

Reality

Recently, my Wife after reading some statistics on costs of living announced at the dinner table that living in the Florida Keys was now ranked in the top ten most expensive places to live in the United States. One must wonder why and how did we get ourselves into this grand position in life. Is this because of real estate costs buoyed by a handful of deep pocketed developers, who as it turns out were not deep pocketed, but just using some other party's pockets to get rich and leave. Or was it the lending & mortgage business that gave away money to people who had no income to support the payment, but only a dream of "flipping" property, once again and leaving. Certainly it is combination of things. But one thing for sure, we are here today and tomorrow with the same high property tax bills. And the question to every property owner is, when will the values be adjusted, as they are supposed be by Law. Recently a condo development in Islamorada was auctioned; best bid \$8,000,000 for 25 finished units and a Marina, at real cost of \$320, 000 per unit.

With present building costs of \$200.00 per square foot on average this sale places the property value at \$0.00. Which basically means property for condo development and home sites should be valued accordingly. After all when the big money was paid for this old motel site all the other local motel owners received a much higher tax bill the next year. Thus they were burdened by either their bad luck of not winning a developers lottery ticket or by trying to be hardworking people who wished to stay in their chosen business. With our inflated construction costs you can now

build a new home and sell it for less than cost or enjoy your dream home with no future profit in site. This is sad but true in the present real estate economy. We must all give a little thought to the mechanics of government.

When you have a large tax base the joys of being on the Government side increase, nice new offices, new cars and toys like Police boats. We have had more than one agency to patrol our waters for quite some time. Do we really need more at the taxpayers expense? Certainly the Police would not agree after all calling their boat a toy. Maybe if they operated the boat every evening to patrol the subdivisions from dark till dawn to prevent crime instead of patrolling the sandbar on Sundays with the other entire law enforcement agency's, I would not dare insult the wisdom of boats for local police. Now at the top of the pile is the "Tax Collector", who runs the fiefdom of Monroe County. We have just reelected the good long time "King", who controls the purse strings. Will he do the right thing or continue status quo?

Remember he is in the budget also and will he want to cycle down, remember their was no problem cycling up, except for the business owners who had to increase his or her pricing to you, the consumer to pay the King's Ransom. I would have had a much better dinner if The Florida Keys were in a statistic of the safest place to live, cleanest place to live, or some other designation except top ten most expensive places to live. Ask yourself a simple question, does expensive always mean you get what you pay for?

Writer's name & business withheld from fear of another tax increase.

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KEYES FLORIDA KEYS

Letter to the Editor:

A BIG THANK YOU to Robbie Majeska and Sherry Dunn of Keys Kritters Pet Store for all your hard work and very generous contribution to the restoration of our beautiful fish tank in the lobby of our facility.
It's a happy break in the day and brings smiles and joy to our residents.

Again, our deepest thanks!
Plantation Key Convalescent Center (PKCC)
Joe Del Buono
President of the Residents' Association



Sherry Dunn and Joe Del Buono stand with the happy parrotfish in their restored fish tank.

Beings of Light Human Angels

During each of our journeys, there are those inevitable moments when someone comes into our life at precisely the right time and says or does precisely the right thing. Their words or actions may help us perceive ourselves more clearly, remind us that everything will turn out for the best, help us cope, or see us through difficult situations. These people are human angels - individuals designated by the universe to be of service to those in need at specific points in time. Some human angels make a commitment before their births to make a positive contribution to the world at a particular moment. Others were chosen by the universe. All human angels, however, come into our lives when we least expect them and when we can most benefit from their presence.

A few of the human angels we may encounter are in professions where helping others is an everyday occurrence. But most of them are regular people, going about their daily lives until called upon to be in the right place at the right time to bring peace, joy, help, or heal someone when they most need it. You may have met a human angel in the form of a teacher who gave you a piece of advice that touched your soul and influenced your path. The person that momentarily stopped you to say hello on the street, delaying you long enough to avoid an oncoming car or a collision, is also a human

angel. They may offer nothing more than a kind word or a smile, but they will offer it when you can draw the most strength and support from their simple action.

You may be a human angel yet not know it. Your fate or intuition may guide you toward other people's challenging or distressing situations, leading you to infer that you simply have bad luck. But recognizing yourself as a human angel can help you deal with the pain you see and understand that you are there to help and comfort others during their times of need. Human angels give of their inner light to all who need it, coming into our lives and often changing us forever. Their task has its challenges, but it is they that have the power to teach, bring us joy, and comfort us in times of despair.



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