

islamorada news

VILLAGE HALL

Traffic study in works

ISLAMORADA — The Village Council has hired a traffic and transportation engineering firm to recommend traffic mobility and safety improvements on the four islands.

The goal of the council is to identify improvements that could be made to alleviate traffic congestion on both local streets as well as developing data-driven recommendations for traffic mobility and safety.

Kittelson & Associates Inc. will evaluate existing conditions and determine the impact and demands of expected growth on future traffic conditions. Through completion of this task, areas where improvements may have the greatest impact on overall mobility will be identified.

Following the evaluation of existing conditions, the firm will conduct an evaluation of traffic throughout the village and produce a technical memorandum with recommendations to improve traffic mobility.

Included in the study will be analysis of where traffic crashes and fatalities have occurred in the village. Also included will be an evaluation of the potential need for traffic-calming measures on the Old Highway.

A presentation of the findings and recommendations will be made at a Village Council meeting this spring.

UPPER MATECUMBE KEY

Families meet ‘Bloodline’ star

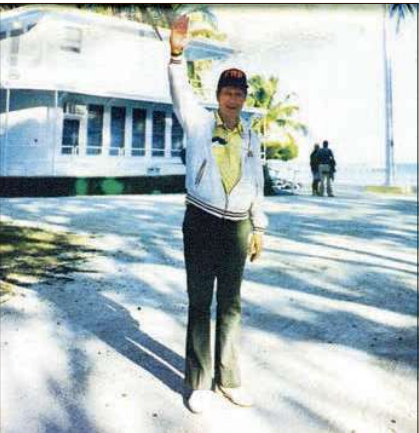
ISLAMORADA — Habitat for Humanity of the Upper Keys’ families who attended the 15th annual Habitat for Humanity Cocktail Party at the Islander Resort had a chance to meet ‘Bloodline’ star Norbert Leo Butz, who portrays Kevin Rayburn on the Netflix series drama.

During his three years in the Upper Keys while filming ‘Bloodline,’ Butz has participated in a number of community events. At the cocktail party, he shared his family’s involvement in and personal experiences with Habitat for Humanity in his home town.

The annual cocktail party is the local organization’s primary fundraiser and enables it to build houses for qualified, low- to moderate-income families. The cocktail party raised more than \$160,000.



CONTRIBUTED
Above, three Habitat families pose for a photo with Butz. From left, Pat and Lyndie Meyers (current Habitat homeowners), Butz, Dolly and Wilfredo Castro (future Habitat homeowners) and Joe and Melissa Stubblefield (future Habitat homeowners). The families have purchased or will purchase houses built by the Habitat Construction Fund. The annual cocktail party is the local organization’s primary fundraiser and enables it to build houses for qualified, low- to moderate-income families.



FILE AND OCEAN SOTHEBY’S INTERNATIONAL REALTY/Contributed
Above, then-Vice President George H.W. Bush waves to the press from the Bay Bourne houseboat during a fishing trip to Islamorada in 1988. The Free Press reported at the time that ‘Bush’s wins in recent Republican primaries have launched him into the presidential nomination lead and edged Islamorada toward a vacation White House.’ Right, The houseboat estate on Upper Matecumbe Key sold recently for \$3.8 million.



Historic houseboat estate sold for \$3.8M

Free Press Staff

ISLAMORADA — The historic houseboat estate on Upper Matecumbe Key sold recently for \$3.8 million, according to Ocean Sotheby’s International Realty.

Rich in history, this 5-acre property at 101 Carroll St. has entertained many dignitaries over the years, including President Harry S.

Truman, President George H.W. Bush and legendary news anchor Edward R. Morrow.

It’s centerpiece is a 60-foot 1948 Chris Craft houseboat that served as a rental unit for Clara May Downey’s Olney Inn, which later become Cheeca Lodge under new ownership.

According to Upper Keys historian Jerry Wilkinson, Downey had the house-

boat, Bay Bourne, towed to Islamorada from Miami in the early 1950s. The houseboat, which had been custom built for hotelier Baron Conrad Hilton, was moored next to the inn.

In 1960, Hurricane Donna washed the Bay Bourne onto the middle of Preston Street. It was later rolled on telephone poles back to the place where it sits, permanently anchored to a foundation on the beachfront property.

Race car sponsor Jim

Gilmore Jr. of Kalamazoo, Mich., later purchased the property and added a second deck to the Bay Bourne. It was owned by the Gilmore Houseboat Trust of Otsego, Mich., until the recent purchase.

The house boat features a stateroom, two baths, a galley kitchen and salon on the first deck, and a top deck with a four-bunk stateroom and private upper deck. The property also includes 300 feet of sand beach overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.



FILE
Former President Harry S. Truman, right, stands outside the Bay Bourne with Shelton Stone, caretaker of the Olney Inn, in 1957.

The estate’s market value lion by the Monroe County was estimated at \$3.1 mil- Property Appraiser in 2016.

Traffic delays possible

ISLAMORADA — Overnight traffic delays near mile marker 73 are possible through March 31 as a state road contractor completes work on a

Channel 2 bridge rehabilitation project, village officials say.

To minimize any effect on traffic, construction activities will take place from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.

During the hours of construction, lanes will be shifted on a portion

of the bridge but no lanes will be closed. The speed limit of 50 mph will be reduced to 45 mph through the affected area, and deputies from the Monroe County Sheriff’s Office will be on site each night to assist with traffic.

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