



## CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

### Mayor Craig Cates Presents 'State of the City'



Key West Chamber of Commerce President Nicki Will thanks Mayor Craig Cates for his State of the City update during the Chamber's January membership luncheon at the DoubleTree Grand Key Resort.

Key West Chamber of Commerce members were treated to a sneak preview of Mayor Craig Cates' "State of the City" address during their Jan. 28th luncheon at the DoubleTree Grand Key Resort.

"The state of this city is always good, and I'm proud to give this address," Cates said, touting the ongoing programs and projects within various city departments. "Key West is very fortunate to be able to do most everything in-house, and not have to contract for outside help. It is a fine group of dedicated men and women who work for the city of Key West and many residents may not realize what it takes to make our great city work day in and day out."

Despite its diminutive size, this 2-by-4-mile island has more than 80 miles of streets, sidewalks and storm water drainage systems that are constantly cleaned, monitored and maintained by the men and women in Public Works, a division of the Community Services department.

"These guys sweep the city streets 365 days a year; they clean up after Fantasy Fest, fix potholes and prepare for storms. They just do so much," the mayor said to nods of appreciation from the audience.

"They also maintain our historic cemetery, which is not only still extremely active, with more than 100 interments a year, but is also a tourist attraction, sitting on 19 acres in the heart of Old Town."

Cates also detailed recent and ongoing improvements completed by the city's Parks and Recreation division, which recently finished \$1.1 million in upgrades at the Martin Luther King Community Center and Pool, and the adjacent Willie Ward and Nelson English parks. "We're also doing a \$1.7 million renovation at Frederick Douglass Gym in Bahama Village."

*continued on page 3 ▶*

### Message from the President



I would like to address three aspects of Chamber activities in my February message including committee membership, research and data, and Goal 1 of Vision 2020.

I am honored to serve as the President of the Key West Chamber of Commerce in 2015.

I would like to thank Dr. Robin Lockwood for his exceptional leadership of the Chamber in 2014. Robin had a very busy and successful year as President in 2014 and I hope to build upon the successes and achievements of Robin and all the Chamber presidents before me.

Committees are the key to the foundation and growth of the Key West Chamber of Commerce. As we begin our year, committees are organizing and meeting for the first time in 2015. I invite you to become involved in one or more committees.

If you are interested in shaping the future of the Chamber please join a committee. It is through the committees that the work of the Chamber is done. The committee members are the eyes, ears and hands of the Chamber. Most importantly the members of the committees bring the perspectives of the membership to light and ultimately to the Board.

Sometimes we need to see issues through "new eyes" and a "different set of eyes" and this vision is gleaned through our committees.

*continued on page 3 ▶*

### Table of Contents

Business Spotlight . . . . .	2
Award Winners . . . . .	2
2015 Installation Banquet . . . . .	4
Honoring Extraordinary Educators . . . . .	5
Business Trends . . . . .	6-7
Hall of Fame Inductee . . . . .	8
Business After Hours . . . . .	9
New Members . . . . .	10
Cruise Ship Calendar . . . . .	10
Community Calendar . . . . .	11
Firefighter of the Year . . . . .	11
Chamber Calendar of Events . . . . .	12

## Spotlight Shines on ... Michael Finger, Our Keys



Each month, the Chamber of Commerce spotlights a business or professional person whose business card is drawn at the *Business After Hours*. This month's winner is Michael Finger, Our Keys Advertising Service.

The growing number of advertising venues and shrinking advertising budgets mean difficult decisions for businesses in the Florida Keys and everywhere. Marketing directors and business owners must allocate advertising dollars wisely, and find the best return on their investment, which is why Michael Finger at *Our Keys* covers all bases for his clients.

The direct-mail advertising publication, *Our Keys*, is delivered monthly to more than 12,500 households between Key West and Baypoint.

"February will be our 30th hard copy issue," Finger said, adding that as of March, all mailboxes on Sugarloaf Key also will receive *Our Keys* each month, bringing the total number of recipient household to 13,200. "Yes, people still enjoy thumbing through the actual hard copy magazine. They always tell me where they keep it in their house, whether it's in the bathroom, next to the computer, or on the kitchen counter. And we're still the only direct-mail advertising publication in the area."

But in addition, Finger's clients enjoy a strong and crucial presence online and in the ever-changing world of social media.

"We've overhauled our website at [www.our-keys.com](http://www.our-keys.com) and developed a very active Facebook presence that is seen by 8,000 to 9,000 people per month," he said. "We reach a lot of people."

Advertising is available on a six- or 12-month basis, and the rates include placement in the magazine, on the website and on Facebook.

"Online advertising is so very trackable, so our clients can see exactly how many people they're reaching and how effective their ad or coupon is," said Finger, who works with local graphic designer Cindy Jefferson to produce each issue.

Advertisers can send their own ad and logo to *Our Keys* for placement, or Jefferson can create a custom ad or coupon for each client.

"Our advertisers can also always change their monthly ads to highlight different sales, discounts or holiday promotions, for example," said Finger, who moved to Key West in 2010.

A native of London, he lived in Orlando for seven years before moving as far south as possible in the Sunshine State.

"When I sold my other business in Orlando, I decided to launch one down here, and it's really been getting a great response," said Finger.

He plans to continue increasing his audience for *Our Keys* magazine.

"We'll be throughout Sugarloaf come March, and then we plan to cover Key West to Cudjoe later this year," he said. "That will bring us up to 14,000 households each month."

Advertising rates remain some of the most affordable around, he said, encouraging any interested business owners to visit their website at [www.our-keys.com](http://www.our-keys.com), email [Michael@our-keys.com](mailto:Michael@our-keys.com) or call 305-295-6376.



The Key West Chamber of Commerce proudly honored Rita Irwin, President and CEO of the Dolphin Research Center in Marathon and chair of the Monroe County Tourist Development Council board of directors, with the prestigious Athena Award presented by Melissa Kendrick during the Chamber's January 24th banquet at the Marriott Beachside Resort.



Winners of the Key West Chamber of Commerce Island of Lights holiday decorating contest were recognized during the Chamber's January membership luncheon. Pictured from left: Martha Arencibia of the Historic Seaport; Janelica Jenkins of [floridakeys.com](http://floridakeys.com); George Fernandez of the Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory; Karen Puglisi of Kermie's Key Lime Shoppe; Steve Kessler of Atlantis House guesthouse; Virginia Waik of the Pilot House guesthouse; David Buras and Ernestina Coleman of the Curry Mansion and the Chamber's 2014 President Dr. Robin Lockwood.

## The Chamber Chowder Heartily Thanks These Businesses for Their Generous Support of this Issue of the Newsletter

**Ernest Hemingway House Museum**  
907 Whitehead Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-294-1136

**Porter Allen Insurance Company**  
513 Southard Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-294-2542

**La Concha Crowne Plaza**  
430 Duval Street  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-296-2991

**Old Town Key West Development**  
201 Front Street, Suite 301  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-294-3225

**AT&T Advertising Solutions**  
9850 NW 41st St.  
Doral, FL 33178  
305-482-2601



## "A Year of Success" continued from page 1 ▶

In addition, the Parks and Recreation department maintains the Clayton Sterling Baseball Complex, Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park, Bayview Park and 14 tiny, neighborhood "pocket parks" that dot the island with green space and sculptures created by local artists.

"They've recently re-sodded the sports field at Truman Waterfront, and we'll finally be starting work on that long-awaited park in the coming months," Cates assured the audience. "Key West is a small island with lots going on."

From the city's total \$150 million budget come expenditures for the downtown storm water system upgrades that will alleviate flooding in downtown areas and improve near shore water quality.

"We've also increased our recycling rate by 26 percent in the past year or so," Cates said.

The increase translates to an estimated 1,200 pounds of garbage being diverted to recycling.

"In our IT department, we've invested in a new GIS system – geographic information system – that allows our planning department, police, fire and other departments to analyze large quantities of data to create maps, integrate information and overlay different scenarios to evaluate the outcomes," Cates said. "It's an extremely useful tool when assessing various situations for planning purposes."

City staff skillfully balances new technology with an appreciation for the island's historic buildings, "and the HARC

department processed more than 2,100 applications in the last year to ensure that restoration work is being done properly and in keeping with the historic guidelines to preserve the city's historic district."

The city's Tree Commission is busy processing about 46 applications a month, Cates said, adding that no trees are removed from Key West without the Tree Commission signing off and making arrangements for replacement plantings.

"We're continuing the process of digitizing all our documents," Cates said, adding that the city's Finance Department has 29 years of favorable audits to show for their dedicated efforts.

"But we do face challenges with regard to workforce housing due to increasing rents," he said, acknowledging that "we may never have all the housing we need."

But we must use these challenges and be dedicated to finding solutions," he said, echoing Chamber President Nicki Will's priority for the coming year with regard to workforce housing solutions.

"Key West is on top now, and working hard to stay there," Cates said. "Our team can accomplish great things if we work together to continue to make Key West a great place to live."

Time ran out before Cates could answer questions from the audience, but he is scheduled to present the same report to the city commissioners at their meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 3rd at Old City Hall. 

## President's Message continued from page 1 ▶

Some of the Committees that that are in need of members include – Economic Development, Education and Youth, Golf Tournament, Image, Membership, Tourism and Workforce Housing. Committees do make a difference and are critical to the mission of the Chamber. If you are interested in growth, change and having your voice heard, please contact the Chamber office to become a member of a committee. You can call Nancy at 294-2587 or email [committees@keywestchamber.org](mailto:committees@keywestchamber.org).

Data and Research. The Key West Chamber of Commerce is a wealth of data and research for the business community. The Chamber website and the members only section is an excellent source of data for our businesses. I personally utilize the information in my monthly reports and annual development of business and strategic plans. Please take the opportunity to examine the data available. This is a definite benefit to all members.

I would also ask all members to complete the quarterly business environment survey. It is emailed to all members and only takes a few minutes to complete. The survey requests very basic data on the status of members' business operations including among other indicators volume changes, employee vacancy and turnover rates and impacts of various Key West and Florida Keys events.

Vision 2020. This month I would like to touch on Goal 1 from Vision 2020. Goal 1. We will have achieved a balance of workforce to housing availability and affordability achieving the goal of no more than one third of income necessary to fund housing costs of workers in our community.

Despite the exceptional intentions and hard work by many individuals, organizations, and local companies, the reality of workforce housing is not much different from when this goal was drafted in 1998. All organizations continue to have difficulty recruiting and retaining quality employees due to the cost and supply, or lack thereof, affordable housing in the Key West area. I realize we have all heard this many times, however it is time again to come together as a Chamber to work toward achieving that balance of workforce housing. There is momentum in our community with elected leaders, civic leaders and business leaders to place genuine effort behind this issue in 2015. The Chamber has established a Workforce Housing Committee and this is one of the top issues on the Program of Work for the Chamber Board.

Thank you for your continued support of the Chamber. Please let me know how we may better serve you. 



## Visit Dan for FINANCING made easy!

Centennial Bank's local loan expert **DAN** understands the uniqueness of the islands, and he's dedicated to finding the perfect loan for you.

We offer FNMA, FHLMC, FHA, VA and non-traditional loans. Conventional, Jumbo, FNMA, FHLMC, FHA and VA Financing Available.

Dan Blagriff, LOAN ORIGINATOR • NMLS 675375  
305-676-3146 • [dblagriff@my100bank.com](mailto:dblagriff@my100bank.com)



MY100BANK.COM  
A Home BancShares Company (Nasdaq:HOMB)

## Chamber Banquet Honors and Installs Business Leaders



Board members of the Key West Chamber of Commerce enjoyed the organization's Annual Installation and Awards Dinner on Jan. 24th at the Marriott Beachside Resort. Pictured, left to right: Diane Gibson, Randy Moore, Cara Higgins, Raquel Crummitt, Claude Gardner, Mark Rossi, Cathy Smiley, Joyce Benavides, Robin Lockwood, Jim Wilson, Esther Tupino, Melissa Kendrick and Kim Works.



Past presidents of the Key West Chamber of Commerce followed tradition at their annual Installation and Awards Dinner by passing the gavel down the line to the organization's newest president Nicki Will. Pictured, left to right, are Past Presidents Diane Gibson, Cara Higgins, Jim Wilson, Esther Tupino, Robin Lockwood and Nicki Will, who was installed as the 2015 president during the event.



The 2015 officers of the Key West Chamber of Commerce are, from left: Vice President Greg Sullivan, Secretary Sam Holland, President-Elect Jennifer Hulse and Treasurer Scott Saunders.

If an organization is as strong as its members, then the Key West Chamber of Commerce can move mountains.

The organization celebrated its strength and its achievements of the past year during its formal Installation and Awards Dinner that took place Jan. 24th at the Marriott Beachside Resort.

In passing the presidential gavel to 2015 President Nicki Will, Dr. Robin Lockwood joined the illustrious line of past presidents who have led the Key West Chamber of Commerce through nearly 80 years of success in the island community.

In his parting words, Lockwood credited the board members of the Key West Chamber for their involvement in important issues.

"I've been very surprised by how often I have had to change my mind about an issue while sitting in an Executive Committee or Chamber Board meeting," Lockwood told the audience. "I'd walk into a meeting thinking one way, and then by the end of the meeting, my mind would've been changed by the spirited discussions provided by experienced board members."

Lockwood thanked Executive Vice President Virginia Panico and the Chamber staff for their help and guidance during his

presidential term, and commended both for the Chamber's record-breaking trade show, "which set an all-time record for attendance and revenue."

Lockwood also thanked the three Executive Committee board members he selected to help him lead the organization.

Randy Moore contributed his experience and expertise, having followed Panico as Chamber president 29 years ago.

"I also asked Melissa Kendrick to be on the executive committee because she has the insight provided by being president of the Chamber twice," Lockwood said. "I was looking for all the help I could get; and I also chose Sam Holland for the committee to get some new and younger ideas contributed."

Lockwood wrapped up his presidency by acknowledging the efforts of the Chamber's various committees and their chairs, from the organizers of the annual golf tournament, to the committees that deal with everything from education and economic development; to membership and image.

"Thank you to all Chamber members who joined and participated in our meetings and programs," Lockwood said. "And lastly I would like to thank Nicki Will for her support of me during her year as a President-Elect. I

greatly appreciate all her support and wish her a great year as president."

Lockwood then introduced a man who needed no introduction to the Key West Chamber of Commerce to swear in the 2015 officers.

"We know him as our favorite emcee of many Chamber programs," Lockwood said. But on Oct. 18, 2013, Governor Rick Scott appointed him to the Third District Court of Appeal, making him the first Monroe County attorney ever appointed to that court – Judge Edwin A. Scales III."

Scales shunned the spotlight following Lockwood's listing of his professional accomplishments, and instead directed the spotlight back to the Key West Chamber of Commerce with his inimitable combination of irreverent humor – and heartfelt humility in being asked to speak at the event and install the incoming officers and directors.

After hurling perfectly timed barbs toward Panico and fellow attorney David Paul Horan, Scales got serious, and told the audience, "When I first moved to the Keys in 1998, my employer, Ed Swift gave me three pieces of advice: Remove the life-sized Florida Gators

*continued on page 8* ▶

## Key West Chamber of Commerce Honors Extraordinary Educators

As part of its ongoing commitment to education and the future of the community, the Key West Chamber of Commerce regularly honors the area's best and brightest teachers.

These individuals, nominated by their peers and school principals, leave a legacy in each of the students they teach and contribute to a brighter outlook for everyone.

Each honoree receives a commemorative plaque and a gift bag of appreciation from Chamber members who show their support of teachers through gift certificates, merchandise or cash donations.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce, as always, is proud to honor the following Key West teachers for their tireless dedication to the island's youngest residents:

**Christine Shanle**, *exceptional student education teacher, Gerald Adams Elementary*

- Christine Shanle is convinced each student, regardless of their struggles, harbors a special talent. It's her job to find that strength and nurture it by designing lesson plans that let each child shine, says Gerald Adams Principal Fran Herrin, who said, "Mrs. Shanle's upbeat professionalism shines through in every aspect of her teaching." Twenty years in the classroom have provided Christine the confidence to boldly embrace new challenges, and "Gerald Adams is a better place because of her presence," Principal Herrin said in describing Shanle, who was named the school's Teacher of the Year in 2010.

**Tyler Smith**, *music teacher, Gerald Adams Elementary School*

- Tyler Smith has made quite a mark at Gerald Adams Elementary School in his first year teaching in the Florida Keys. The talented music teacher started his career nearly five years ago in Illinois, and recently brought his talents to the Southernmost City, where he created an "exciting, interactive music program at Gerald Adams," said Principal Fran Herrin. "Students look forward to their time in music class and Mr. Smith never disappoints," she said of the teacher with a degree in music education with an emphasis on steel pans, which fits in perfectly with the school's legendary Steel Your Heart Band. "Monroe County is fortunate to have such a highly skilled, dedicated individual to foster students' development through the arts," Principal Herrin said.

**Katie Holtkamp**, *art teacher, Horace O'Bryant School*

- Katie Holtkamp is more than an art teacher at Horace O'Bryant School, as she finds time to provide constant support to her students in all their academic classes, said Principal Mike Henriquez. "She is creative in implementing writing activities in her classes and encourages

students to strive to always do their best in all areas of their education," he added. Katie is equally supportive of her colleagues, as well, always willing to help with an encouraging smile and a positive attitude. "In addition, she volunteers at school-sponsored activities both in and out of school, and each year organizes an Art Night at HOB to show off her students' achievements," Principal Henriquez said.

**Nicole Smith**, *math and exceptional student teacher, Horace O'Bryant School*

- It didn't take Nicole Smith long to become one of the most popular and effective teachers at Horace O'Bryant School. Smith joined the Monroe County School District, and specifically HOB, just 18 months ago after a 15-year-teaching career in Virginia. "As a classroom teacher, she is amazing," said Principal Mike Henriquez. "Her sense of humor and ability to motivate make her classroom a favorite among students, whom she supports fiercely." Smith knows what students need and is happy to share her expertise with her colleagues. In addition to teaching multiple grade levels, Smith also provides after-school math tutoring, and upon arrival at HOB took on the school's WEB (Where Everyone Belongs) transition program that pairs eighth graders with incoming sixth graders to ease the transition into middle school. "She's an outstanding educator, and our students and community are very fortunate to have her at HOB," Principal Henriquez said.

**Sabryah Alghrary**, *art and English teacher, Key West High School*

- Words and images collide successfully in Sabryah Alghrary's classrooms, where she uses a variety of strategies to meet the needs of her students in both art and English classes, said Principal Amber Archer Bosco. "In addition to her excellent classroom work, she is also the Fashion Club sponsor, who facilitates the high school's popular annual Fashion Show," said Principal Bosco. "She is positive and an integral part of Key West High."

**Valerie Mathijssen-Palay**, *French teacher, Key West High School*

- The real-world melting pot of foreign languages comes to life in Valerie Palay's French classes, where students are actively engaged and utilizing French in creative ways that make them want to continue their foreign language studies. "From the use of technology to field trips that put their skills into real world use, Valerie shows her students the value of learning a second language," said Principal Amber Archer Bosco. "The support and individual attention she provides promotes the foreign language program, with many students taking French for multiple years." Valerie also



The Key West Chamber of Commerce honored eight outstanding teachers during its January luncheon at the DoubleTree Grand Key Resort. Front row: Teachers Sabryah Alghrary and Valerie Palay. Back row: Teachers Christine Shanle, Katie Holtkamp, Nicole Smith, Tyler Smith, Mark Coleman, Julie Curry, Chamber President Nicki Will and Education Committee Chair Sharon Moore.

volunteers countless hours after school as a club sponsor and a participant in many extra-curricular activities. "Our Conch community is fortunate to have her," Principal Bosco said.

**Julie Curry**, *third-grade teacher, Poinciana Elementary School*

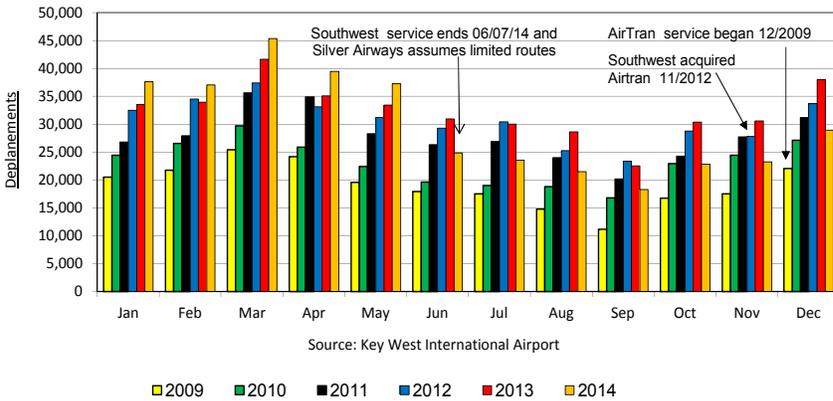
- The experience and expertise of a veteran and the enthusiasm of a novice combine in Julie Curry's third and fourth grade classrooms at Poinciana Elementary School. "She is always willing to help her fellow teachers, share ideas and represent others whenever needed," said Principal Christina McPherson. "When one walks into her classroom it is managed with productivity and respect, while still incorporating creative ideas and a great infusion of humor. Her students respect and love her. Her dedication, leadership and authentic passion for teaching are something to be admired by all."

**Mark Coleman**, *physical education teacher, Sigsbee Charter School*

- Mark Coleman, affectionately known as "Coach Coleman" on the Sigsbee Charter School campus, has a passion for teaching students healthy life skills while instilling the values of honesty, integrity and intrinsic motivation into their learning experiences, said Principal Eli Jannes. She commended Coleman's positive attitude and his position as a role model for all students. "As a successful triathlete and trainer, Coach is a model for the importance of fitness and respect among students and adults in the community," Principal Jannes said. "At school, he has quickly become a leader among his peers, a mentor for struggling students, vice president of Sigsbee's Parent-Teacher Organization and chairman of the Sigsbee Social Committee."



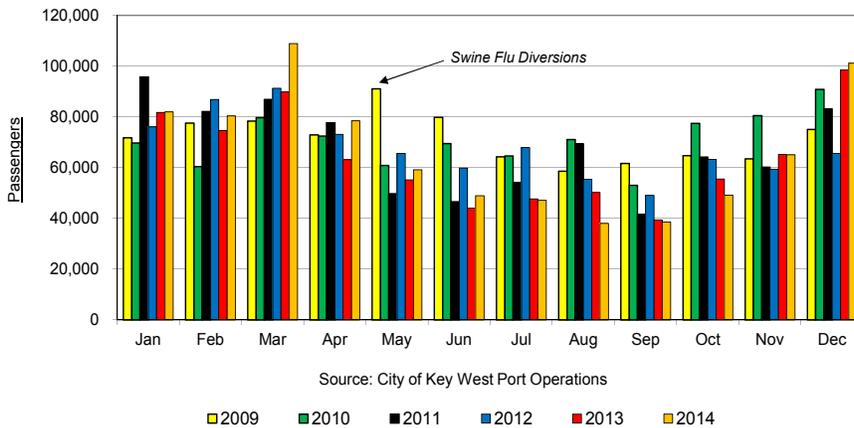
**Key West International Airport Arrivals**  
January 2009 - December 2014



Passenger arrivals to Key West International Airport in December 2014 totaled 28,946. **This is a decrease of 23.8% when compared to December of 2013.**

Total passenger arrivals for the year 2014 is at 360,168. **That is a 7.4% decrease over 2013 totals.** With Southwest not flying and US Airlines summer furlough, year to date increases experienced in the first half of 2014 were erased as monthly arrivals fell to 18-25% below 2013 levels. Excluding Southwest from the comparison, the remaining airlines' 2014 total passenger arrivals are up 7.5% over their 2013 totals.

**Key West Cruise Ship Passengers**  
January 2009 - December 2014



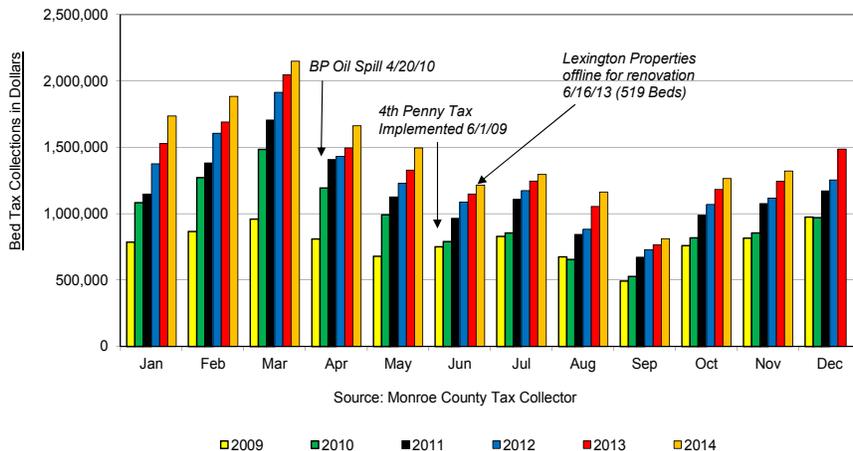
A total of 101,161 cruise ship passengers disembarked in Key West during December 2014. **This was 2.8% higher than December of 2013,** which saw 98,418 passengers disembark.

For the twelve months of 2014, cruise ship arrivals saw 796,960 passengers disembark. Despite monthly drops, **Disembarkments increased 4% compared with the same period in 2013.**

The cruise ship schedule for February thru April 2015 compared with the same three months in 2014 is shown below:

	Number of Ships	
	2014	2015
February	37	42
March	47	51
April	32	35

**Key West Bed Tax Collections**  
January 2009 - November 2014



Reported Bed Tax Collections for Key West were **\$1,322,365 for November 2014, an increase of 6.3% compared to November 2013.**

According to Smith Travel, **November 2014 occupancy was 86.2%, a 1.6 percentage point decrease from the November 2013 occupancy rate of 87.8%.**

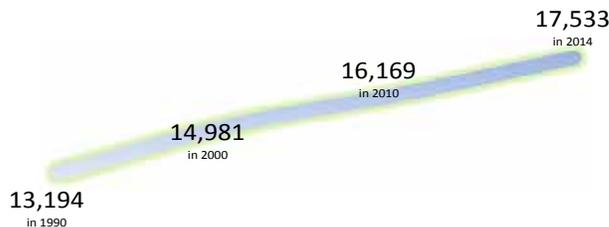
The Average Daily Rate (ADR) was reported at **\$257.31 for November 2014, an increase of 5.4% from the ADR of \$244.16 posted for November 2013.** This ADR of \$257.31 is the highest recorded for the month of November. This continues the record of 58 months where the ADR has been higher than the previous year. In fact, **the last 44 months are all-time records for each month.**



## Key West Chamber of Commerce Wage & Benefit Survey

The Key West Chamber of Commerce annually surveys members on employment conditions including compensation, benefits, trends and expectations.

## Key West Labor Force



The Key West Chamber of Commerce is currently conducting its annual Wage & Benefit Survey. Over 500 private sector members and 15 governmental agencies are surveyed, employing the majority of the labor force for the region.

This survey provides extensive information by business sector, including the level of benefits, such as the amount of paid time-off (holidays, vacation & sick time off), medical care coverages (health, dental, and vision), & retirement policies, as well as job-specific wages.

## What are communities' mooring fields?

A city, a community, is comprised of a place, people, and a way to make a living.

The *Soul of the Community* project identified three things ("mooring fields") that cause people to invest and stake their future in a place. And it is the size of the anchors that people set down in a place that separates cities, defining the endurance of economies and creating a community. The project found cities with (1) physical beauty, (2) entertainment venues and places to meet, and (3) an openness that built networks and quality of life options for all kinds of people were the most likely to have anchors dropped by those sailing through.

Making a city a desirable place to live, and not just visit, is important because the most successful cities are able to attract and retain the talent that strengthen communities and grow economies. Economic development is about longevity; it is about creating viable and sustainable economies where people can afford to stake their futures.

Key West has exceptional "mooring fields" in place. And the Wage & Benefit Survey helps us determine how well we are doing at providing a way to make a living.

## Sampling of 2014 Wages by Job Title

Job Title	Public Sector Mean Annual Wage	Private Sector Mean Annual Wage	Miami-Dade & Monroe & Monroe Average	Miami-Dade & Monroe 2014 - 2022 Growth Projections	Job Codes
Receptionist	\$ 33,740	\$ 29,039	\$ 25,459	17.7%	434171
Accounting Clerks	\$ 38,045	\$ 30,898	\$ 35,714	9.6%	433031
PC Technicians	\$ 48,290	\$ 32,822	\$ 56,930	11.8%	151152
Bartenders <i>(with Tips)</i>	Not Applicable	\$ 38,306	\$ 20,779 <i>(without tips)</i>	11.4%	353011
Attraction Ticket Sales	Not Applicable	\$ 27,040	\$ 21,195	12.5%	393091
Maintenance Workers	\$ 37,568	\$ 29,924	\$ 32,282	9.0%	499071
Auto Service Technician	\$ 50,359	\$ 41,205	\$ 35,776	5.9%	493023

The above job titles are a sampling of the approximately 120 positions that are included in the yearly survey covering 15 different categories. Areas covered include General Administrative positions, Accounting, IT, Medical & Family Services, Banking, Lodging, Food & Beverage, Retail, Attractions, Maintenance, Skilled Labor, and many more. The full report provides detailed data for each position, including actual low, 1st quartile, mean, median, 3rd quartile, high, as well as average low and average high of official ranges.

Copies of the 2015 complete report will be sent to those members who participate in the survey. Copies of the Key West Chamber's 2014 Wage & Benefit Survey are also available at a cost of \$75 to non-participating members of the Chamber and \$150 for non-members. Call the Chamber at (305) 294-2587 to receive a copy.

Sources: Key West Chamber of Commerce 2014 Wage & Benefit Survey; US Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistic; Florida Dept of Economic Opportunity; SoulOfTheCommunity.org

*Installation Banquet continued from page 4 ▶*

from your office; don't run for City Commission and get involved with the Key West Chamber of Commerce. I got involved and got to know some of the best people anywhere, selflessly committed to making our community a better place and damned if it's not the same people in this room tonight. Every city has a Chamber of Commerce, but no other city has a chamber like ours and I'm honored and humbled to be asked to install its leaders."

Scales' humor returned a moment later and brought the audience to its knees as he modified the oath of office while administering it to incoming President Nicki Will, who is the CEO of Lower Keys Medical Center.

In addition to faithfully performing the duties of her office, Scales asked Will "to refrain from visualizing Virginia Panico when reading 'Fifty Shades of Gray.'"

A blushing Will quickly recovered her composure to address the audience with a personal and heartfelt speech that included thanks to her supportive mother, who was in the audience that night, and acknowledgement of the husband she lost to cancer last year.

"I know he would be proud of me for this accomplishment," she said. "The Chamber is a member-driven organization and I am here to work for you as members of the Chamber....The membership is a very diverse group and I hope to be inclusive in my presidency."

Will told the audience that one of the greatest challenges she wants to address in the coming year is the shortage of affordable workforce housing for Key West workers.

"Many members of our workforce are struggling to live in Key West and a significant focus this year will be as a Chamber to work with public and private partners in assessing and addressing workforce housing," Will said, adding that the changing regulations regarding travel to Cuba will also be included in her work plan for the Chamber for 2015.

"Let us all work together to address those changes and steer the ship in the direction that is beneficial for the greater good of the members of the Key West Chamber of Commerce," Will concluded.

Following a decadent dinner at the Marriott Beachside, and a complimentary cocktail hour generously provided by the Farr and Appelrouth families, Melissa Kendrick took the microphone to bestow the prestigious ATHENA Award to Rita Irwin, president and CEO of the Dolphin Research Center in Marathon and chair of the Monroe County Tourist Development Council board of directors.

Kendrick reminded the audience that the ATHENA Award was created by a Michigan Realtor Martha Mertz in 1982, when she realized how few professional women were ever honored with community and business awards.

The award seeks to support, develop and honor women leaders, and inspire women to reach their full potential while striving to create balance in leadership worldwide.

"And in Key West, this may be only single secret we can keep each year," Kendrick said before describing this year's winner.

"This year's recipient has worked in the nonprofit world for 35 years, 25 of them in Key West," Kendrick said, describing Irwin as a native New Yorker who now heads both the Dolphin Research Center and the county's TDC.

"Our tourism industry is entrusted to her watchful oversight," Kendrick said, adding that Irwin still finds time to donate her experience and expertise to the Marathon Community Theater and other nonprofits."

Irwin was shocked and humbled by the recognition, and profusely thanked the Key West Chamber of Commerce memberships, who honored her with an enthusiastic standing ovation.

## Kim Works inducted into Key West Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame



*Diane Gibson, left, and Jose Gonzalez, proudly inducted Kim Works into the prestigious Key West Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame during the Chamber's Installation and Awards Dinner on Jan. 24th.*

Members of the Key West Chamber of Commerce offered an enthusiastic cheer for their own "Chamber Cheerleader," Kim Works, during the organization's annual Installation and Awards Dinner on Jan. 24, 2015.

Past Chamber of Commerce Presidents Diane Gibson and Jose Gonzalez led the presentation to induct Works into the Key West Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame during the formal affair at the Marriott Beachside Resort.

The prestigious Hall of Fame is reserved for Chamber leaders who are at least 55 years old and have contributed 15 to 20 years of service in the Key West business community. Inductees also must have served on the Chamber's board of directors for at least 10 years.

The award is given to recognize "a lifetime of service that has borne fruit for the entire community" to someone who has spent decades "enhancing the image of the business community with a positive direction and innovating ideas."

Kim Works met all but one of the award criteria years ago – but was never old enough to be inducted into the Hall of Fame.

Her induction finally occurred under the proud eyes of her mother, while Gibson and Gonzalez narrated the story of Works' early life and fateful arrival on the island that shares her initials.

A slideshow of photos showed the effervescent Works throughout her life, which started on an apple farm near Independence, Kentucky and included a stint as a child model for a weekly televised fashion show.

Although she clearly didn't have a "face made for radio," Works always enjoyed the world of broadcasting. She earned a degree in communications specializing in radio broadcasting from Eastern Kentucky University and worked as an on-air personality under the pseudonym Janet Planet and then as news director in Lexington and Louisville, Kentucky until a short trip to Key West in the late 1970s changed Works and the island community.

*continued on page 10 ▶*



## BUSINESS AFTER HOURS | WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20<sup>TH</sup>, 2015

Sponsored by: Smokin' Tuna - 4 Charles Street



## Cruise Ship Schedule

### February 2015

02/01	Constellation	8:00am-5:00pm
02/01	Brilliance	11:30am-5:30pm
02/02	C. Conquest	8:00am-4:00pm
02/02	Disney Magic	11:30am-7:45pm
02/03	Ecstasy	7:30am-1:30pm
02/03	Carnival Magic	10:00am-7:00pm
02/04	AIDAvida	8:00am-4:00pm
02/05	SS Navigator	7:30am-4:00pm
02/05	Majesty of the Seas	9:30am-6:00pm
02/06	Constellation	8:00am-5:00pm
02/07	N. Amsterdam	8:00am-5:00pm
02/07	Costa Med	12:00pm-7:00pm
02/08	Constellation	8:00am-5:00pm
02/09	Serenade	11:00am-5:00pm
02/09	Ryndam	12:00pm-6:00pm
02/10	Ecstasy	7:30am-1:30pm
02/11	NO SHIPS	
02/12	Riviera	7:30am-5:00pm
02/12	Majesty of the Seas	9:30am-6:00pm
02/13	Carnival Victory	7:30am-2:00pm
02/14	Eurodam	8:00am-5:00pm
02/14	Disney Wonder	11:30am-6:00pm
02/15	Norwegian Pearl	7:30am-4:00pm
02/15	Brilliance	11:30am-5:30pm
02/16	Disney Magic	11:30am-7:45pm
12/16	Ryndam	12:00pm-6:00pm
02/17	Ecstasy	7:30am-1:30pm
02/17	Costa Med	9:00am-2:00pm
02/18	Norwegian Pearl	7:30am-4:00pm
02/18	Grandeur	9:00am-5:00pm
02/19	Majesty of the Seas	9:30am-6:00pm
02/20	NO SHIPS	
02/21	N. Amsterdam	8:00am-5:00pm
02/22	Constellation	8:00am-5:00pm
02/22	Norwegian Pearl	8:00am-4:00pm
02/23	Serenade	11:00am-5:00pm
02/24	Ecstasy	7:30am-1:30pm
02/25	SS Navigator	7:30am-4:00pm
02/25	AIDAvida	8:00am-4:00pm
02/26	Majesty of the Seas	9:30am-6:00pm
02/27	Carnival Victory	7:30am-2:00pm
02/27	Costa Med	9:00am-2:00pm
02/28	Eurodam	8:00am-5:00pm
02/28	Disney Wonder	11:30am-6:00pm

Hall of Fame continued from page 8 ▶

“Kim fell in love with Key West and was lucky enough to get a job here as an on-air announcer and program director for WAIL radio station in 1985 – the same week Hurricane Kate hit,” Gonzalez told the audience.

The ever-fearless Works hit the ground running and quickly made a name for herself in local media and business circles.

“From day one, she has been actively involved with the local community,” Gibson said during the award presentation. “She became general manager of two radio stations, worked in sales for AT&T, managed four radio stations for

Clear Channel and later became vice president of advertising sales for the Key West Citizen.”

And if that’s not enough, Works has served on the board of the Key West Chamber of Commerce for 25 years. She has held every office in the organization and currently co-chairs the Membership Committee.

If the Chamber didn’t keep her busy enough, Works has also filled her time volunteering for the Sunrise Rotary Club, Founders Society, Red Barn Theatre and the Tourist Development Council’s District Advisory Committee.

She was a Fantasy Fest queen and a previous winner of the Chamber’s ATHENA and

## Welcome New Members!



The Key West Chamber of Commerce welcomed six new members to its ranks during its January luncheon. Pictured left to right: Nick Maddox of Keys Pool Service; Matthew Molle of JRM Accounting & Bookkeeping; Pat Labrada, accepting for Ruben Concepcion of Keys Financial Corporation; Membership Committee Co-Chair Kim Works, Morgan Smith of Air Adventures Helicopters and Membership Co-Chair Joyce Benavides. Other new members (not pictured) include Key West Realty Professionals and Crossfit Key West.

### Air Adventures Helicopters

3471 So. Roosevelt Blvd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
844-246-3594  
www.Fly-KeyWest.com  
Contact: Mr. Peter Closi  
Air Tours

### Crossfit Key West

2506 No. Roosevelt Blvd.  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-814-4838  
www.crossfitkeywest.com  
Contact: Mr. Alex Cruz  
Health and Fitness

### JRM Accounting & Bookkeeping Services

3706 No. Roosevelt Blvd., Suite I-208  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-501-2766  
www.jrmfinancialassociates.com  
Contact: Mr. Matthew P. Molle  
Accounting and Bookkeeping Services

### Keys Financial Corporation

302 Southard Street, #202  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-294-1484  
www.keysfinancial.com  
Contact: Mr. Ruben Concepcion  
Financial Services/Mortgage Brokerage

### Keys Pool Service, LLC

2409 No. Roosevelt Blvd., Suite 1 & 2  
Key West, FL 33040  
305-731-4448  
www.keyspoolservice.com  
Contact: Mr. Nick Maddox  
Contractor/Cleaning  
Sponsored by: Linda Russin, Island 107

### Key West Realty Professionals

86 Asheland Avenue  
Asheville, NC 28801  
305-434-0956  
Contact: Mr. Jason Sheffield  
Real Estate

Appelrouth Awards, Gibson said, adding that Works’ current position in sales for KEY TV and Pirate Radio has also allowed her to resurrect her Janet Planet persona Saturdays on Pirate Radio.

“Kim, thank you for your upbeat nature, your dedication to this Chamber, other organizations and our community, and for your passion in all that you do,” Gibson said before closing the induction ceremony with a lighthearted cheer for the cheerleader: “Gimme a K. Gimme an I. Gimme an M....”

The audience gladly participated and got to their feet to welcome Kim Works to the Greater Key West Chamber of Commerce Hall of Fame.

## Community Calendar

### February 2015

- 2/1 Annual Conch Republic Polar Bear Plunge at Salute! At Noon 305-296-0240
- 2/1 Key West Artisan Market at 1111 Eaton Street Contact: Richard Tallmadge 305-294-7994
- 2/1 AIDS Help Art Auction at the Studios of Key West – 533 Eaton Street 5:30pm-7:30pm 305-809-5000
- 2/3-3/7 Red Barn Theatre presents: Clark Gable Slept Here 319 Duval St. 8pm 305-296-9911
- 2/5 Symphony Pops Series II – The WannaBeatles 7:30pm at Tennessee Williams Theatre 305-295-7676
- 2/6-7 Ragnar Relay Race Miami to Key West [carrie@ragnarrelay.com](mailto:carrie@ragnarrelay.com) 352-514-1283
- 2/6-8 Civil War Days Heritage Festival 305-292-6850
- 2/7 The Spencers: Theatre of Illusion 7:30pm at Tennessee Williams Theatre 305-295-7676
- 2/10-28 Waterfront Playhouse presents: Next Fall at 8pm 305-294-5015
- 2/13 Alvin Ailey II Dance at Tennessee Williams Theatre 8pm [www.keystix.com](http://www.keystix.com) 305-295-7676
- 2/12-14 Sloppy Joe's 11th Annual Put-In-Bay Music Festival 305-294-5717
- 2/13-15 55th Annual House Tours (2 of 3), [www.oirf.org](http://www.oirf.org), 10am-4pm 305-294-9501
- 2/14 32nd Annual Wesley House Valentine's Day Gala at Curry Mansion Inn at 6:30pm-9:30pm 305-809-5000
- 2/14 Annual Marques Butler Memorial Softball Tournament at Clayton Sterling Complex and the Dewitt Roberts Field at 7:00am-11:00pm 305-797-1481
- 2/14-15 GardenFest Key West & the Green Market at KWBGS 10:00am-4:00pm 305-296-1504
- 2/18 South Florida Symphony: Love, Loss, Redemption 7:30pm at Tennessee Williams Theatre 305-295-7676
- 2/20 The Spinners at Tennessee Williams Theatre 8pm [www.keystix.com](http://www.keystix.com) 305-295-7676
- 2/21 Mardi Gras Casino Night at the Key West Marriott Beachside Resort 7:00pm 305-747-0395
- 2/21 Montessori Children's School of Key West Spring Gala at Key West East Martello Museum 6:00pm-10:00pm 305-294-5302
- 2/21 Key West Historic Cemetery Stroll honoring Black History Month At KW Cemetery 9am-12pm [jnewhage@keywestcity.com](mailto:jnewhage@keywestcity.com) 305-304-1453
- 2/21-22 50th Old Island Days Art Festival, [www.keywestartcenter.com](http://www.keywestartcenter.com) 305-294-1243
- 2/25 Ready, Set, COLLEGE! Workshop at FKCC Library-Building A 5:30pm-7:30pm 305-294-2587

## Key West Chamber Honors Thomas Bouchard: Firefighter of the Year



Key West Chamber of Commerce Past President Robin Lockwood presented Key West Firefighter Thomas Bouchard with the Firefighter of the Year award during the Chamber December membership luncheon.

The life and work of a Key West firefighter is not all smoke and sirens, but the other parts of the job are just as important. And a true Key West firefighter is never off duty.

Just ask Firefighter Thomas Bouchard, who was working a downtown fire watch detail at Clinton Square Market in the early morning hours of March 6 when Key West Police received a call about a man who had fallen off a ladder.

When police arrived to investigate the situation in the 100 block of Whitehead Street, they found Thomas Bouchard, who was by then off-duty, performing CPR on the victim of the fall.

"He had immediately rushed to help and assessed the victim," said Fire Division Chief Eddie Perez in his nomination of Thomas Bouchard as 2014 Firefighter of the Year.

"He found the patient was not breathing and without a pulse," Perez reported. "Shortly thereafter, Key West Fire Department Engine 6 arrived on scene and assisted Firefighter Bouchard with continuing CPR."

It was Bouchard's quick response, professional training and deliberate actions that the victim regained a pulse and began to breathe on their own. The patient was eventually transported to the hospital and

then flown to the Ryder Trauma Center for further treatment, Perez said.

"We commend Firefighter Bouchard for making a difference with his quick response and his devotion to duty," Perez wrote.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce echoed his praise and gratitude during the Chamber's Dec. 17th awards luncheon, where President Robin Lockwood presented Bouchard with the 2014 Firefighter of the Year award.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce presents:

# Ready, Set, COLLEGE!

for high school students, parents, and teachers

Wednesday, February 25  
FKCC Key West Campus  
5:30 - 6:30p.m.  
Library-Building A  
5901 College Rd.

Parents/guardians and students will receive hands-on guidance through the completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as information about scholarships, grants, and loans.







## CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Nicki Will, President  
*Lower Keys Medical Center/294-9200*

Jennifer Hulse, President Elect  
*The Hulse Law Office, P.A./292-7771*

Greg Sullivan, Vice President  
*Waste Management/434-9140*

Scott Saunders/Treasurer  
*Fury Management/294-8899*

Sam Holland/Secretary  
*The Conch House/293-0020*

Robin Lockwood MD, Past President  
*Robin Lockwood, MD/296-2212*

Melissa Kendrick, Appointee  
*Mel Fisher Maritime Museum/294-2633x24*

Randy Moore, Appointee  
*Moore & Spottswood, CPAs/294-5234*

Cara Higgins, Appointee  
*Horan, Wallace & Higgins, LLP/294-4585*

Virginia A. Panico, Executive Vice President  
*Key West Chamber of Commerce/294-2587*

### CHAMBER STAFF

Virginia A. Panico  
*Executive Vice President*

Steven Weed  
*Director of Research*

Mari-Lynn Boerma  
*Executive Assistant*

Kerry Baker  
*Membership Director/Special Events Coordinator*

Gladys Clarks  
*Tourist Information Receptionist*

Emily Brogdon, Nancy Caruthers  
*Office Assistants/Tourist Information Operators*

Virginia A. Panico  
*Newsletter Editor*

Cindy Jefferson  
*Art Director*

### Key West Chamber Calendar of Events

#### February 2015

##### Business After Hours

Date: Thursday, February 19th

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Co-Hosted By: Florida Keys SPCA  
and Royal Furniture

Location: 3326 N. Roosevelt Boulevard  
Members Only Networking Event

##### General Membership Meeting

Date: Wednesday, February 25th  
Noon

Speaker: Monroe County Mayor,  
the Honorable Danny Kolhage

Topic: Update on Monroe County  
Location: Key West

Marriott Beachside Resort

Please RSVP to the Chamber

at 305-294-2587 or email:

committees@keywestchamber.org

#### March 2015

##### Business After Hours

Date: Wednesday, March 18th

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Hosted by: First State Bank

Location: 1201 Simonton Street  
Members Only Networking Event

##### General Membership Meeting

Date: Wednesday, March 25th  
Noon

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

Location: Key West Marriott  
Beachside Resort

Marriott Beachside Resort

Please RSVP to the Chamber

at 305-294-2587 or email:

committees@keywestchamber.org

#### Key West Chamber of Commerce presents: Ready, Set, COLLEGE!

Date: Wednesday, February 25th

Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Co-Sponsored by: Florida Keys Community College

Location: FKCC Key West Campus Library – Building A

5901 College Road

For high school students, parents, and teachers

#### COMPUTER SLOW?

Call today to setup  
an appointment  
with a Certified  
IT Professional



SOLUTIONS AND SERVICES

520-302-4617

admin@firmaitss.com

WWW.FirmaITSS.com