



# THE CITIZEN

KEY WEST

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'Fins' Tua benched in loss; move not permanent — 1B



Tuesday

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## CAYO CONCH



"It just might be time to branch out and think about Christmas decorations!"

## TO OUR READERS

The Key West Citizen is proud to announce a significant upgrade to our keysnews.com website.

Keeping our readers aware and informed of all local news remains our highest priority. To that end, we have unveiled a cleaner, fresher, more user-friendly keysnews.com.

As a digital subscriber, you will be asked to log in to your digital account with the same login information you always use. Don't panic, this is a one-time process.

Because of the unprecedented nature of the COVID pandemic and the temporary reduction in print publication days to three — Wednesday, Friday and Saturday — digital access becomes even more valuable since our Tuesday and Thursday editions are 100% digital.

To access your digital version of each day's Key West Citizen, go to <http://www.keysnews.com> and click on Log In. Subscribers can also access breaking news on The Citizen's Facebook page. Finally, we are always available to serve you; call 305-292-7777.

## ON THE RADIO



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Capt. Dave Dipre talks water safety as visitors and snowbirds begin to fill the Florida Keys.

Also on today's show:

- Chad Huff, Florida Mosquito Control
- Trice Denny, NAS Key West Public Affairs Officer
- Sarah Fangman, National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent
- Teri Johnston, Key West Mayor
- Alicia Bentancourt, Monroe County Extension Office

NEWS: 7:30, 8:30 a.m., noon, 5 & 6 p.m. Evening Edition 5-5:30 p.m.

keysnews.com



# Citations raise mask awareness

## Code issues warnings to 7 businesses, 18 individuals

BY PRU SOWERS

Key West Citizen

There was good news and bad news about mask compliance in Key West this past weekend, the first weekend with a new, stricter mask-wearing restriction in effect.

While seven local businesses violated the new emergency mask order and 18 individuals received

mask citations, there appeared to be at least more awareness that a mask was required, according to Key West Mayor Teri Johnston and Assistant City Manager Patti McLaughlin.

"I walked it with code officers and police officers Saturday night. I rode Duval [Street]. You could tell the difference. It was a great improvement," McLaughlin said.

"She saw a marked difference

between this weekend and last weekend," Johnston said about what McLaughlin told her. "More people were wearing masks or had masks around their neck."

Johnston said she made her own daytime reconnaissance to the downtown area and saw more compliance.

"It feels different. It's turning," she said, but warning, "Are we there yet?"

We've got a ways to go."

The new ordinance requiring everyone over the age of 6 to wear a face covering while outdoors except for a few exceptions, including while riding in a private car or boat, was put into place on Thursday last week. The soaring COVID-19 case count in Monroe County — 320 new cases

See MASK, Page 8A

# ReMARCable trees arrive



Photos by CAROL TEDESCO/The Citizen

ABOVE: Volunteers carry Christmas trees onto the grounds of the MARC House on Monday, in preparation for the 36th annual Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens Christmas tree sale event. Beginning on Black Friday, Nov. 27, more than 1,500 fragrant pines from the Cardinal Tree Farm in West Jefferson, N.C., will be available for purchase, along with an abundance of holiday trappings including wreaths, poinsettias, boughs, garlands and other decorations. The lot will operate through Christmas Eve, or until all trees are sold. Masks and temperature checks will be required for all entering the Tree Lot and Plant Store.



Volunteers Jeremy Wilkerson, left, and Elisa Lev, right, tag Christmas trees on their way from the delivery truck to the grounds of the MARC House Christmas tree lot on Monday. The tree sale event is a fundraiser for the organizations adult day training program where clients learn about horticulture and retail skills. For information, contact Becki Balcer at [info@marckeywest.com](mailto:info@marckeywest.com), or the MARC Plant Store at 305-296-9556.

# Pinder, Bacheler to lead Islamorada council

BY JILL ZIMA BORSKI

Key West Citizen

Passing five resolutions including approval of Lower Matecumbe Key canal restoration work, and discussing items such as public events and the Florida Department of Transportation project of a pedestrian bridge at Founders Park, the five new Islamorada councilmembers got to work, incorporating a lot of dialogue and exchange of ideas.

At their first meeting Nov. 19, council chose Joseph "Buddy" Pinder as the village's new mayor. His family traces its roots back to Islamorada's founding families. The vice mayor is Peter Bacheler. The votes by councilmembers were unanimous and no other names were proffered for the mostly honorary positions. Judge Sharon Hamilton administered the oaths of office.

Village Clerk Kelly Toth explained the ready-to-go name plates for council. "Whenever there is an election for mayor and vice mayor, I print out a vice mayor and mayor insert for every councilmember. Then, I only need change two inserts when the decision is made. I bring two extra name plate holders with me. While I was recording the vote, the deputy clerk was changing the insert."

See COUNCIL, Page 8A

## FAMILIAR FACES:

An ongoing series that looks at the people who make up our island community

# Cancer, storm don't stop long-distance runner

BY THERESA JAVA

Key West Citizen

A year after undergoing a double mastectomy and radiation treatment to battle breast cancer, Sabrah Witkamp planned to celebrate her recovery by running a half marathon in Greece, but things didn't work out. So she decided to run on home turf.

When Witkamp's plans for Athens were foiled by the coronavirus pandemic, and after losing both her parents last month, it was sheer determination that compelled her to run a full marathon, from her home in Key Largo's Stillwright Point to Bud N' Mary's in Islamorada Saturday, Nov. 7, in the rain as Tropical Storm Eta approached.

"When I left at 4:30 in the morning, it was drizzling and really dark out

still. I left a note for my husband and son that I would see them down at the Islamorada Publix at 10 a.m., and then I left," Witkamp said. "The wind was blowing south, so it was almost pushing me and it was never super sunny all day."

Witkamp had a headlamp on and carried a little bit of money to stop for some water along the way as she ran the 26.22 miles in 6 hours and 29 minutes.

"I ran a 15-minute, 6-second mile. I'm not a fast runner by any stretch," Witkamp said. "I cramped up a bit and had to stop a few times. I think around 8:30 [a.m.], people started meeting me. I felt so accomplished. I was so grateful for their support, that they took the time out to help me check something off my bucket list."

See RUNNER, Page 8A



Sabrah Witkamp ran a full marathon, from her home in Key Largo's Stillwright Point to Bud N' Mary's in Islamorada Saturday, Nov. 7, in the rain.

Photo provided