

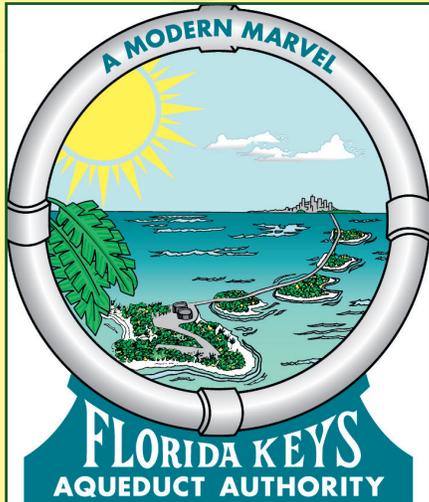


CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

Chamber Hears From Major Utilities with an Irma Rundown



Hindsight is always 20/20, especially after a major hurricane. The January 24th chamber luncheon at the Casa Marina Resort took the opportunity to welcome Lynne Tejada, General Manager and CEO of Keys Energy Systems, and Kirk Zuelch, Executive Director of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority, to walk through what happened post Irma and how the two major utility companies got the Keys back on its feet.

“Two thirds of Florida were without power,” Tejada began. “So we couldn’t call on a lot of other resources to help us out.” Keys Energy had a plan for a major event like Irma but a state wide event was unpredictable. Luckily, Keys Energy had many dedicated employees that came to the rescue. While Tejada did secure companies

from as far as Texas to come, many resident workers opted to stay and get boots on the ground immediately. While all responders were given the option to leave, five out of 57 second responders stayed and 57 out of 91 first responders stayed and took shelter in the Keys Energy buildings. By the end of the week, 33 more workers were able to re-enter the Keys.

“Transmission failure began at 11:05p.m. Saturday night (Sept. 9th),” said Tejada and from then, she described Irma’s damage as broken power lines, downed poles, and damaged insulators. Tejada showed the chamber slides of the downed transmission poles and a severed Cow Key Channel pole that an Arnold’s Tow Truck had to hold in place until repaired. Keys Energy estimated the damages as 625 poles, 650 transformers, and over 1600 street lights. Tejada did say that finally this month almost all street lights will have been fixed or replaced. Lastly, there were five miles of underwater fiber optics damaged that effect data transmission to the Keys and should also be restored by this spring.

“Restoration was challenging, especially with the debris piling up,” continued Tejada. Large energy trucks were losing access to poles and lines but also the debris trucks caused some damage as well. The cavalry eventually arrived and Tejada smiled when she showed an aerial photo of a long line of utility trucks arriving from Georgia and Texas. Ten different companies came to help which was a mix of contractors and visiting city utility companies.

“It was a good feeling knowing help had arrived,” she said but keeping the workers going was also work. “We used

continued on page 3 ▶

Message from President Suzanne Moore



Last Saturday night we kicked off the 2018 year with our annual Installation and Awards banquet at the Marriott Beachside Hotel. They did an amazing job once again with their delicious food and exceptional banquet staff and I would like to

extend a special thank you to The Appelrouth Family for sponsoring the cocktail party.

We certainly had some highlights with our own Past President Greg Sullivan receiving the Appelrouth Award for his tremendous dedication and hard work this past year. He was completely surprised as he wasn’t expecting it and his peers and great friends Mark Rossi and Michael Morawski gave him a special roast and presented him with his award.

Cara Higgins was presented with the 2017 Athena Award. This prestigious award is given to an outstanding professional woman who demonstrates excellence in business or her profession and provides valuable service to the local community. Cara has been involved in countless non-profit boards and business and community boards and is always willing to dedicate her time and talent to benefit others.

continued on page 3 ▶

Table of Contents

Business Spotlight	2
Community Calendar	2
Athena Award	4
Billy Appelrouth Award	4
Hall of Fame Award	5
New Members	5
Business Trends	6-7
Honoring Extraordinary Educators	8
Business After Hours	9
Tiger in the Woods Golf Tournament Info.	10
Cruise Ship Calendar	10
Installation of New Leaders	11
Chamber Calendar of Events	12

Spotlight Shines on ... Tom McKechnie of TEM Environmental and Mechanical Services, Corp.



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 Tom McKechnie of TEM Environmental and Mechanical Services, Corp.

“Now we can drive down most streets and see all the work we have done,” said Tom McKechnie’s wife Gabel. In their seven short years here, Tom McKechnie of TEM Environmental and Mechanical Services, Corp.,

who works with wife Gabel, have made an impact on the Keys in the best way, air conditioning. How could businesses survive without it? Having originally started in Homestead, Tom McKechnie already had his hand in HVAC big business systems from installing them in the Miami Airport Carport, Baptist Hospital and even Walmart.

When TEM won a Monroe County and Navy contract, Tom McKechnie saw a huge opportunity here. “There was a lack of local commercial contractors for air conditioning,” said McKechnie. “They all came from out of town and had to provide for workers to be here. There was definite niche for being on site and local.” McKechnie was right. In just a few short years TEM has provided systems for the most known big businesses in town: Key West City Hall, Poinciana Gardens, Stock Island Jail, two CVS stores, The Studios of Key West, Jackson Square, and the new FKSPCA, as well as many more. Aside from working in the plan and spec phases of commercial building projects, TEM also conducts residential duct cleaning, an important maintenance for homes.

“Someone told me it was about showing up down here, so that’s what we do, we show up, it’s all about service,” said McKechnie. And they don’t just show up for the job, but for the community as well. When Rick Ramsey needed the jail to re-open post Irma, McKechnie headed

back immediately leaving Gabel with all their horses and animals without power in north Florida. Getting the jail up and running wasn’t his only priority. The McKechnie’s also own the popular Sudzy’s Laundromat on Big Pine Key. With the island devastated by salt water and no running water, fast thinking McKechnie was able to rent a tanker full of fresh water to operate the laundromat. Sudzy’s was able to open laundry service to where it was needed most just days after the storm. Also, it became a popular meeting place for locals post Irma to help share information.

“It was funny, the moment the tanker ran out of water,” laughed McKechnie “The water came back on.” While their company lost a few workers due to the storm, they are proud to still maintain 22 workers with their businesses and still see opportunity to hire and grow in Key West.

The McKechnie’s feel this is their community now and are actively involved with helping out the Wesley House, Samuel’s House, Hospice and never miss a Headdress Ball.

“It’s a small community and it’s important to give back,” said McKechnie. “Last year was physical and mental struggle but it is still paradise.”

Contact TEM, Environmental & Mechanical Services, Corp at www.temenviomech.com.

Community Calendar

February 2018

2/1-2/3	Cuda Bowl info@cudabowl.com, 305-744-0903	2/16-17	58th Annual HOME Tours (3 of 4), www.oirf.org, 10am-4pm, 305-294-9501
2/3	Rock N’ Roast, 4pm-9pm, 305-294-1031	2/17	Key West Botanical Speaker Series & Native Plant Sale 1:30pm, 305-296-1504
2/2-4	Civil War Days Heritage Festival 8am-5pm at Ft. Zach, 305-292-6850	2/13	Mystic Krewe of Key West – Annual Mardi Gras Ball, 202-352-1669
2/4	Locals Day at Key West Botanical Gardens, 305-296-1504	2/24	Key West Historic Cemetery Stroll 9:30am, 9:50am, 10:10am, 305-340-1453/305-304-9931
2/7-10	Mile 0 Fest	2/24-25	Key West Garden Club Garden Tours – 10am-3pm, 305-509-7744
2/8-10	Sloppy Joe’s 14th Annual Put-In-Bay Music Festival, 305-294-5717	2/24-25	Old Island Days Art Festival, www.keywestartcenter.com, 10am – 5pm, 305-294-1243
2/8-4/9	Tennessee Williams 106th Birthday Celebration, 305 842 1666	2/25	Sunrise Rotary 25th Annual Golf Tournament, Roger Cousineau, 305-304-2698
2/10	Parade of Paws & Holiday Bazaar 10am-2pm at Higgs Beach, 305-294-4857		
2/14	35th Annual Valentine’s Gala, www.keystix.com, 305-809-5000		

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



“Irma Rundown” continued from page 1 ▶

21,965 gallons of diesel and 16, 503 gallons of gas to keep the fleet running.” Let alone by the 28th of September, there had been over 23,000 meals served to workers from a catering company brought in to help. Lastly, Keys Energy brought in laundry service that did more than one hundred loads a day.

Tejeda was thankful for social media and Julio Torrado for making multiple trips to the radio station on Sugarloaf to broadcast to get the information to residents. Given the circumstances, communication went better than expected.

Tejeda ended her presentation with the final good news that Keys Energy secured a 50 million dollar loan already to cover expenses. The total estimate should be around 41 million in damages. They have already submitted to FEMA for 21 million and project at present, they have about 16 million more in damage repairs to poles and transformers. Tejeda ended with, “While this was an expensive event, good news is, expenses are down and rates will not go up for customers. Next we will be sitting down with FEMA and revising our hurricane preparedness plan.”

Kirk Zuelch with FCAA then took the stage and reminded the audience, “It’s a good day. We woke up and were able to brush our teeth, take a shower and use the facilities.” Laughter erupted as those who remembered the days post storm when then basic amenities were not available. “September 10th and 11th was the first time in 57 years there was no water in the Keys. This was not a common storm.”

Zuelch explained it all starts at the water plant in Florida City. Here was the catch, the plant, which once survived Hurricane Andrew, was completely fine and able to generate the usually 26 million gallons that gets pumped to the Keys daily. Usage by residents roughly is between 17- 19 million a day. The water from the plant is pumped and re-pumped down and registers a certain pressure at each marker all the way down until it gets to Key West.

“We could see that we had lost pressure during the storm, and then it kept slowly dropping. There was no water to Key West, a dribble to Marathon,

and slightly better in Islamorada but there was no broken main pipe,” said Zuelch. “We were pumping 21 million gallons to nowhere.” He explained during Hurricane Donna, the last time water flow was interrupted, it was from a broken pipe attached to a bridge. Most pipes are attached to the bridges but there was no broken bridges this storm.

“Here’s what we did lose,” said Zuelch as he showed the audience a simple picture of an uprooted tree tangled with smaller white pipes. “This was a ‘small pipe event’ meaning all the uprooted trees around home properties had lifted and broken all the tinier pipes to homes. Eventually there were so many leaks there was no pressure at all.” Zuelch estimated 8,500 service calls after the storm. It came down to all the small pipes leading to homes leaking everywhere.

Again, like Keys Energy, FCAA had to reach out to other states for work crews. Workers came from North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee to join available local contractors. Zuelch then took a moment to thank many of the businesses in the room who helped house and feed all the crews.

“Also, this was the first time we had to issue a boil water alert,” said Zuelch. “Our guys did an amazing job at monitoring the situation. We conducted 800 water quality tests and only four came back inconclusive but not negative. That just meant retesting.”

The water was nearly completely restored after ten days and FCAA then began to focus on the cause and effect of the problems. In the coming year the FCAA will look at “system hardening” and how to fix issues such as small pipe problems and meters buried in debris. They will look at measures that can automatically reduce flow to homes experiencing damage and how to get more meters turned off pre storms. The FCAA also is looking into an ad campaign to help residents keep their pipes away from trees.

The chamber applauded Tejeda and Zuelch for their hard work and dedication to the community. 

President’s Message cont. from page 1 ▶

It seemed like there was certainly some girl power at the Awards banquet this year as the newest member of the Hall of Fame was the one and only Melissa Kendrick, Executive Director of Mel Fischer’s Museum. Her friend and colleague Diane Schmidt, General Manager of Margaritaville Resort along with Past President Greg Sullivan had the honorable task of reading off Melissa’s many accolades and accomplishments. Melissa has been volunteering in this community for almost 30 years and her dedication and commitment was rewarded as she now joins an elite group of individuals who have been major role models in our local Key West and chamber community.

I am honored to serve as the new President with all three recipients on our 2018 Board of Directors. We also have some new faces this year and will be tapping into all of their expertise and experience as we continue to strive for excellence and face the challenges ahead.

As we enter into our busy season, we know that there are still economic repercussions from Irma. Hotel booking pace is down and our projected numbers are somewhat flat. But we are seeing more and more short term bookings and as our visitors up north continue to realize that we are open and the Keys are as beautiful and viable as ever. Newman PR firm has just completed a “Come back to the Keys” press trip where they invited top tier travel writers to come take a tour and also have been running an online fishing trip competition and getting over 1000 entries each day. So the PR and the TDC’s continuing efforts are all very encouraging. We will be keeping you up to date with all the trends on the chambers weekly and monthly publications so you can see the numbers. Please feel free to browse all this important data on our website and view our upcoming events at www.keywestchamber.org.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming monthly meetings or the Business after Hours. 

Chamber Honors Cara Higgins with Prestigious Athena Award



Greg Sullivan congratulates Cara Higgins winner of the prestigious Athena Award.

was inspired by the Greek deity who represents resolute courage and wisdom, guided and enlightened by reason. “This award is designed to recognize the achievements of outstanding business and professional women in communities across the country,” said Works. She also paid tribute to past Athena winners in attendance: Virginia Panico, Sue Barroso, Kim Works, Melissa Kendrick, Sandy Higgs, Diane Schmidt and Piper Smith.

When Attorney David Horan was called to the stage to announce the winner all eyes fell upon Higgins, who was visibly shocked. Horan and Higgins, the name of their law firm, began to work together fourteen years ago after meeting at a chamber after hours networking event. Close friends as well as business partners, Horan knows firsthand Higgin’s passion for serving the business community. He watched as she

was elected to the chamber board of directors in 2007, the same year she made partner and had her first child. “Cara beat me by a decade—actually two decades—when she was chosen to serve as president of the chamber,” said Horan.

Higgins has since served on the board of commissioners of the Lower Florida Keys Hospital District and the board of directors of the Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority. She has gone on to chair the FCAA’s Labor Committee and join the governing board of the Lower Keys Medical Center and now serves as liaison between district board and governing board. “Her work has resulted in improving local medical care, lowering bills and she strongly supported the switch from life flight to Trauma Star helicopter service,” continued Horan.

Higgins, mother of two, has been an active part of her children’s education serving as

board president at the Montessori Children’s School and donating countless hours to The Basilica School. Also, she serves on the board of directors for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monroe County, mentors for Take Stock in Children, is a member of the Southernmost Republican Club. “In her spare time, she practices law,” said Horan who ended his speech with “Athena is primarily remembered for her strategic skill in warfare. It is altogether fitting and proper that Cara Higgins receives the Athena Award.”

“I’m seriously shocked,” said Cara Higgins. “I have so much respect for all the women who have received this award. I was raised in the back of the ballroom by Virginia Panico and now I know I just want to keep doing it.” Higgins thanked her husband, Mike, the chamber, David Horan and the many friends who help make her work possible.

Greg Sullivan Honored with Billy Appelrouth Award



Michael Morawski and Mark Rossi surprise good friend and outgoing President Greg Sullivan with the William “Billy” Appelrouth Award

The presentation of the William “Billy” Appelrouth award had a delightful plot twist this year. Past president Greg Sullivan began the award’s introduction unknowing that he was the actual recipient. He was duped to believe there would be no

2017 award winner. Instead Sullivan used the introduction to describe Billy Appelrouth, who served an unprecedented three times as chamber president and gave back to the City of Key West for decades. In the audience were Appelrouth’s wife, Rachel, and daughter Eileen. “Billy understood that if he was to live and receive from his island, it was also his obligation to give back to the community, which he did unflinchingly,” said Sullivan.

Sullivan unwittingly ended up describing himself when he said, “The Appelrouth Award recognizes a pinnacle of service that goes way, way beyond volunteers. It recognizes that every moment of dedication to the chamber is a personal choice to serve others—placed ahead of your own profession, hobbies and family.”

The crowd erupted with applause when Mark Rossi and Michael Morawski put an end to the hoax and declared the winner from a “trashy business”. As Waste Management’s Florida Keys Director, it did not take long for Sullivan to get the joke.

“Greg has never said no to any request of the chamber,” said Morawski. “He evens offers free snow removal,” said Rossi, then listed Sullivan’s volunteer efforts such as: Clean Florida Keys, Keep Key West Green and Clean, Boys & Girls Club, United Way, Past President of Sunrise Rotary and Key West Military Affairs. For the chamber, Morawski described Sullivan’s good deeds as “funding for hospitality bags, being the presenter of the Trade Show, and the title sponsor for the Tiger in the Woods Golf Tournament. I could keep going on and on but some of you would like to go home tonight.”

“There are people that talk about working for the chamber and its ideals and then there are people who actually do the work,” Mark Rossi said of his good friend. Sullivan is only the third chamber member to receive this award twice.

After a standing ovation Sullivan took the stage and thanked everyone. Out of words after his exiting president’s speech, Sullivan kept it simple. “I just try and do the right thing,” he said. “Merili McCoy just always taught me to do the right thing.”

Chamber of Commerce Extends Highest Honor to Melissa Kendrick



Melissa Kendrick accepts the highest honor the Chamber bestows, the Hall of Fame Award from Greg Sullivan.

It's not surprising that Melissa Kendrick, President and CEO of Mel Fisher Maritime Museum, received the prestigious Hall of Fame Award. The past president has already been an Athena Award winner and a William "Billy" Appelrouth Award winner for her many good deeds, but it was her decades of determination and willingness to serve the community that the Hall Of Fame Award honors.

The exclusive award is determined by past presidents of the chamber and given to someone who meets the requirements of 55 years of age, 15-20 years of service to the business community, a member of the chamber's board of directors for over ten years and has moved the business community in positive direction.

Greg Sullivan began Kendrick's introduction describing her career path. It started when New York City's loss was certainly Key West's gain. Kendrick, a city girl, had the highest GPA citywide during high school and majored in Banking and Finance at NYU. She went on to have a prosperous career with Citibank of North America for thirteen years until the lure of Key West winters won her over. Kendrick joined Mel Fisher Museum in 1991 and has risen to the CEO/COO/executive director, where over the years she has obtained over five million dollars in grant funds.

"She has rescued several local community organizations that were struggling by restructuring revenue programs and increasing their membership," said Sullivan. "She also led the effort to stabilize the Key West community after the September 11th tragedy in New York."

"Melissa is one of the best strategic thinkers and planners I have ever known in business, politics and culture," said Diane Schmidt, who concluded the introduction. "She started her own company named 'Amazon Tease' in 1989. Yes, she actually was ahead of Jeff Bezos who did not start the Amazon we know now until 1994. Forward thinking and strategic."

Kendrick has been with the chamber since 1991 and on the board since 1995. She has been involved with the Attractions Association, TDC DAC 1 and the Harry S. Truman Little White House's Foundation Board. Also, she works with the Historic Florida Keys Foundation/ Florida State Preservation Board and the Florida Association of Museums, as well as, American Association of Museums. And on the side she is a licensed pyrotechnic.

"I have not learned how to say no," laughed Kendrick, thanking the audience. She attributes her love of helping to her old Citibank days and hating golf. Kendrick bargained with her bosses, if she could get out of golf with the clients, then she would handle all the non- profits. "It has been an interesting road with a lot of surprises," said Kendrick. Lastly she thanked the late chamber member Sharon Moore, who she called "our better angel."

Welcome New Members!



President Suzanne Moore welcomes new business member Michael Wattner of Perfection Roofing along with the Member Committee Chair Kim Works and member Jay Hall.

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www.jasilaw.com
Law Firm

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305-233-1316
Contact: Michael Wattner
www.perfectionroofing.com
Roofing & General Contracting
and Mold Removal
Sponsored by: Melissa Kendrick,
Mel Fisher Maritime Museum

Sunset Sail Key West

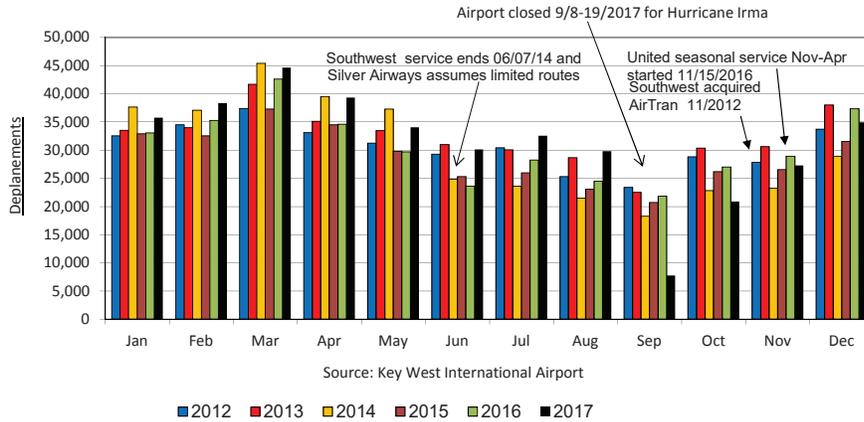
202 William Street
7009 Shrimp Road
Key West, FL 33040
305-587-3915
Contact: Seth and Jeff Salzmann
www.sunsetsailkeywest.com
Sailing Charter

We would also like to "Welcome Back"

Breakthru Beverages and
Classic Harbor Line America 2.0.



Key West International Airport Arrivals
January 2012 - December 2017

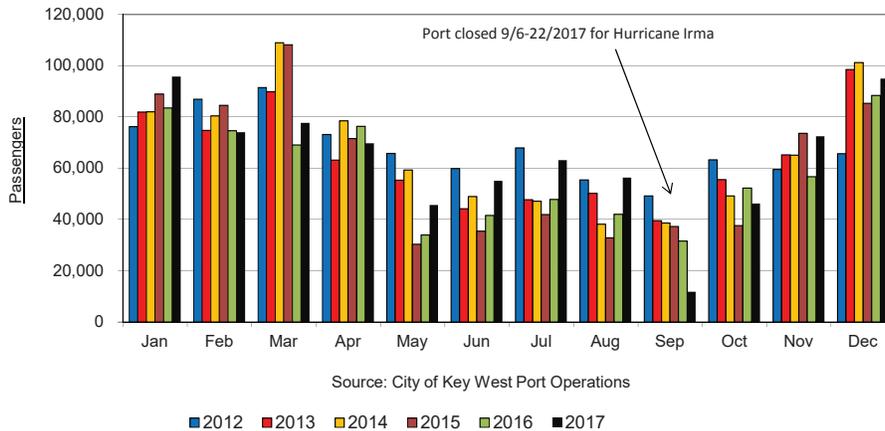


Passenger arrivals to Key West International Airport in December 2017 totaled 34,922. **This is a decrease of 6.4% when compared to December 2016.**

Total passenger arrivals for the twelve months of 2017 was 375,283. That is a 2.4% increase over the same period in 2016.

August's deplanements marked the end of the fourteenth straight month of steady year over year increases and an all time high for August. For October, with Delta and American suspending overnight flights, deplanements were lower than those seen since 2010.

Key West Cruise Ship Passengers
January 2012 - December 2017



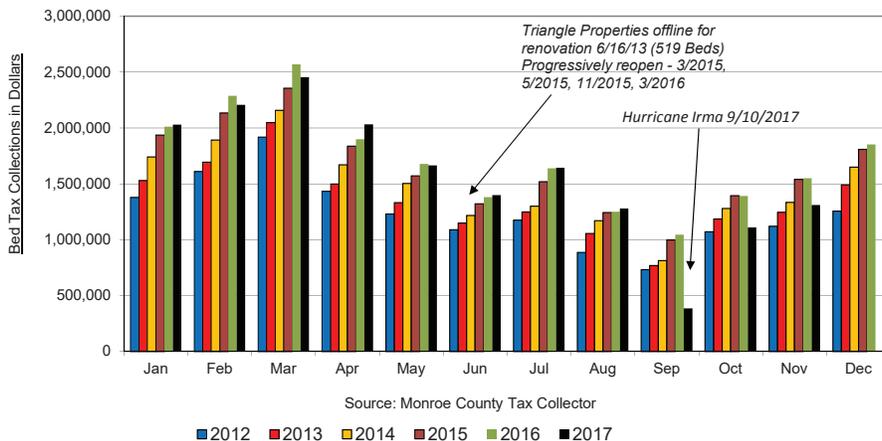
A total of 94,872 cruise ship passengers disembarked in Key West during December 2017. **This was 7.5% higher than December 2016**, which saw 88,264 passengers disembark.

For the twelve months of 2017, cruise ship arrivals saw 762,079 passengers disembark from 341 port calls. While port calls are up 6.2% so far for 2017, passenger counts are up 9.4% over the same period in 2016.

The cruise ship schedule for February to April compared to the same three months in 2017 is shown below:

	Number of Ships	
	2017	2018
February	36	42
March	33	48
April	30	43

Key West Bed Tax Collections
January 2012 - November 2017



Reported Bed Tax Collections for Key West were **\$1,308,090 for November 2017, 15.6% lower than in 2016.**

According to Smith Travel, **November 2017 occupancy was 78.6%, a 3.9 percentage point decrease from the November 2016 occupancy of 82.5%.**

The Average Daily Rate (ADR) was reported at \$259.21 for November 2017, a decrease of 4.5% from the ADR of \$271.54 posted in 2016.

Since Hurricane Irma passed on September 10, 2017 and caused damage to some hotels, the number of rooms available has declined in Key West. The estimated number of rooms off-line coming into October was 27% in Key West. The number of rooms still off-line through December is estimated at 9% in Key West.

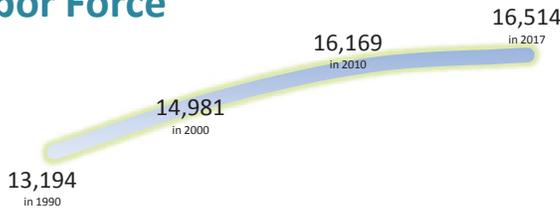


Key West Chamber of Commerce Wage & Benefit Survey

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

What are communities' mooring fields?

Key West Labor Force



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.

2018 Wage & Benefit Survey

2 Sections - 6 Clicks



Six Click Navigation
be anywhere
in just a few clicks

What to expect when you accept your invitation -

The survey is comprised of two sections and as few as six clicks from start to finish. And while the survey takes less than 15 minutes, your answers are saved as you go along and you can return via your invitation link at any time to complete or review prior to submission.

Upon using your invitation link to access the survey, as you click a second, third, and fourth time you will provide information about your staff size, work hours, paid time-off, insurance & other benefits, and your types of pay as section one is completed in only four pages. Section two is where you will provide specific compensation information for each of your distinct job positions. We provide the most common job titles and descriptions for your ease in providing this information, while allowing you to provide any alternate job titles you use or adding unique positions not pre-coded. On the section two navigation page you will find the pre-coded jobs organized on category or industry sub-pages for ease in finding the jobs relevant to your organization. And now you only need to navigate to the pages you want and can click straight through to the end of the survey at any time. If you are a sole proprietor with no employees, with only one click you can finish and submit your survey.

Copies of the 2018 complete report will be sent to those members who participate in the survey. Copies of the Key West Chamber's 2017 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: US Dept of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistic; Florida Dept of Economic Opportunity; SoulOfTheCommunity.org

Key West Chamber of Commerce Honors Extraordinary Educators



President Suzanne Moore, left, helps honor Key West teachers Pam Ziesmann, Cheryl Truhan, Jerri Niles, Eithne Saunders, Robert Eggers, Ashley Henriquez, Andrea Newby, Matthew Poffenberger and Elizabeth Ford with Chair of the Education Committee Billy Spottswood.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce takes pride in honoring the invaluable teachers serving our community. The recipients are nominated by their students and principals for contributing more than just their time but their energy and heart to their profession. These teachers help shape a positive and lasting educational experience for their schools, their community, and mostly, their students.

Each honoree is invited to lunch, sponsored by Royal Furniture, to receive a commemorative plaque, sponsored by local enterprises, an apple lapel pin, and a gift bag of appreciation from chamber members who show their support through gift certificates, merchandise or cash donations.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce recognizes the following teachers for outstanding achievement and unsung dedication to their students and schools:

- ▶ **Andrea Newby**, 8th grade science teacher, basketball coach, and kayak instructor, Sigsbee Charter school
A teacher of ten years, Andrea Newby made a splash her first year at Sigsbee. "Using her certification as a Kayak Instructor, Andy Integrated her Stem block with new kayaks and launched a dynamic science program on the water for middle school students," said Principal Eli Jannes. "She often extends the classroom to the great outdoors and her enthusiasm is contagious. She spends every afternoon coaching boys' and girls' basketball and her athletes always compete with integrity and grit."
- ▶ **Elizabeth "Betsy" Ford**, Advanced Placement English, Key West High School
Betsy Ford excels at student engagement and academic achievement after fifteen years of teaching. She is a leader at meeting the needs of all her students and her positive rapport with her students is a model for others. Students remark "She is the one they feel had a tremendous impact on their preparation for college." In addition, Ford is the coach of the Academic Challenge Team, a peer mentor for new teachers and leads special activities. "Betsy is an invaluable member of our staff and we are honored to give her this recognition," said Principal Amber Acevedo.
- ▶ **Eithe Saunders**, 4th grade teacher, Poinciana Elementary School
Specializing in elementary education K-6, Eithe Saunders started off as a volunteer at Poinciana then began to substitute in the classrooms. "She has a passion and love for teaching and we were excited she decided to be part of the Poinciana family," said Principal Dr. Larry Schmiegel. "When you walk into her classroom, you see learning and love for her students. Mrs. Saunders is so respected by her peers that she was nominated and won beginning teacher of the year."
- ▶ **Ashley Henriquez**, Physical Education, Gerald Adams Elementary
With the challenges of school construction to outside physical education, Ashley

Henriquez has maintained a positive attitude and created alternative activities making P.E. fun, and engaging. In addition to her regular teaching duties, Ashley coordinates GAE's 21st century after school program, is a member of the building level planning team and acts as a major advocate of the school. "She truly is the face of Gerald Adams," said Principal Frannie Herrin.

- ▶ **Robert Eggers**, American History Teacher, Key West High School
Robert Eggers is passionate about teaching and creating excitement for his students for American History. For 14 years, he has engaged his students and encouraged them to critically think about the subject matter and how it affects the world today. "Utilizing technology and instructional strategies, Eggers is able to reach students of all levels. Many will tell you Mr. Eggers is among their favorite teachers. He also contributes to our ESE team and an asset to the staff. We are proud to honor him," said Principal Amber Acevedo.
- ▶ **Jerri Niles**, First Grade, Horace O'Bryant School
Jerri Niles is being recognized for her excellence in assisting students in an inclusion setting. She comes to the school with a bachelor's in elementary education, ESOH and reading endorsement. "Her kindness and enthusiasm in the classroom is outstanding," said Principal Christina McPherson.
- ▶ **Cheryle Truhan**, Mathematics Teacher, Horace O'Bryant School
Cheryle Truhan's Bachelors in Marketing may attribute to getting 100 percent of her students to pass the EOC exam. "Ms. Truhan has already been named HOB Teacher of the Year and Inclusion Teacher of The Year. With 18 years of teaching experience, she dedicates an overwhelming amount of her personal time to tutor students after school and on weekends," said Principal Christina McPherson.
- ▶ **Pam Ziesman**, Elementary P.E. Coach, Horace O'Bryant School (November Honoree)
"For a decade, Coach Pam Ziesman has not just been an elementary physical education teacher but a positive influence on the entire school, staff and students alike," said Principal Christina McPherson. She has a Bachelors in Psychology, Autism Endorsement, Elementary Ed, Health and Physical Education, ESOL and ESE for K-12. "Coach 'Z', as we lovingly call her, is always willing to help out whenever and wherever needed. She embodies the school motto 'One Team, One Dream'," said Principal Christina McPherson.
- ▶ **Matthew Poffenberger**, 5th Grade Math and Science, Poinciana Elementary School (November Honoree)
Matthew Poffenberger's classroom is rigorous and engaging, bringing math and science to life. "Always positive and ready to take on a challenge, he has been a wonderful addition to the fifth grade team," said Principal Larry C. Schmiegel. "His greatest asset is his calm and caring demeanor. Mr. Poffenberger builds relationships with his students, even the most challenging. We are blessed that he is a part of the Poinciana family."

BUSINESS AFTER HOURS | TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2018

Sponsored by: **Curry Mansion Inn, 511 Caroline Street**





Cruise Ship Schedule

FEBRUARY 2018

2/1	Disney Magic	6:45am-3:45pm
2/1	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
2/2	No Ship	
2/3	Eurodam	8:00am-5:00pm
2/3	Silver Wind	8:30am-5:00pm
2/3	Costa Deliziosa	11:00am-6:00pm
2/4	Empress	8:00am-5:00pm
2/5	Celebrity Silhouette	7:00am-5:00pm
2/5	Viking Sky	8:00am-4:00pm
2/5	Rotterdam	11:00am-6:00pm
2/6	Enchantment	7:00am-4:00pm
2/6	Carnival Breeze	11:00am-7:00pm
2/7	No Ship	
2/8	Norwegian Dawn	10:00am-7:00pm
2/9	Carnival Sensation	7:30am-1:30pm
2/9	Empress	8:00am-5:00pm
2/10	Disney Magic	6:45am-3:45pm
2/11	Celebrity Equinox	7:00am-5:00pm
2/11	N. Amsterdam	8:00am-4:00pm
2/12	Rotterdam	11:00am-6:00pm
2/12	Disney Wonder	11:30am-4:15pm
2/13	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
2/13	Empress	8:00am-5:00pm
2/13	Brilliance	11:30am-5:30pm
2/14	No Ship	
2/15	Norwegian Jade	7:00am-7:00pm
2/15	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
2/16	No Ship	
2/17	No Ship	
2/18	Empress	8:00am-5:00pm
2/18	Seven Seas	8:00am-6:00pm
2/18	C. Paradise	12:00pm-6:00pm
2/19	Celebrity Silhouette	7:00am-5:00pm
2/19	Rhapsody	11:00am-6:00pm
2/20	Carnival Victory	7:30am-1:30pm
2/20	Carnival Breeze	11:00am-7:00pm
2/21	Summit	8:00am-5:00pm
2/22	Serenade 8:00am-5:00pm	
2/22	Enchantment	9:30am-6:00pm
2/23	Carnival Sensation	7:30am-1:30pm
2/23	Empress	8:00am-5:00pm
2/23	Costa Deliziosa	11:00am-6:00pm
2/24	No Ship	
2/25	Celebrity Equinox	7:00am-5:00pm
2/25	Riviera	8:00am-5:00pm
2/26	Ventura	9:00am-5:00pm
2/27	Enchantment	7:00am-4:00pm
2/27	Brilliance	11:30am-6:00pm
2/28	No Ship	

WASTE MANAGEMENT + THE KEY WEST CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A TIGER IN THE WOODS

GOLF TOURNAMENT

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SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 2018

KEY WEST GOLF CLUB

TEE TIME | 7:30AM • REGISTRATION | 7AM

PRIZES + AWARDS

- \$500 Cash Prize for Closest to Pin on all PAR 3
- 1st, 2nd + 3rd Place Prize in each Flight
- Longest Putt
- Closest to Hole
- Longest Drive

OVER \$20K IN PRIZES + RAFFLES

ADVANCE PAYMENT IS REQUIRED TO CONFIRM REGISTRATION

Minors 15 years or older permitted to play with a parent or guardian. No refunds after Sunday, April 15 or due to weather. Sorry, NO CHILDREN permitted in the Clubhouse or on the Course! **No Exceptions.**

305-294-2587 | KeyWestChamber.org



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 the chamber at info@keywestchamber.org with your event details.

Key West Chamber of Commerce Installs New Leaders



The new officers of the Key West Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors, Sam Holland, Cara Higgins, Billy Spottswood, and John Toppino, have taken leadership.

The Key West Chamber of Commerce had many reasons to celebrate this year, accomplishing great achievements and enduring Hurricane Irma, 2017 marked a formidable year for the Chamber.

The annual awards gala at the Marriott Beachside took place January 20th and gave members a chance to raise a glass and honor those who made the extra effort to serve the community all year long.

“I am certainly glad to have 2017 in the rear view mirror,” laughed outgoing president Greg Sullivan, who reminded the audience of the chamber’s successes despite the hurricane. “We supported FIRM in their never ending insurance battle. We encouraged and worked with folks to bring UBER to the community. The FDOT Committee chaired by Mark Rossi continually worked with FDOT and the City of Key West for improvements.” Sullivan also gave thanks to Virginia Panico for aiding in efforts for

a new control box and synchronized lights at the triangle entrance to Key West.

Laughter arose from the audience when Sullivan talked about “Camp Beachside” for the many members who rode out Irma at the Marriott. He remarked that three weeks after the storm, Key West was open for business as the chamber hosted seminars for SBA,



Suzanne Moore accepts the passing of the gavel as the new incoming President of the Chamber

distributed FEMA information and was able to hand out Fantasy Fest float prizes another year. Sullivan ended by thanking all the members who work on the many chamber committees “to insure all programs are in the best interest of our community and residents.”

The Honorable Mark Wilson, County Judge then swore in new board members John Bartelmo, Joyce Benavides, Joe Caso, Jed Dodds, Darren Horan, Melissa Kendrick, Bill Lay, Michael Morawski, Monica Munoz, Britt Myers, Mark Rossi, Diane Schmidt, Karen Sharp, Catherine Smiley, Dr. Louis Speilos, Greg Sullivan, Lynne Tejada, Daniel Toppino, Jim Wilson and Kim Works.

Officers 1st Vice President Billy Spottswood, 2nd Vice President Cara Higgins, Treasurer John Toppino and Secretary Sam Holland were sworn in as well. They will be assisting the new President.

Lastly, Suzanne Moore took the president’s oath and was passed the gavel by the previous past twelve presidents in attendance. Moore remarked on a lengthy career from working as a concierge, to hotel sales and finally, real estate. Moore’s husband and past president Randy Moore when encouraging her to be president of the chamber, told her “You have been selling this island for 22 years with everything you have done.” Moore passionate about the next year said, “I love this island and it’s been really good to me. I understand Key West is hurting but if we stick together, we can come back.”



CHAMBER CHOWDER®

510 Greene Street ~ 1st Floor, Key West

www.keywestchamber.org

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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

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

Cara Higgins, Second Vice President
Horan & Higgins, LLP/294-4585

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

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

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

Jed Dodds, Appointee
The Studios of Key West/305-296-0458

Melissa Kendrick, Appointee
Mel Fisher Maritime Museum/305-294-2633

Lynne Tejada, Appointee
Keys Energy Services/305-295-1020

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

Dorothy Schmida
Administrative Assistant

Shay Penke
Office Assistant/Tourist Information Operator

Nicole Armstrong
Project Assistant

Gladys Clarks
Tourist Information Receptionist

Virginia A. Panico
Newsletter Editor

Cindy Jefferson
Newsletter Art Director

Hays Blinckmann
Newsletter Writer

Karrie Bond
Social Media Director

Key West Chamber Calendar of Events

February 2018

Business After Hours
Wednesday, February 21, 2018
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Sponsored by: First State Bank
Location: 1201 Simonton Street
Members Networking Event

General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Noon
Location: Doubletree Grand Key Resort
3990 S. Roosevelt Blvd.
Topic: Key West Chamber
Social Media for our Members
Speaker: Karrie Porter Bond,
Social Media Director
Please RSVP to the Chamber at
305-294-2587 or email:
info@keywestchamber.org

March 2018

Business After Hours
Wednesday, March 21, 2018
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Sponsored by: Keller Williams
Location: 333 Fleming Street
Members Networking Event

General Membership Meeting
Wednesday, March 28, 2018
Noon
Location: Key West Marriott Beachside
3841 N. Roosevelt Blvd.
Topic: Visitor Profile Study
Speakers: Stacey Mitchell,
Director of the Tourist Development Council
Kelli Fountain,
Director of Market Research of the TDC
Please RSVP to the Chamber at
305-294-2587 or email:
info@keywestchamber.org

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