

FLORIDA WEEKLY®

KEY WEST EDITION

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 6-12, 2018

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WOMENFEST 2018

INSIDE: Where to celebrate the ladies This week. **A10-11** ▶

BY LAURA RICHARDSON
Florida Weekly Correspondent

SEPTEMBER. JUST THE MERE MENTION of the month sends shivers down every hot-blooded American's spine. The advent of September means back-to-work, back-to-school, sharpened pencils and brand-new backpacks and briefcases — that is to say, summer vacation is over and it's back to the daily grind. And somehow, despite all of our best efforts to make the most of every summer day, there are still untaken boat trips and squandered three-day weekends that will be haunting our dreams until winter break. But there's still time! So how does a tropical island like Key West celebrate the change-

SEE WOMENFEST, A10 ▶

Rick Springfield Rocks Sunset Green Event Lawn

BY LAURA RICHARDSON
Florida Weekly Correspondent

If you told me you've never danced around in your bedroom belting “You know I wish that I had Jessie's girl” into your hairbrush, I would look you right in the face and call you a bold-faced liar. It's actually physically impossible to hear one of Rick Springfield's many hits — songs the like of “Jessie's Girl,” “Love Somebody,” “Affair of the Heart” and “Don't Talk to Strangers” — and not feel compelled to sing along. For those of you unashamed

of your bedroom vocal gymnastics, the crooning coveter of his best friend's girl will be performing on Sunday, Sept. 9 at the Sunset Green Event Lawn, the newest addition to Key West's growing lineup of first-rate concert venues, and the more the merrier when it comes to singalongs en masse.

Rick is also touring his newest album, **SEE ROCKS, A14** ▶

RENATA HEARN / COURTESY PHOTO

Rick Springfield will be performing Sept. 9 at the Sunset Green Event Lawn.



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KEY WEST EDITION

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OFF OFF DUVAL

The most traveled and visible street in Key West is only the beginning, the surface, of what the town has to offer. Ask the locals about their favorite spots, stroll through quiet neighborhoods or down alleyways off Duval and you'll begin to dive deeper into the quieter, more diverse and less readily apparent offerings. Here are eight spots you might not see at first glance.

Better than Sex, 926 Simonton St. 305-296-8102; www.betterthanssexkeywest.com. A great place for couples. Swing by this dessert-only, adults-only restaurant late in the evening. Indulge your senses with chocolate dipped wine glasses and cheeky, homemade desserts and beverages such as an Ephemere Apple Spiced Ale in a tall beer glass with a signature caramel rim-job. Lick it good.

Mellow Café and Gastro Pub, 1605 Roosevelt Blvd. 305-745-3874; www.mellowventureskeywest.com. Near the water in Old Town Key West, the café is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and offers unique island fare with a mellow atmosphere to match. The menu items are crafted with fresh, locally sourced ingredients and include a fresh catch, Havana roasted pork, romaine leaf plates and caramelized banana chocolate tacos. Drink options include a large selection of craft beers, 11 rotating tap beers, wine, house-made sangria, and champagne cocktails. They have a great happy hour daily from 5-7 p.m., and delivery is available.

Cuban Coffee Queen, 284 Marga-



COURTESY PHOTO

The Mellow Café and Gastro Pub is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner.

ret St. 305-292-4747; www.cuban-coffeequeen.com. The strong Cuban coffee at this hole in the wall is also rich in Key West heritage. A café con leche paired with a classic Cuban sandwich or some Havana rice and beans will keep you going long into a Key West night.

Firefly, 223 Petronia St. 305-849-0104; www.fireflykeywest.com. Being that Key West is home to the southernmost point of the continental United States, it's fitting that the island is home to a very southern-inspired restaurant. Firefly's plantation-style look and Southern-inspired cuisine give it the most down-home feel of any culinary experience on the island. The shrimp and grits, fried chicken and bacon-wrapped meatloaf are a few fan favorites.

Key West Island Bookstore, 513 Fleming St. www.Keywestisland-

books.com; 305-294-2904. This decades-old boutique bookstore offers a surprisingly varied wealth of current and used titles, from bestsellers to rare titles. Often open late, it's an inviting place to browse the crowded stacks.

La Rubia Fine Hats, 510 Fleming St. 305-296-6059; www.larubiakeywest.com. This is the Florida Keys' only importer of authentic Panama hats. The owners developed the boutique to carry on the centuries-old tradition of hand weaving hats (which come from Ecuador and not Panama, by the way). There are styles for men and women in a wide array of colors and weaves. There's also a nice selection of wearable fair trade crafts such as jewelry, ikat wraps and shigra bags.

Little Pearl, 632 Olivia St. 305-204-4762; www.littlepearlkeywest.com. Nestled in the heart of Old Town Key West and away from the bustling downtown streets sits this excellent spot for fresh local catch and innovative cuisine with a tropical twist. It's new and it's hot. Reservations are required.

Nancy Forrester's Secret Garden, 518 Elizabeth St. 305-294-0015; www.nancyforrester.com. Ms. Forrester has a secret, and it's not her garden, per se: It's what she keeps there. The longtime environmentalist has been caring for orphaned parrots for more than 30 years. She invites the public to meet them, take pictures, hold them and listen as she educates the community about her fine feathered friends. ■

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This blonde ale brewed with local honey is good as it gets. A nice clean ale with a subtle honey-like sweetness that lingers just long enough. Very drinkable and smooth.

ISLAND LIFE AMERICAN LAGER

Standard American Lagers are the "regular" strength versions of the light American lagers. The style guidelines for this beer are almost identical as those for the light versions.

LAZY WAY IPA AMERICAN IPA

A medium-bodied, lightly toasted IPA with a malt character and a balanced bitterness. The piney hop notes carry through to the flavor. Finishes crisp and fairly dry.

*Drank
in the Keys!*



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KEY WEST

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MAR BAR
TAVERNIER

-
MRS. MAC'S KITCHEN
KEY LARGO

MAP IT OUT



Getting around Key West

1. Southernmost Point

The corner of South and Whitehead streets
www.southernmostpointwebcam.com
 The city of Key West erected this now famous concrete buoy in 1983 to denote the southernmost point in the continental United States.

2. Conch Tour Train

303 Front St.
 305-294-5161 or 888-916-8687
www.conchtourtrain.com
 The Conch Train has been winding its way through the streets of Key West since 1958.

3. Sloppy Joe's

201 Duval St.
 305-294-5717
www.sloppyjoes.com
 The historic bar has been a Key West tradition since it opened in 1933. Its most famous patrons were Ernest Hemmingway and the rum runner Habana Joe.

4. Mallory Square Sunset Celebration

1 Whitehead St.
 786-565-7448
www.sunsetcelebration.org
 This nightly festival begins at the water's edge an hour or two before sunset and includes street performers, local

artisans, food carts, palmists and psychics.

5. Truman Little White House

111 Front St.
www.trumanlittlewhitehouse.com
 The Little White House adds a presidential luster to the Conch Republic. Originally built for Naval officers in 1890 and used as a command headquarters in three wars, the Little White House later served as lodging for President Harry S. Truman's winter retreats from 1946 to 1952.

6. The Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum

907 Whitehead St.
 305-294-1136
www.hemingwayhome.com
 Take the tour and say hello to one of the 40-50 six-toed cats, all descendants of Hemingway's cat, Snowball.

7. The Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory

1316 Duval St.
 305-296-2988 or 800-839-4647
www.keywestbutterfly.com
 More than 50 butterfly species from around the world and 20 exotic bird species coexist in this climate-controlled, glass-enclosed habitat that includes waterfalls, flowering plants and trees.

8. Mel Fisher Maritime Museum

200 Greene St.
 305-294-2633
www.melfisher.org
 Exhibits include treasures from the Spanish galleons of 1622 discovered by Mel Fisher and his crew.

9. Mile Marker 0 Sign

490 Whitehead St. (corner of Fleming Street)
 U.S. 1 begins here in Key West and continues 2,369 miles north up the East Coast before ending in Fort Kent, Me. Stop here to commemorate your visit to Key West with a photo next to the iconic Mile Marker 0 sign.

10. Key West Express Ferry Terminal

100 Grinnell St.
 239-463-5733
www.Keywestexpress.net
 Traveling via the Express is truly the best way to get between Key West, Fort Myers Beach or Marco Island. You'll enjoy air-conditioned interiors, exterior sun decks, couches, tables and even reclining airline-style seating. There's a full-service galley, full-service bar and flat-screen TVs with satellite television.

11. Audubon House and Garden

205 Whitehead St.
 305-294-2116
www.Audubonhouse.com
 Original lithographs by John James Audubon are on display in this former home of shipwreck salvager Capt. John Geiger.

12. Key West City Cemetery

Bordered by Angela, Frances and Olivia streets and Windsor Lane
 305-292-6718
www.Friendsofthekeywestcemetery.com
 Stop by the sexton's office near the entrance at Passover Lane and Windsor Lane for a map containing a free walking tour.

13. Fort Zachary Taylor State Park and Beach

At the ocean end of Southard Street and bordering the Naval Reservation.
 305-295-0037
www.Fortzacharytaylor.com
 "Fort Zach" is known to locals and tourists alike as one of Key West's best beaches. In addition to the expansive beach, the 54-acre park has nature trails, bike paths, picnic tables and grills and Historic Fort Zachary Taylor. Enjoy the beautiful view of the Atlantic Ocean and the Key West Shipping Channel. ■

End of SUMMER

Escape!



GET AWAY FROM ONLY **\$125** ROUND TRIP!*

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NOT-TO-MISS ATTRACTIONS

Audubon House & Tropical Gardens

205 Whitehead St.
305-294-2116 or 877-294-2470
www.audubonhouse.com
Original lithographs of John James Audubon's drawings are on display at this former home of shipwreck salvager Capt. John Geiger.

CityView Trolley

Tours of Key West
1045 Whitehead St.
305-294-0644
www.cityviewtrolleys.com
These open-air trolleys offer hop-on-and-off tours that incorporate narration of the history of Key West.

Conch Tour Train

303 Front St.
305-294-5161 or 888-916-8687
www.conchtourtrain.com
The Conch Train has been winding its way through the streets of Key West since 1958.

Custom House

281 Front St.
305-295-6616
www.kwahs.org
The Custom House was originally home to Key West's customs office, postal service and district courts.

The Ernest Hemingway Home & Museum

907 Whitehead St.
305-294-1136
www.hemingwayhome.com
Take the tour and say hello to one of the 40-50 six-toed cats, all descendants of Hemingway's cat, Snowball. Florida Keys

Eco-Discovery Center

35 E. Quay Road
305-292-0311 or 305-809-4750
www.Floridakeys.noaa.gov/eco_discovery.html
Sponsored and operated in part by the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and NOAA.

Fort East Martello Museum

3501 S. Roosevelt Blvd.
305-296-3913
www.kwahs.com
This Civil War fort was built in the late 1800s and is now home to a sculpture garden and museum with a collection of relics from the Civil War.

Ghost Tours and Ghost Hunts

301 Whitehead and 1102 Duval Street
305-395-1435
www.hauntedkeywest.com
Discover the haunted history of one of the most haunted cities in the United States.

Harry S. Truman

Little White House
111 Front St.
305-294-9911
www.trumanlittlewhitehouse.com
This historic building famously served as the winter White House for President Harry S. Truman in 1946.

Key West AIDS Memorial

Foot of White Street and Atlantic Boulevard
www.keywestaids.org
At the entrance to the White Street pier, the Key West AIDS Memorial commemorates Florida Keys-friendly people who died from AIDS-related causes.

Key West Aquarium

1 Whitehead St., at Mallory Square,
800-544-5927
www.keywestaquarium.com
The aquarium is home to alligators, jellyfish, sharks and many other marine animals. Guided tours and feeding presentations are available.



The historic Key West Lighthouse and Museum located on Whitehead Street.

The Key West Butterfly & Nature Conservatory

1316 Duval St.
305-296-2988 or 800-839-4647
www.keywestbutterfly.com
More than 50 butterfly species from around the world and 20 exotic bird species coexist in this climate-controlled, glass-enclosed habitat that includes waterfalls, flowering plants and trees.

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Bordered by Angela, Frances, Olivia streets and Windsor Lane
305-292-6718
friendsofthekeywestcemetery.com
Stop at the sexton's office near the entrance at Passover Lane and Windsor Lane for a map containing a free walking tour from the Historic Florida Keys Foundation.

Key West Historical Memorial Sculpture Garden

401 Wall St. (at Mallory Square)
305-294-4142
www.keywestsculpturegarden.org
This original sculpture garden, at the site of the original shoreline in Mallory Square, features 36 bronze busts of the most influential men and women from Key West's past.

Key West Lighthouse & Keeper's Quarters Museum

938 Whitehead St.
305-294-0012
www.kwahs.com
The lighthouse opened in 1848, was decommissioned by the Coast Guard in 1969, and now stands as a museum dedicated to Key West's maritime heritage.

Key West Shipwreck Museum

1 Whitehead St.
305-292-8990
www.keywestshipwreck.com
At the Shipwreck Museum, you can walk up the 65-foot lookout tower for a 365-degree view of Key West and its harbor.

Key West Theater

512 Eaton St.
www.thekeywesttheater.com
The Key West Theater is a newly renovated performing arts center that presents original plays, musicals, films and concerts.

Key West Tropical Forest & Botanical Garden

5210 College Road, Stock Island
305-296-1504
www.keywestbotanicalgarden.org
This natural conservation habitat is home to many endangered flora and fauna as well as two of the last remaining freshwater ponds in the Keys.

Key West Wildlife Center

1801 White St.
305-292-1008
The Key West Wildlife Center is in the 8-acre Sonny McCoy Indigenous Park and includes a nature walk with a freshwater pond and two aviaries.

Mallory Square

Sunset Celebration
1 Whitehead St.
786-565-7448
www.sunsetcelebration.org
This nightly festival begins at the water's edge about an hour or two before sunset and includes street performers, local artisans, food carts, palmists and psychics.

Mel Fisher Maritime Museum

200 Greene St.
305-294-2633
www.melfisher.org
Exhibits include treasures from the Spanish galleons of 1622 discovered by Mel Fisher and his crew.

Mile Marker 0 Sign

490 Whitehead St., corner of Fleming Street
U.S. 1 begins here in Key West, continues 2,369 miles north up the East Coast and ends in Fort Kent, Me. Stop here to commemorate your visit.

Old Town Trolley

Tours of Key West
1 Whitehead St.
305-296-6688 or 888-910-8687
www.historictours.com/keywest
Historic Tours has been running sight-seeing trolleys in Key West for more than 25 years.

Red Barn Theatre

319 Duval St.
305-296-9911
www.redbarntheatre.com
The Red Barn Theatre has been producing plays and musicals in Key West for more than 35 years.

Ripley's Believe It or Not!

108 Duval St.
305-293-9939
www.ripleys.com/keywest
Ripley's contains more than 550 odd, bizarre and unusual exhibits housed in a historical building.

San Carlos Institute

516 Duval St.
305-294-3887
www.instituteosancarlos.org
This historic landmark serves as a Cuban museum, library, art gallery and theater.

The Southernmost Point

The Southernmost Point
Corner of Whitehead and South streets
This colorful anchored concrete buoy was erected in 1983 to commemorate Key West as the southernmost point of the continental United States.

The Studios of Key West

533 Eaton St.
305-296-0458
www.tskw.org
The studios of Key West is a local non-profit dedicated to nurturing artists and the artistic process.

Tennessee Williams Key West Exhibit

513 Truman Ave.
305-842-1666
www.twkw.org
Learn about Tennessee Williams' literary accomplishments and life in Key West.

Tennessee Williams Theatre

5901 College Road, Stock Island
305-296-1520 or 305 295-7676 (tickets)
www.tennesseewilliamstheatre.com
The Tennessee Williams Theatre presents national tours, concerts and local and national cabarets.

The Tropic Cinema

416 Eaton St.
877-761-FILM (3456)
www.tropiccinema.com
The Tropic Cinema is a nonprofit movie theater that shows independent films and documentaries in addition to hosting a wide variety of community cultural events.

U.S. Coast Guard Cutter Ingham Maritime Museum and National Historic Landmark

0 Southard St.
305-292-5072
www.uscgcingham.org
With more than 50 years of service around the world, the USCGC Ingham offers a portrait of Coast Guard history from 1936 to 1988. It is the only Coast Guard cutter afloat today to receive two Presidential Unit Citations for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy.

Waterfront Playhouse

310 Wall St.
305-294-5015
www.waterfrontplayhouse.org
The nonprofit Waterfront Playhouse produces plays and musicals in its 150-seat theater, located right next to Mallory Square.

West Martello Tower

1100 Atlantic Blvd.
305-294-3210
www.keywestgardenclub.com
The West Martello Tower is a former Civil War-era fortification that is now home to the Key West Garden Club and the Joe Allen Garden Center. ■

Its namesake never saw it, but Audubon House still worth a look

BY MAXINE LOPEZ-KEOUGH
Florida Weekly Correspondent

It's midway through the tour of Key West's stunningly pretty Audubon House and Tropical Gardens that the truth comes out: John James Audubon — famed naturalist painter, whose lifelike paintings of bird portraits line the walls of the museum — never actually lived in the Audubon House. But don't let this spoiler keep you from visiting; indeed, a visit to the Audubon House offers so much beauty, charm and historical interest, you'll be left feeling only that it was Audubon's loss that he was never able to inhabit such a magical place.

Amassing a fortune from treasure gathered from the ruins of shipwrecks might seem like a job description for a storybook pirate, but in 19th-century Key West, it was a lucrative and respectable way to make a living. The busy passage between the Eastern Seaboard and the Gulf Coast was a dangerous place for ships to sail, and each year saw many boats wrecked on offshore reefs during the frequent storms that pummeled the area.

"Finders keepers" might not mean much today, but for those in the wrecking industry of Key West, it was law. When a ship ran aground, the first man to reach the boat became the "wreck master," who — after saving the crew and passengers, if possible — directed the salvaging of the ship and its cargo. Back on land, the recovered haul was auctioned off, with the wreck master taking the largest cut of the profits. It was a dangerous, highly competitive and regulated industry, the spoils of which helped solidify Key West as the richest city in the country by the mid-1800s.

For Capt. John Huling Geiger, a maritime pilot whose shipwrecking success had made him one of the richest men in the Florida Keys, such wealth demanded a home of appropriate grandeur. In 1846, after the rest of the island was mostly flattened in a hurricane, Capt. Geiger chose a prominent lot on which to build his family's new home — a lavish American Classic Revival mansion of tropical wood at the intersection of Green and Whitehead streets, with an unobstructed view of the ocean (and any new potential shipwrecks). It was a grand, busy estate encompassing 6 acres, home to Capt. Geiger, his wife, his children, and a number of slaves who, in addition to domestic chores, were made to assist in the wrecking business that fueled Geiger's wealth.

For over a century, Capt. Geiger's home remained in the family's possession, until Capt. Geiger's great-grandson, Capt. William Bradford Smith, took up residence. Smith, a Key West Harbor pilot, lived in hermit-like seclusion without indoor plumbing, electricity or cooking facilities, and by the time of his death in 1956, the house had fallen into ruin.

Slated for demolition, it was saved in 1958 by Mitchell and Frances Wolfson, who were compelled to purchase the property after hearing it was destined to become a gas station. The Wolfsons had heard the same folklore that speculated James Audubon might have conceived many of his bird portraits during a visit to the gardens of Dr. Benjamin Strobel, whose home was located on the property



COURTESY PHOTO

Audubon work. The three-story home is filled with precious antiques and, of course, with Audubon's work, as well as information about the artist's life and career. An acre of lush tropical gardens surrounds the home, featuring hundreds of orchids, a koi pond and a replica of the property's original 1850s outdoor kitchen building.

Visitors are encouraged to wind their way through the quiet brick pathways, taking note of the rare tropical plants (carefully labeled for those without extensive botanical knowledge) and view the medicinal and herb garden, a staple of 19th-century upscale homes. Though the museum and its grounds are located in the bustling downtown district, once inside the protective foliage of the grounds, the sights and sounds of the outside world are muffled. Visitors are transported back in time to an island without tour buses or T-shirt shops, where fame and fortune awaited any man brave enough to watch the sea for a wrecked ship, and beat his fellow wreckers to the prize. ■

where the Geiger family mansion would later be constructed.

The Wolfsons began a two-year process of painstaking renovation, the first historical renovation of its kind in Key West, at the end of which marked the rechristening of the Geiger home as the Audubon House Museum. They filled the house with antiques, including many items from the Geiger family, as well as numerous original hand-colored lithographs by Audubon.

Today, Key West is known for having one of the most colorful and well-protected historical districts in the United States, with the highest density of historic frame buildings in the nation. Yet few who visit know that it was the Wolfsons' renovation of the Audubon House that began this now-priceless movement to protect and preserve the island's oldest architecture.

To this day, the property is cared for through the Mitchell Wolfson Trust, and remains a reputable dealer of original

in the know

The Audubon House

- >> **Location:** 205 Whitehead St.
- >> **Hours:** 9:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
- >> **Tickets:** The museum offers discounted museum tickets to locals.
- >> **Contact:** For more information, call 305 294-2116 or visit www.audubonhouse.com.

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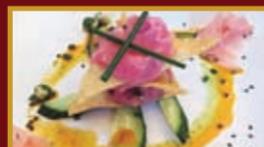
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KEY WEST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SPECIAL EVENTS

The Soul Man-Robert Albury

Sept. 6, 6:30 p.m.
Sunset Pier
Zero Duval St.

Jerrod Isaman and Friends Live

Sept. 6, 10 p.m.
Mary Ellen's
420 Appelrouth Lane
www.maryellensbar.com

Live Music with Dave Bootle

Sept. 7, 9 p.m.
Mangoes
700 Duval St.
www.mangoeskeywest.com

Summerish Fun Movie Series: "Finding Nemo"

Sept. 9, noon.
The Key West Theater
512 Eaton St.
www.thekeywesttheater.com



COURTESY PHOTO

The Key West Art & Historical Society's Permanent Collection includes more than 25,000 objects spanning from postcards, photographs, paintings, artifacts, textiles, ordnance and archives highlighting the people, places and events which have shaped the Florida Keys. Items are available through the generous support of donors. See it at Key West Art and Historical Society Custom House, 281 Front St., www.Kwahs.org.

COMEDY

Comedy Open Mic Night

Mondays, 9 p.m.
Mary Ellen's Bar and Restaurant
420 Appelrouth Lane

Comedy Key West

Thursdays and Fridays, 7:30 to 10 p.m.
The Blue Room
1128 Simonton St.
Tickets available at
www.comedykeywest.com

MUSIC

Green Parrot Bar

601 Whitehead St.
Live Music Nightly
Check the schedule at
www.greenparrot.com

Irish Kevin's

211 Duval St.
Live Music Nightly
Check the schedule at

www.irishkevins.com

Mary Ellen's

420 Appelrouth Lane
Open Mic with Comedy Key West,
Mondays, 9 p.m.

Drunken Spelling Bee, First Monday
of each month, 9 p.m.

Trivia, Tuesday Nights, 6:30 p.m.

SIN Night (Service Industry Night),
Wednesdays 8 p.m. to 4 a.m.

Mellow Café and Gastropub

Bike Nights-Live Music

Ride your bike and get half off
your meal
Thursdays, 6-10 p.m.
1605 North Roosevelt Blvd.
www.mellowkw.com

Smoking Tuna

4 Charles St.
Live Music Nightly
Check the schedule at
www.smokingtunasaloon.com

Sloppy Joes

201 Duval St.
Live Music Nightly
Check the schedule at
www.sloppyjoes.com

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs by Jorge de la Torriente

Ongoing
De La Gallery
419 Duval St.
www.delagallery.com
305-395-2210

Homegrown

Photographs by Michael Marrero
Ongoing
Gallery on Greene
606 Greene St.
www.galleryongreene.com

CINEMA

Tropic Cinema

416 Eaton St.
www.tropiccinema.com
Check the website for ongoing films

RAMS HEAD PRESENTS



RICK SPRINGFIELD
SEPTEMBER 9 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN



MICHAEL FRANTI
OCTOBER 22 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN



LYLE LOVETT & ROBERT EARL KEEN
NOVEMBER 3 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN



THE AVETT BROTHERS
NOVEMBER 16+17 AT KEY WEST AMPHITHEATER



JJ GREY & MOFRO
DECEMBER 29 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN



AIR SUPPLY
JANUARY 25 AT SUNSET GREEN EVENT LAWN

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KEY WEST CALENDAR OF EVENTS

LGBT

Aqua Nightclub

711 Duval St.
Aqua Idol for Fantasy Fest King and Queen
 Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m.
Drag Shows
 Nightly, 7 and 9 p.m.
Karaoke
 Monday through Thursday, 11 p.m.
 www.Aquakeywest.com

Bobby's Monkey Bar

900 Simonton St.
 Karaoke-Nightly, 9:30 p.m.
 Bobby's Monkey Bar on Facebook

Bourbon St. Pub

724 Duval St.
Just Jeff (Moss), Thursdays through Sundays, 8 to 10 p.m.
Ronnie, Mondays through Wednesdays, 3 to 8 p.m.
The Men of Bourbon, Nightly
 www.BourbonSt.pub.com

801 Bourbon Bar

801 Duval St.
Drag Shows, Nightly, 9 and 11 p.m.
Happy Hour Drag, 5 p.m. Saturdays
Drag Karaoke, 4 p.m. Sundays
Messy Mondays with Mulysa, 1 a.m. Mondays
Fierce and Fabulous/Dragalicious, 1 a.m. Wednesdays
 www.801bourbon.com

Sidebar at Aqua

504 Angela St.
Kristen McNamara, Wednesdays and Saturdays, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m.
 www.sidebarkeywest.com

La Te Da

1125 Duval St.
Christopher Peterson, Sept. 6, 8 and 13, 9 p.m.
3Sum, Sept. 6, 7, 8 and 9, 8:30 p.m.
Ronnie Lively, Sept. 10, 8:30
The Fabulous Spectrelles, Sept. 11 and 12, 8:30 p.m.
Tea Dance, Sundays 4 to 6:30 p.m.
 www.Lateda.com

AROUND KEY WEST

Local Farm Stand

Wednesdays, 5 to 7 p.m.
 Mellow Café and Gastropub
 1605 North Roosevelt Blvd.

Ghost Tours and Ghost Hunts

Nightly
 301 Whitehead St. and 1102 Duval St.
 305-395-1435
 www.hauntedkeywest.com ■



■ Don't miss this performance of Key West's legendary **Soul Man, Robert Albury**, Sept. 6, 6:30 p.m., Sunset Pier, Zero Duval St.



9.9



9.7
 Sing
 Dance
 Laugh

■ Live music with **Dave Bootle**. Come out and catch this multi-talented Key West favorite. Sept. 7, 9 p.m., Mangoes, 700 Duval St.
 — www.mangoeskeywest.com

■ **Jerrod Isaman and Friends Live**, Sept. 6, 10 p.m., Mary Ellen's, 420 Appelrouth Lane
 — www.maryellensbar.com

9.6



9.9

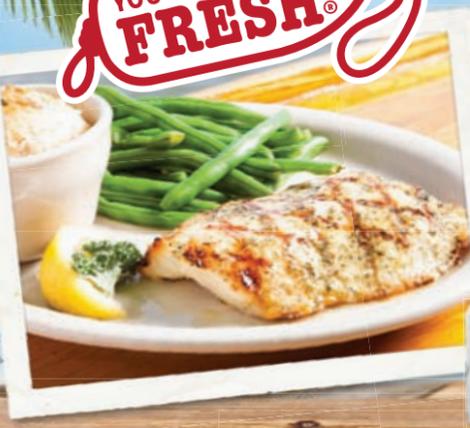
■ Bring the whole family to the **Summerish Fun Movie Series: "Finding Nemo"**, Sept. 9, noon, The Key West Theater, 512 Eaton St.
 — www.thekeywesttheater.com



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WOMENFEST

From page 1

ing of the seasons when the seasons don't actually change all that much? The ultimate end-of-summer girls' weekend: Key West WomenFest, which runs from Sep. 5 - 9.

For decades, Key West's WomenFest weekend has drawn thousands of lesbians and their friends to what is arguably the premier gay vacation destination in the country (sorry, Provincetown, but the weather up north is already a little too nippy for our taste). WomenFest weekend has a simple goal: to serve as a gathering for women who want to mix, mingle, feel comfortable being themselves, soak up some rays and then party their faces off.

Since its debut more than 20 years ago, Key West WomenFest has grown to become a worldwide standard for lesbian gatherings. Couples, singles and families arrive in the southernmost town each year to enjoy the famously gay-friendly atmosphere that the Key West Business Guild — the nation's first ever gay-oriented chamber of commerce — works tirelessly to maintain. With Lilith Fair a mere memory (I'm still grieving the lack of Alanis in my life) and Palm Springs' Dinah Shore Weekend already come and gone, the streets of Key West (complete with LGBTQ-themed rainbow sidewalks) are guaranteed to be overrun with women looking to celebrate in all their Sapphic glory against the lushly tropical backdrop of our remarkable island paradise.

While this year's schedule of events ranges from raucous pool parties to intimate art openings, much of the draw of WomenFest is the simple promise of lazy days spent poolside, or else strolling through the sun-dappled historic neighborhoods of Key West with the comfort of knowing you can hold your girlfriend's hand without some psychopath yelling hateful slurs from across the street. Key West is a city where gay couples don't just vacation; they settle down, procreate and then send their children to the local Montessori school.

While many arriving for WomenFest will invariably take advantage of Key West's picturesque state park, its wide-ranging culinary scene, unique museums and world-famous watering holes, it's the official WomenFest events that keep the ladies coming back year after year. This year's schedule has been curated to appeal to a wide audience, with both family-friendly events and those decidedly adult in nature. We've got the full schedule, so read on to learn what's happening when and plan your ideal itinerary for the weekend.

This year's WomenFest party headquarters is Key West's quintessential drag bar, Aqua Nightclub (711 Duval St.), whose "Reality is a Drag" shows and open-air Back Bar make it the perfect spot to take in a show or enjoy cocktails under the stars. WomenFest kicked off on Wednesday Sept. 5 with a Welcome Party at Sidebar (504 Angela St.), Aqua Nightclub's adjunct little sister, at 7 p.m.

If you didn't party hard enough Wednesday night, fear not. Thursday, Sept. 6, starts with the Get Lei'd Party from noon until 3 p.m. at The Green Room (501 Greene St.) and Tiki House (430 Greene St.). For three whole hours, you can get totally "lei'd" at the Green Room and Tiki House while winning additional prizes just for drinking. A mere \$20 allows you entry into this fantastic event that starts at The Green Room, where you will receive a free drinking cup, two free drinks, two raffle tickets and some party swag. After that, it is your mission to bounce between The Green Room and Tiki House and collect an equal number of leis from

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each bar — one lei for every alternating drink. Each drink you buy at a discounted price will get you another lei and a raffle ticket for some truly epic prizes. At the end of the party, the lady that got lei'd the most (i.e. the chica with the most faux flower garlands around her neck) wins. Bonus: your first drink at

both The Green Room and Tiki House are on the house.

After you've nabbed your tropical trophy, hitch a ride out to Havana Cabana Hotel (3420 N. Roosevelt Blvd.) for the Girls Just Wanna Have Rum Pool Party. From 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., listen to the all-female Latin band Las Divas with an

ice-cold mojito by the gorgeous pool (which honestly looks more like a Balinese oasis than a hotel watering hole). When you've had your fill of pool time (is that even a thing?), grab a solid meal because Sidebar's Glow Party kicks off at 9 p.m. and you'll want all the energy you can muster to dance and glow all night long. After the last of your glow sticks have died, hop down the street to Pandora's Party at Viva Saloon (903 Duval St.) where DJ Rude Girl will be spinning tunes from 10 p.m. until you just can't dance anymore.

We suggest you spend the next morning recharging your batteries, because Friday, Sept. 7 is chock full of great events and is going to require some stamina. If you're feeling bright-eyed and bushy tailed (and miraculously unhangover from Thursday's late-night antics), hit one of the IWFFA Flag Football Clinics held from 10 a.m. to noon at Bayview Park and get in some practice for Saturday morning's "friendly" game. After you sweat a little, soak your tired muscles in the pool at Alexander's Guesthouse (1118 Fleming St.) during BAM and KAT's R U Wet Pool Party with DJ Rude Girl from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. Later that evening, enjoy a sunset dinner cruise hosted on one of Sunset Watersports' deluxe catamarans, with hors d'oeuvres, top-shelf drinks and a pulse-pounding dance party to round out the trip. At night, flit back and forth between a mix of ladies' night lounge specials and a "Stop Light" dance party



Join Spikey Van Dykey at 1 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 8, for Fury Water Adventures' three-hour Reef & Ritas tour. COURTESY PHOTO



COURTESY PHOTO

WomenFest kicked off on Wednesday Sept. 5 with a Welcome Party at Sidebar (504 Angela St.), Aqua Nightclub's adjunct little sister.

at Sidebar. The party starts at 9 p.m., when legendary drag queen Spikey Van Dykey and DJ Citizen Jane step on stage and behind the decks to deliver their patented brands of hilarious drag and impossible-to-resist beat-murdering music. Your feet (and laugh muscles) have been warned.

You can party all the way into the next morning, then sweat out the toxins with a friendly game of IWFFA Flag Football in Bayview Park at 10 a.m., Saturday, Sept. 8. If you've overslept, you can still hit the WomenFest Pool

Party at noon at the typically male-only Bourbon St. Pub (724 Duval St.). There will be games and prizes, and in true Key West spirit, clothing is completely optional. If you haven't gotten enough sun, join Spikey Van Dykey at 1 p.m. for Fury Water Adventures' three-hour Reef & Ritas tour. No, this is not the S.S. Minnow redux; \$47.95 plus tax gets you three uninterrupted hours of sun, surf and all the margaritas your tequila-loving tummy can handle. Once you've snorkeled yourself silly, nap off that tequila buzz and head back downtown

to the White Party at Aqua Nightclub. DJ Citizen Jane starts spinning at 11 p.m.

Are you one of those ladies who wakes up early on vacation all bright-eyed and bushy-tailed (you lucky duck)? Roll out of bed and head to Jazz Brunch on Sunday Sept. 9 at the Hard Rock Café (313 Duval St.) from 10 a.m. until noon. If you're like the rest of us (which means you need a long nap, a heavy meal and a bloody Mary to make you feel whole again), the BackBar at Aqua is hosting Hot Dog Church, a weekly ladies' tradition here in Key West. Hot dogs and



COURTESY PHOTO

Enjoy the traditional Sunday Tea Dance at Key West's gay mainstay, La Te Da (1125 Duval St.), in the heart of Duval St.

hamburgers will be in ample supply starting at 1 p.m. A hot dog with a little hair of the dog? Sounds like a marriage made in hangover heaven.

If sausage isn't exactly your cup of pre-Tea Dance tea (see what we did there?), hit the Tatas & Tequila Pre-Tea Mixer from 1 to 4 p.m. at The Rumbar/Speakeasy Inn (1115 Duval St.). From there, it's a short skip to the traditional Sunday Tea Dance at Key West's gay mainstay, La Te Da (1125 Duval St.), in the heart of Duval St. And if you've made it to the end of the day and you're still looking for more (we seriously envy your stamina), cap off your weekend with the "Victoria's Dirty Little Secret" Lingerie Tea Dance After Party at Mangoes beginning at 7 p.m.

With such a wide variety of activities all weekend long, you'll be forgiven if you return home on Monday a little worse for the wear. But the exhaustion is well worth the price of admission to Key West WomenFest.

For more information, ticket prices and contacts, visit www.womenfest.com. ■

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www.aquakeywest.com
- Bagatelle**
115 Duval St.
4-6 p.m.
Half-price drinks
\$5 appetizers
www.Bagatellekeywest.com
- Blackfin**
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www.Bluemacawkeywest.com
- Boathouse Bar and Grill**
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www.Boathousebarandgrill.com
- Bobby's Monkey Bar**
Noon-8 p.m.
\$3 well drinks
\$2.50 domestic beers
\$3 imports
\$2 Pringles and \$2 Slim Jims
- Conch Republic Seafood** 
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www.Conchrepublicseafood.com
- Dante's**
951 Caroline St.
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\$3.50 Jagermeister and Fireball
\$4 Jameson
www.Danteskeywest.com
- Geiger Key Marina** 
5 Geiger Road
4-6 p.m.
Drink specials and special happy hour menu
www.Geigerkeymarina.com
- Green Parrot Bar** 
601 Whitehead St.
4-7 p.m. Monday-Thursday
4-5:30 p.m. Fridays
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www.Greenparrot.com
- The Grand**
314 Duval St.
5-7:30 p.m.

- Half-price wine, cocktails and beer
Half-price appetizers
www.grandcafekeywest.com
- Half Shell Raw Bar**
231 Margaret St.
4:30-6:30 p.m.
2-for-1 drink specials
Special happy hour food menu
www.Halfshellrawbar.com
- Hard Rock Café** 
313 Duval St.
5-7 and 10 to closing
Half-price appetizers and drinks
www.hardrockcafe/keywest
- Hogfish Bar and Grill** 
6810 Front Street
4-6 p.m.
Drink specials and special happy hour menu
www.Hogfishbar.com
- Island Dogs Bar** 
505 Front St.
4-6:30 p.m. Monday-Friday
Half-price well drinks, bottled beer and wine by the glass
Half-price oysters, special \$5.95 menu
www.Islanddogsbar.com
- Lucy's Retired Surfer Bar and Restaurant**
320 Grinnell Street
4-7 p.m.
Half-off appetizers, \$3 well drinks, draft beer and house wine
www.Keywest.lucysretiredsurfers.com
- Martin's**
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4-6 p.m.
Half-price drinks and tapas
www.Martinskeywest.com
- Mary Ellen's Bar** 
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www.maryellensbar.com
- Mellow Ventures Café and Gastropub** 
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5-7 p.m.
Half-off starters
2-for-1 draft beer, wine, sangria and mimosas
www.mellowventureskeywest.com
- Old Town Mexican Café**
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Half-price appetizers
Half-price beer, wine and well drinks
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www.Pepeskeywest.com
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- Stock Island Salty Oyster Dockside Bar & Grill**
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- Matt's Stock Island Kitchen & Bar**
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\$3 drafts, \$6 cocktails and wine,
\$2 oysters, \$5 appetizers and crudo
www.perrykeywest.com
- Pinchers Crab Shack**
712 Duval St.
3-6 p.m.
Oysters, clams, shrimp, wings
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www.Pinchersusa.com
- The Roost**
508 Fleming St.
3-6 p.m.
\$10 Stoli Elite Martinis
- Roostica Pizzeria**
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Drink specials and special happy hour menu
www.Roostica.com
- Sand Bar Sports Grill** 
511 Greene St.
Check the website for daily specials
Sandbarkeywest.com
www.Sand Bar Sports Grill Key West on Facebook
- Santiago's Bodega**
207 Petronia St.
3-6 p.m.
Half-price drinks
\$5 tapas
www.Santiagosbodega.com
- Sidebar at Aqua** 
504 Angela St.
4-8 p.m.
\$5 well drinks, \$3.75 domestic beers
9 p.m.-close, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, drink specials
www.sidebarkeywest.com
- Southernmost Beach Café** 
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\$5 small bites bar men, \$5 draft beer, house wine, well drinks and house margaritas
www.Southernmostbeachcafe.com
- Square Grouper Bar and Grill and My New Joint Upstairs.** 
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www.Squaregrouperbarandgrill.com
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2-for-1 margaritas or well drinks
www.Galleonresort.com
- Tattoos and Scars** 
512 Greene St.
Stella on draft \$4 all day
www.Tattoosandscarssaloon.com
- Tiki House** 
430 Greene St.
4-6 p.m.
2-for-1 wells, drafts and Zombies
www.tikihousekw.com
- Turtle Kraals**
231 Margaret St.
4:30-6:30 p.m.
Half off bottled beers, well drinks and house wines
Special happy hour menu
www.Turtlekraals.com
- Two Friends Patio Restaurant**
512 Front St.
4-6 p.m.
Early bird dinner specials
www.Twofriendskw.com
- Vinos on Duval**
810 Duval St.
4-7 p.m.
\$5 sangria
Sundays
\$5 mimosas
www.Vinosonduval.com
- Viva Saloon** 
903 Duval St.
4-6 p.m.
\$3 well drinks, \$1 off all beer and house wine, \$5 appetizers
www.Vivakeywest.com
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www.thewaterfrontbrewery.com
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www.Laonchakeywest.com
- Yellowfin Bar and Grill**
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www.oceansedgekeywest.com/hotel/yellowfin-bar-and-grill ■



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BARTENDER OF THE WEEK

'Captain Comedy' Shaun Griffin



BY BUCKY MONTGOMERY
Florida Weekly Correspondent

"I had been working at Danger Charters for about a week, when a friend of mine, Wade, said 'if you like draft beer, check out the Porch.' I went in, saw a big TV and thought it was sports. When I saw that it was the Muppet Show, I knew this was going to be my favorite bar," bartender Shaun Griffin says. "I got my job here in the worst way possible. By being the drunkest, most obnoxious guest ever. I believe they only gave me a job bartending to watch me fail."

The Porch was Shaun's first bartending gig and although he has since moved on, to his credit he still holds one of the longest running tenures at the iconic craft beer and wine bar. Today, he bartends at the newly established fast food joint Sinz Burritos most Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays from 5 to 10 p.m. Here he serves up a distinct collection of craft beers that pair well with the likes of tacos and tostados from the comfort of a small circular countertop facing the gateway intersection to Duval at Truman Avenue.

Shaun was born in Baltimore, Md., where he lived until he was 21 when he discovered that he had a love for sailing. "I realized that I didn't have to only sail where I grew up. I could go anywhere there was water."

His first jaunt away from home was to Maine during the winter. "I lived on a little island (Sugar Island) in the middle of a lake (Moosehead Lake)." Needless to say, there wasn't much sailing going on. "Then I was offered two boat jobs. One in Hartford, Conn., and one in Key West. I did seriously consider Hartford." Instead, in 2006, he headed to Key West.

"My wife was the very first girl (my own age) I met in Key West. She was coming in on a sailboat. Once they got tied off, it was a common custom for the crew to take their shirts off and go top-

less. It was getting dark, but I could see her in her white bikini, glowing in the setting sun. The captain (who also had a crush on her) said, 'Margot, why don't you go show Shaun where the dumpster is?' And the rest was history. To this day, she says she has never owned a white bikini." Must've been tan lines then.

Shaun and Margot had only been dating three weeks when they both took off in different directions. She to go to boatbuilding school for a couple of years, and he off to get his captain's license. "I wrote her letters all the time, the old-fashioned way, snail mail," he said. Then, on different boats, they both sailed and met in Hawaii where they lived together for six months.

They eventually came back to Newport, R.I., for a stint, then, to celebrate Shaun getting his captain's license, the two of them headed to Thailand for three months. "I applied for my job at Danger Charters here in Key West while we were in Thailand. I knew I wanted it because I love sailing, and I love teaching about the environment."

So, besides bartending, he still holds down his day job as an eco-tour guide for Danger Charters three days a week. "It's good to teach people about birds and fish, and to get tips for taking off my shirt." You can find out more at www.DangerCharters.com, or check it out on Trip Adviser.

When not working, you may see Shaun out with his three-legged dog Fenway, or hanging around the Blue Room when the Comedy Key West takes the stage. "If you miss me at the bar, you can come see me at the comedy club."

He also presents himself as somewhat of a cook. "The only reason my wife keeps me is that I keep her fed."

He says of himself, "I am neither friendly or nice, yet everyone not only tolerates me, but even acts like they like me."

Shaun points out what he says are the

two proudest moments in his life. "The first was the first date with my wife behind the dumpster at the Westin," he says. "And also, in the seventh-grade I was voted the 'Most Creative Student in Maryland,' by the Odyssey of the Mind Association," which is a real thing." (I looked it up. Sometimes when you're exchanging information with someone who also performs comedy, you can't always be sure if you're getting your leg pulled.)

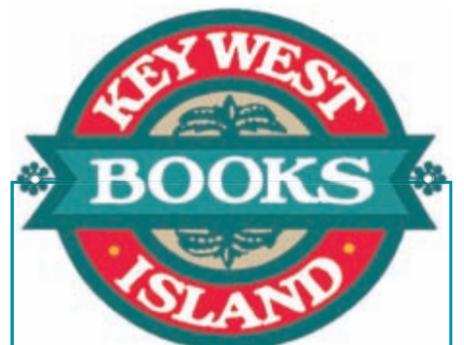
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"I like the people here in Key West, the community. People treat each other better here than anywhere else I've ever been," he said, in regards to what he likes most about living and working in Key West. "And if I couldn't get out on the water two or three times a week, I'd murder everyone." ■

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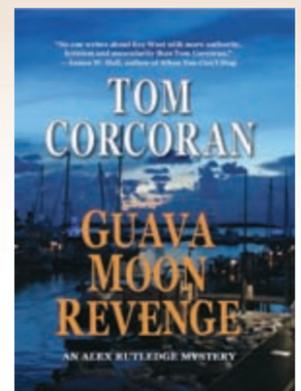
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ROCKS

From page 1

“The Snake King,” a bluesy take on rock ‘n roll steeped in dark and evocative imagery. In advance of what I can only assume will be a spirited display of seasoned musical prowess and perhaps less-seasoned (but no less enthusiastic) audience participation, this lucky reporter got to sit down with Mr. Springfield to chat about what makes him tick.

Florida Weekly Key West Edition: How does it feel to play a show and have multiple generations singing all of the lyrics to your songs?

Rick Springfield: It’s pretty great to see it. I was fortunate to be writing in a time of radio when a good song had a chance to be heard just because it was a good song. That doesn’t exist anymore. It’s all corporate and short playlists and new rock radio is basically dead. I think that’s why people love live shows. They can still commune with like-minded people in the church of rock and roll.

FWKW: When you started making records, did you ever think you’d be performing well into your 60s? (You look and sound amazing, by the way.)

RS: I never thought about an expiration date. I still don’t. I think we’ll all just do it until we drop. As long as you’re enjoying it, why stop?

FWKW: How do you think the music industry has changed since you started performing?



LUCY APPLE / COURTESY PHOTO

Rick Springfield will be performing songs from his new album “The Snake King.”

RS: Night and day. I feel for all these great bands and artists that I hear who are making amazing music and have no real outlet other than touring in a van or performing peer to peer. Radio doesn’t want to know. If it isn’t rap or some pop song written by a thousand people it won’t be heard on modern radio. The business side has always been full of leeches and talentless jerk-offs, but the positive side is that the artists are mostly pure and true and just want to do what they love

FWKW: How did you transition from music to TV and film? What’s your favorite role you’ve played?

RS: I don’t really know how anything happened or happens other than I have a desire to do it and just go forward, head down, damn the torpedoes. I think acting and music feed the same beast in artists, which is why you get so many actors trying to transition to music and vice versa. Playing with Meryl Streep and having Jonathan Demme direct (in Ricki and the Flash) has been a highlight so far. I love them both.

FWKW: I’ve watched clips of some of your recent live performances and you’re a madman on stage - where do you get the energy?! How do you keep it fresh and exciting for yourself and for the audience?

RS: I draw energy from the music and from the audience. I love to play guitar which was really what started it all when I was 14, but the energy thing is just something I feel. There’s no real premeditation to it and some nights are better than others.

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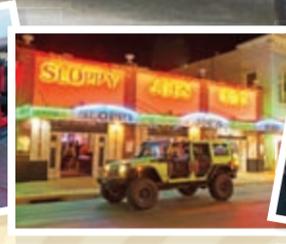
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FWKW: How long have you been playing with your current band lineup?

RS: The last member joined about two years ago. It's the best band I have ever played with. They are monsters!!

FWKW: What do you want the audience to leave with after they come see one of your shows?

RS: A very expensive Rick Springfield T-shirt :) I want everyone to walk out feeling better than when they walked in.

FWKW: How do you think your own personal style has evolved from "Beginnings" to "Snake King"? Where did all the blues/gospel influence on "Snake King" come from?

RS: I have always loved the blues. Most musicians my age are blues-based players. That's the music we copied as kids and it's still inside us, the love of it. Yeah, "Beginnings" to "The Snake King" is a pretty big jump. Just life, really.

FWKW: What do you do in your down time when you're not touring? Any weird hobbies?

RS: I collect stuff. Toys, antiques, religious artifacts and I buy stuff online that I have absolutely no use for. Mostly I write. That's my relaxation.

FWKW: And finally — who are you listening to these days? Who inspires you?

RS: Every song, every book, every article, every person I meet inspires me. As far as what I'm listening to, it varies. My last playlist last night was: Porcupine Tree, Christine and the Queens, Zoot (my old Aussie band, we're putting together a retrospective from 1969 to 1971), Beck Ola (Jeff Beck and Rod Stewart's band from the 60s), Tom Petty, Gerry Rafferty, the 1975 and a bunch of other stuff I may have been too buzzed to remember. ■■■■

...Well, at least he's honest. Rick's concert will take place on the



COURTESY PHOTO

Sunset Green Event Lawn, an expansive, multipurpose event space located at the 24 North Hotel on N. Roosevelt Blvd. Maybe it's the wannabe flower child in me, nostalgic for the era of concerts on open lawns, picnic blankets spread and barefoot music lovers dancing, but lately I've been craving an outdoor venue where I can lay back, listen to songs

I love and stare at the stars pretending I'm in the middle of the woods (although the middle of the ocean ain't so bad either).

According to Lee Sheehan, Director of Sales and Marketing for the Keys Collection (of which 24 North is a participating hotel), "Our vision behind the concert space was to create an immersive experience for guests and locals to congregate underneath the colorful Key West skies. The verdant landscape and laid-back environment invites guests, visitors, and locals to take their shoes off and experience the best of Key West with live music and tapas-styled food. The lawn is designed to accommodate comfortable seating with Adirondack chairs, cabanas, or hammocks for enjoying events."

In the next year alone, Sunset Green will also host Michael Franti and Spearhead, Lyle Lovett and Earl Keen, JJ Grey & Mofro, Air Supply and The Beach Boys, all thanks to Rams Head Promotions, an Annapolis-based restaurant and entertainment company that currently owns and operates five locations in Maryland and provides programming for the Key West Theater on Eaton Street. Rams Head has been responsible for bringing dozens of renowned bands and musicians to town, including Marshall Tucker Band, Lee Ann Womack and Citizen Cope. Surrounded by luxurious pools and lush greenery, Sunset Green Event Lawn is a natural addition to the Rams Head cache that provides the ultimate escape to indulge in the Key West lifestyle. And being able to relax and listen to music in an open environment away from the sounds of trolleys and incessant scooter horns is something I think we can all appreciate — no matter how you feel about "Jessie's Girl."

You can buy tickets for all of the Sunset Green shows at www.keywest-concertseries.com or at the Key West Theater Box Office, located at 512 Eaton St. ■



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Little White House holds wealth of history

BY MAXINE LOPEZ-KEOUGH
Florida Weekly Correspondent

Step inside the Harry S. Truman Little White House, and you'll be forgiven for feeling the sudden urge to solve domestic policy issues while on vacation. It's here, inside this spectacular circa 1890 home, that some of the nation's most influential leaders have retreated from the public eye to rest, recuperate and bring new meaning to the term "working vacation." And while history buffs might know that former U.S. President Harry S. Truman spent so many hours hammering out deals inside the home that it was rechristened the Little White House, few know the full history of this remarkable place, and just how much our lives today benefit from the secret meetings that happened inside its hallowed walls.

Before Truman himself had stepped foot inside the Truman Little White House, the building served as a residence for the Key West Naval Station's base commandant and paymaster. Borrowing from both Victorian and West Indian architectural traditions, the home offered its residents a secluded and breezy retreat from naval station life.

The beginning of World War I saw the Key West Naval Station take on a vital role in the U.S. war effort. Inventor Thomas Edison volunteered to aid the U.S. war effort, living at Little White House for six months while he developed a total of 41 weapons. After Mr. Edison's departure, the house remained command headquarters through World War II, when Key West was tasked with protecting Allied ships off the Straits of Florida.

At the end of the war, then-President



COURTESY PHOTOS

Former U.S. President Harry S. Truman spent so many hours hammering out deals inside the home that it was rechristened the Little White House.

Harry S. Truman was both physically and emotionally exhausted, prompting his doctor to prescribe a vacation somewhere warm and secure. At the recommendation of his friend, Fleet Adm. Chester Nimitz, the president headed south. He was immediately taken with the charm and restorative climate of Key West, and that first trip in 1946 began what would amount to 11 total working vacations spent at the naval base commander's home. While on-island, White House staff from Washington was flown into Key West for important meetings (or, on occasion, poker games and fishing trips) and documents sent from the Little White House were stamped as having been sent from The White House,



U.S. Naval Station, Key West, Florida. In total, President Truman would spend 175 days of his presidency governing from the Little White House. President Truman also used the Little White House as a base from which to formulate the Marshall Plan, the recognition of the state of Israel, the Truman Doctrine, a civil rights executive order requiring federal contractors to hire minorities, and a two-week cease fire agreement for Korea. After his presidency, he would return to Key West five more times — each time staying in a downtown private residence, but making sure to visit his beloved Little White House.

The Little White House continued to

serve as a White House of America; in 1955, President Dwight D. Eisenhower used the Little White House as a place to convalesce after a heart attack, while six years later, President John F. Kennedy hosted British Prime Minister Harold Macmillan at Little White House for a one-day summit before the Bay of Pigs crisis. After the failed invasion, President Kennedy returned to the Little White House in 1962 to perform inspections following the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

After President Truman's death in 1974, the Navy Base (renamed the Truman Annex) on which the Little White House stood was closed, and the house abandoned. It remained unoccupied for 12 years, during which unscrupulous residents of Key West were rumored to have broken in and helped themselves to the former president's furniture. Developer Pritam Singh purchased the annex at an auction in 1986 and immediately took out an ad in a local newspaper requesting that all those who had borrowed furniture from the Little White House return the items, and thanked the residents of Key West for looking after the antiques for so long. Much of the original furniture was returned, and Singh transferred ownership of the Little White House to the state of Florida for its use as a museum, after which he privately funded the building's restoration.

Today, approximately 78,000 visitors tour the house annually.

The Harry S. Truman Little White House is located at 111 Front St., and is open to the public every day from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with frequent tours. For more information, call (305) 294-9911 or visit www.trumanlittlewhitehouse.com. ■

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MUSIC SCENE

The Strickland Taddiken duo is back

BY JENNIFER WHITE

Florida Weekly Correspondent

Not long before moving back to his hometown of Charleston, S.C., Larry Strickland met Ben Taddiken during one of Ben's shows at Captain Tony's Saloon. Entirely devoid of high-maintenance fuss and fluff, the easy-going musicians struck up a harmonious chemistry right away. As such is the test of life, serendipity often moves in right before a departure and even though the distance would make entertaining as a duo rather difficult for them, they decided to do it anyways by traveling thousands of miles just to play together. It's been six years and they are still going strong.

"Ben and I played our first set together a month before I left to go back to Charleston" Larry explains. "When I left in 2012 we started playing here six to eight times a year. It's been fun. We don't take anything too seriously and it's always fun."

"I love when Larry gets on percussion and shakes an egg instrument, while playing the bongos and the tambourine at the same time," Ben adds.

Without missing a beat, the conversation shifts back to Larry as if on rhythmic cue. "Ben still astounds me after all these years. One of the compliments we get a lot is that there might just be two of us playing, but it sounds like a full band," he boasts cheerfully. Their sets include a variety of genres from tropical to '90s alternative.

"It was June of 2017 when I called Larry and said I'm moving back and would you be interested in joining me and doing the duo thing full time? I barely got the words out of my mouth and Larry was on the other end saying yes, yes of course."

— Ben Taddiken

Thanks to an unofficial artist residency at Margaritaville, Larry and Ben have always had a place to come back to and consistently perform even though they were never able to rehearse as much as they would have liked to. At the time of this writing they had just finished a three-week record-breaking run at the Jimmy Buffet famed joint. This sort of home base has allowed them to keep their roots firmly planted in the Key



West community and continue to develop the sound and reputation that would set the stage for their return to the island.

"It was June of 2017 when I called Larry and said I'm moving back and would you be interested in joining me and doing the duo thing full time?" Ben says, "I barely got the words out of my mouth and Larry was on the other end saying yes, yes of course."

Again, it seems that their cosmic union was meant to be. If timing is

everything then that phone could not have rung at a better time.

"The mortgage company that I was working for wasn't really working out and then while I was sitting there and thinking about coming back Ben calls me," Larry recalls. "And I'd already been thinking about it for a while so my business partner from back home and I decided to open another mortgage company based out of Orlando which would allow me to do my work right out

of the Keys. The theme of music and mortgages has been my own personal theme and now I'm able to do them both here — so that's going to be our thing. Ben is learning about mortgages a little bit, too."

But their common ground will always be music before anything. Ben's story officially begins at church gospel sings and in school choirs while Larry got a late start after watching several of his band friends doing their thing and thinking, "I want to do that." Experience happened quickly for Larry and he immediately got invited into the Diesel Brothers Band which was actually what landed him at Margaritaville in the first place. Meanwhile, Ben was busy with a modest debut of solo gigs at Mallory Square and on Duval Street and then at places like the late Rumrunners and of course Captain Tony's where he would eventually meet Larry.

These days Ben is happy to be back where he can ride his bike with his guitar securely in his backpack. Larry is happy to get back to his laid-back

"We play here by choice. It's cheaper and easier to play somewhere else but we play here because we want to."

— Ben Taddiken

lifestyle. Together they are ready to take this thing to the next level now that they are, in fact, together again.

"We play here by choice. It's cheaper and easier to play somewhere else but we play here because we want to," Ben says.

"The gist of the whole thing is that we are thankful to be playing here," Larry chimes.

You can find the band schedule for Strickland Taddiken Duo on Facebook by searching for @ben.taddiken.music and yes that is an acronym STD to go along with their slogan "the only one you want to catch in Key West." You can also learn more about Larry's mortgage business by visiting his website, www.themortgagefirm.com/larrystrickland.

I guess you could say that they have finally come full circle, bringing everything back to where they started. Now they get to have hopeful plans for future bookings at more places and to do the things that most working couples like to do like rehearse or maybe even record an album and dare I say stop denying that this is the place for them. Welcome home, Larry and Ben. ■



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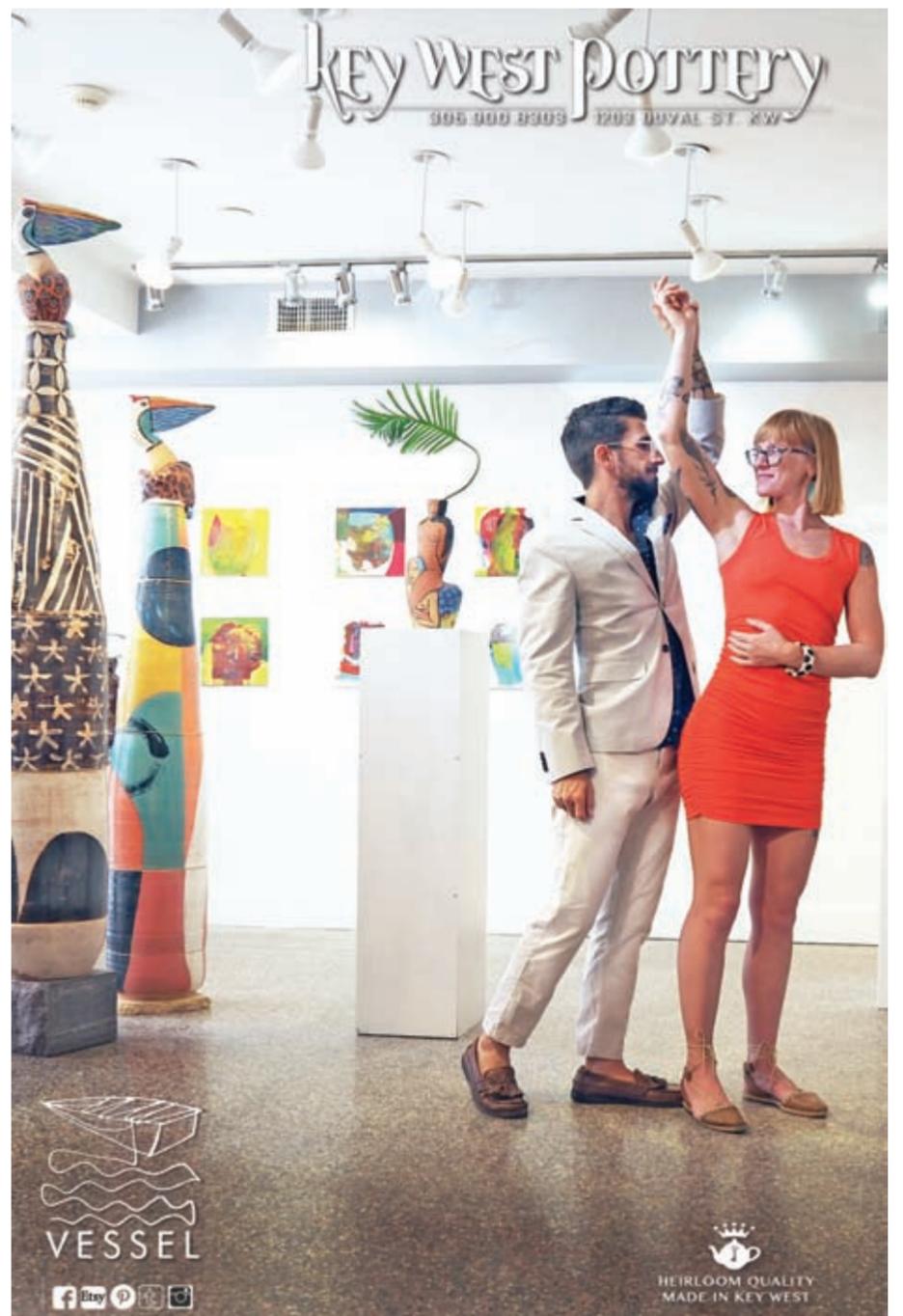


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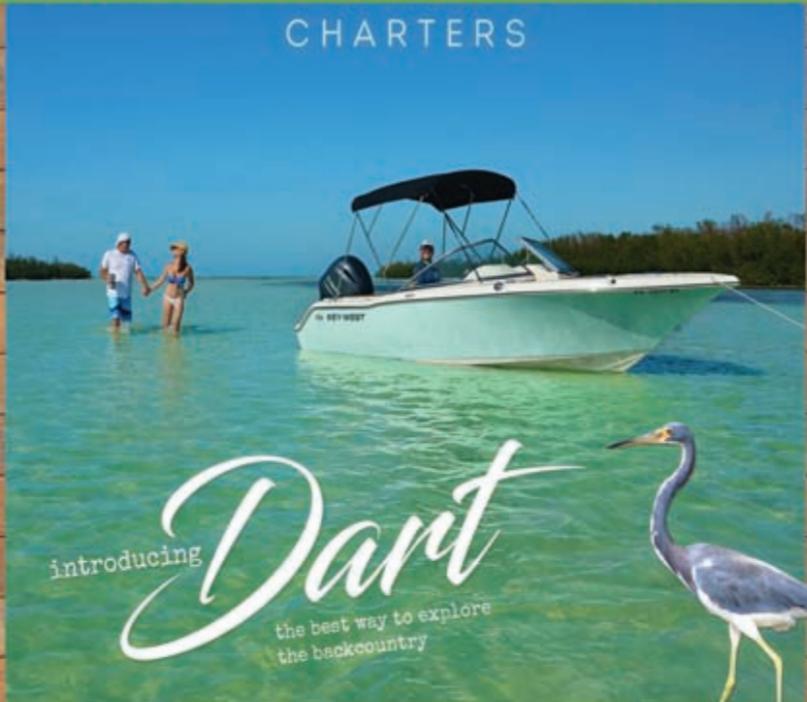
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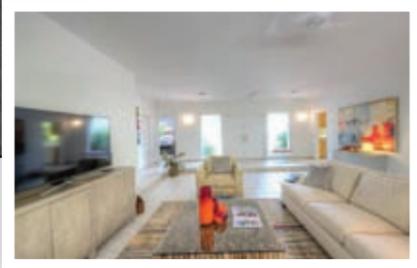


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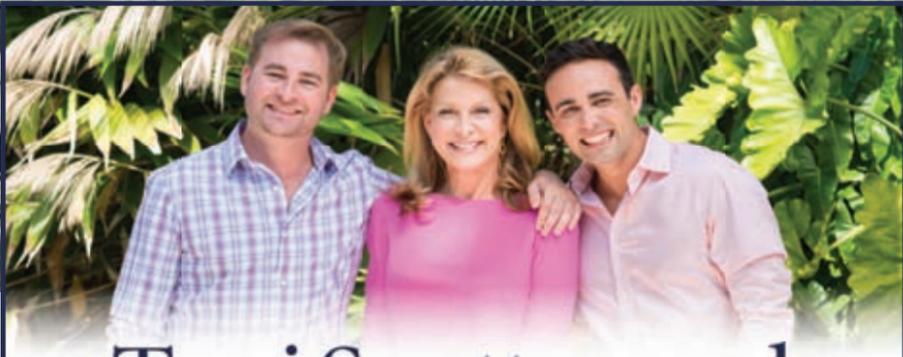
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