotonia, accepted the donation.

"We continue to be humbled by this generous, innovative program from M/I Homes to support Pelotonia's mission of ending cancer through research, said Olsavsky. "The tremendous engagement of M/I Homes at the national level has helped to broaden awareness of Pelotonia, furthering our collective impact on a mission that affects us all."

This initiative highlights the strengthened role of the Lakewood Ranch community in driving national progress toward ending cancer. For more information, visit www.mihomes.com/pelotonia.

Voted One of
Sarasota's Best
29 years in a row!

celebrating 35 YEARS!

NEWSTYLE® HYBRID SHUTTERS

HunterDouglas Gallery
M&M
MATTSON & MATTSON
Wallcoverings & Blinds, Inc.... since 1989

2023 READERS' CHOICE
Herald-Tribune
WINNER

Janet and Curt Mattson
Owners

2024 THE OFFICIAL HOMEOWNERS CHOICE AWARDS
Sarasota
FINALIST

Blinds • Shutters • Draperies • Wallcoverings
4801 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota
Across from the Landings
925-7800 • mmwallcoveringsblinds.com



PHOTOS BY ERNIE SOLLER

LWR Aloha Ukulele Club Holds a “Ukefest” at Town Hall

By Ernie Soller
Community Correspondent

Did you ever have an interest in getting hold of a ukulele, learning how to play it, and maybe joining a group of folks who have similar ideas as to having fun playing music?

I will admit to “once upon a time” owning a ukulele. I was a little kid. It was plastic, and I had no idea how to play it. If my memory is correct, it may have been fated to join the ranks of certain rock band guitars – in other words, it ended up in pieces.

In any case, the ukulele has become the signature instrument of Hawaii, even if its origins are in Portugal!

That’s right folks, Portuguese immigrants from Madeira arrived in Hawaii back in the 1800s, having brought with them techniques for making fine string instruments, such as the cavaquinho and the guitarra. Not able to find the same European hardwood they used back in the old country, they experimented and found that Hawaiian Koa wood worked well. The end result is the ukulele. Once they heard the sound of this new-to-them string instrument, Hawaiians grew to love it, since up until then, almost all of Hawaiian music was percussion-based, and didn’t exactly have any real melodic sound. The ukulele changed all that.

The ukulele pretty much was a Hawaii-only instrument until the Panama-Pacific Exposition, held in San Francisco back in 1915. The event featured musicians from Hawaii, and lots of visitors fell in love with the music of the ukulele, making for instant celebrity status for good ukulele players, and the demand for ukuleles took off. Ukuleles came to be made in various designs – some were even made to look like pineapples!

It became so much of a hit that a lot of the tin pan alley music of the decades following the Panama-Pacific Exposition featured ukulele parts. The popularity lingered into the era of rock and roll, when electric guitars became the rage, but it didn’t die out.

So, let’s fast forward to 2024. We’re in Lakewood Ranch, and there’s this club called the Lakewood Ranch Aloha Ukulele Club. You can find their members – dressed in their matching

Hawaiian shirts and playing their ukuleles – at various events in Lakewood Ranch, such as Holidays Around the Ranch on Main Street, where I first became aware of the club.

They get together to practice and have fun several times each month at Lakewood Ranch’s Town Hall North, located on the west side of Lakewood Ranch Boulevard just south of state Road 70.

The Aloha Ukulele Club got started about three years ago when a woman, Sunny Kellner, decided to share her native Hawaiian culture with the community at a class at Patton Park. That was the start of the Club, and it has gone from there.

Earlier this year, the Aloha Ukulele Club put on its “Back in the Saddle Again” Ukefest at the Lakewood Ranch Town Hall. I arrived at around the time the event was to begin and found myself in what might be called “Ukeworld.” I had never seen as many ukulele players in one place as were there that day. There were all ages from teenagers to older adults and everything in between, men and women, and all having a great time. The event was a sell-out, and the place was packed. Evidently, ukulele playing has really caught on in Lakewood Ranch!

Hawaiian shirts were kind of the “uniform of the day,” with one guy I saw wearing a shirt festooned with drawings of many ukuleles. Another player wore one on which was written: “I Play Ukulele Because I Like It, Not Because I’m Good at It!” Leis were much in evidence, and wild colors were the order of the day. And the wild colors were not just in the shirts, as I discovered that ukuleles come in all sorts of designs and colors – one woman had a lavender-colored instrument. I also learned that ukulele playing has come into the 21st century – I asked club president Alice Baumann what this little electronic device was on the necks of many ukuleles. It was an electronic tuner!

The Ukefest was a sold-out event, with various education sessions scheduled during the day, as well as a concert featuring Lisa Webb and Bob Taggart, who also conducted a couple of the classes: “Introduction to Chord Melody” and “Owning the Song,” respectively.

Greg Gent’s class focused on “Right Hand Essentials,” and as I sat through Greg’s demonstration, I learned just what a “chuck”



is in uke playing. (It involves hitting the strings so as to not produce a ringing sound, but a percussive “exclamation point” to accent the song.) Cool.

Jay Nunes, former president of the Tampa Bay Ukulele Society, offered a class on “Blues Licks and Tricks.”

The Aloha Ukulele Club had gotten all sorts of sponsors for the event, including Music Go Round, a local Bradenton music shop, and Augustino LoPrinzi Ukuleles and Guitars, a Clearwater company founded by Italian string instrument makers.

There were lots of raffle and bid items, from new ukuleles to accessories – even uke-shaped bottle openers, in addition to a 50/50 drawing. These people were having an enormous amount of FUN.

Proceeds from the event are going to purchase ukuleles for the music program at the LWR Pinnacle Academy, and to make a donation to the LWR Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Interested in learning more? Contact Alice Baumann, president of the Lakewood Ranch Aloha Ukulele Club. Her e-mail is aliceb63@yahoo.com.

Aloha!

Ryan Homes Announces New Community: Amber Creek in Lakewood Ranch

Ryan Homes recently unveiled its latest development, Amber Creek, a new community in the heart of Lakewood Ranch. The grand opening for VIP sales will take place on Sept. 28.

Amber Creek features townhomes starting from the upper \$300s. The community offers several benefits, including no CDD fees, low monthly HOA dues, and a 2-car brick-paved driveway.

Residents of Amber Creek will enjoy a range of amenities and features:

- **Included lanai:** Each townhome comes with a covered lanai, perfect for relaxing and entertaining.
- **Scenic homesites:** Choose from homesites with water or nature views.
- **Direct school access:** Convenient sidewalk access to B.D. Gullet Elementary and Dr. Mona Jain Middle School.
- **Dog park:** A dedicated area for pets, ensuring that four-legged family members are well-catered for and have a place to roam off-leash.
- **Two dynamic town centers:** Lakewood Ranch's Main Street and Waterside Place offer a multitude of dining, shopping, and entertainment options.
- **Prime location:** Situated at the corner of

44th Avenue E. and White Eagle Boulevard, Amber Creek is just 10 minutes from I-75, providing a quick commute to Tampa and Sarasota. The community is also close to the new Lakewood Ranch Library, and to Bob Gardner Park and the Premier Sports Campus, which offer ample recreational opportunities.

"Amber Creek represents our commitment to creating high-quality, accessible living spaces in top locations," said Tony Piscopo, sales manager at Ryan Homes. "We're excited to introduce this new community, which combines stylish, affordable townhomes with excellent designer features and a prime location."

Event details:

• **Grand opening VIP sales date:** Sept. 28, 2024

• **Location:** 12570 Amber Creek Cir, Lakewood Ranch, FL 34211

For more information about Amber Creek or to join the interest list to receive pre-construction pricing and the best selection of homesites, please contact (813) 519-4550 or visit the website at RyanHomes.com/AmberCreek.

Kate Mulligan Named New Executive Director Of Lakewood Ranch Community Foundation

The Lakewood Ranch Community Foundation (LWRCF) recently announced Kate Mulligan as its executive director. Mulligan began her new role on September 3.

"The Lakewood Ranch Community Foundation is delighted that Kate has accepted the position of executive director," said Mark Clark, board chair of LWRCF. "Her passion for people and for the vision and mission of the organization was clear throughout the hiring process. She is already a key player in the community, and we are excited for our future with Kate's leadership. Her qualifications are matched equally with her desire to make a lasting impact in the region."

Most recently, Mulligan was the general manager for ensembleNEWSRQ, where she managed all administrative aspects of the organization's concert series and their fundraising events. Prior to that, she was the executive director of Capital Philharmonic of New Jersey and of Trenton Children's Chorus, also in New Jersey. She holds a bachelor's degree in music and nonprofit management from Westminster

Choir College of Rider University in Lawrenceville, N.J., and a master's degree in business administration from Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N.J.

"I am thrilled to lead an organization that has such a positive effect on the Lakewood Ranch community by helping local nonprofits achieve their missions," Mulligan said. "It is an amazing opportunity. I want to Open the Door... to the Lakewood Ranch community to help amplify the impact of their giving, and to local nonprofits so that they can more effectively achieve their missions."

Mulligan's goals for her first 90 days are to strengthen existing partnerships with donors, nonprofits, and members of the community; increase awareness and donations through events and sponsorships; and enact the board of directors' plan for growth and continued sustainability for the future.

For more information about the Lakewood Ranch Community Foundation, visit www.LWRCF.org or call 941-208-6799.



JOIN US AT OUR NEXT SHOW!

Every month at Lakewood Ranch, we host the best of local music, visual and performance art the Sarasota region offers.

LWR WIND ENSEMBLE & CHORAL ARTISTS: Friday, September 27th @ 6pm

ASOLO REP ON TOUR, "MUCH ADD ABOUT NOTHING": Thursday, October 10th @ 6pm

STRINGS CON BRIO: SALUTE TO VETERANS: Thursday, November 7th @ 7pm

Check out all of the events happening around The Ranch!



LAKWOOD RANCH®.com 



STUFF THE BUS 2024

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6th 9 AM-3 PM

Presented by **Mosaic**

TO BENEFIT:



Meals on Wheels PLUS
OF MANATEE

The Food Bank of Manatee is a PLUS program of Meals on Wheels PLUS of Manatee

CRITICALLY NEEDED ITEMS

- CANNED VEGETABLES
- CANNED FRUITS
- MAC 'N' CHEESE
- PEANUT BUTTER
- JELLY
- BOXED RICE
- BOXED PASTA
- CANNED SOUPS
- CANNED MEAT
- 100% FRUIT JUICES
- BREAKFAST BARS
- OATMEAL
- POWDERED MILK
- APPLE SAUCE
- DRIED BEANS
- TRAIL MIX

IT'S AS EASY AS...

All Manatee County Publix Locations

1

Publix

SHOP AT ANY OF THE
MANATEE COUNTY
PUBLIX LOCATIONS

2

BUY 1
GET 1 **Free**

PICK UP BOGOs FOR
THE FOOD BANK

3

DONATE
NON-PERISHABLES
IN FRONT OF PUBLIX
& HELP STUFF THE BUS

GOAL:

RAISE **150,000 LBS** OF FOOD TO FEED
MANATEE COUNTY RESIDENTS!

MealsOnWheelsPLUS.org



Herald-Tribune

LOCALiQ



United Way Suncoast

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.