

# BOCA BEACON

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SHE'S STILL STANDING ...

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Your Locally-Owned Weekly Newspaper

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**HURRICANE IAN ASSISTANCE FROM THE BOCA GRANDE WOMAN'S CLUB IS AVAILABLE BY FILLING OUT AN APPLICATION FOUND AT BOCAGRANDEWOMANSCLUB.ORG, BY PICKING UP AN APPLICATION AT THE BOCA GRANDE FIRE DEPARTMENT OR AT THE BOCA BEACON OFFICE.**

**GO TO BALLYHOO PAGES 7, 8 AND 9 FOR INFO ON:**

- FEMA AID
- BRIDGE NEWS
- DEBRIS PILES
- WHAT'S OPEN
- WHAT'S CLOSED
- WHAT WILL OPEN

## A timeline involving GIWA and Ian

### ■ STAFF REPORT

One of the basic necessities of life, one that we often overlook until it is not available, is running water. Hurricane Ian brought that fact to light in a hurry, as we had no water on the island for almost two weeks in some places. The water was under a boil notice until today, press day, which is another whole ball of wax when power is sporadic and boiling water can be problematic.

Our executive director of the Gasparilla Island Water Association, Ron Bolton, took a minute out of his incredibly busy schedule to give us a timeline of how things went before, during and after the storm. Here is what we had to say ...

Tuesday, Sept. 27: GIWA prepared for evacuation of island by turning power off to all lift stations, water plant and wastewater plant. Substation had one pump running.

Wednesday, Sept. 28: Hurricane Ian.

Thursday, Sept. 29: Returned to island in afternoon to make initial assessment. High water and downed powerlines made travel unsafe.

Friday, Sept. 30: Met with key staff and began welfare checks on all

See **GIWA TIMELINE** on **PAGE 19**



*Hardships make or break people,  
We are #BocaStrong!*

■ This photo of the Boca Grande Causeway taken on Tuesday morning, Oct. 11, we will call "Boca Rising." Finding the beauty in the midst of the storm.

Photo submitted by Scott McGeheen



## Owner of Gasparilla Mobile Estates makes decision: No more park, what's done is done

### ■ BY MARCY SHORTUSE

On October 10, while residents of Gasparilla Mobile Estates were busy picking up pieces of their lives from the neighborhood, the road and beyond, they received a letter they will never forget. It came from the owner of the property, letting them know their leases were terminated.

Gasparilla Mobile Estates is going to cease to be without a miracle.

Dave Dietrich, a resident of the park and a community advisor to many who helped out after the tornado that blew through on January 16, contacted us and gave us the bad news that the owner was giving up the ghost on the little trailer park that has stood

there for decades.

Residents now have until the first week in November to find another place to live. For many of them that will be very tricky, as they are on extremely limited incomes.

The letter to residents read, "As you all know, an act of God occurred on September 28, 2022 that has made it impossible for us to continue operating Gasparilla Mobile Estates as a mobile home park. We do not have the resources to restore Gasparilla Mobile Estates to a functioning mobile home park and we do not plan to do so."

The letter continued.

See **MOBILE** on **PAGE 10**



■ The Inn chefs feeding dinner to the masses. Photo by Becky Paterson

*Feeding the hungry,  
hard workers trying  
to rebuild it all*

### ■ BY SHEILA EVANS

In the time following a disaster, food can serve as a symbol of love and appreciation. That symbolism can be seen all over Boca Grande lately.

Free or "donation only" food and drink have been showing up this week to sustain the many residents and helpers working to bring back a feeling of normalcy to the Island. Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot dogs and corn dogs, chicken patties on a bun, and fries have been on the donation only menu at the food truck at Whidden's Marina. George and Cindy Cera and their 10-year-old son Tucker have been providing the comfort food there since last Wednesday, a week after

See **FOOD** on **PAGE 18**