

THE SANIBEL CHARTER IS SAFE

Every now and then the island administration appoints a committee – the Charter Review Committee – to review the island charter and recommend whether or not any of the language should be changed. The current Sanibel Charter Review Committee has been meeting since last December to discuss the language in the various articles. The committee has not recommended any changes so the administration of island affairs will continue as is. One wonders why changes would be considered for a city that clearly is doing so well. And the answer is it's the growth thing to do. Conditions change and it's good to keep up with that in governance. Just one more reason why Sanibel is such a great place to live.



SANIBEL PUBLIC LIBRARY

This little gem of a library has won awards and pleased its constituency year after year. It entered an eBook challenge last year and won. The challenge was called a Digital Dash contest and was sponsored by Overdrive, an eBook vendor. The library's members borrowed and read over 2,000 eBooks – more than any

other contestant. The library won \$500 in eBooks from Overdrive. The Sanibel Library has offered eBooks through Overdrive and Hoopla for years. Their eBook usage has increased 20% every year. It has averaged almost 6,000 a year over the past six years. They are free for anyone with a valid library card. If you would like more information call 239 472 2483 or go to www.sanibel.org.

A CHANGE IN THE LIQUOR SALES CODE

It appears, since the DUT's are down, we can now drink at theatre performances even when no on-premise food is for sale. The former code allowed liquor sales only with food sales as a prerequisite. *It's now probable that the jokes will be much funnier and the laughter much louder at Schein Hall and Herb Strauss Theatre.*

NO MORE NECK OR SHOULDER PAIN!

It has been known for some time that there is a close association between computer use and neck and shoulder pain. It is now reported that chronic neck pain due to the use of smart phones is another factor and is on the rise. According to an article in Applied Ergonomics the pain is due mostly to texting. When texting the tendency is to move the head forward and downward creating a gravitational demand that ends up hurting. *The solution is so simple – hold the phone at eye level and take frequent breaks. As you know, we try to help.*



YOU WON'T FIND A BETTER REALTOR ON SANIBEL

David Schuldenfrei has been engaged in island real estate since the causeway was completed. He has committed the time to earn the major professional designations – CRS (Certified Residential Specialist), GRI (Graduate Realtor Institute) and he is a broker. David is a consistent market leader, elected as president of the real estate association 3 times and voted Realtor of the Year 4 times. He is an important reason his agency – The VIP Realty Group – has been voted the best island real estate agency for the past six consecutive years. He has worked hard and successfully because he cares about what he does and how he does it. *Call him and see for yourself what a difference a Dave makes.*



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THE SANIBEL COCOON

Last year it was announced that Sanibel was the seventh safest city in the state of Florida. This March the Sanibel Police Department announced that federally reported crimes on the island had dropped 31% in 2017. Burglaries were down 58%, assaults were down 20%, DUI's were down 27%. **WHEW!!! It's OK to go out at night.**

ROBBIE'S RIDERS ARE RIDING HIGH

Robbie's Riders provide special adaptive bicycles and tricycles to children with disabilities. They work with the financial support of charities and the public and the pediatric support of the Golsano Children Hospital's pediatric physical therapist. Each child is evaluated and fitted for his or her own adaptive cycle. It is heartening to see how these cycles can change a child's life and see them go from walkers to crutches to independence. Robbie's Riders is a volunteer organization dedicated to bettering the lives of children. They provided 32 custom-made cycles to children in the past year. *If you would like to learn more go to www.savethekid.org*



THE SANIBEL HERITAGE TRAIL

This project was launched seven years ago and is designed to uphold and build on the island's values forged by its inspiring past. The trail is made up of 23 panels along the city's shared use paths. Each panel includes text and historic photos addressing many of the aspects of Sanibel's heritage. *It starts with the establishment of the Historical Preservation Committee and has individual panels featuring pioneer families, conservation, environment, hospitality and others.*

FISH IS THERE TO HELP

Friends-in-Service-Here (FISH) had a record year in 2017 helping the people in need on the island. The volunteers drove 34,000 miles delivering neighbors to medical appointments and supplying food and medical supplies. More than 760 families visited the Food Pantry. The year 2017 saw a 43% increase in the number of individuals served. *It is nice to know that a place with so much is happy to give so much.*

GOODYBE PLASTIC

There have been two recent actions taken that are aimed at reducing the amount of plastic dumped on the beaches and byways of the

island. The targets are plastic straws and single use plastic water bottles. There are 500 million plastic straws that are discarded daily in the country and untold numbers of plastic water bottles. Coastal Keepers of the Sanibel Sea School is the author of the Strawless on Sanibel initiative www.sanibelseakeepers.org. The “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge has stopped the sale of plastic single-use water bottles in its Nature Store replacing them with biodegradable and reusable water bottles. www.fws.gov/refuge/jn_ding_darling/. *Good news for the birds and fish!*

THE BOAT CLUB IS HONORED

Formerly known as the Sanibel-Captiva Sail and Power Squadron it is now the local chapter of America's Boating Club. They are one of ten recipients that received the national Distinguished Civic Service Award – one of the most prestigious awards a squadron or district can achieve. It recognizes community visibility and service. Our local chapter is actively involved in boating education and safety. It is open to both boat owners and non-owners. They meet every month and have cruises, pot-lucks and social events. *If interested call 239-985-9472.*



A REMINDER

We have, periodically, reminded our readers of the activities that are available at the **Center4Life**. It is centrally located at 2401 Library Way and offers games, fitness classes and serves as venue for various island events. You can learn more by calling 239-472-5743. **Games** – are Bridge, Mahjong, Canasta, Hearts, Rummikub, Hand&Foot and are scheduled, one per day, early afternoon every day. **Fitness** – Various fitness classes are scheduled every day in the morning from 8 AM to 11 AM. Both games and fitness classes have fees.

FREE SHELL MUSEUM MEMBERSHIPS

Families with students at the Sanibel School can now sign up for a membership to the Bailey-Matthews National Shell Museum at no cost to them. The cost of the membership is subsidized by the Sanibel Kiwanis Club and the Museum. Just go to the front desk at

the museum and sign up for membership and get access to the museum's wonderful exhibits and lectures. Another great reason to live on Sanibel. *For more information about the Museum go to www.ShellMuseum.org*

CHEERS FOR BIG ARTS

This island treasure is now enjoying 40 years of art contributions to these islands. It started as a bunch of artists and friends supporting each other. They formed a committee to help promote the performing arts, fine arts and creative writers on Sanibel. That grew into the Barrier Islands Group for the Arts which became Big Arts, the major cultural influence on the island and probably the region. They now have theatres and a gallery. They present music festivals, dance recitals, a literary festival and stage performances. Talents such as The Glenn Miller and Count Basie Orchestras, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, trumpeter Chuck Mangione, crooner Cab Calloway, authors James Dickey and Douglas Brinkley have been pleased to perform here. There have also been performances by young still-developing artists that Big Arts would like to help along. *A remarkable achievement for a little island of less than 10,000 people.*

NATIVE PLANT TOURS

The City of Sanibel, through its Vegetation Committee, offers free guided tours of the city hall grounds which are planted exclusively with native plants. The tours start at 10 AM at the bottom of the main staircase in city hall. The city encourages planting of vegetation that is indigenous to the area as it requires very little maintenance, no fertilizer and little or no supplemental water. If given full sun, well-drained soil and just enough rain-water the garden will smile and be pretty and you won't be overworked. Anyone facing a landscaping in their future can benefit from the tour. *If you'd like more information call 239-472-3700.*



The Schuldenfrei REPORT



Serving the Islands for more than 40 years

About real estate on Sanibel and Captiva • Going to 7,000 local property owners and 15,000 Northern visitors

THE MARKET STILL LOOKS GOOD!



David L. Schuldenfrei
Realtor®, CRS, GRI, SCIS
Selling the Islands for
more than 40 years.

The real estate market on these paradise islands continues to show their bright colors for the first quarter of the year 2018. Unit sales are on the plus side and the prospects for further growth are also on the plus side. Single family homes and condominiums are both showing healthy gains. Building lots are down considerably although that is not disturbing since there is so little land to sell. We have appended the details.

Here is a quick summary:

- Single family homes are up 11%. Higher priced homes fronting on the water were up 15% while homes without direct access to water were even with last year.
- Condominium sales were up 7%. The one and two bedroom units were even with last year and the higher priced three bedroom units were up 25%.
- Building lots were down after a strong finish last year.
- The average selling price reversed the recent declines and were up over 20%. This was due more to the sales profile than a true price increase – the water-front homes and larger three bedroom condominiums were a bigger share of sales this year than last year.
- The time it took to sell a property also reversed recent declines for homes. It took a bit longer to sell a home although this could be due to the profile. Condominiums continued to show a decline in selling time.

- New listings of all properties increased 5% over last year. They increased 11% for condominiums. That is really good news. Although it's only one report period it gives hope that maybe the inventory segment of the market can be stabilized and improved. It could impact the market pricing and selling time.

This is a nice picture of the island real estate market. It is likely due, in part at least, to a strong and growing economy and a record high equity market. But there is still some uncertainty.

How will the new tariff legislation affect the economy?

Will a mortgage rate increase cool the market?

Will foreign buyers find new outlets?

These are risks. But for the first quarter, at least, things look good. The real estate market, which came under the new tax legislation in the first quarter, didn't overreact, explode or die as some predicted. We will be watching to see if the new caps seem to have an impact. Some say it's going to keep potential sellers in their homes but we don't think so here. We don't prognosticate but we do think that our favorite islands are not subject to the same ground rules as the general market. The buyer of island property is less affected by the general market constraints. And they are motivated by a different set of values. Most important, they have David Schuldenfrei, the island pro. He has the most experience and the caring benefits that are acknowledged by his clients, customers and colleagues. *Call him and see for yourself.*



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– CURRENT LISTINGS –

Houses:

1743 Venus Drive – Direct deep water Gulf access 4 bed 3.5 bath canal home \$1,629,000

500 Kinzie Island Court – Spacious updated 3 bedroom 3 bath canal home \$1,599,000

585 Lake Murex Circle – 3 bedroom 2 bath near beach home on oversized lot \$699,000

Condos:

Pointe Santo E-23 – Unique 2 bed 2 bath + den Gulfview floorplan \$995,000

Lots:

5821 Pine Tree Drive – Double canal lot with dock in place priced to sell \$499,000

	SANIBEL 2017	2018	CAPTIVA 2017	2018	TOTAL 2017	2018	%CHNG
CLOSED SALES (Units)							
Houses	58	63	6	8	64	71	+11%
Condos	32	34	10	11	42	45	+7%
Lots	11	3	1	0	12	3	-75%
Total	101	100	17	19	118	119	+1%
PENDING SALES (Units)							
Houses	40	63	4	3	44	66	+50%
Condos	17	26	5	5	22	31	+41%
Lots	9	4	1	0	10	4	-60%
Total	66	93	10	8	76	101	+33%
HOUSES							
Gulf/Bay	5	9	2	3	7	12	+71%
Other A*	16	19	1	0	17	19	+12%
Other B**	37	35	3	5	40	40	0%
Total	58	63	6	8	64	71	+11%
CONDOS							
1 Bedroom	3	5	6	4	9	9	0%
2 Bedroom	23	21	2	5	25	26	+4%
3 Bedroom	6	8	2	2	8	10	+25%
Total	32	34	10	11	42	45	+7%
AVERAGE SALE PRICE (\$000s)							
Houses	1047	1263	2162	2462	1152	1399	+21%
Condos	732	766	432	911	661	801	+21%
AVERAGE DAYS ON MARKET							
Houses	138	160	116	169	136	161	+18%
Condos	219	118	196	214	218	136	-38%

*Bayou, Canal, Roosevelt Channel and Lake **Near beach, inland

Source: Market Activity Report and Monthly Statistic Report

VIP Realty Group, Inc.

SANIBEL'S ROMANTIC SPIRIT SOARS ON

It's thrilling to hear those heartwarming oaths of endearment, "I Do", on a sub-tropical island with the lullaby of soft breezes and the important people in your life surrounding you with love. Well, we have the place for you. Sundial Beach Resort & Spa has won two prestigious awards for their accomplishments in the wedding market. The Couples Choice Award from Wedding Wire and the Knot Best of Weddings. The Couples Choice recognizes excellence in quality, service, responsiveness and professionalism. The Knot Best of Weddings goes to the top 3% of professionals in the wedding industry as acknowledged by actual couples. *Sanibel will not just give you a spectacular vacation it can also give you a spectacular wedding.*



*Photo courtesy Sanibel-Captiva.org

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