

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Fort Myers Beach

February 2024

FORT MYERS BEACH

Living

THE NEWLYWEDS!

Nick & Danielle Dibona

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Cover Photo By Sandy Sandness



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A Best Version Media Magazine
An independently owned community magazine.

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FEEDBACK / IDEAS / SUBMISSIONS

Have feedback, ideas or submissions? We are always happy to hear from you! Deadlines for submissions are the 20th of each month, 6 weeks in advance of publication. Email your thoughts, ideas and photographs to gmooney@bestversionmedia.com. Submissions must be original and exclusive to *Fort Myers Beach LIVING*, at a maximum of 500 words. *Fort Myers Beach LIVING* reserves the right to edit submissions for clarity, space limitations and spelling.

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:

- Emergency: 911
- Lee County Sheriff's Office: 239-477-1000
- FMB Fire Department: 239-590-4200
- FMB Town Hall: 239-765-0202
- FMB Public Library: 239-765-8162
- Lee County Parks & Recreation: 239-533-7275
- Beach Elementary School: 239-463-6356
- FMB Water Department: 239-463-9914
- Trash Collection: 239-334-1224
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- Comcast Cable Company: 239-432-9277
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SUDOKU

- By Gary Mooney -

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Answers on page 10



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Hello Friends & Neighbors!

When we were little kids, we loved jigsaw puzzles! When I began putting a puzzle together, I scattered the pieces all over the tabletop, hunted down the ones that formed the outside frame, then slowly but surely filled it in until the picture came together. No matter how you solved a puzzle, however, it was something you could not hurry nor take a shortcut to finish; we all had to do it one piece at a time.

I got to thinking about puzzles when I read the profile of this month's cover feature, Danielle Dibona, when she discussed how FMB Town employees began to tackle the massive task of resurrecting our beach community in the first days after Hurricane Ian. Danielle stated that "Town employees resumed their duties in the same way residents were dealing with their own homes and businesses: One piece at a time! There was no plan for what Ian wrought so you do it one piece at a time. Each employee figured out what was in their power to accomplish that day, then the next day you again figured out what you could do and so on until a semblance of a plan came together. Now that we are a year-and-a-half past Ian, the Town looks better than I thought it would at this stage and it improves every day."

Months before I read Danielle's quote, I was rebuilding my island home, just as many of you did or are still doing, and I thought, "this is like putting together a jigsaw puzzle! You pick up a piece here and a piece there and before you know it, it all slowly comes together." But each one of our own individual "puzzles" are actually "pieces" themselves in the much larger puzzle we call Fort Myers Beach.

It seems to me that in the first year after Ian, that was like when we scattered all the puzzle pieces onto the table, because before we could assemble the puzzle, we had to first organize everything, from clean-up to insurance regulators, permits to work crews, and on and on. But I began to notice a tremendous

change right around Ian's first anniversary and that continues through today – many of our individual "pieces" are now filling in the larger FMB puzzle. Some of those significant "pieces" are the grand opening of the Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB as well as the reopening of island institutions like the Beach Elementary School, Estero Island Historic Society cottages, Bay Oaks Recreational Center, the iconic Mound House and more, along with various bars, restaurants, businesses and our own beloved homes.

As Danielle rightfully said, "Now that we are a year-and-a-half past Ian, the Town looks better than I thought it would at this stage and it improves every day" and I agree! I hope your individual puzzle piece is coming along as well as mine – I moved back into my home just before the end of 2023 – as, one piece at a time, we all put back together the puzzle that is Fort Myers Beach!

Speaking of our various "puzzle pieces," please remember to do your shopping and socializing right here on Estero & San Carlos Islands, especially with our FMB LIVING Magazine sponsors. These good folks work hard every day to make our island home what it is today and will be again through all of our dedication and drive.

Happy Valentine's Day!



Sandy Sandness

Publisher

Fort Myers Beach LIVING

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*Photo by Sandy Sandness
Wonder Gardens, Estero FL*



THE NEWLYWEDS!

Danielle & Nick Dibona

- By Gary Mooney -

"Most people on Fort Myers Beach know me as Danielle Felton, but I married my husband Nick on September 24, 2023, so I am a newlywed and now Danielle Dibona," she explains with a laugh! Danielle is originally from Sylva, North Carolina. "I was actually born in Maine but my parents moved to Sylva when I was two years old, so I consider North Carolina home. I attended Western Carolina University where I earned certifications in Nutrition, Fitness, and Personal Training."

Danielle and Nick met at Crunch Fitness in Fort Myers on Christmas Eve 2021, but her interest in him predates that by several years! "I first noticed Nick at Crunch Fitness six years before we met and I had a crush on him since the first time I saw him but not have enough nerve to introduce myself. You see the same faces at the gym over and over again but almost never know their names, so my friend and I came up with imaginary nicknames for them and ours for Nick was 'Sexy Teddy Bear!'"

On Christmas Eve, Crunch Fitness is open just a half-day "so everyone jams in to get their holiday workout in all at the same time," explains Danielle. "The only free workout bench was next to him so I thought, 'why not – just say Hi.' Everybody wears ear buds so I awkwardly waved to get his attention, then said, 'I am sorry to interrupt but I just have to tell you that I really admire your work ethic.'"

They exchanged names and occupations and "Nick seemed receptive, saying it was nice to chat," Danielle continues. "I asked when he usually worked out and he said around 7 p.m. That was later than my usual time but for the next two weeks, I was there each evening at 7 but no Nick. I began to think I would never see him again and I told my tale of woe to the front desk girls who tracked down his last name. I sent him a Facebook message and he responded and everything took off from there! Nick happily tells everyone how great it is that I 'admired his work ethic' so maybe my lesson to other women

is that it is all right to make the first move! Two years later, we married in Wolcott, Connecticut, Nick's hometown."

That Was Perfect for Me

Danielle's introduction to FMB occurred due to happenstance as well. "While living in North Carolina, I married then divorced at a young age, so I was ready to move out of our small town. A local gentleman said he was going to expand his Cork & Barrel Restaurant to Fort Myers and said that if I would relocate, he would give me a job. I knew absolutely nothing about Fort Myers and asked if it was warm and close to a beach and when he said Yes to both, I replied, "I AM IN!" The Cork & Barrel specialized in tapas so I practiced saying that in a way that people could not confuse it with 'Topless,' as I did not want any misperception!" She waitressed there for ten months, then in 2016 went to the South Beach Grille for the next five years.

Good fortune further played a part in Danielle joining the FMB Town workforce. "Cork & Barrel had a couple of steady customers who lived on the island and I said I wanted to as well, so they drove me around to show me nice areas with available apartments. We cruised past the Bay Oaks Recreational Center and they said it was a great place, though hard to find. I soon discovered Bay Oaks was seeking a Coordinator for its 'Social Seniors' program for field trips, kayak tours and related events and that was perfect for me so I applied, then pestered them for three months until they hired me! When you work for a small department like Bay Oaks, you are really a 'Jack-of-All-Trades,' so in addition to Senior programs, I do special events, youth activities, fitness programs and even occasionally did some accounting!"

In Ian's immediate aftermath, Danielle for roughly the next year took on a different role, as the Assistant to the two former Interim Town Managers, but returned to Bay Oaks in late 2023 as a Recreation Supervisor, as she "really missed working with the Seniors and children. I am excited to reenergize 'Social Seniors' programs. We are revamping many events for 2024, while returning those you know and love, with youth events already taking

off. We strive to make Bay Oaks, Bayside Park and all the island's parks and recreational facilities better than ever, full of fun activities and adventures! It is wonderful to have our afterschool program with the Beach Elementary School going again, as our island school children are our most precious resource."

Surreal & A Nightmare

Danielle and Nick live off-island, near Golisano Children's Hospital, "so we weathered Ian better than those on the island. We had three inches of water in the house so we had to replace the flooring, drywall and appliances. Like many people, we took Ian casually, assuming it would blow right past us, but when the wind started whipping and the water began rising into the house, I was scared, wondering why we did not evacuate. We will not make that same mistake again; we will move our furniture upstairs, pack up our dogs Ranger and Bandit, and leave."

While their home received some damage, it did not prepare Danielle and Nick for what they saw when they first returned to FMB. "It was surreal," she remembers; "it was like a nightmare from which you could not shake yourself awake! People were milling about aimlessly so we picked up as many as we could and transported them as best we were able. From that first moment, it amazed me how everyone came together to help each other out, despite the tragedy of their own lives. Nick eventually dropped me off at whatever

was left of Town Hall, then he continued to be basically an ad hoc taxi service to all those in need, the good man that he is."

Danielle recalls that Town Hall "was basically destroyed, with one wall completely gone. A day or two later, I made it to Bay Oaks. While I could enter, I could not get past the front desk, between the gobs of sludge and unbearable smell. I was so sad, as Bay Oaks contains years of happy memories for me."

Town employees resumed their duties in the same way residents were dealing with their own homes and businesses, says Danielle: "One piece at a time! There was no plan for what Ian wrought so you do it one piece at a time. Each employee figured out what was in their power to accomplish that day, then the next day you again figured out what you could do and so on until a semblance of a plan came together. Now that we are a year-and-a-half past Ian, the Town looks better than I thought it would at this stage and it improves every day. New Town Manager Andy Hyatt has every Town employee on the same page to benefit our citizens more and better than ever, as we have an awesome staff."

It Will Be Again!

In their spare time, Nick and Danielle enjoy mountain biking and adventure activities. "When we say mountain bike, people think we are crazy because where in flat-as-a-pancake Florida can you find mountains," Danielle laughs! "Florida however is full of abandoned phosphorous mines that are now terrific offroad trails and great fun; we love to mountain bike on those with Ranger and Bandit running behind. We still work out and enjoy anything outdoors with our dogs. When we honeymooned in Hawaii, we did all we could there, including skydiving, repelling down a waterfall, hiking on an active volcano and of course mountain biking!"

As to what FMB will look like in five years, "I see a beautiful resort destination, with Margaritaville serving as the beginning of that vision," predicts Danielle. "That resort theme will grow and expand; as a result, FMB will most likely become a wealthi-



Danielle had a crush on Nick "the first time I saw him but did not have enough nerve to introduce myself."

er community but that is not necessarily bad. Our property values rise and our businesses thrive on tourism dollars so a wealthier clientele is good for everyone. It is sad we will no longer be that community of quaint beach cottages but we will never lose our small-town atmosphere because the people who live here will not allow that to happen. FMB will always be a tourism destination so we might as well lean into that, as this is who we are so let's do it well."

By far, FMB's strongest attribute is its people, raves Danielle! "The folks who call this place home are the absolute best and if you had any doubt, look at how we all banded together after Ian! FMB was awesome prior to Ian and our citizens will ensure it will be again!" ■



Nick & Danielle married on September 24, 2023, in Wolcott, Connecticut.



"When we honeymooned in Hawaii, we did all we could there, including hiking on an active volcano!"

IN THE PILOT'S SEAT!

FMBCF Traces Its Beginning to Pilot International

- By Gary Mooney -

The Fort Myers Beach Community Foundation (FMBCF) is a philanthropic and charitable organization dedicated to working cooperatively to improve the quality of life on FMB. Even though the FMBCF is in its 14th year, its island existence traces back to 1985, when it was a branch of Pilot International (PI) for its first quarter-century before reorganizing as the FMBCF in 2010.

Betty Simpson shares the unique distinction of being a charter member of both the Pilot Club Fort Myers Beach and the FMB Community Foundation!

"I certainly was a Pilot Club FMB charter member," Betty says proudly! "We started our club in December 1985 as an offshoot of the Pilot Chapter of Fort Myers, who affectionately called us their 'Beach Babies!' There were 12 to 15 charter members and we met in a meeting room in the old First Federal Bank that was in front of the former Wynn Dixie grocery store that eventually became TOPPS but of course is now no longer there. After all these years, I am happy to say that there are a few of us charter members still around. Personally, I was a professional pilot in those days, so the name 'Pilot International' intrigued me because I initially thought it was a group regarding aviation!"

The connection to the Fort Myers chapter was necessary because "Pilot International required that you could not form a new



The FMB Community Foundation is a philanthropic and charitable organization dedicated to working cooperatively to improve the island's quality of life.

chapter but needed an invitation and the Fort Myers group felt that FMB was a logical place to expand. Back then, you needed to be a professional or executive woman to be a member so individual invitations were necessary to join and that was part of the charm. PI eventually morphed into a more encompassing organization that accepted members from all walks of life."

She greatly enjoyed the cosmopolitan aspect of PI. "I liked being a member of an International club where you spread your wings outside your local area and met a wide variety of people. I became the Lieutenant Governor for the Florida Southwest region so I attended many regional conventions and functions and found it fascinating to meet PI members from Japan, for instance, where you experienced their culture and traditional dress. I felt that being a member of an international group gave us a certain prestige that you could not acquire from a local organization. It expanded our horizons and I personally liked all the pomp-&-circumstance, as it made you different from every other local club."

Betty points out that the FMB chapter "enjoyed an outstanding 25-year run! I really liked it but PI had a strict structure to its organization, so members from the Fort Myers club frequently attended our island meetings to ensure we followed the protocol and that was one of the reasons that ultimately led to our club parting ways with PI, as many of our members did not like that strict structure. Our club members had little interest in the international aspect of the PI experience, so that was a drawback. Another bone of contention was that a substantial amount of the funds we raised on the island went to the International organization rather than staying here on FMB. As we added more island members, they wanted to keep all of the money we raised here on the beach and I could appreciate that."

When the FMB group began discussions to break away from PI, "I personally did not want to do that," reflects Betty. "Once the beach chapter made that official and formed the FMBCF, I did join but I and a small core group continued to attend PI meetings in Fort Myers and we fairly enjoyed that. FMB, however, was my home so I ultimately chose the CF over PI. The CF was doing great things, many of my friends were members, and I

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“COVID-19 then Hurricane Ian forced us to adapt and to promote low-key initiatives such as selling We Are FMB items and our always-popular cookbook.”



“There are too many memories to mention, when you think about events like the Winter Concert Series and our numerous fundraisers.”

did like that everything we raised on the island stayed on the island, with our funds going to good organizations to benefit good people.”

While Betty appreciates the essential fundraising arm of the FMBCF, “the social aspect is so important, especially after what Hurricane Ian did to our island community! When I attend CF functions today, it is wonderful to see so many longtime friends; it feels like the band is back together! While we may live on an island, Ian made me realize that we are all not ‘an island unto ourselves’ and the social aspect of clubs like the FMBCF is every bit as important as its fundraising. The CF reminds us that we all remain connected no matter where we live these days; we are still one solid island community! The FMBCF is a heart-

beat onto itself and in my opinion is now the heartbeat of FMB. I am proud I am a charter member of both Pilot International FMB and the FMB Community Foundation, as there is a certain charm to being in on the ground floor of these outstanding organizations that benefit so many with so much.”

To learn more about the FMBCF, membership meetings are the third Wednesday of each month from October through April at the Historic Mound House from 5:30 to 7 p.m., with Happy Hours every fourth Wednesday of every month at Snug Harbor from 4 to 6 p.m. For more information or a membership form, see www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com. The Fort Myers Beach Community Foundation: encouraging philanthropy to improve the overall quality of life on FMB! ■

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February

HAPPY Valentine's DAY

EVERY DAY

FREE LeeTran Beach Tram

@FMB Public Library to Bowditch Point Park
The FREE LeeTran Beach Tram runs daily every 35 minutes from the FMB Public Library to Bowditch Point Park and back, with the first tram leaving from the FMB Library at 9:30am and the last departing Bowditch Point at 10:35pm; see www.lee.gov.com.

Thurs., February 1

FMB Chamber "Coffee Connection"

@The Heights Foundation
Start your day with your FMB Chamber friends for networking with tasty complimentary coffee and breakfast items at The Heights Foundation at 15570 Hagie Drive. The free "Coffee Connection" is from 8 to 9:30am; see www.fortmyersbeach.org.

Fri., February 2

AND EVERY FRIDAY

Fort Myers Beach Market

@Times Square
This Downtown FMB Market offers fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more every Friday from 9am to 1pm; see www.41markets.com.

Sat., February 3

Mound House Eco-Kayak Tour

@The Historic Mound House
Explore the winding mangrove creeks and hidden backwaters of the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve on this 2-hour tour. The MH provides all equipment; ages 12 & up, weather permitting and participants must wear shoes and bring water. The Eco-Kayak Tour is every Wednesday & Saturday from 9 to 11am. \$50-per-person including MH admission with reservations necessary at www.moundhouse.org.

Sun., February 4

AND EVERY SUNDAY

Bayside Park Concert Series

@Bayside Park
Islanders and visitors alike kick back and relax while listening to fantastic tunes from local musicians at these FREE weekly outdoor concerts from 4 to 7pm! For details, see www.fortmyersbeach.org.

Mon., February 5

FMB Town Council Meeting

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center
The FMB Town Council continues its efforts to rebuild FMB at 9am; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Mondays, February 5 & 19

Caribbean Cruise-In Car Show

@Parrot Key Caribbean Grill
The largest FREE FMB Car Show returns on the 1st & 3rd Monday of each month through April. Enjoy music, food and prizes while marveling at these fantastic cars. 3 to 6pm; see www.myparrotkey.com.

Wed., February 7

AND EVERY WEDNESDAY

Moss Marina Market

@Moss Marina
Enjoy fresh produce, artisan foods, arts, crafts, clothing and more each Wednesday from 9am to 1pm; see www.41markets.com.

Wed., February 7

Mound House Museum, Grounds & Store

@The Historic Mound House
Built in 1921, the Mound House is the oldest standing structure on FMB. It is a multi-level museum that showcases Calusa artifacts, interactive exhibits and the one-of-a-kind 1,600-year-old underground shell mound attraction. Wednesdays through Saturdays from 9am to 4pm with the Grounds open 7:30am to 6pm. Adults \$15, Students \$8, Kids 6 to 12 \$5, & 5 & under free; Grounds free. See www.moundhouse.org.

Wed., February 7

Great Gopher Tortoises

@Lovers Key State Park
A Park naturalist explains more about Lovers Key's resident gopher tortoises. Discover the differences between a turtle and tortoise, why gopher tortoises are important to our ecosystems and what you can do to preserve their existence. Free with park entry fee at 10am; reservations necessary at <https://bit.ly/FOLKS-Events>.

Wed., February 7

FMB Woman's Club Monthly Meeting

@The Historic Mound House
Join the best club on the entire island; bring a dish to share and all are welcome! The meeting starts at 6:30pm; see www.fmb-wc.org.

Thurs., February 8

FMB Chamber Membership Luncheon

@TBD
Join your FMB Chamber friends to savor a scrumptious luncheon from a favorite island restaurant and hear from an informative speaker from 11:30am-1 pm. \$30 members & \$40 prospective members; for the restaurant location see www.fortmyersbeach.org

Thurs., February 8

FMB Art Association Potluck

@Fort Myers Congregational Church
Bring a cocktail food to share as well as your own plate, cup, drink & utensils, as all are welcome. The potluck begins at Noon with the Membership Meeting at 2 p.m.; see www.fortmyersbeachart.com.

Fri., February 9

Welcome & Discovery Center

@Lovers Key State Park
The Welcome & Discovery Center educates and informs visitors about Lovers Key habitats through interactive displays Wednesdays through Fridays from 10am to 1pm. The W&DC is FREE with the park entry fee; see www.friendsloverskey.org.

Fri., February 9

Shell Mound Tour

@The Historic Mound House
Discover the archaeology and history of the Mound House and learn clues uncovered about this 1,600-year-old shell mound on this 30-minute tour every Wednesday through Saturday at 10am & 2pm. \$5-per-person plus MH admission; see www.moundhouse.org.

Saturdays., February 10 & 17

"American Boating Course"

@San Carlos Bay Squadron Classroom
This 2-day, 8-hour basic boating class includes Florida navigation rules and how to deal with water emergencies. \$65-per-person & \$20 each additional person from 8:15am to Noon; see www.scbps.com.

Sat., February 10

"Members Only Coffee Chat"

@The Historic Mound House
This program is exclusively for Mound House Members, so join up today! Savor coffee and treats as you get a behind-the-scenes look at never-before-exhibited artifacts from the Mound House collection from 10am to Noon! If you are not yet a member, chat with staff to find out the best level for you and your family, or tell us what you want from a MH membership. FREE to Mound House members; register in advance at www.moundhouse.org

SUDOKU

Answers from page 3

9	3	1	4	6	7	5	2	8
2	4	5	1	8	3	7	6	9
7	6	8	5	2	9	3	1	4
1	5	3	9	7	2	4	8	6
6	9	4	3	5	8	1	7	2
8	2	7	6	4	1	9	5	3
3	1	2	8	9	5	6	4	7
5	7	6	2	3	4	8	9	1
4	8	9	7	1	6	2	3	5

Sat., February 10

**Mrs. Roper's
Back to The Beach Party**

@The RUDE Shrimp CO.
A curly red wig, a caftan, and some chunky accessories are all one needs to conjure up the surprisingly beloved Helen Roper! Join other caftan-dressed friends beginning at The RUDE Shrimp CO. with the "Regal Beagle" hosting the Crawl's kickoff party. Other stops include Wahoo Willie's, Nervous Nellie's and Petey's Upper Deck before concluding on the Sunset Terrace at the License to Chill at the Margaritaville Beach Resort FMB. For information see www.facebook.com/FMBStrong.

Tues., February 13

FMB Local Planning Agency Meeting

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center
The FMB LPA, appointed by Town Council, continues efforts to rebuild FMB following Hurricane Ian at 9am; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Wed., February 14

CROW Campus Tours

@Center for the Rehabilitation Of Wildlife
An in-depth look at what the animal patients experience, from intake to release, including the hospital and treatment process. The 45-minute tour is every Wednesday through Friday at Noon; \$25-per-person with advance registration and payment necessary at 239-472-3644 or reservations@crowclinic.org.

Thurs., February 15

**FMB Town Council
Management & Planning Session**

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center
The FMB Town Council continues its efforts to rebuild FMB following Hurricane Ian at 9am; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov.

Thurs., February 15

FMB Chamber "Business After Hours"

@TBD
Join your FMB Chamber friends for a fun time while enjoying delicious appetizers and a cash bar from 5:30 to 7pm. Members FREE & \$15 for perspective members; for the "BAH" location, see www.fortmyersbeach.org

Sat., February 17

"Brunch On The Bay"

@The Historic Mound House
Enjoy a one-hour guided kayak tour of the Estero Bay, then savor light lunch bites on the Mound House's second-floor porch that overlooks the Bay. For the cost and to register in advance, see www.moundhouse.org.

Tues., February 20

FMB Town Council Meeting

@Town Hall, Bay Oaks Recreational Center
The FMB Town Council continues its efforts to rebuild FMB following Hurricane Ian at 9am; see www.fortmyersbeachfl.gov. The Council Meeting is one day later due to the Presidents' Day Holiday.

Tues., February 20

Mound House Lecture Series

@The Historic Mound House
Charlie Barnes, President of the Lee County Black History Society, is the speaker. A complimentary wine and refreshments reception is at 5:30pm with the lecture at 6pm. \$7 Mound House members & \$15 non-members; register in advance at www.moundhouse.org.

Wed., February 21

Delightful Dolphins

@Lovers Key State Park
A Park naturalist discusses our local dolphins. Discover the unique anatomy of these marine animals, how they maintain the balance of the food web, and what you can do to protect them. Free with park entry fee at 10am; reservations necessary at <https://bit.ly/FOLKS-Events>.

Wed., February 21

**FMB Community Foundation
Monthly Meeting**

@The Historic Mound House
The FMB Community Foundation is the island's leading philanthropic organization, so join in on the fun from 5:30 to 7pm; see www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com.

Sat., February 24

**"Fall In Love With
Lovers Key Again" Gala**

@Lovers Key State Park
Enjoy the beauty of the beach while preserving it for today and future generations from 6 to 10pm. Guests will savor an elegant dinner "under the stars," live music and lively bidding at the luxury auction showcasing trips and experiences sure to delight. Beach formal attire; limited space so advance tickets necessary. For information see www.facebook.com/friendsoflovekey.

Wed., February 28

**FMB Community Foundation
Happy Hour**

@Snug Harbor Waterfront Restaurant
The FMB Community Foundation is the island's leading philanthropic organization, so join in on the fun from 4 to 7pm; see www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com.

Thurs.-Sat., March 7 to 9

87th Annual Sanibel Shell Festival

@The Sanibel Community House
See magnificent shells, shell art, crafts, local vendors, and live mollusk tanks. Display your beautiful shell creations at the Artistic Show and win the People's Choice Award. 9am to 3pm; \$5-per-person admission; to register or for more information, see www.facebook.com/share/Zc-Z3L7qtzAsXRn5m/.

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Seafood Chowder

Submitted by Nancy Bouchard

INGREDIENTS

- 3 (10 ounce) cans whole baby clams with liquid
- 4 tbsp butter unsalted
- 2 small shallots, diced
- 2 bay leaves
- 1/8 tsp fennel seeds (or celery seeds)
- 10 large sea scallops
- 10 large shrimp
- 1/2 pound boneless, skinless cod or other white fish, cut into chunks
- 1/4 pound boneless, skinless salmon, cut into large chunks
- 1/4 pound lobster meat, in chunks (optional)
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1 large yellow onion, peeled and sliced
- 5 stalks celery, trimmed and diced
- 1/2 bulb fresh fennel, trimmed and diced
- 1 cup water
- 1 pound Yukon gold or other waxy potatoes, peeled & diced
- 2 cups heavy cream
- Sea salt and cracked black pepper
- 1/2 bunch flat leafy parsley (about 2/3 cup) chopped
- 1/2 bunch chopped chives (about 1/4 cup) (dill works well too!)
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- Combine all ingredients; mix well

INSTRUCTIONS

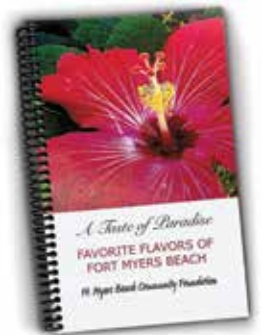
Drain the clams and put clams in one bowl, liquid in another. You will need 1 1/4 clam liquid; if you do not have enough, add water or bottled clam juice.

In a large pot over medium heat, melt the butter with shallots, bay leaves, and fennel seeds and cook, stirring until shallots are tender, about 5 minutes. Place the scallops, shrimp, cod, and salmon into the pot and add the white wine. Cover and steam for 5 to 7 minutes until seafood is partially cooked. Remove all the seafood with a slotted spoon.

Add the onions, celery, and fennel to the pot. Cook until onions are translucent, 7 to 10 minutes. Add the reserved 1 1/4 cup clam juice, 1 cup water, and the potatoes. Cook until potatoes are tender. Add the cream and canned clams. Bring to a simmer; adjust seasoning. Place all of the remaining cooked fish back into the pot and heat through.



This delicious recipe and many more are in the Fort Myers Beach Community Foundation's cookbook, *A Taste of Paradise: Favorite Flavors of Fort Myers Beach* that is available for purchase at www.fmbcommunityfoundation.com.



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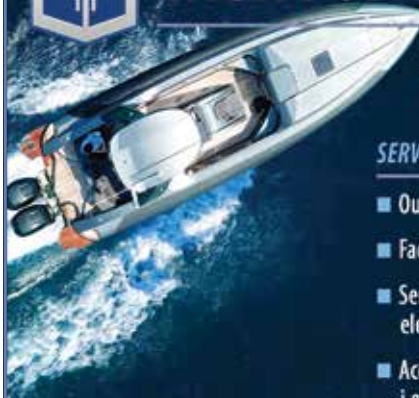
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306 SEMINOLE WAY	2 Bed/2	1,304	\$775,000
114 TROPICAL SHORE WAY	3 Bed/2	1,463	\$754,900
160 WASHINGTON AVE	3 Bed/1.5	1,186	\$475,000

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Address	Lot Frontage	Lot Left	Acres	Sold Price
470 MADISON CT	117	95	0.232	\$1,750,000
231 ALBATROSS ST	60	105	0.14	\$687,500
SEAHORSE LN	78	112	0.203	\$645,000
5583 ESTERO BLVD	45	125	0.129	\$630,000
125 MANGO ST	50	109	0.126	\$610,000
100/102 ANDRE MAR DR	80	120	0.25	\$605,000
224 FAIRWEATHER LN	47	90	0.102	\$500,000
5615 LEWIS ST	150	50	0.115	\$497,500
29 DOUBLOON WAY	43	94	0.082	\$175,000

CONDOS 11-27-2023 to 12-28-2023

Address	Sub/Condo	Sq. Ft.	Sold Price
GRANDVIEW AT BAY BEACH #701	3+Den/3(1)	2,923	\$2,879,000
SURF SONG CONDO #3E	3 Bed/2(0)	1,410	\$1,050,000
ESTERO BAYSIDE #402	3 Bed/3(0)	2,100	\$925,000
WATERSIDE AT BAY BEACH #182	2 Bed/2(0)	1,445	\$685,000
THE PALMS OF BAY BEACH #5C	2 Bed/2(0)	1,142	\$575,000
OCEAN HARBOR CONDO #105	2 Bed/2	1,430	\$561,250
CRECIENTE #816	2 Bed/2	1,545	\$550,000
ESTERO BEACH AND TENNIS CLUB #PH5	1 Bed/1	517	\$500,000
CASA MARINA #352	2 Bed/2	1,164	\$480,000
THE PALMS OF BAY BEACH #E4	2 Bed/2	1,142	\$475,000
LOVERS KEY BEACH CLUB AND RESORT #1002	1 Bed/1	586	\$450,000
HIBISCUS POINTE #132	2 Bed/2	997	\$430,000
HIBISCUS POINTE #123	2 Bed/2	1,060	\$425,000
FAIRVIEW ISLES CONDO #225	2 Bed/2	884	\$425,000
ESTERO BEACH AND TENNIS CLUB #107	1 Bed/1	517	\$420,000
SANTA MARIA II #210	1 Bed/1.5	737	\$375,000

Based on information from the Florida Gulf Coast MLS, Inc. for the period 11-27-23 to 12-28-23 for FB01-FB07 • Best Version Media does not guarantee the accuracy of the statistical data on this page. The data does not represent the listings of any one agent or agency but the entire real estate community in the area. Any real estate agent's ad appearing in the magazine is separate from the statistical data provided which is in no way a part of their advertisement.



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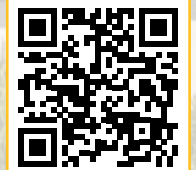
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