

Garden wonders



LONELL RICE and C. MICA ALEX/Contributed

A bronze mermaid with dolphin and sea turtle greet visitors to Chateau Cortez, one of four homes to be showcased during Friday's Upper Keys Garden Walk. Below, event organizers Dee Dee Barreto, Jerri Grossman and Marlies Kraemer visit The Garden Box, the only business on the tour.



Tour features four homes, one business

BY STEVE GIBBS

Free Press Staff

The Upper Keys Garden Walk 2012, themed "Connecting with Nature," is celebrating its 32nd year by blazing a colorful 13-mile trail along the Overseas Highway to showcase individual variations on the paradise theme.

On Friday, Feb. 24, the Upper Keys Garden Club, located at the Francis Tracy Garden Center at mile marker 94, presents its annual fundraiser tour. Guests may visit any or all of the five properties, in any order desired, between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

For a \$20 donation guests will tour the grounds of the Upper Keys' most impressive landscaping wonders, including the oceanfront estate of Academy Award-winning movie producer Jon Landau, dubbed "Bali Hai," but more on that later.

Guests are advised to wear walking shoes and bring sunscreen or rain gear, depending upon the weather. The tour will be held rain or shine.

Pareira-dise

At the end of North Coconut Palm Boulevard, near mile marker 90, is "Pareira-dise," a home that became the culmination of Barbara and Alan Pareira's 10-year search for a Florida Keys home.

See GARDEN, page 32



OPTIMA

The 2012 OPTIMA LX
Starting at \$21,000



KIA MOTORS
The Power to Surprise™



3424 North Roosevelt Blvd.

305-295-8646

www.kia.com

318996

2022.604.0029

keys cruisin'

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT, THINGS TO DO AND LIFE IN THE KEYS

Press

FEBRUARY 22 - 28, 2012

Garden wonder



LONELL RICE and C. MICA ALEY/Contributed

A bronze mermaid with dolphin and sea turtle greet visitors to Chateau Cortez, one of four homes to be showcased during Friday's Upper Keys Garden Walk. Below, event organizers Dee Dee Barreto, Jerri Grossman and Marlies Kraemer visit The Garden Box, the only business on the tour.



Tour t
four k
one b

BY STEVE GI
Free Press Sta

The
20
wi
its 32nd year
mile trail al
to showcase
the paradis

On Frida
Garden Cl
Tracy Gard
94, presen
tour. Guest
five proper
between 10
For a \$20
the ground

impressive
including
Academy A
ducer Jon I
but more o

Guests a
shoes and
gear, depe
The tour w

Pareira-

At the en
Boulevard.
"Pareira-di
the culmin
Pareira's 10
Keys home



OPTIMA

The 2012 OPTIMA LX

Starting at \$21,000

KEY WEST KIA

3424 North Roosevelt Blvd.

305-295-8646

KIA
The

www



File photo by ROBERT SILK/Free Press
and D'ASIGN SOURCE/Contributed

Academy Award-winning producer Jon Landau's 'Bali Hai' home features a large circular hot tub with a fire pit in the center as well as lush walkways that snake around the oceanfront property.

Garden

Continued from page 32

has provided exotic landscaping around the mansion that is isolated from the road.

"When we got here, there wasn't a tree within 100 feet of the house," D'Ascanio said.

"We brought in hundreds of mature trees and palms. Mr. Landau said to 'make the neighbors disappear.'"

"We planted 20 to 30 types of hibiscus. He loves the color," D'Ascanio said.

One spectacular bromeliad in bloom is reminiscent of the color associated with Landau's

film, "Avatar." Elaborate stained glass art greets the eye all along the perimeter of the home. An arcade of color leads to tennis courts on one side, while stone inlaid coping surrounds a large circular hot tub with a fire pit at its center on the other. Palms and huge orchids surprise those who

walk lush paths that snake their way around the property.

Stepping stones that look

See **GARDEN**, page 35



Enjoy Relaxing Oceanfront Dining
While Feasting On
Exquisite Seafood Dishes
Daily Lunch & Dinner Specials

Explore your marketing options

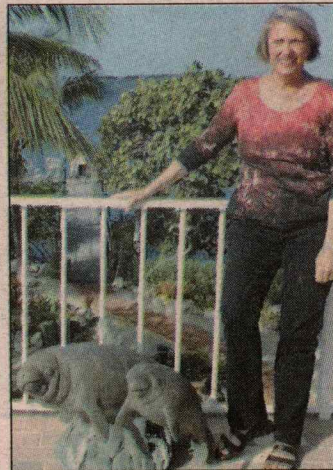
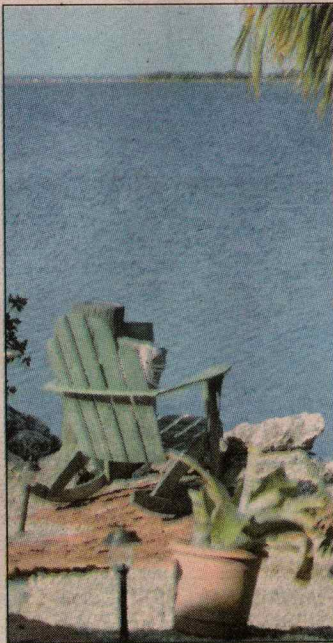
With the new interactive **ExploreBoard**, set to launch March 1 at the Key Largo Chamber of Commerce's Visitor Center at MM 106.



Join us!

Join the Key Largo Chamber of Commerce for a free, 15-minute webinar to learn more about how you can use this great new digital marketing tool to reach your tourism prospects while they

COVER STORY



STEVE GIBBS/Free Press
and LONELL RICE/Contributed

Barbara Pareira's bayfront garden offers sweeping views of Cowpens Bank.



Garden

Continued from page 21

"We bought this house in 1988 and I have spent countless hours landscaping," said Barbara during a recent media tour.

Between terraced rock gardens planted with bromeliads and ferns are reminders that the Pareira's are Florida Gators. An unobtrusive ceramic gator undulates in the sand near a pathway. A "Florida Fans Parking, Only" sign announces their allegiance.

An upstairs balcony, sprinkled with mature potted desert roses, gives an unobstructed view of the water. A lone chair by water's edge provides a singular sunset setting and a view of Cowpens Bank. Two kayaks nestled in a notch between trees await launching.

"We love sunsets here," Barbara said. "Sometimes manatees swim by."

Bali Hai

"Bali Hai" is the home of

Jon and Julie Landau's private garden property on the ocean at mile marker 89.3, off the Old Highway just south of Coral Shores High School.

Franco D'Ascanio, president of D'Assign Source of Marathon,

See **GARDEN**, page 33

