



CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

New Fantasy Fest Producer Details Long-Awaited Improvements



Key West Chamber of Commerce President Greg Sullivan thanked Fantasy Fest producer Nadene Grossman-Orr for presenting some of the updates and improvements she and her team have planned for this year's 10-day festival. Pictured left to right: Greg Sullivan, Fantasy Fest event director Evelyn Judge, event producer Nadene Grossman-Orr and Fantasy Fest event coordinator Gordon Ross.

Nadene Grossman Orr was preaching to the choir when outlining her plans and priorities for this year's Fantasy Fest.

"One of the first things I wanted to do was bring back the arts and creativity," Grossman-Orr said while speaking on July 26th to Key West Chamber of Commerce members during their luncheon at the Casa Marina Resort.

The chamber audience needed little, if any, convincing that the city's largest annual event needs some improvements, updates, a bit more class and a lot more clothing in the form of creative costumes.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce in recent years has put its money where its mouth is when calling for a renewed focus on the creativity upon which the festival was founded. The chamber two years ago implemented its own cash prize and championship trophy to reward two locally designed Fantasy Fest parade floats each year for their creativity and ingenuity. The first-place prize is \$7,500 and the second-place prize is \$2,500.

The involvement of several local arts groups will help ensure that creativity continues throughout the 10-day festival, which takes place October 20th-29th with the theme "Time Travel Unravels."

"The Florida Keys Arts Council is now a sponsor. The Key West Art & Historical Society is also on board, along with The Studios of Key West and Key West Theater," Grossman-Orr said during her presentation, receiving nods of support and encouragement from the audience.

Grossman-Orr, who owns We've Got the Keys event planning and marketing company, won the contract to produce Fantasy Fest in January by responding to a Request for Proposals from the Tourist Development Association, the group that created Fantasy Fest more than 30 years ago and still owns it.

Grossman-Orr and her team have been tasked with "fixing" Fantasy Fest after scores of residents and visitors started complaining about its overly sexualized reputation for nudity and lewd behavior.

continued on page 3 ▶

Message from President Greg Sullivan



More than half way thru 2017 where does the time go. We have had another busy month for the Key West Chamber. We now have Uber, Lyft & other ride share options in town, and so far so good. Uber has joined the chamber, please contact us with any issues positive or negative and we will work to help get them resolved. The county has approved the ride

sharing companies to drop off and pick up at the Key West International Airport. They have designated the covered shelter located before the entrance to the one hour parking lot as a pick-up point.

I want to thank the Hard Rock Cafe & Winn Dixie for a great "Christmas in July" Business After Hours this past month. A complete holiday dinner along with all of the Christmas decorations set the mood for the celebration. A collection of toys and cash from our members were donated to the Wesley House who will distribute them to the children this coming Christmas.

The chamber is busy reviewing annual budgets for Monroe County, City of Key West, FCAA, Keys Energy Systems, the School Board, and Mosquito Control. This is an annual process the chamber undertakes to monitor and comment on how our tax dollars are spent. We recently asked the FCAA to delay the possible expense of \$42,000,000 yes Forty-Two Million Dollars for a new reverse osmosis plant on Stock Island. We would like to

continued on page 3 ▶

Table of Contents

Business Spotlight	2
New Members	4
Dog Daze of Summer Promo	5
Business Trends	6-7
Members to Elect Five Directors	8
Business After Hours	9
Tom Sawyer 5 Star Program	10
Cruise Ship Calendar	10
"Showcase of Key West Businesses" Trade Show	11
Community Calendar	12
Chamber Calendar of Events	12

Spotlight Shines on ... Chelsea Vanadia, Smith Hawks Law Firm



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 Chelsea Vanadia, Smith Hawks Law Firm.

Frequent Key West vacations turned into a permanent relocation less than three months ago for Chelsea Vanadia, the newest associate attorney to join the law firm of Smith Hawks PL.

A native of the Palm Beach area, Vanadia spent several vacations in Key West and the Florida Keys before heading up to South Carolina's Coastal Carolina University for her undergraduate studies.

She then earned her law degree from Barry University in Orlando in 2013 and opened her own law practice in the Orlando area for a few years before accepting the job in Key West.

"Who wouldn't want to live in Paradise?" she asked rhetorically. "Everyone in town has been so welcoming and has epitomized that true Key West mentality. This place has lived up to its reputation as an amazing place to live."

Vanadia specializes in the same type of law here in Key West as she did on the mainland, mainly residential real estate, zoning and land-use, which also happen to be some of the specialties of the Smith Hawks firm overall.

She assists both domestic and international clients in a wide range of legal matters involving commercial and residential real estate transactions (including sale and purchase transactions, closings, title and escrow services, leasing, land use, zoning, and permitting), business transactions (including corporation formation, limited liability companies, limited partnerships and partnership formation, preparing and reviewing contracts and addressing general operational issues), and the probate of estates.

"With six attorneys in our office, we're the largest private law firm in town, and we do everything but criminal and family law," Vanadia said, adding that the firm and its attorneys' dedication to service set Smith Hawks apart.

"We're a good combination of the small-town and big-firm atmosphere that allows us to be constantly available to our clients, and to draw on each other's expertise and experience when we need support with a case," she said. "Our clients may work

with only one or two of us, but they get the benefit of everyone here."

Vanadia is still finding her way around Key West's community endeavors, but said she is actively seeking to become involved with local charities and nonprofits.

She was the board chairman of the Central Florida chapter of Best Buddies, a nonprofit organization whose mission is inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

"I worked with a lot of kids and adults with Down's syndrome and other developmental delays and disabilities, so I'm hoping to become involved with Key West's MARC organization (Monroe Association for Remarkable Citizens) and the local Special Olympics chapter very soon," she said.

Before leading the Best Buddies board, Vanadia sat on their advisory board and chaired their annual fundraising walk, which raised more than \$70,000.

"I was also a Rotarian in the Lake Mary Rotary Club, and I know there are a few very active Rotary clubs here in Key West, so I look forward to jumping into all of it."

Of course, when she's not solving complicated land-use matters for clients, or planning her volunteer work, the Florida native spends as much time as possible on the water.

"I'm a happy girl whenever I'm doing anything on the water," she said. "I guess I'm in the perfect place for all the things I love."

Chelsea Vanadia can be reached at Smith Hawks PL at 138 Simonton St., or by phone or email at 305-296-7227 or Chelsea@smithhawks.com. 

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

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

Horan & Higgins, L.L.P.
608 Whitehead Street
Key West, FL 33040
(305)294-4585

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

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



"Fantasy Fest" continued from page 1 ▶

"We're working hard with our sponsors and partners to add value to their sponsorship, and we're getting a lot of new participation and new events," Grossman-Orr said of her efforts to bring local businesses back into the Fantasy Fest fold. For instance, she said, the Marriott Beachside Hotel will host a high-end masked ball, and the Key West Art & Historical Society will host a lecture on 'The History of Sex.'

The festival will still include plenty of adult-themed events, but those will be listed in a special "Little Black Book" that details the more risqué gatherings.

"Those events will still take place, but we're trying to make them a little more exclusive by including them in their own 'Little Black Book,'" she said.

"There will be a ton of new and returning events. My goal is to have a 10-day schedule so full of events that people will want to extend their stay, or they'll wish they had arrived earlier in the week," she said, recalling a time, 20 years ago, when hotels implemented seven-day minimum stays for the festival. In recent years, those minimums have dropped to two or three days or have disappeared completely.

One of the most popular annual events, the Friday street fair, this year will include more participation from local vendors, restaurants and other businesses.

"Historically, there were usually 40 to 45 out-of-town booth vendors," she said. "But this year I hope to keep that number down to about 20. We're offering local businesses a 30 percent discount on booth space, and local restaurants can extend their liquor license out to the street so they can sell food and drinks in the street fair. We're also setting aside the 100 block of Duval Street for the Mallory Square sunset performers during the street fair, so it'll be Mallory Square on Duval Street.

"We really want people to feel like they're entering a true festival atmosphere when they walk into the Duval Street Fantasy Zone," she said, pointing out that few locals even knew the boundaries of the so-called Fantasy Zone.

The new team will designate three "festival hubs" on Duval Street to help visitors find their way and plan their adventures.

"Three historic and iconic landmarks — The Custom House, Southernmost Mansion and San Carlos Institute — will be our festival hubs, where we will offer interactive maps, event schedules, information and directions. We'll also be selling our retail merchandise

from those locations, including the new Fantasy Fest t-shirts."

And wait 'til you see this year's t-shirts, Grossman-Orr said, adding that the shirts will soon be available for purchase online and in local retail outlets. She credited festival art director Marky Pierson for bringing many creative visions to life. Pierson, for example, is building a three-dimensional, 16-foot high Fantasy Fest logo that will be installed in front of the Custom House for photo ops, with the assumption that people will post photos of themselves on their social media pages.

"We're planning to have a huge social media presence this year as part of our efforts to appeal to some younger festival-goers," she said, eliciting a chuckle from the audience when she said, "We're going to live-stream several events — carefully," so as not to reveal too much in any of the videos.

There's also an emphasis on "greening" the festival, Grossman-Orr said, outlining some environmental initiatives, such as a bead-recycling program that will benefit MARC.

"MARC clients will collect, clean and repackage beads to be sold the following year as a fundraiser for the organization," Grossman-Orr said, introducing Gordon Ross, who is this year's events coordinator for Fantasy Fest.

A reusable, recyclable —and refillable — plastic festival cup will be available for sale and can be refilled for a discount at any participating venue, Grossman said, adding that the initiative proved popular during this year's Songwriter's Festival.

"We'll also have several bike-friendly events," she said. "The Zombie Ride is now an official Fantasy Fest event."

In answer to a question from the audience, Grossman-Orr said she and her team are looking into potential partnerships with or sponsorships by local shuttle services so Lower and Middle Keys residents and visitors can take part in the party without having to drive — and park — in Key West.

In addition, Stephanie Smith, the South Florida spokeswoman for Uber, which sponsored the luncheon, told the audience that Uber plans to meet with city officials and event planners before Fantasy Fest.

"We want to be part of the conversation to ensure that we're part of the solution during these large events, and not just in the way," she said.

"So in closing, I hope as locals you'll come back to Fantasy Fest," Grossman-Orr said, acknowledging that many locals had given

President's Message cont. from page 1 ▶

have public input at meetings to discuss and better understand the benefits and just what the cost burden would be both short and long term. The current plant was built in the late sixties and has the capability of two million gallons per day. There are other options less than the forty-two million which we would want to explore. There are many questions that we feel need to be researched. If we have some sort of disaster would there be tourists here? How many residents would be here? Would we be able to get support from our local military? These are just a few questions that we feel need to be discussed before spending millions of dollars.

Just a reminder of our coupon program "Dog Daze" of Summer. This is available to all, just visit our web site to see what discounts are available from our local business members. During the slower time please support our local chamber member businesses and enjoy great deals and never have to pass the triangle.

Speaking of the Triangle FDOT is in the process of redoing the crosswalks to improve safety and help traffic flow. The cross walks will be continuous rather than the current three mid-point waiting areas. The plan is for longer traffic time and the people crossing will also see longer wait times. We are still asking FDOT to study the overhead cross walk which would eliminate the current walk way issues, eliminate congestion from the many bike and running races that have become annual events. We want to have the safest venue for locals and visitors with whatever means of transportation they choose, foot, bike or vehicle.

I hope you have a great summer, and remember it takes two the Chamber & You. Feel free to call us at 305- 294-2587, stop by the office, or visit www.leywestchamber.org.

up on the event and have avoided it in recent years. "I hope I've inspired you to check out our new website and get involved once again. I'm not naïve enough to think I can change everything this first year, but I do want to implement enough improvements so the locals notice our efforts."

She directed everyone to the newly redesigned website at FantasyFest.com and encouraged everyone to contact her with any questions, suggestions or sponsorship inquiries. Parade participants should also visit keywestchamber.org for information about the cash prizes for locally designed floats.

Welcome July, 2017 New Members!



The Key West Chamber of Commerce welcomed six new members during its July membership luncheon at the Casa Marina Resort. Pictured left to right are: New member Frances Holland of West Isle Club Apartments; Membership Committee Co-Chair Britt Myers; new members Heidi Morris of The UPS Store on Big Pine Key and Anne Barnett of Southernmost Island Realty; Membership Committee Member Joyce Benavides and new member Stephanie Smith of Uber Technologies, which sponsored the luncheon. (Additional new members not pictured are: Jose Wejebe Spanish Fly Memorial Foundation and Keller Williams Key West Compass Realty.)

Jose Wejebe Spanish Fly Memorial Foundation

22970 Overseas Highway, #475
Cudjoe Key, FL 33042
561-350-8558
www.josewejebefoundation.org
Contact: Krissy Wejebe
Associate Member

Keller Williams Key West Compass Realty

333 Fleming Street
Key West, FL 33040
305-292-0020
www.kellerwilliamskeywest.com
Contact: Debra Joyce
Real Estate

Southernmost Island Realty

PO Box 6616
Key West, FL 33041
352-222-6666
www.southernmostislandrealty.com
Contact: Anne Barnett
Residential & Commercial Real Estate

The UPS Store 6896

181 Key Deer Blvd.
Big Pine Key, FL 33043
303-501-0233
www.theupsstorelocal.com/6896
Contact: Heidi Morris
Printer/Mailing Services

Uber Technologies

80 SW 8th Street, Suite 1830
Miami, FL 33130
<http://www.uber.com>
Contact: Stephanie Smith
Transportation Network Company

West Isle Club Apartments

3333 Duck Avenue, A107
Key West, FL 33040
305-294-3124
www.westisleclub.com
Contact: Frances Holland
Apartment Complex

“ CAR BUYERS CAN EXPECT EXCEPTIONAL CAR SERVICE AND COMPASSIONATE, KNOWLEDGEABLE CUSTOMER SERVICE THAT COMES WITH A SMILE. ”



Keys Auto Center's mission is to be the automotive home of drivers throughout the Florida Keys. We house a vast selection of new and used vehicles that suit all styles, needs, and preferences. Keys Auto Center is now under new ownership, which brings with it a strong reputation. Car buyers can expect exceptional car service and compassionate, knowledgeable customer service that comes with a smile.





Boating & Watersports

Charter Boat Ramerzi

305-294-0803 1801 N. Roosevelt Blvd.
\$50.00 off advertised internet rate when purchasing your private charter.

Danger Charters

Margaritaville Marina
305-296-3272 20% off when you book two separate excursions, 10% off when you book one excursion. 30% off for Locals with ID.

Fury Water Adventures

237 Front St. 305-292-4600.
10% Off Any Fury Tour.
Must book direct by calling 855-969-3207 and mention promo code "SHELL". Cannot be combined with any other offers or discounts.

Stock Island Marina Village

7005 Shrimp Rd.
Buy 50 gallons of Diesel Fuel or 90-Rac Gasoline and receive a \$25 voucher for any of our Marina Village Restaurants.

DINING & BEVERAGES

Blue Mojito at Hyatt Centric

601 Front St.
Daily Happy Hour – half priced beer, well drinks, and select menu items. \$6 featured drink of the day.

Casa Marina - A Waldorf Astoria Resort

1500 Reynolds St.
2 for 1 first round only of Spencer's Ale at Sun Sun Beach Bar & Grill. *This offer cannot be combined with any other discount.*

El Meson De Pepe

410 Wall Street, Mallory Square
20% off for locals

Goldman's Bagel Deli

2796 Roosevelt Blvd.
\$4.95 Early Bird Special. *Two eggs any style, home fries or grits, fresh boil n' baked bagel or toast and bottomless coffee or fountain drink. Must be seated before 10am.*

Hard Rock Café

313 Duval St.
Buy One Drink. Get One Free. *(no limit on drink price).*

Jimmy Buffet's Margaritaville

500 Duval St.
Buy One Get One Free Who's To Blame Margarita **Offer may not be combined with any other offer or discount.*

LaConcha Hotel & Spa

430 Duval St.
10% off small plates and drinks at Wine-O. *Cannot be combined with any other offer.*

Lucy's Retired Surfers Bar & Restaurant

320 Grinnell St.
Buy one get one all beverages up to a \$10 value.

Mangoes

700 Duval St.
½ off all regular menu lunch and dinner items to all Monroe County locals daily 11am-7pm (excluding alcohol).

Margaritaville Resort & Marina - Bistro 245

245 Front St.
15% off lunch at Bistro 245.

Marriott Beachside Tavern-N-Town

3841 N. Roosevelt Blvd.
All entrees \$19.95 if seated by 6:30pm, 15% off check if seated after 6:30pm - Monroe County ID Required.

Mellow Café

1605 N Roosevelt Blvd.
50% off food Monday-Friday with Local ID.

Pier House Resort & Caribbean Spa

One Duval St.
Free drink or dessert. Your choice of one. Must present coupon before ordering. Not valid with any other discounts including Kids Eat Free. *Minimum purchase of \$13.99, maximum drink value \$7.99. Only one per person per day.*

Pinchers Crab Shack

712 Duval St.
Free drink or dessert. Must present coupon before ordering. Not valid with any other discounts including Kids Eat Free. *Minimum purchase of \$13.99, maximum drink value \$7.99. Only one per person per day.*

Sheraton Suites Key West

2001 S Roosevelt Blvd.
15% off lunch.

The Inn at Key West

3420 N Roosevelt Blvd.
15% off lunch.

The Reach - A Waldorf Astoria Resort

1435 Simonton St.
2 for 1 on first round only *Spencer's Ale at Spencer's by the Sea. This offer cannot be combined with any other discount.*

Shor Restaurant at Hyatt Centric

601 Front St.
Free glass of our signature Michael Mondavi Canvas wine with purchase of an entrée.

LODGING

Cayo Hueso Resort

509-515 United St.
10% off stay, 5 nights or more. *Excluding holidays and special events.*

Key West Vacation Homes

305-292-8905
201 Front St., Suite 333.
Four-night stay for the price of three inclusive of tax and all fees. Based on availability.

Vacation Homes of Key West

507 Whitehead St.
\$250 off any rental from August - October

RETAIL

Diva Designs

218 Whitehead St., #3
10% off your Purchase and Free Gift with Purchase

Fairvilla

524 Front St.
15% off a purchase (does not include sale items).

Key West Aloe

416 Greene St. & 1075 Duval St. #9
15% off regular priced items

Key West Handbags

531 Southard Street
15% off any item not already on sale.

Key West Local Luxuries

515 Fleming St.
\$10 Off. *The Keys' largest selection of pearls and handmade jewelry!*

Kutchey's Flowers in Key West

1223 White St.
Flower Happy Hour: Mondays 3pm - 5:30pm, 50% Off all fresh cut flowers. *Cash & carry.*

Ron Jon Surf Shop

503 Front St.
15% discount with minimum purchase of \$30. Coupon must be presented at time of purchase. *Certain exclusions apply, see your local store or our website for details. Cannot be combined with any other offer or discount. Code 38422.*

Small Dog Electronics

1001 Truman Ave. \$15 off on any purchase of \$75 or more.

Tervis

431 Front St., Unit 3
Please enjoy 15% off entire drinkware purchase.

The Spice & Tea Exchange

431 Front St., Unit 4
10% off entire purchase (excludes accessories) or buy five spice blends, get one free; buy five teas, get one free. *Free sample of the month with a \$10.00 purchase.

SERVICES

Centennial Bank

1229 Simonton St.
2514 N Roosevelt Blvd.
701 Whitehead St.
Come by for free use of Centennial Bank Coin Machine, for all locals, at any of our three locations above.

Flow Spa, Inc

508 Southard St. #105
305-296-0772
Complimentary body scrub with one-hour massage or one-hour facial.

Four Star Rentals

5216 US-1,
MM 4.5, Stock Island
10% Discount Off Anything We Rent

Island 106.9

1075 Duval Street, C17
Buy one commercial, get two free. Must buy from rate card & mention "Dog Daze" or "Shell Out Less"

Jala Spa at Hyatt Centric

601 Front St.
20% off all services with valid local residence ID

JSA Promos & Print

314 Simonton St.
www.browncandbigelow.com
15% off all orders

Keys Federal Credit Union

514 Southard St.
3022 N Roosevelt Blvd.
Receive .25% (1/4%) off your rate on a new Keys Auto, Boat, RV, Motorcycle or Personal Loan.

TendBar

305-998-4081
10% off total bill for all locals and tourists.

Tours & Activities

Air Adventures Helicopters

3471 S Roosevelt Blvd.
\$10 off per person, any helicopter tour.

Dolphin Research Center

MM59, Overseas Hwy, Grassy Key
\$3.00 off general admission. *May not be combined with other offers or used for interactive programs.*

Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum

907 Whitehead St.
10% off of any \$25 or more purchase at the Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum Bookstore/Gift shop.

Haunted Key West

301 Whitehead St.
15% off per person on any of our walking ghost hunts or tours. *Must book online and enter promo code CHAMBER. Cannot be used with any other offers or discounts.*

Key West Food Tours

305-396-2224
10% off all tours with the code CHAMBER at checkout. 50% off tours for locals with the code CHAMBER50 at checkout. **Offer not valid on gift certificates.*

Little White House

111 Front St.
Sign up as a member to the Key West Harry S. Truman Foundation in August. Get an annual \$100 membership for only \$75.

Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden

5210 College Rd.
BOGO -By one Adult Admission
Get one Free Adult Admission, Children under 12 free.

Ripley's

108 Duval St.
Locals get 50% off admission with Monroe County ID.

The Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory

1316 Duval St.
1/2 Price Admission, and 10% off merchandise with locals ID.

TRANSPORTATION

AAA Limo Group

305-731-4340
\$20 per hour discount for Chamber members. From regular \$80 per hour rate, to be used in Key West only.

Key West Express

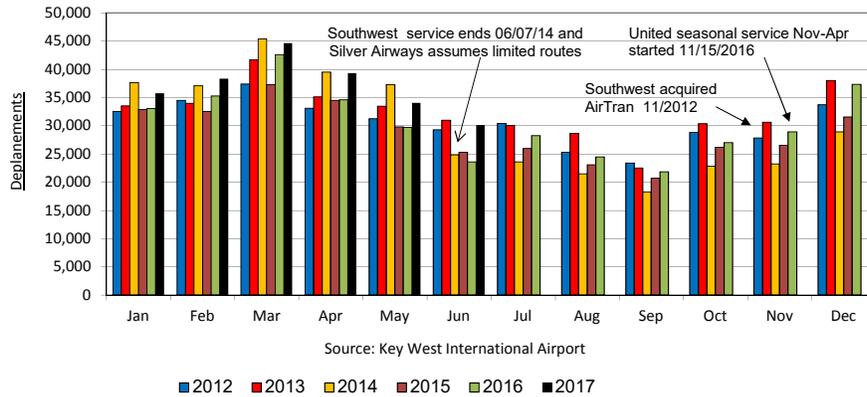
100 Grinnell St.
\$30.00 off full fare roundtrip adult/senior travel. Must present valid Key West photo ID to qualify for discount. *Travel must originate from Key West, valid for travel August & September. Not valid for online sales. Cannot be combined with any other offers.*

Sunshine Scooters, Inc.

1910 N. Roosevelt Blvd.,
Corner of Duval & Caroline
10% off every rental.



Key West International Airport Arrivals
January 2012 - June 2017

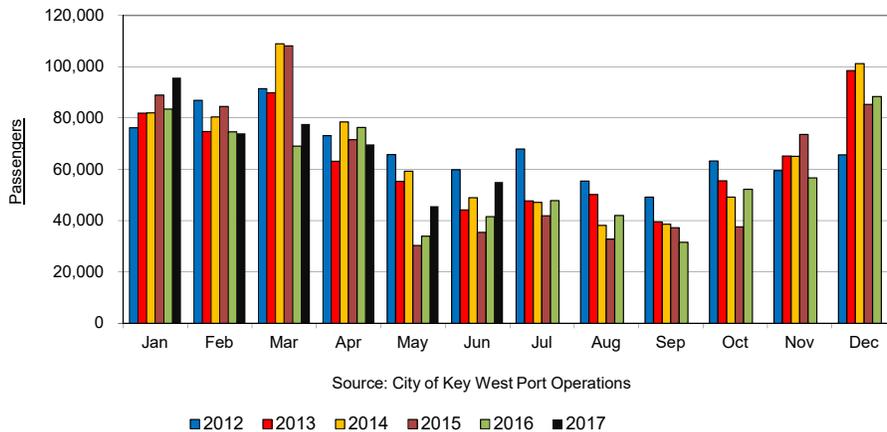


Passenger arrivals to Key West International Airport in June 2017 totaled 30,109. **This is an increase of 27.7% when compared to June 2016.**

Total passenger arrivals for the six months of 2017 was 222,158. That is a 11.8% increase over the same period in 2016.

With last year's airport arrivals producing marked highs and marked lows, June's deplanements marked a twelfth straight month of steady year over year increases while United's seasonal service helped edge February to an all time high for the month as Southwest's volume had dipped in 2014.

Key West Cruise Ship Passengers
January 2012 - June 2017



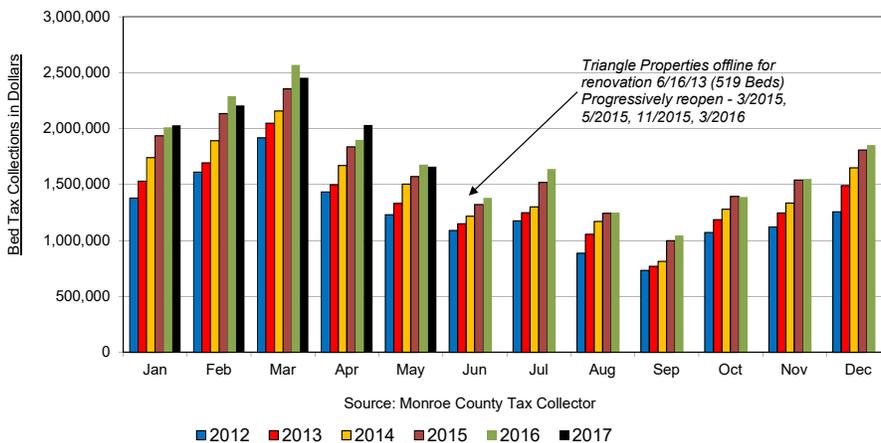
A total of 54,979 cruise ship passengers disembarked in Key West during June 2017. **This was 32.4% higher than June 2016**, which saw 41,525 passengers disembark.

For the six months of 2017, cruise ship arrivals saw 417,569 passengers disembark from 183 port calls. While port calls are up 5.8% so far for 2017, passenger counts are up 10.3% over the same period in 2016.

The cruise ship schedule for August to October compared to the same three months in 2016 is shown below:

	Number of Ships	
	2016	2017
August	16	23
September	16	21
October	28	27

Key West Bed Tax Collections
January 2012 - May 2017



Reported Bed Tax Collections for Key West were **\$1,657,871 for May 2017**, 1.1% lower than May 2016.

According to Smith Travel, May 2017 occupancy was 85.5%, a 0.3 percentage point increase from the May 2016 occupancy rate of 85.2%.

The Average Daily Rate (ADR) was reported at **\$268.49 for May 2017**, a decrease of 3.7% from the ADR of \$278.78 posted in 2016.

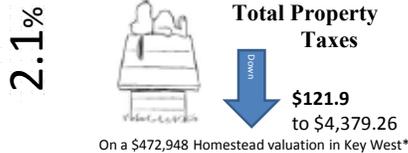
February 2016 broke the six year trend in which the monthly ADR had been higher than the previous year. With the number of rooms available increasing by about 10% from the low beginning the 2015 season, occupied room nights have begun the climb back to historical levels, while occupancy percentages and ADRs drop.



Chowder Trends Special Focus: Key West Property Tax (Part I)

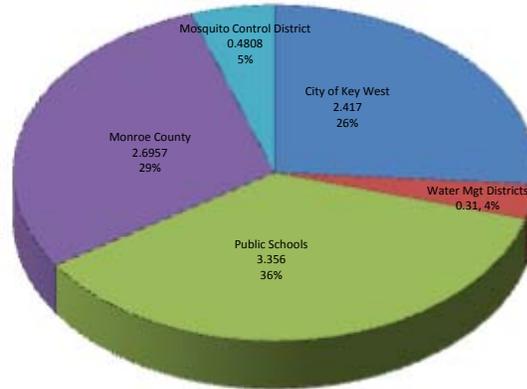
Municipal Budget process is Underway with a 9.2595 Millage Proposal*

Homestead Values Increase



Property taxable values in Key West increased citywide about 7% this year. A "Roll-Back" in property tax rates will be necessary this year to avoid a tax increase on property owners whose increases have not been capped.

In next month's Chamber Chowder we will discuss how to review your "TRIM Notice" and provide more information to help you participate in the public hearing process. Public input is critical to the budget process. Your local officials are elected to serve you; for them to properly do that you must let your voice be heard. **Remember that it's your money they're spending and the tax rates can be changed.**



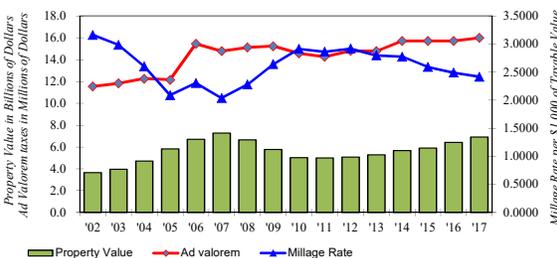
Proposed Millage Rates for Key West*

The chart above shows the composition mix of your property tax, as currently proposed.

The chart on the right, has a blue line connecting the millage rates for the City of Key West's General Fund for the Tax Roll Years of 2002 through 2017, compared with property values for the same period. Declines in property values does not automatically mean lower taxes, as the red line shows connecting the amount of Ad Valorem taxes levied during the period. **Note that the tax bills levied bear little relationship to property values.** Ad Valorem taxes are assessed based on what a government thinks will be required to provide services that it believes the residents want.

One should be mindful that the millage rate is not the final objective. The focus should be on how government is spending your tax dollars, by attending budget meetings and speaking out. Your Chamber of Commerce will be at these meetings, keeping you informed.

City of Key West
Property Values, Millage Rates, & Ad Valorem Taxes
Tax Roll Years 2002 through 2017*



*2017 millage rates are proposed numbers, subject to change.

Didn't fill out a Citizen Survey?

call or email your Commissioner.... or tell them face to face

VOTE!

KWCity | CityofKeyWest-FL.gov

find budget information under Finance Department

MC | MonroeCounty-FL.gov

find budget information under Budget & Finance Department

MCS D | KeysSchools.com

find budget information under Finance Department

FKMCD | KeysMosquito.org

call for budget information

FKAA | FKAA.com

find budget information under Resources/About Us/Reports

KES | KeysEnergy.com

find budget information under About KEYS/Financial Information

August

Locations: L-Key Largo, M-Marathon, T-Tavernier, W-Key West

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8 3p @ T - MCS D Hearing	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 3p @ M - FKMCD Workshop	16 5p @ W - KES Workshop	17	18	19
20	21	22 3p @ M - MCS D Hearing	23 10:30a @ T - FKA A Final Hearing	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Legislative Calendar

Key West Chamber Members to Elect Five Directors

Ten community- and business-minded people are running for five open seats on the 2018 Key West Chamber of Commerce board of directors. Some candidates are up for re-election to the board, while others are hoping to serve their first three-year term, which will begin on January 1, 2018.

All candidates have expressed a commitment to the business community and a willingness to act as its eyes and ears. The Key West Chamber of Commerce depends on them to help the organization serve local businesses in the island's ever-changing economic environment.

The chamber board consists of 15 elected directors and ten others who are appointed by the Nominating Committee. Ballots will be mailed to all members on August 1st and must be returned to the chamber offices, located at 510 Greene St., 1st Floor, Key West, FL 33040 or postmarked by 5:00p.m. August 18, 2017.

All members will be asked to vote for five of the following ten candidates (introduced below in alphabetical order). Look for your ballot in the mail.

- ▶ **Joe Caso**, though a relatively new full-time resident of Key West, Joe Caso and his wife have been spending winters here for 17 years, watching with interest the growth and changes in "Paradise." "I feel I would bring a 'new set of eyes' to the board," Caso wrote in his application, because he is "not hampered by past events." Caso is currently a business coach and adviser to small and medium sized businesses around the country and feels his background would enhance the Key West Chamber of Commerce. That background includes an accounting degree, experience in sales and marketing and founder of a search firm. "I am a process-driven individual and currently serve the chamber on the membership and Economic Affairs Committees."
- ▶ **Scott Duszynski**, a 22-year resident of Key West, is President and CEO of Keys Federal Credit Union. Under his leadership, KFCU recently was named Credit Union of the Year by the League of Southeast Credit Unions. While serving the chamber for the past three years, Duszynski has been active on the Executive Committee as Second Vice President, and also on the Education and Finance committees. His additional community involvement includes Key West Sunrise Rotary Club, where he served as a board member for ten years, treasurer for three years and president for a year. Duszynski also served as secretary of the Military Affairs Committee, was active on the Audit Committee and was a board member and committee chairman for the Navy League.
- ▶ **Cara Higgins**, a partner in the law firm of Horan & Higgins, has served on the chamber's board of directors since 2007. She served as president in 2011 and on the Executive Committee in 2009, 2010 and 2015 through 2017. Throughout her years of service on the board, she has served on various committees including the Image Committee, Nominating Committee and the Education

Committee. In 2017, the chamber honored her with the William "Billy" Appelrouth Award for her extensive service to the business organization. Higgins also serves on the board of directors of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA), the Lower Florida Keys Hospital District, and the Advisory Board for Lower Keys Medical Center. In addition to board service for both local and state legal organizations, her history of community involvement includes various leadership positions for local schools and Big Brothers/Big Sisters.

- ▶ **Melissa Kendrick** has been with the Mel Fisher Maritime Museum since 1991, where she is the president/CEO. Kendrick has served on the chamber board since 1993, three years in the vice president roles and as chamber president in both 2001 and 2006. She currently chairs the Tourism Committee and serves on the Image and Nominating committees. She was elected to three-terms as President of the Key West Attractions Association and has served on the Tourist Development Council's DAC I board for nine years, chairing it for three years. Kendrick also chaired the Florida Association of Museums' board for three years and leads the Historic Florida Keys Preservation board. Kendrick was honored with the Billy Appelrouth Award for service to the chamber and in 2005, Kendrick received the prestigious and international Athena Award. Before coming to Key West, she owned her own retail business and was a banking officer at Citibank in New York City, where her career spanned 14 years.
- ▶ **Graciela Lozano** is a computer programming expert who enjoys using her computer programming skills to make people's lives easier and ensure maximum client satisfaction. After working for more than two decades in the Internet, phone and computer fields, she is now also venturing into the mobile phone business. Lozano describes herself as having "great passion for her work, impressive technical skills, attention to detail and a creative mindset." She has been a member of the Key West Chamber of Commerce on and off for the last 20 years, depending of her time available to socialize. Additional involvements include the Key West Business Guild, Rotary Club, Lions Club, Key West Ambassadors, Webmaster Association, Key West Association of Realtors and the Key West Yacht Club.
- ▶ **Mike Morawski** has served as president of the Ernest Hemingway Home since 1994. In addition to his board role within the Key West Chamber of Commerce, he represents the Hemingway property as a member of the Key West Business Guild, the Lodging Association of the Florida Keys & Key West and the Key West Attractions Association. Morawski is a past chairman of the Florida Attractions Association and currently chairs the Workforce Housing Task Force Committee which is charged with drafting a white paper about the chamber's strategic plan to address the challenging housing issue. Mike also co-chairs the Economic

Affairs Committee and he formerly chaired the chamber's Education Committee.

- ▶ **Karen M. Sharp** moved to Monroe County permanently in 1981. In 1988, she started her career with First State Bank of the Florida Keys, where she serves as president and CEO, providing leadership to the community-driven commitment of its board and employees. The bank has been a member of the chamber for 35 years. Sharp joined the Key West Chamber of Commerce board in July 2016 and is a member of its Budget & Finance Committee. As such, she is a strong supporter of local businesses and nonprofits. Sharp is also a Certified Public Accountant, has served on the boards of the Community Foundation of the Florida Keys, the Executive and Finance Committees, and the Florida Bankers Association's board. The banking association has honored Sharp with its Chairman's Award as well as the Florida Diversity Council's Glass Ceiling Award.
- ▶ **Catherine Smiley** considers her 14 years on the board of the Key West Chamber of Commerce an honor and a privilege. She has served on the Image Committee, the Candidate Forum Committee, the Economic Affairs Committee and various ad-hoc committees during her tenure with the chamber. Smiley has lived in Key West for 22 years and in that time has worked in the largest economic sector of the local business community, the hospitality industry. "I strongly want to continue my service to the chamber and the community as we move into an era that is certain to bring changes to the complexion of the community and the economy," Smiley wrote in her board application.
- ▶ **Louis Spelios** is a dentist with 29 years of experience in private practice and multiple facility operations. He has served as a consultant for business strategies and development, as well as an adviser for dental companies such as American Dental Plans, Dental Health Management, CompBenefits and Britesmile, which named him its national spokesman. He has served on the boards of the National Association of Dental Plans Council, Stonegate Bank and DuMond Conservancy for Primates. Spelios opened six teeth-whitening centers on the East Coast and owned and operated 28 dental centers in three states in the Southeast employing more than 450 dental professionals. He now owns and operates Island Dental in Key West and has been a chamber member for two years.
- ▶ **John Toppino** has worked for the past ten years as operations manager for Monroe Concrete Products and Charley Toppino & Sons. He was nominated to the chamber's board of directors two years ago and currently holds the office of Treasurer on the Executive Committee. Toppino also serves on the Golf Tournament Committee, the Election Committee and the Workforce Housing Committee. He is a member of the Military Affairs Committee and a past member of both the Key West Rotary Club and the Rollins College board of directors.



CHRISTMAS IN JULY | BUSINESS AFTER HOURS | WEDNESDAY, JULY 11TH, 2017

Hosted by: *Hard Rock Café and Winn Dixie* - 313 Duval Street





Cruise Ship Schedule

AUGUST 2017

8/1	Sea Princess	7:30am-6:00pm
8/1	Carnival Breeze	11:00am – 6:00pm
8/2	No Ship	
8/3	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
8/3	Empress	12:30pm-7:00pm
8/4	No Ship	
8/5	No Ship	
8/6	Seven Seas Navigator	9:00am-5:00pm
8/7	No Ship	
8/8	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
8/8	Empress	12:30-7:00pm
8/9	No Ship	
8/10	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
8/11	Carnival Sensation	7:30am-1:30pm
8/12	No Ship	
8/13	Empress	12:30pm-7:00pm
8/14	Equinox	7:00am-5:00pm
8/15	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
8/16	C. Paradise	8:00am-5:00pm
8/17	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
8/17	Empress	12:30pm-7:00pm
8/18	No Ship	
8/19	No Ship	
8/20	No Ship	
8/21	No Ship	
8/22	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
8/22	Empress	12:30pm-7:00pm
8/23	No Ship	
8/24	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
8/25	Carnival Sensation	7:30am-1:30pm
8/26	No Ship	
8/27	Empress	12:30pm-7:00pm
8/28	No Ship	
8/29	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
8/30	No Ship	
8/31	Empress	12:30-7:00pm

Support Our Local Educators and Students through the Tom Sawyer Five Star Program



How Many STARS will You Earn for the 2017/2018 School Year?

Earn your First Star by donating to the Teacher Recognition Program.

How to earn your Star:

A donation of 22 gifts from your company with a minimum value of \$25.00 each (for a total value of \$550.00), or a cash donation of \$550.00. These are combined into gift bags and are awarded three times within the school year to a total of 22 outstanding Key West teachers.

Gifts or cash donations should be made to the chamber before our October 18, 2017 General Membership Meeting.

For more information on how you can donate to the Teacher Recognition Program contact any member of our Education Committee:

Chair: Billy Spottswood

Spottswood, Spottswood & Spottswood

Co-Chair: Suzanne Moore

Truman & Co Real Estate Services

Jennifer Barrios

Monroe County School District

Julie Cuneo

American Cancer Society

Scott Duszynski

Keys Federal Credit Union

Bobbi Holland

Conch House Heritage Inn

Chuck Licis

Take Stock in Children

Kay Miller

First State Bank of the Florida Keys

Edward Perez

City of Key West

Brittany Snyder

Florida Keys Community College

Angie Walterson

First State Bank of the Florida Keys

Don Whitehead

Wicker House

Maria Wilson

Appraisal Company of Key West

Virginia Panico

Key West Chamber of Commerce

or Contact the Chamber offices at 305-294-2587



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



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

Share Your Event Information

The Key West Chamber of Commerce strives for comprehensive coverage and promotion of Key West events that benefit our local organizations, businesses, citizens and visitors; however, we can only do this with your help!

We'd like to remind everyone that we do have an online calendar of events that we are happy to add your organization events to. In addition, your event would be listed in our weekly newsletter, The Chamber Chatter, and our monthly newsletter, The Chamber Chowder, for all fellow members to see. Best of all—your event listing is free! To submit an event, please contact Shay at info@keywestchamber.org with your event details.



*The Key West Chamber of Commerce
and Waste Management Present
the 29th Annual "Showcase of Key West Businesses" Trade Show
at the Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel*

Wednesday, September 20, 2017
Open from 3:00p.m. to 5:00p.m. for the General Public.
Members only Business After Hours Trade Show
continuing from 5:30p.m. to 7:30p.m.

Listen for our future promotions of the show on the radio and in print!

The Key West Chamber of Commerce offers you an opportunity to showcase your business during the Business Trade Show at the Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel. Last year as in previous years this highly successful show was sold out, with more than 400 people attending making it a fun day for all. This year's trade show hours will be 3:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. with a ½ hour break at 5:00 p.m. to prepare for the **members only** Business After Hours sponsored by the Key West Marriott Beachside Hotel.

We encourage you to participate in this year's trade show to display the products and information your business offers. As an exhibitor you will receive maximum exposure from residents and members of the business community who look forward to this show yearly. Don't forget to provide giveaways as an added attraction resulting in a greater marketing exposure for your business.

Booth Sizes Available:

- **Oversized Corner Booths**

Located in the four corners of the room, ideal for oversized displays. The booth space includes a six foot draped table.
\$600.00

- **Extended Wall Booths**

A limited number of wall spaces with extended space on both sides are available.
***Please contact Chamber for details and pricing.**

- **Standard Wall Booths**

Located along the perimeter of the room, ideal for back drops and free standing displays. The booth space includes a six foot draped table, all displays cannot be wider than six feet, and not to extend beyond one foot from the wall.
\$475.00

- **Center Room Booths**

located in the inside of the room and ideal for table top displays **\$375.00**

For more information or to reserve your booth contact:
The Key West Chamber of Commerce | 305-294-2587 | kbaker@keywestchamber.org

Presented by: **Waste Management**



Co-sponsored by: **OMI/CH2M**





CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Greg Sullivan, President
Waste Management/305-434-9140

Billy Spottswood, First Vice President
Spottswood, Spottswood & Spottswood/305-294-9556

Scott Duszynski, Second Vice President
Keys Federal Credit Union/305-293-6017

Suzanne Moore, Secretary
Truman and Company Real Estate 305-292-2244

John Toppino, Treasurer
Monroe Concrete/305-296-5606

Kim Works, Past President
Pirate Radio/294-1017

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

Sam Holland, Appointee
The Conch House/305-293-0020

Mark Rossi, Appointee
Ricks/Durty Harrys/305-296-5513

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

Claudia Wilson
Executive Assistant/Bookkeeper

Kerry Baker
Membership Director

Special Events Coordinator

Karrie Bond
Social Media Director

Shay Penke
Office Assistant/Tourist Information Operator

Gladys Clarks
Tourist Information Receptionist

Virginia A. Panico
Newsletter Editor

Cindy Jefferson
Newsletter Art Director

Key West Chamber Calendar of Events

August 2017

Business After Hours
Date: Thursday, August 10, 2017
Time: 5:30p.m. – 7:30p.m.
Sponsored By: Key West Aquarium
Location: 1 Whitehead St.
Newly Air Conditioned
Members Only Networking Event

General Membership Meeting
Date: Wednesday, August 23, 2017
Time: Noon
Speaker: Chris Hamilton,
Transport Coordinator
Topic: The Duval Loop
Location: Margaritaville Key West
Resort & Marina
Please RSVP to the Chamber at 305-294-2587
or email: info@keywestchamber.org

September 2017

Business After Hours
“Showcase of Key West Businesses”
Community and Business Exposition Trade Show
Wednesday, September 20, 2017
Time: 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Sponsored by: Key West
Marriott Beachside Hotel
Location: 3841 North Roosevelt Blvd.
Members Only Networking Event

General Membership Meeting
Date: Wednesday, September 27, 2017
Noon
Speaker: TBA
Topic: TBA
Location: Key West Marriott Beachside
Please RSVP to the Chamber at 305-294-2587
or email: info@keywestchamber.org

29th Annual Key West Chamber of Commerce “Showcase of Key West Businesses” Community and Business Exposition Trade Show
Wednesday, September 20, 2017
Key West Marriott Beachside, 3841 North Roosevelt Blvd
Presented by: Waste Management, Inc.
Co-sponsored by: CH2M
3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Open to the Public

Click to connect with the Chamber on
Facebook, Twitter,
Pinterest, or Instagram



Community Calendar

August 2017

8/6 **Annual Battle of the Bars**, www.schoonerwharf.com, 305-292-3302

8/10-13 **21st Annual Key West LobsterFest**, www.keywestlobsterfest.com, 305-744-9804

8/13 **KW Cashflow Club**, Good Tidings Church – 1pm-3pm, clslater@att.net

8/16-20 **Tropical Heat**, 305-294-4603

8/31-9/4 **8th Annual Key West Brewfest**, info@keywestbrewfest.com, 800-354-4455

September 2017

8/31-9/4 **8th Annual Key West Brewfest**, info@keywestbrewfest.com, 800-354-4455

9/6-10 **Key West WomanFest**, www.womenfest.com, 305-294-4603

9/6 **Ready, Set, College**, www.fkcc.com/edu/community/rsc/

9/7-11 **REvolution LGBT Art, Food, Wine & Cultural Festival**, 954-699-6556

9/8-10 **Southernmost Light-Tackle Anglers Masters (SLAM) Celebrity Tournament**, 305-664-2002, Contact Gary Ellis www.redbone.org

9/9 **4th Annual Rotary Casino Night**, KW Marriott Beachside, Jessica Cranney 305 773 4016 or Jill Cranney-Gage 305 747 0395

9/15-10/15 **WineDine Key West** - http://www.winedinekeywest.com/

9/20 **29th Annual “Showcase of Key West Businesses” Trade Show**, 305-294-2587