

**Name and Location of News Organization:**

Key West the Newspaper, Key West, FL (AKA The Blue Paper)

Entrants

**First Name:**

Naja

**Last Name:**

Girard

**Phonetic Pronunciation of Name:**

Na'-zha Gi-rard'

**Mailing Address:**

1214 Newton Street Key West FL 33040

**Occupation/Job Title:**

Publisher, Editor and investigative journalist

**Bio:**

Arnaud and Naja Girard, publishers of the re-launched online-only version of Key West the Newspaper (The Blue Paper) previously reported for the original print version of KWTN, Key West's longest running independent weekly, published by Dennis Reeves Cooper, Ph.D., from January 1994 until November 2012. The Girards are perhaps best known for their discovery of and extensive research surrounding the US Navy's 1951 claim of ownership of Key West's Wisteria Island but are also responsible for top investigative stories including breaking news coverage of the highly controversial in-custody-death of Charles Eimers on Thanksgiving Day 2013, the catastrophic police tasing of Matthew Shawn Murphy, and the property tax scandal involving Balfour Beatty to name a few. Arnaud and Naja have lived in Key West since 1986.

**First Name:**

Arnaud

**Last Name:**

Girard

**Phonetic Pronunciation of Name:**

Ar'-no Gi-rard'

**Mailing Address:**

1214 Newton Street Key West FL 33040

**Occupation/Job Title:**

Co-publisher, videographer, cartoonist and investigative journalist

**Bio:**

Arnaud and Naja Girard, publishers of the re-launched online-only version of Key West the Newspaper (The Blue Paper) previously reported for the original print version of KWTN, Key West's longest running independent weekly, published by Dennis Reeves Cooper, Ph.D., from January 1994 until November 2012. The Girards are perhaps best known for their discovery of and extensive research surrounding the US Navy's 1951 claim of ownership of Key West's Wisteria Island but are also responsible for top investigative stories including breaking news coverage of the highly controversial in-custody-death of Charles Eimers on Thanksgiving Day 2013, the catastrophic police tasing of Matthew Shawn Murphy, and the property tax scandal involving Balfour Beatty to name a few. Arnaud and Naja have lived in Key West since 1986.

**Short Summary:**

Immigrants to Key West arrested and deported unjustly. One bicyclist hit by a car and handed over to Border Patrol.

**Name of Person Sponsoring Entry:**

Rick Boettger

**Title and Organization:**

Investigative reporter for Key West the Newspaper [The Blue Paper]

**Mailing Address:**

1402 Olivia St. #1 Key West, FL 33040

**Phone:**

3052948503

**Email:**

rd.boettger@gmail.com

Local Reporting

**Please identify any partnerships with other institutions or organizations in the reporting of this story:**

None originally. The Paper participated in a joint meeting here in Key West with ACLU and SPLC. Eventually, the ACLU and SPLC sent a letter to our officials, as described in the December 12th story. KWTN supplied the ACLU with a copy of the detention hold document the ACLU says is illegal.

**How did the story come to light:**

Trump becomes President. ICE goes hardline on illegal immigrants. City of Key West Commission decides via formal resolution that Key West police officers will NOT ask suspects about their immigration status - meanwhile Jeff Sessions is getting down on "Sanctuary Cities". We find out Haitian restaurant workers, with valid work permits, are disappearing during their annual visit to ICE in Miami and that the County Sheriff's deputies apparently are asking suspects about their immigration status and calling in Border

Patrol on routine traffic stops. Immigrants are ending up jailed by Border Patrol and facing deportation and the constitutionality is suspect. We ask the Sheriff about his policy. He says he doesn't have one. We go digging...

**What obstacles, if any, were overcome in the reporting:**

In general, law enforcement resists interacting with us because of our paper's long history as a police watchdog. In 2002, we got a Civilian Review Board started. In 2005 our then-publisher won a \$250,000 lawsuit for having been wrongfully arrested for publishing information about a police operation. The detainer hold document analyzed by ACLU was obtained through a public records request early on - before we had written our first Sheriff-smacking article - so they were not on guard.

They later (now thoroughly angered at us on this topic among others) decided to cease giving us those forms claiming exemption from Florida's public records law based on a federal FOIA exemption.

**Please describe any innovative techniques used in reporting or telling this story:**

We are the only Florida Keys publication to include video reporting or to use hyperlinks to supporting materials.

**If applicable, how is this work distinguished from previous or competing reporting on this subject:**

A tragedy in the Keys is that all of the other corporate media have completely abandoned investigative reporting—reporters who have quit say they prohibit “controversial” topics. The other media basically afflict the afflicted and comfort the comfortable. We are the last voice, and may need to shut down this year unless we are able to obtain more financial support. Our daily paper has not written one story about the plight of local immigrants. The AP picked up our Marcos story [the crash victim handed over to Border Patrol] and put it on their international wire [Univision had called us after we published - and we provided some advice- call ACLU - call Commissioner Sam Kaufman - etc. They then published their piece claiming it was their “exclusive.” The AP and others picked it up. What is interesting is that the story was told by thousands of publications worldwide and seen by tens of millions of people, but our local daily paper would not touch it.

Link to NBC video and story, showing attribution to

Univision: <https://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/Body-Cam-Video-Shows-Monroe-County-D...>

**How does this story demonstrate community expertise:**

The publishers have long roots in the immigrant community, having immigrated themselves. They speak French with the Haitians and Spanish, helping immensely with interviews of immigrants here. Also, the long relationship with law enforcement, often adversarial, gives them insight into their machinations.

**Describe the impact of the story:**

We can't say that the Sheriff is obeying the law as a result of our work but he is now walking a tight rope. The result of our work is that he's being more careful [as evidenced by bodycam audio with officers talking about "all the letters going around and that they are no longer allowed to call Border Patrol on a routine traffic stop for "translation" but must now say it is for "identification". [This was a result of our "Racistas!" piece]. He is likely still holding people without legal justification based on those detainer hold requests. What has happened because of our coverage is that he is scrambling and the ACLU is now pressuring him to come clean.

**Please note any substantive challenges to the accuracy or fairness of the work and provide any response by the news organization or reporters:**

We originally reported that the deputy sent the immigrant crash victim to "ICE" but quickly changed it to Border Patrol. This was at the request of ICE agents who very unhappy the agency had been mentioned in

such a controversial story. They have had no challenges to the accuracy of their reporting since they acquired the paper 5 years ago.

**If you are including supplemental material, please summarize it:**

Included is a numbered list describing the ten items submitted and three letters of support.

**Haitian workers being reported despite having legal right to be here and following all laws.**

 [Deportation of Two Legal Restaurant Workers](#)

 [Is Monroe a Sanctuary County?](#)

 [ICE: Haitians with Valid Work Permits Must Leave U.S.](#)

**"Are you illegal?" Immigrant Bicyclist HIT BY CAR and Handed over to Border Patrol**

**Sheriff's Deputy Strikes Again: Turns Longtime Chef over to Border Patrol**

**7. Racistas" [VIDEO] [illegal roadside detention of immigrants with legal status]**

**8. Immigration: Damned if You Do, Damned if You Don't [This introduced the legal issue the ACLE letter is based on... continued jailing after bond is paid based on federal detainer hold request**

 [Immigrants" Unlawful Detention: Who Is at Fault?](#)

 [Sheriff's Office Warned: "Stop Illegally Jailing Immigrants"](#)

**Supplemental Material:**

 [List of items and three letters of support](#)

- [Submit an Entry](#)
- [My Entries](#)
- [Entry Rules](#)