



# GREATER MARATHON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE **CONNECTION** The Official Monthly Publication of the Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce



Visit <https://raceworldoffshore.com/>  
for VIP tickets and a complete schedule of events

## Chamber After Hours

April 12th - 5:30pm-7:30pm



## Membership Luncheon

April 18th 12pm-1pm

Guest Speaker:

Mel Montagne, FIRM Board Leader



\$16 RSVP to  
[erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:erika@floridakeysmarathon.com) or 305-743-5417

## Please welcome our new members!

Welcome New Members  
ArtBodySoul, Inc.  
5409 Overseas Hwy #1122  
Marathon, FL 33050  
305-743-2588(Studio)  
305-363-9947- Debra's Cell  
[www.ArtBodySoul.net](http://www.ArtBodySoul.net)  
Contact: Debra Wilson  
[Artbodysoul1@gmail.com](mailto:Artbodysoul1@gmail.com)

Construction Dynamics, Inc.  
1222 SE 47th St.  
Cape Coral, FL 33904  
305-849-1488  
Contact: Mike Aranda  
[mike@thenewhomespot.com](mailto:mike@thenewhomespot.com)  
[www.thenewhomespot.com](http://www.thenewhomespot.com)

Executive Level: Seahorse  
Tranquility Bay Resort  
2600 Overseas Hwy  
Marathon, FL 33050  
844-209-6758  
[www.TranquilityBay.com](http://www.TranquilityBay.com)  
Contact: Jasmyn Holmes  
[jholmes@tranquilitybay.com](mailto:jholmes@tranquilitybay.com)

## **Chamber Member Recap**

New Members This Month: 3

Total Members: 566

Visitor Center Recap

Total Members: 82

### **Monthly Stats**

February 2023

Total Visitors: 2225

Daily Average: 70

Top State: Florida

Top Countries: Canada

Without Reservations: 25%

## **Member Referral Program:**

Anytime a current member of the Chamber successfully refers another business to join, they will receive \$25 in "Chamber Bucks!" Chamber Bucks can be used to attend monthly luncheon meetings or for advertising opportunities through our website or newsletter.

## **Events:**

Please let us know about upcoming events or community news for our newsletter, social media pages and online calendar. Or submit your own events to our online calendar.

Visit [www.floridakeysmarathon.com](http://www.floridakeysmarathon.com) and Click to Submit Your Event or contact [Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com)

# **CHAMBER BUCKS!**

**Any current member of the Chamber that successfully refers another business to join, will receive \$25 in "Chamber Bucks!"**

**Chamber Bucks can be used to attend monthly luncheon meetings or for advertising opportunities through our website or newsletter.**

### **New/Current Member Orientation:**

We want to ensure you are able to take full advantage of your chamber membership.

Please set up a Member Orientation with Erika to learn more about how you can maximize your membership with us and utilize member benefits that will help you and your business.

Contact Laura for more info:

[membership@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:membership@floridakeysmarathon.com)  
305-743-5417

## **Executive Membership Circle**

**Starfish Level**  
Seafarer Realty, LLC

### **Angelfish Level**

Iberia Bank • First State Bank • Hawks Cay  
Florida Keys Media • Isla Bella Beach Resort  
Florida Keys Electric Co-op • 5 Star Air  
Million Air • Faro Blanco Resort

### **Seahorse Level**

Centennial Bank • Keys Federal Credit Union  
D'Asign Source • Marlin Bay Resort & Marina  
Fishermen's Community Hospital  
Weekly Newspaper • Dolphin Connection  
Faro Blanco Resort • Wolfe/Stevens PLLC  
Mt. Sinai Cardiology of the Keys  
UM Sylvester Cancer Center • The Tackle Box  
Florida Keys Cemetery

## **Additional opportunities to advertise to Chamber members and visitors include:**

### **Monthly Travel Email Blast**

Our Travel email blast goes out to a growing list of visitors (5,700+ including travel writers) The email blast will consist of up to 20 business listings (includes picture/logo, contact info and website link) upcoming events and featured business spotlight. This blast is a great way to get noticed by travel writers and potential visitors. The cost is only \$35/month to participate. Contact (305) 743-5417 or [info@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:info@floridakeysmarathon.com)

### **Newsletter Ad or Flyer**

Take advantage of our advertising opportunities with a flyer or ad space! Contact [Jeanine@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Jeanine@floridakeysmarathon.com) for pricing

### **Member Email Blast**

We will send your email/flyer to all of our Chamber members and their staff (1,400+ recipients) Cost is \$50/email and you chose the date and frequency of the blast. Contact [Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com) for an application

### **Events**

Please let us know about upcoming events or community news for our newsletter, social media pages and online calendar. Or submit your own events to our online calendar. Visit [www.floridakeysmarathon.com](http://www.floridakeysmarathon.com) and Click to Submit Your Event or contact [Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com)

## MARATHON NEWS, EVENTS & HAPPENINGS

**April 1**

**38th Annual 7 Mile Bridge Run**

Registration closed, but show your support of this historical run! Good luck runners!

Beat that bus!

Event details at [www.7mbrun.com](http://www.7mbrun.com)

**April 1-2**

**History of Diving Museum and NAUI present:**

**Vintage Dive Weekend!**

10am-4pm daily at Jules' Undersea Lodge in Key Largo

Join us for vintage diving, demonstrations, and fun activities for the entire family.

\$15 pp spectator admission includes free pass to the museum

\$75 per certified diver for Sea Hunt style double-hose regulator diving experience

Daily activities include certified divers' vintage dives, unique photo ops, educational booths, art activities for kids, food truck M.E.A.T. Eatery, cornhole and other games

**April 3**

**CHI Golf Tournament**

Marathon Chamber members welcome!

Deering Bay Yacht & Country Club in Miami.

A world-class South Florida Private Club and home to the 18-hole, par 71 Arnold Palmer Signature Course

**April 9**

**Happy Easter!**

Be sure to check out your local papers and social media pages for a list of holiday hop-penings!

**April 12**

**Chamber Business After Hours**

5:30pm at The Turtle Hospital

Join us for a great evening of fun, networking, live music, raffles & giveaways, food & refreshments

**Helping our Heroes**

Join the Red Cross to support America's Military and Veteran Families

Virtual Open House events on the second Wednesday of every month from 5:30-6:30pm

For more info contact [Marta.Oppenheimer@redcross.org](mailto:Marta.Oppenheimer@redcross.org)

**April 18**

**Chamber Membership Luncheon**

12pm-1pm at Marathon Grill & Ale House

Guest Speaker Mel Montagne, FIRM Board Leader discussing new property insurance legislation and its effects on YOU!

\$16 Please RSVP to [Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com)

**April 20-22**

**2nd Annual Marathon Premium Sailfish Tournament**

Walk-Up Registration – Fairfield Inn Tiki -Thursday, April 20th. 3 pm-6 pm.

Kick Off Event – Fairfield Inn Tiki – Thursday, April 20th. 4 pm-6 pm. (Reading of Rules at 5:30pm)

Day One – Friday, April 21. – Lines In 8 am Lines out 4 pm.

Day Two – Saturday, April 22. –

Lines In 8 am Lines out 3 pm.

Awards Banquet – Saturday, April 22 – 6:30 pm- 8:30 pm at Aquarium Encounters

**April 27-30**

**APBA National Championship Series**

**7-Mile Offshore Grand Prix**

**Ultimate Fan Experience in Marathon**

VIP Passes available.

Visit Marathon -

Race World Offshore for a complete schedule of events.





## Membership Luncheon

*Tuesday*

*April 18th*

*Noon-1pm*

*\$16*

**RSVP Required**

**Limited Seating**

Speaker: Mel Montage,  
FIRM Board Leader



*Topic: : new property insurance  
legislation and it's effects on YOU*

**RSVP to [Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:Erika@floridakeysmarathon.com) or call 305-743-5417**

**Florida Keys Aqueduct Authority (FKAA) is asking for assistance from the public to rebuild water reserves by conserving water.**

Dear Customer,

Florida Keys Aqueduct has reduced output from our Florida City plant, to relieve pressure on our system. We are asking for assistance from the public, in an effort to conserve water and rebuild our reserves.

FKAA is generating enough water to service our customers. However, we are limited in our ability to build our reserves; which have been depleted as a result of the leaks that occurred last week.

No conservation is too small. This includes less time running irrigation systems, faucets, showers, washing of boats, vehicles, etc. Any and all effort is greatly appreciated during this time, as we attempt to rebuild our water supply.

Thank you,

Greg Veliz  
Executive Director



HISTORY OF DIVING MUSEUM  
AND NAUI PRESENT:

# Vintage Dive Weekend!

at JULES' UNDERSEA LODGE, 51 Shoreland Dr, Key Largo, FL 33037

Join us for vintage diving, demonstrations,  
and fun activities for the entire family

**APRIL 1 & 2 10AM - 4PM DAILY**

\$15 pp spectator admission, includes a FREE pass to HDM!

Live Demonstrations

using  
Vintage  
Diving  
Helmets



## DAILY ACTIVITIES:

- Certified Divers' Vintage Dives
- Unique Photo Ops
- Educational booths
- Art activities for kids
- Food Truck - M.E.A.T. Eatery
- Cornhole and other games

**\$75\*** per person

## CERTIFIED DIVERS:

Sign-up NOW  
to participate in  
a Sea Hunt-style  
double-hose regulator  
diving experience!

\*Sea Hunt-Style Dive Experience participants will embark on an underwater tour in the lagoon around Jules' Undersea Lodge and have an opportunity to meet Dr. Deep Sea during his 100-day mission in the habitat, while using a double-hose regulator just like in Sea Hunt.

Pre-registration required. Diving experience fee includes gear orientation, dive, underwater photo op, and a free pass to HDM. Time Slots TBA. Plan on two hours for your vintage diving experience.

Scan QR Code below to Sign-Up Online or Contact the History of Diving Museum directly!



Eatery And Taproom



OCEANFIRST



Ocean Reef Conservation Association



HELD AT:



**History of Diving Museum**

82990 Overseas Hwy MM83

Islamorada | Open Daily 10am-5pm

305-664-9737 | [divingmuseum.org](http://divingmuseum.org)



February 23, 2023

Daniel Samess, CEO  
Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce  
12222 Overseas Hwy  
Marathon, FL 33050



Valued Marathon Chamber of Commerce Member:

The Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors is honored and proud to support, inform, promote, and advocate for your business!

One way we try to support your business is through our annual (2023) Professional/Adult Continuing Education Scholarship Program. Your Marathon Chamber Board will award up-to \$10,000 in such scholarships to fellow business-members (and staff) who wish to continue to advance their knowledge, skills, and abilities via a continuing education opportunity in 2023. Scholarship amounts can be anywhere from \$50.00 - \$1,000.00 per applicant and can include any type of training, classes, courses, seminars, or continuing education opportunity. I hope you take advantage of this member-benefit and opportunity for yourself and/or your employees. Please see the attached application and return it to us by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

Thank you for taking the time to review this information. Please call or email us anytime with any questions you may have, as well as for any assistance you may need putting your application together. If you haven't yet renewed your chamber-membership for 2023 please do should you wish to apply for this scholarship/grant opportunity.

We truly value your membership with us, and more importantly I appreciate having the opportunity to continue to serve your business and staff.

Sincerely & Respectfully,

Daniel Samess, M.S.  
Chief Executive Officer  
Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce  
(305) 743-5417

[ceo@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:ceo@floridakeysmarathon.com)

[www.FloridaKeysMarathon.com](http://www.FloridaKeysMarathon.com)

[www.MarathonSeafoodFestival.com](http://www.MarathonSeafoodFestival.com)

**GREATER MARATHON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**  
**2023 Professional/Adult Continuing Education Scholarship Application**

***"Please turn in completed application to the Marathon Chamber no later than 5PM  
on April 30, 2023"***

**Send/Return to:** Marathon Chamber of Commerce 12222 Overseas Hwy, Marathon, FL 33050 (or email to: [CEO@FloridaKeysMarathon.com](mailto:CEO@FloridaKeysMarathon.com))

**About:**

The Marathon Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors strives to continuously strengthen the Marathon Chamber's educational programs offered to our 540+ members. One way was by creating a new scholarship opportunity that will allow one member, or employee of a business-member, to continue to advance their knowledge, skills, and abilities via a continuing education opportunity.

There are many great training programs throughout the state and region that employees may benefit from; but between the costs, travel, and time away from work, it is prohibitive for businesses to take advantage of these opportunities.

These new scholarships offered by the Marathon Chamber Board of Directors seeks to bridge that gap, making such opportunities more accessible to our business-members and their employees.

**Appropriate Uses:**

Any type of training, classes, courses, workshops, seminars, or educationally-based opportunities that will enhance the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a business-members' employees, staff, or owners. We chose to keep the limitations extremely open and broad, as to allow employers to choose the right program that provides the best return on investment for their staff and business.

→ College of the Florida Keys offers some great continuing educational courses online, here are a few links for more info/resources, or call them at (305) 809-3238

<https://www.ed2go.com/fkcccconed/>

<https://www.cfk.edu/academics/community-education/>

Monies received from the Marathon Chamber may be used for:

- Costs of educational/continuing education programs, training, etc.
- In addition to costs of training, travel costs associated with the training opportunity:
  - Continuing education must take place from time of application deadline through December 31, 2023.
  - Scholarship(s) paid via reimbursement only, all invoices, proof of purchases/receipts, etc. must be submitted prior to December 31, 2023.

**Scholarship Amount(s):**

- Applicants may apply for any amount between \$50.00 - \$1,000.00.
- "We ask you apply for only what you "need" as it may free up more monies for other applicants.
  - Resources are limited, the GMCC reserves the right to pro-rate awarded grants as/if needed, and/or partially award requested grants.





# COMMERCE CORNER



**AMERICAN INCOME LIFE**  
insurance company

Established in 1951, Matt Pitcher has been working with American Income since early 2023 providing numerous life insurance policies including Whole Life, Term and Supplemental Health insurance to the Florida Keys. Pitcher says the key to his success is trust and service. "The customer will always be able to talk with me. I sit down with them and go over all options. They do not have to do it online with someone far away just working with numbers who may not have their best interest in mind" said Pitcher. While licensed in most states, Pitcher's office is located in Marathon.

**Matt Pitcher**

704.201.0622

mpitcher@zuzick.com

**GREATER MARATHON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

305.743.5417 • 1.800.262.7284

visitus@floridakeysmarathon.com

www.floridakeysmarathon.com

12222 Overseas Highway • Marathon, FL 33050





# COMMERCE CORNER



Established in 1982, overlooking the Gulf, you will find one of the hidden secrets and special places in the Florida Keys. This interval ownership resort offers weekly ownerships as well as rentals that are a competitively priced alternative to a hotel stay.

When you are at Marathon Key Beach Club, you are not returning to a hotel room, you are returning home. The well-appointed units are open and airy offering two bedrooms, fully equipped kitchens, living area with a sleep sofa and a dining room that leads to a screened lanai. The property includes a BBQ area with tiki hut covered picnic tables.

We invite you to visit our website for more information and look forward to your visit!



4560 Overseas Highway, Marathon  
305-743-6522  
[marathonkeybeachclub.com](http://marathonkeybeachclub.com)

Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce  
305 743 5417 • 1 800 262 7284  
[visitus@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:visitus@floridakeysmarathon.com)  
[www.floridakeysmarathon.com](http://www.floridakeysmarathon.com)  
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5001 Overseas Highway, Marathon, FL 33050  
P: 305-743-7099 F: 305-743-4057  
[www.marathonvet.com](http://www.marathonvet.com)



## SPRINGING FORWARD



High season is almost done (so they say), and it's been another strong season for us here. While we didn't emulate last year's high season, I think many of us are okay with that, as this year was much more manageable. I do, however, want to stress the importance of proper budgeting and forecasting for your businesses. Many members have told me they were disappointed, even worried, that they didn't hit last season's numbers. It's interesting how quickly we all get used to something, isn't it? I have had to remind many members that the last eighteen (18) months or so were an anomaly and outlier given that most of our tourism competition was closed down due to the pandemic (cruises, Bahamas, California, NY, Hawaii, Europe, etc.). What has helped with some of the members I have spoken with is to look up 2019 numbers from Jan-March) and benchmark them to this year's Q1. From what I have heard thus far, many are up 15% to 30+% for the same quarter in 2019. Remember 2019 was our best year to date before the pandemic, and our last "normal" year versus this year thus far. Be sure to set realistic and appropriate expectations my esteemed members, it will provide better perspective and guidance as you move through 2023.

On another note, we are again excited to be hosting our Business After Hours later this month. Which will take place on April 12th from 5:30-7:30PM at The (world renown) Turtle Hospital. Free admission, as always for our members (members only of course). The Turtle Hospital will have complimentary libations and appetizers, and of course, there will be great networking opportunities for fellow members. Please also be sure to RSVP for our April 18th Luncheon where Mel from FIRM will be our keynote speaker to discuss new insurance updates and legislation from Tallahassee and how it affects our properties and businesses.

On yet another note, please contact us if you are interested in being a sponsor, volunteer, or vendor for our 3rd annual Florida Keys BrewBQ ([www.KeysBrewBQ.com](http://www.KeysBrewBQ.com)); which will feature craft beers, amazing BBQ, a BBQ competition, live music, and more on July 14-15 at Marathon Community Park.

Lastly, our 2023 Continuing Education Grants/Scholarships are open to apply for you and your staff! Please contact Laura ([membership@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:membership@floridakeysmarathon.com)) from our office to apply. It's a great opportunity to let your chamber help pay for any educational needs you and/or your staff are interested in.

Have a great April (and Easter) everyone! Please remember (if you haven't already) to send in your membership renewal dues that were mailed out in December, online payment is now available for your convenience. Remember there is a late fee for payments received after April 30th. We greatly appreciate your membership with us and look forward to continuing to serve, support, promote, and advocate for your business. Please never hesitate to contact me to help you in any way. Hears to a safe and profitable April!

Most Respectfully,

CEO  
[www.MarathonSeafoodFestival.com](http://www.MarathonSeafoodFestival.com)  
Greater Marathon Chamber of Commerce  
(305) 743-5417  
[ceo@floridakeysmarathon.com](mailto:ceo@floridakeysmarathon.com)  
[www.FloridaKeysMarathon.com](http://www.FloridaKeysMarathon.com)  
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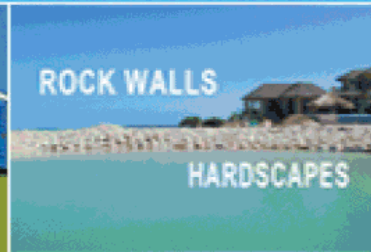


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3800 Overseas Highway  
Marathon, FL 33050

*Marlin Bay*  
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THE YACHT CLUB: The marina, pool, clubhouse and dockmaster facilities, and all ancillary facilities, are included in a separate club membership fee which is available on a separate disclosure. All your club membership fees for club dues, to be furnished by the developer to the prospective member, shall be made in the documents required for Section 715.03, Florida Statute, to be furnished by the developer to the prospective member. This offering is made only by the prospectus for the club membership and no statement should be relied upon if not made in the prospectus. This is not an offer to sell, or subscription of shares to buy the club membership units in any other jurisdiction or in any other state. Prices, features, and specifications, subject to change without notice. The photos in this brochure are intended merely as illustrations of the attributes and concepts depicted herein. Plans and elevations are artist's renderings and may contain options which are not standard.

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 **FIRST HORIZON.**

# Unstoppable

starts here in the Keys



Dwight L. Hill, Florida Keys Market President  
Trich Worthington, Florida Keys Group Branch Manager

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## Florida Keys Media

  
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TheTackleBox@thetacklebox.com

Teri Hiller -Chair Elect  
Coldwell Banker Schmitt Real Estate Co.  
11100 Overseas Hwy  
Marathon, FL 33050  
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terihiller@cbschmitt.com

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Lavarski Smith- Director  
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Big Pine Key, FL 33043  
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kristinrauch@gmail.com

Tricia Baker -Director  
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Marathon, FL 33050  
305-743-3688  
tricia@marathonlumber.com

Robert Moore-Director  
Hawks Cay Resort  
61 Hawks Cay Blvd.  
Duck Key, FL 33050  
305-998-4590  
bob.moore@hawkscay.com

Daniel Samess, CEO  
Marathon Chamber of Commerce  
12222 Overseas Hwy  
Marathon, FL 33050  
305-743-5417/cell 305-849-9688  
ceo@floridakeysmarathon.com



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**Interested in Solar? Finance with FKEC!**

Florida Keys Electric Cooperative is committed to making access to solar power generation possible for interested members. Obtain an FKEC solar loan and make payments through your monthly electric bill — It's that easy.

**How do I qualify?** Qualifying is based solely on your credit history with FKEC. Residential members must have a minimum 12-month clean billing history with FKEC and commercial members must have 24 months.

**How do I apply?** Start by calling FKEC Member Service at 305-852-2431 to see if you are eligible, and to learn more about the terms of the loan. You can also find the terms and steps to obtaining a solar loan at [www.FKEC.com](http://www.FKEC.com).

305.852.2431 • [www.FKEC.com](http://www.FKEC.com)





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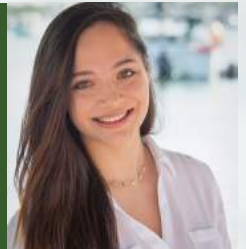
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