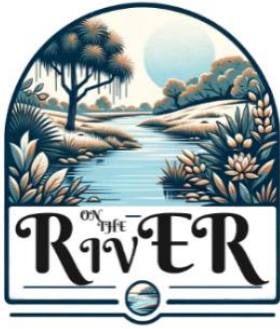


WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

As always, please share with anyone. Ken DeWalt, publisher, [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)



# *On The RIVER* NEWS

*Connecting Caloosahatchee River Communities from Fort Myers Shores to LaBelle  
For all our NEIGHBORS and NEIGHBORHOODS*

---

**TO SUBSCRIBE, offer articles, or to contact the publisher/editor with any questions, email:**  
[kendewalt@ontheriver.org](mailto:kendewalt@ontheriver.org)

*The deadline for receipt of any materials is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month. Issues go out before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, and may be edited.*

*See our commercial advertising terms on the last page of this newsletter. We encourage all subscribers to consider patronizing the paid advertisers. Their support of our mission helps us provide you with local news every month.*

## **FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S OTR**

**AREA NEWS, Page 2**

**ALVA, Page 23**

**BUCKINGHAM & FORT MYERS SHORES, Page 28**

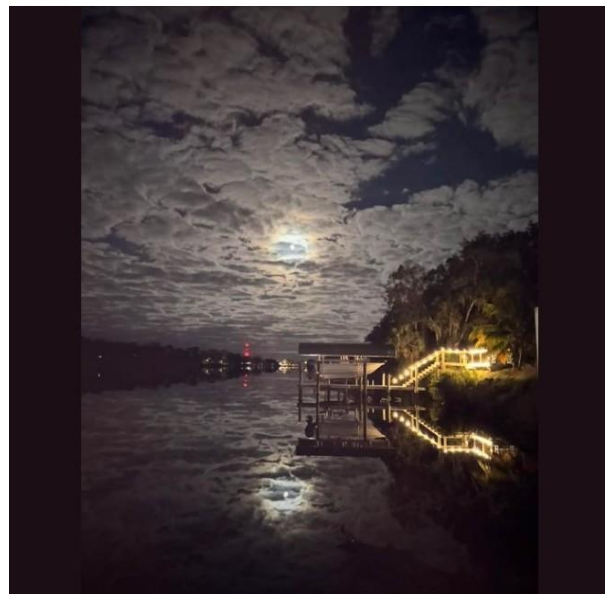
**LABELLE AREA, Page 30**

**NORTH FORT MYERS & NORTH OLGA, Page 36**

**FOR ALL OF US, Page 37**

**IMMIGRANT RIGHTS, Page 62**

**CHURCHES, Page 65**



---

**Special THANKS** to all who support our PAID ADVERTISER's.

**AND** to all PRIVATE DONATIONS from readers who help keep the GIGS in our hard drives  
and the INT in our internet.

# NEWS

The area we cover for news and non-profit events



## Wawa Gas Station for LaBelle discussed at public meeting

(TY Leonard N., Len, Enriquez)



**NOT THE PROPOSED ACTUAL BUILDING**

The Wawa meeting at LaBelle Civic Center Tuesday 7/29 did it not go well for the developer (who says he wants to buy the Sandlot from its current owner, then rent it out to Wawa).

The developer & Wawa say they want to change the property's zoning from its current status "Historic Downtown Business District" to commercial zoning class.

They say they want to close off Yeomans Ave between Main and College. However, much of the crowd chuckled when the Developer's consultant said basically: "You can always drive straight through the Wawa parking lot", assuming there is no congestion in the parking lot.

ALL traffic would enter and leave the gas station through either Main or College (no entrance from SR80) so that the gas station traffic will increase the difficulty of walking both of those now quiet streets that lead into the Downtown Historic area.

A major concern is that there does not appear to be a need in this market for another gas station in LaBelle, especially in it's center. Outside the city, where new developments are being built, might make more sense.



(TY East Lee News-The Roar)

# School Plan Puts Politics Over Students

## \$400M School Bond Advances Without Oversight—Community & Students Left Behind

Concerned Residents of East Lee County

For several years, residents of East Lee County have spoken out about the lack of transparency and accountability in how the School District of Lee County sites new schools. Despite attending town halls, submitting public comment, meeting with board members, and sending hundreds of emails, our voices have largely been ignored.

The issue has now escalated with the approval of a \$400 million Certificate of Participation (COPS) bond known as Lee 2025AB. This bond, pushed through at the June 3, 2025 school board meeting, funds three new schools: Hector Cafferata, Cypress Lake, and the most controversial—'School NNN,' a high school planned for the Joel and Tuckahoe site in rural Alva.

While the need for updated facilities at Cafferata and Cypress Lake is clear, the case for building a massive new high school in Alva is not. The rural region has just 732 enrolled students in all grades combined. In contrast, Lehigh Acres has over 7,900 students and continues to grow rapidly. Yet, the District has opted to prioritize an isolated, rural site that lacks critical infrastructure like water, sewer, and safe roads.

This decision contradicts the District's 'Student Proximity and Neighborhood School Model.' A new school in Alva would require nearly all students to be bused in, creating a commuter campus instead of a neighborhood school.

A federal inquiry (OCR Complaint #04-25-1677) has been filed under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, questioning whether this decision diverts resources from racially and economically diverse communities like Lehigh Acres. This echoes a similar federal complaint that halted a school project in Estero in 2021.

At the June 3 board meeting, five of seven board members expressed serious concerns about the site in

Alva. They cited the lack of utilities, failing road infrastructure, environmental risks, and absence of walkable neighborhoods. Some called for another public workshop or bond modification.

Rather than address those concerns, Superintendent Carlin and senior staff gave inconsistent responses about the bond's flexibility. Chief Strategy Officer Ken Savage recommended moving forward regardless, and suggested one-on-one 'walk-arounds' with board members, raising Sunshine Law concerns.

The board then voted 7-0 to approve the \$400 million bond with School NNN included—without resolving the objections or hearing further public input.

This decision is part of a larger pattern. In the past year, the District cut its board meetings in half and dissolved five citizen advisory committees without public vote. The Construction Committee has vanished, and public speakers are sometimes limited to one minute.

The Audit Committee, one of only two remaining oversight groups, has issued warnings about financial mismanagement, ignored audit findings, and repeat cost overruns on school projects like Riverdale and Bonita Springs High.

There is growing concern that political influence is behind the push. A major developer with ties to recent board campaigns has multiple projects near the Joel/Tuckahoe site. That developer would benefit from new taxpayer-funded roads, utilities, and school-based growth incentives.

Meanwhile, the District already owns a construction-ready site at Joel and David in Lehigh Acres. That site has infrastructure in place and is surrounded by the very students who need relief from overcrowded schools. It was purchased in 2022

and cleared for use by July 2025.

If built there, the new school could serve students immediately, avoid an estimated \$60 million in inflationary costs, and eliminate the need for new utilities or unsafe bus routes.

Joel Boulevard is already at capacity and is a failing, flood-prone road. Four-laning the road is not included in the MPO's 10-year plan. Alva has no sidewalks and no utility service franchise assigned. This is the wrong place and the wrong time for this school.

We urge Congressman Greg Steube—whose district touches the affected area—to look into the matter. This is about more than one school. It's about how public funds are used, how communities are heard, and whether we're building schools to serve students or developers.

A full dossier of documents has been submitted to state and federal agencies, including audit reports, enrollment maps, and confirmation of the federal Title VI complaint.

Students in Lehigh Acres shouldn't be bused past their homes. Residents in Alva deserve relief. And taxpayers deserve accountability.

It's not too late to change course. The District can swap timelines—build now at Joel/David and reserve Joel/Tuckahoe for future use. This would restore trust and serve the actual needs of our community.

Respectfully,

Concerned Residents of East Lee County

### WHAT THIS MEANS FOR RESIDENTS NEAR JOEL/TUCKAHOE

- **Dangerous traffic will increase.** Joel Blvd is already near

failing status—school traffic will overwhelm this two-lane road with no sidewalks or safe turn lanes.

- **Student drivers and buses raise the stakes.** Teens and heavy buses will navigate unsafe roads daily, increasing the risk of serious accidents or fatalities.
- **Infrastructure costs could fall on you.** There's no water, sewer, or utility franchise assigned. Taxpayers may foot the bill for road and utility expansion.
- **Your rural quality of life is at risk.** A 2,800-student school could invite dense development, changing the area's character forever.
- **You had no real say.** Despite board member concerns, the public was bypassed, workshops canceled, and oversight committees quietly dissolved.
- **Second Amendment rights in jeopardy.**

### WHAT THIS MEANS FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES IN LEHIGH

- **Lehigh is overlooked again.** Thousands of East Zone students will commute miles farther—despite a ready-to-build school site in Lehigh.
- **Longer rides, greater risk.** Lee County leads the state in serious traffic crashes. Longer daily commutes raise the odds of accidents, missed class time, and fatigue.
- **Overcrowding in Lehigh continues.** The district's own data shows Subzone 2 remains over capacity—but gets no immediate relief.
- **Wasted taxpayer dollars.** Building in Alva requires new utilities and infrastructure, adding millions in cost and delaying relief for the areas that need it now.
- **Civil rights concerns under review.** A federal Title VI investigation is underway, questioning whether this decision disadvantages diverse, lower-income communities. 🐾

## Lee County may build EMS facility in Alva but some have mixed feelings

**A retired EMS worker says the site isn't where service is needed, and sees it as a sign of the growth neighbors have been fighting**

(TY Fox 4 NEWS-Austin Schargorodski)

Lee County commissioners could buy a plot of land in Alva for a future EMS facility. Retired EMS worker who calls the plan bittersweet, saying it's tied to the growth heading this way.

the growth neighbors have been fighting

The county's looking to spend \$330,000 to buy a 0.71-acre lot on River Hall Parkway, right off State Road 80. They say they plan to, one day, build an EMS station there to better serve the Alva area.



But retired EMS worker Denise Eberle says there's another place she thinks makes more sense: State Road 31. "Which is actually where it would be needed because of all the development that's occurring on 31 between Babcock Ranch and Neal Communities," Eberle said.



Schargorodski has previously reported on a recently approved 1,100-home development by Neal Communities off SR-31. At the time, people who live in Alva said packing that many homes into a rural area would put too much strain on local services like EMS.

"We are aware that there is not sufficient fire and EMS services to service the entire footprint so public safety is a concern," said Grant Fichter, President of Alva Inc.

Watch to see what the retired EMS worker told Austin about the possible new facility:

Schargorodski has previously reported on a recently approved 1,100-home development by Neal Communities off SR-31. At the time, people who live in Alva said packing that many homes into a rural area would put too much strain on local services like EMS.





"We are aware that there is not sufficient fire and EMS services to service the entire footprint so public safety is a concern," said Grant Fichter, President of Alva Inc.

So, Eberle says it's good to see the county prioritizing EMS service here. But she calls it bittersweet, believing it's meant to sustain growth many in Alva have been pushing back against, including a new high school and eventual middle school proposed off Tuckahoe and Joel Road.

"Following that would come development," Eberle said.

Lee County says Alva is part of their capital improvement plan. They say the fire truck at the Fort Myers Shores station already has a paramedic on board, so only EMT staff would be needed to run an ambulance full-time, and that staff is already trained and ready.

Lee County commissioners will be discussing the lot purchase and its future.

---

## Boardwalk repairs finally coming to Alva Park nearly 3 years after Ian damage

### Lee County approves nearly \$4 million to repair boardwalks, including at Caloosahatchee Regional Park in Alva

(TY Fox News- Austin Schargorodski)



Nearly three years later, a damaged boardwalk at Caloosahatchee Regional Park in Alva just got the green light to be fixed after Hurricane Ian left it in pieces.

Fox 4's Alva Community Correspondent Austin Schargorodski works in the area daily, so he stopped by the park to check out the damage and hear what neighbors think about the fix.

This park stretches right along the Caloosahatchee with more than 20 miles of hiking trails. But right now, it's a little less than that. A stretch of boardwalk is roped off because of damage from Hurricane Ian. You could see dozens of wooden planks missing along the path.

Alannah Felton just started exploring the park, so she says the thought of getting more trails to choose from is a big deal. "There's already so many miles and so many different loops and trails in here, that that's so exciting to me that there will be another option," Felton said.



That's because commissioners approved a nearly \$4 million dollar contract through FEMA and FDEM funding to fix this boardwalk and three others across Lee County, including Galt Preserve, Matanzas Pass Preserve, and Royal Palm Park.

The county says work will begin this fall and, weather permitting, wrap up in about a year. You can track the progress on Lee County's website. Just look for the "Boardwalk Repairs" section.

## Lee County Commissioner Mike Greenwell diagnosed with thyroid cancer

(TY WINK News-Nicholas Karsen)

Lee County District 5 Commissioner Mike Greenwell has confirmed with WINK News that he is undergoing treatment for medullary thyroid cancer.

According to Greenwell's representatives, as part of his recovery and protection of his immune system, the district 5 commissioner has been working from home and participating in board meetings via Zoom and over the phone, stating that he has done so on Monday and Tuesday.

**In a statement regarding his health, Greenwell said,**

"I remain fully engaged and committed to serving the people of Lee County. My focus continues to be on growing our economy, advancing hurricane recovery efforts, and delivering a fiscally responsible, balanced budget that meets the needs of our rapidly growing community. I look forward to returning to the office as soon as I'm able, but in the meantime, I remain focused on county business while working remotely. As a man of faith, I sincerely appreciate the prayers and support while I fight this battle."



---

## Oak Park Village in ALVA Builds a New Riverfront



For years the 1970s built riverfront was deteriorating. Fast and big boats were washing away the constantly repaired rocks, right back to the original steel sea wall.

This summer the highly regarded HONC Construction was contracted to completely rebuild and rejuvenate an angled coral rock faced slope founded upon solid coral stone at its base.



The results, especially once the grass grows in, are wonderful.

Boat on by and take a look!







## United Way 211: SWFL's leading resource during hurricane season

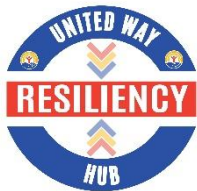
(TY Lake Okeechobee News-Madison Mitchell)

The United Way 211 helpline is a trusted resource that streamlines access to essential services for Southwest Floridians, such as rent and utility assistance, food distribution and tax preparation support. It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, connecting callers experiencing financial hardship, medical issues or another crisis. Trained staff and volunteers – real people, not automated bots – offer guidance in English and Spanish to help individuals and families navigate their next steps.

Locally, United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades operates United Way 211, which is the community's primary entry point into the health and human services system. During emergencies, though, United Way 211 becomes the community's Emergency Information Hotline through a partnership with Lee County Emergency Management. The emergency helpline is activated during hurricanes and tropical storms, as well as public health emergencies like the early days of COVID-19, and representatives offer real-time information and support tailored to evolving needs during a crisis.



When hurricanes approach and start impacting the region, the nature of calls to United Way 211 becomes more urgent. Residents experiencing various levels of stress are seeking help with evacuation routes, shelter locations, access to life-saving medication and transportation options. The helpline's staff and volunteers work tirelessly, using up-to-date information to help callers get the answers and information they need.



To further support recovery, United Way coordinates a network of Resiliency Hubs across the region. These hubs distribute critical supplies, such as food and water, to storm survivors when utilities may be down and stores might be closed. Volunteers brought together by United Way also assist with tasks like clearing debris, delivering meals to homebound seniors and tarping damaged roofs. Their hands-on help in the wake of disaster expedites the region's response and recovery.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Ian, United Way 211 fielded more than 25,000 calls in the first thirty days. These included urgent inquiries about evacuation routes, shelter availability and access to Disaster Recovery Centers. In cases where callers were in immediate danger, 211 operators coordinated directly with local emergency responders to ensure help was dispatched quickly and effectively.

The operation of the United Way 211 helpline highlights the power of collaboration and preparedness in building community resilience. It is a centralized, accessible resource that not only connects individuals to critical services, but also helps coordinate emergency response efforts. By acting as both

an information hub and an action network, United Way 211 plays a key role in reducing harm and moving recovery forward during some of Southwest Florida's most challenging moments.

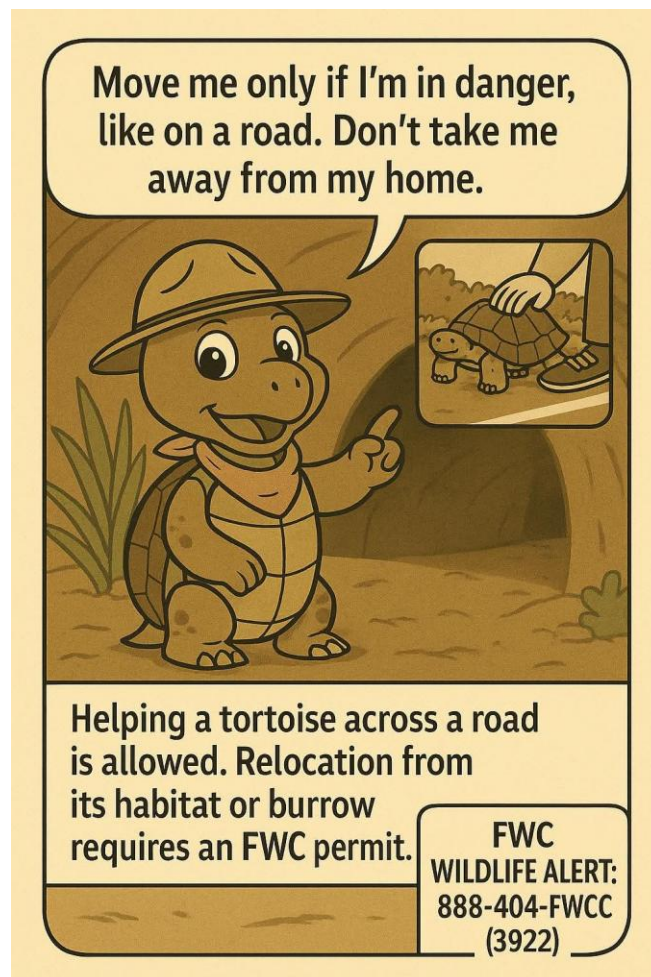
For the residents of Lee, Hendry and Glades counties, the United Way 211 helpline is far more than just a phone number... it's a trusted partner in times of uncertainty that provides reassurance, direction, and life-saving support when it's needed most.



#### About the Author



Madison Mitchell is the senior vice president of Community Impact & Disaster Response at United Way of Lee, Hendry, and Glades Counties. She focuses on solving community challenges and championing collaboration. Mitchell has played a key role in launching and expanding programs like WeCare, Reunite, United Way Resiliency Hubs, Beesley's Paw Prints, Gifts in Kind, and United Way Community Partnership Schools. Visit [UnitedWayLee.org](http://UnitedWayLee.org) for more information





## Lee County School District superintendent speaks on teacher shortage

(TY WINK NEWS-Claire Galt)

Lee County is tackling its teacher shortage head-on, making significant strides in reducing vacancies.

A year ago, Lee County Schools was short 235 teachers. Now, that number has dropped to just 39 vacancies, according to a district spokesperson.

Dr. Denise Carlin, the superintendent of Lee County Schools, assured that every classroom will have a certified teacher qualified to teach the respective subject or grade level.

### How?

Dr. Denise Carlin: "We have recruitment fairs. We've had open houses here. Even the principals have been having barbecues at their school. Come on over. We'd like to talk with you about education as a possible career choice."

The district also embraced virtual options to attract teachers from other states and even from abroad through a cultural program.



### "How do you retain teachers? How do you keep them?"

Carlin explained that salary and working conditions are key factors. During her campaign, she held coffee meetings with small groups of teachers to discuss these issues. "We're in bargaining right now, so hopefully we'll be able to work through that and have some good outcomes for salaries for our teachers," Dr. Carlin said.

The district is also addressing the uptick in mental health issues among students by providing increased support.

### Have incentives to get teachers to stay or go to high-risk schools paid off?

Dr. Denise Carlin: "Exponentially they've paid off. It has been amazing." Teachers are being offered up to \$9,000 to teach in high-risk schools in tested areas, which has encouraged many to stay.

The district's efforts are showing positive results, ensuring that students have qualified educators in their classrooms.

---

**Another Opinion>>>>>>>>**

## Teacher shortage in Lee County drops, but union highlights ongoing issues

(TY WINK NEWS- Brinkley Hill)

The Lee County School District is facing a brewing conflict over teacher staffing as the new school year begins.

The district has made significant progress in reducing its teacher shortage, going from more than 170 vacancies last year to just 35 now.

However, the Teachers Association of Lee County claims the situation is not as rosy as it seems. They sent out a survey and received more than 500 responses in 48 hours, highlighting ongoing issues.

Kevin Daly, President of the Teachers Association of Lee County, shared a letter detailing complaints from high school, middle school and elementary school teachers. Issues include combined classes due to staffing shortages, reduced special area coverage leading to loss of planning time, overcrowded classrooms with up to 40 students and classes led by staff without appropriate certification.

"I played the saxophone for about 6 minutes, and you would definitely not want me in a music classroom, but I'm a certified state teacher," said Daly. "I'm a certified teacher in the room, but I have no business teaching music."

These issues are not new. In the past two years, students reported instances of teachers instructing subjects outside their expertise, such as a Spanish teacher teaching math and a health and P.E. teacher teaching reading.

"I think over an extended period of time, I certainly think it affects student achievement," said Daly. "You just don't have the content knowledge you need to effectively teach the subject you've been asked to teach. I think it provides extra stress levels on the teacher."

Despite these challenges, Daly acknowledged the district's efforts in getting certified teachers into classrooms.

"The public school system is the heartbeat of the community," said Daly. "Everybody, whether you have a student or not in the system or you're an employee of the system, has a right to ask for the best public school system."

The school district stated that it has complied with state law by providing a teacher in every classroom and will continue hiring until all positions are filled.

the Teachers Association and the school district will meet at the bargaining table. The district expressed eagerness to participate in discussions to best serve its teachers.

Fort Myers, FL – August 14, 2025 – The Teachers Association of Lee County (TALC) is calling attention to a serious discrepancy between the District's public claims and the reality inside our schools. While the District has stated that all classrooms were covered by certified teachers on Monday, TALC's climate survey of members tells a different story.

Responses from educators across elementary, middle, and high schools reveal:

- Multiple instances where classes were led by staff without the appropriate certification for the subject or grade level assigned.
- Combined classes due to staffing shortages.
- Special area coverage reductions leading to significant loss of planning time for teachers.
- Overcrowded classrooms, with some reported at 35–40 students.

In addition to quantitative results, teachers reported that:

- "We don't have enough grade-level teachers, so level 1's are being placed in college-level classes. It's not right!"



## NO DEAL: Bargaining talks continue between Lee teachers union and school district

(TY Fox 4 News-Miyoshi Price)



Teachers association and school district meet for 12th time this year as starting salaries lag behind neighboring districts across Southwest Florida

Lee County teachers and the school district remain at an impasse over teacher pay after their 12th bargaining session of the year, with negotiations set to continue in September amid an ongoing unfair labor practice complaint.

The Teachers Association of Lee County and the Lee County School District met on Monday. Still, they failed to reach an agreement on teacher compensation, despite what union leaders described as progress toward the end of the session.

"I think we made progress towards the end. We're not there yet," said Kevin Daly, president of the Teachers Association of Lee County.

The ongoing negotiations come as Lee County teachers face salary challenges compared to neighboring districts. Current starting salaries across Southwest Florida districts include:

- Lee County: \$50,500 • Hendry County: \$51,000
- Collier County: \$57,000 • Charlotte County: \$58,154

All of these dollar amounts can be found on the school district's salary schedule web page.

"That's not enough to really live," Daly said of Lee County's current starting salary.

### **Following the meeting, the School District of Lee County issued a statement:**

"The School District of Lee County and the Teachers Union of Lee County continued their interest based bargaining on August 25, 2025. The School District has met the union's interest for bereavement, parental leave, and pay increases for compression. We have presented a new proposal that raises starting pay to \$54,500, provides a 7% salary increase, in which 2% is in exchange for the School District's interest of teachers spending 45 minutes of additional work time per week, and limits time in meetings. An agreement has not yet been made, but we look forward to our next bargaining session on September 8 where discussion will continue about the proposals at hand."

- Rob Spicker, Director, Communications, Marketing, and Public Relations

### **Understanding the compensation system**

The negotiations involve complex discussions about how teacher experience is calculated. Daly explained the difference between "X" and "L" designations that determine compensation levels. For

example, a teacher who worked as a paraprofessional for two years before becoming a teacher for 15 years would have an "L" of 17 years with the district, but an "X" of 15 years of teaching experience.

"I think it looks like kind of the idea that the compression offset, or the raises, or whatever you want to call it is going to be tiered based on years with the district," Daly said.

The union is also pushing for better recognition of experience for special instructional staff like nurses and psychologists who worked in their fields outside the school district.

"If you're a nurse for us right here, to four if you work for Lee health, you didn't get those nursing years as experience because you weren't a nurse for the school district," Daly said.

### **Unfair labor practice complaint**

Adding complexity to the negotiations, the Teachers Association of Lee County filed an unfair labor practice complaint against the school district two weeks ago.

"It's kind of a strange thing to file an unfair labor practice while we're at the table," Daly said.

"X is credible years of experience," Daly said. "L is longevity. That's years you've worked for the school district of Lee County."

The complaint centers on compensation issues and what the union considers unilateral action by the district. "Essentially, what the district did was it took unilateral action, and in the area of compensation, and compensation is one of those things that's covered as a mandatory subject of bargaining in the state laws," Daly said.



The district declared an educational emergency to implement certain compensation changes, which the union disputes.

"They have what I would consider to be a novel interpretation of the law. And I say that not because I'm an attorney, but because no other district, you know, has decided that this is something they can do," Daly said.

The union and district will meet to agree on an arbitrator to hear the case, with a hearing date to be scheduled. Daly says the process could take 12 to 18 months to resolve. "We're pretty confident, we hopefully will win this one like we did the last one, and then we'll be able to negotiate this if we want to continue to do it, to make it fair," Daly said.

### **The union argues the current system creates inequity among teachers.**





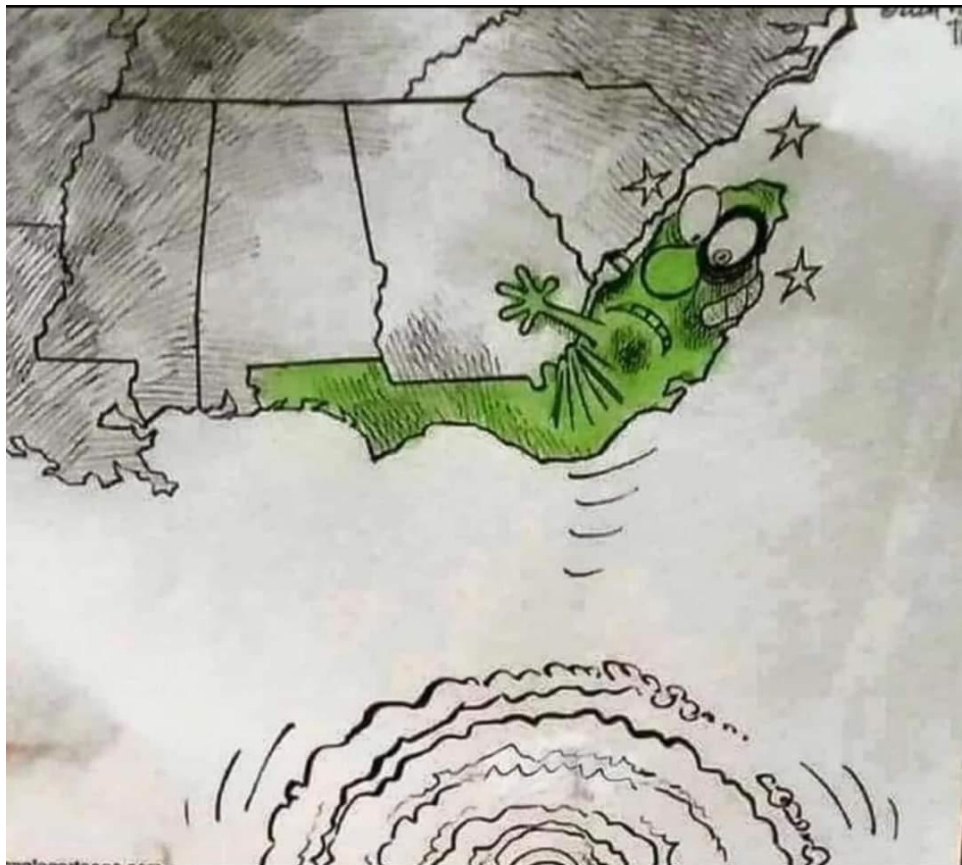
"What it really does is it pits teachers against teachers. You can have a school where you and I teach different things same school, you're getting money, and I'm not just because you're teaching fourth grade and I'm teaching third grade," Daly said.

Teachers attending the meeting expressed hope for salary increases beyond the proposed compensation for additional work time. Without competitive salaries, Daly warned that Lee County risks losing quality educators to higher-paying districts.

"It's one of those things where we're underpaid in comparison to our peers," Daly said.

**The next bargaining session is scheduled for September 8.**

---



## Hendry County celebrates it's teachers after first B grade in district history

**The Huddle Up Hendry event recognized hard work, boosted morale, and prepared staff for the year ahead.**

(Fox4 News-Austin Schargorodski)



With a brand-new "B" rating to celebrate, Hendry County put teachers in the spotlight their annual Huddle Up Hendry event.

Fox 4's Hendry County Community Correspondent, Austin Schargorodski, works in the area daily, so the school district there knows him well. It's how he got the opportunity to see how the school district honored and recharged the people students rely on most.

Teachers from across the district brought the energy, filling the LaBelle Middle School gym to celebrate hard work that helped the Hendry County School District earn its first-ever B rating.

"The fact that we went to a B over the last four years is absolutely remarkable," a said Superintendent Mike Swindle, speaking at the event.

The district handed out Summit Awards to teachers whose students made big gains, like Nina Bautista, who teaches 5th grade at Eastside Elementary.

"I'm happy that I was recognized for all the hard work that I put into it, because I don't think people realize how much hard work, we put into it to ensure the great outcome of our students," Nina Bautista said.

The district also announced they boosted teacher pay - a 4% raise across the board - pushing Hendry into the top ten for average salary statewide. Superintendent Mike Swindle says that investment is paying off.

Superintendent Swindle said, "We had the fourth largest academic growth in the state this year. That's amazing. But again, that's the result of our teachers working really hard, aligning what they teach to what's really important in the testing with the state of Florida, and ensuring every student gets a learning gain," Swindle said.

After the ceremony, teachers headed to workshops to gather new tools for the year ahead. They say they're stepping into that first bell ready to give their best.



## Trump's executive order on homeless relocation sparks SWFL debate

(TY Wink News-Fallon Crowell)

President Donald Trump signed a controversial executive order to remove homeless individuals from public streets and relocate them into long-term institutional care.

The administration aims to restore order and safety, but some local organizations in Southwest Florida are raising concerns.

Michael Overway, the executive director of the Lee County Homeless Coalition, expressed his worries. "They are talking about committing people into institutions," said Overway. "Years and years ago, the government tried that, and it was a failed policy then of trying to put people into institutions to try and regulate their mental health."

The order describes itself as a humane solution, but locals question its direct impact on the county. Lee County is currently reviewing the executive order with community partners. Kinga Cook, a formerly homeless Fort Myers resident, shared her perspective.

"When people see them, they make them invisible because they don't want to see them," said Cook.

Enforcement plans for the executive order remain unclear, but local advocates closely monitor the situation. They argue that real change begins with funding, not force.

If you or someone you know is experiencing or facing homelessness, contact the Lee County Human and Veteran Services Department coordinated entry at 239-533-7996 to receive an assessment for housing and services.





## Parents frustrated by overcrowded buses at Riverdale High School

(TY WINK NEWS- Haley Zarcone)

Students at Riverdale High School are facing overcrowding issues on their school buses, with not enough seats for every child.

**A photo sent to WINK News by a student's mother shows a child sitting in the aisle, highlighting the problem.**

The county states that bus drivers are not allowed to leave if a student is not seated. However, parents report similar overcrowding on other bus routes.

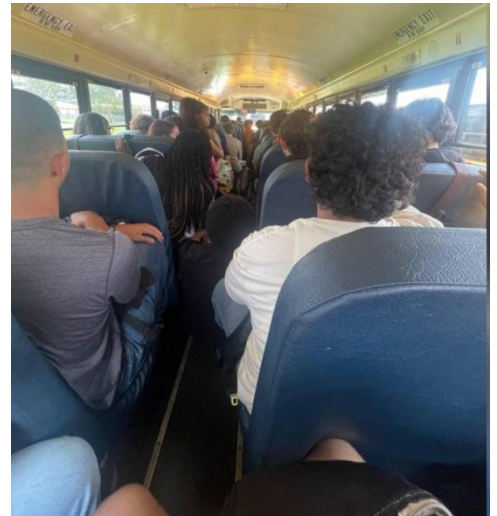
Some parents say buses are so full that they must split the students, taking one group home first and returning for the rest.

The school district acknowledges the overcrowding and says, "If buses fill to capacity, students could be assigned to another bus with available space, or a new bus could be designated to run part of the route."

"The new drivers are going to have problems with their routes. There's going to be things that were not looked into," said Zachary McLean, whose son is a sophomore at Riverdale High School. "And I really don't believe that consolidating routes and moving school times is going to fix the underlying issue with the routes and the way that the school system is using the buses. There just needs to be more of them, period."

McLean's son's bus was so overcrowded on Monday that it had to make a second trip to pick up students.

The school district held a meeting to address the bus route capacity issues.



## Tests show Lake Okeechobee is six times too toxic for humans

(TY Gulf Coast News- Sarah Mankowitz)



Tests conducted on Lake Okeechobee have revealed algae blooms that are six times too toxic for humans. So, we went to Lake O to collect samples and made stops along the way. Barry Rosen, a professor at Florida Gulf Coast University, examined the samples and noted, "Several filaments of cyanobacteria, also known as blue-green algae."

Rosen explained that the water contained multiple types of toxins, saying, "Oh, so we have another cyanobacteria in there. We can make a whole different suite of toxins." Rosen identified a liver toxin in the samples, stating, "Oh, there it is. We got a little microcystis. A liver toxin that can be harmful."

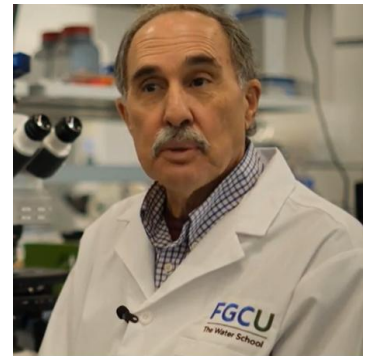
The toxic algae become problematic when water is released westward through the Caloosahatchee River, potentially leading to blooms in local waterways.

Rosen highlighted the challenge of managing the algae, noting, "What are we going to do about it? We've been around a lot longer than us, so they have evolution on their side and they've been around. They're highly adapted and are very successful. It's not a swimming pool. You can't just spray it because you can only kill so much, and everything that's just a few feet out of it's going to start growing and take advantage of the nutrients that are now released from the dying cells or dead cells, or no longer have that competition."

Rosen acknowledged that water releases are an unfortunate reality on Florida's Gulf Coast, and algae levels can fluctuate based on weather conditions. He said, "So what's it going to be like tomorrow. Where's the wind going to blow? Is it going to blow it in from the lake?" The tests indicated that the further from the lake, the less toxic algae were found. However, increased water releases could heighten the risk of blooms.

Rosen also warned about the dangers to pets, explaining, "If you get a high enough dose, it can be toxic to a pet. There's been dog deaths this year. I just got an email from someone from Washington state about a dog death." He added, "If their pets go into the water and it gets on their fur and then they groom and lick it, they get a much higher dose than just drinking the water."

Mike McCormick, a Fort Myers resident, expressed concern for his dog, saying, "You can't keep him out of the lake. So, if we went up there, he would go in, which wouldn't be good."



**Please consider supporting our paid advertisers below with your business. They are supporting the mission of ON THE RIVER for you.**

(Paid Ad- 10/25)



**Patricia (Patty) Walker**  
**REALTOR®**  
Referrals welcome!

239-340-3904  
PattyWalkerREMAX@gmail.com

**RE/MAX GULF COAST LIVING**  
12928 Palm Beach Blvd Ste C  
Fort Myers, FL 33905

Each Office Independently Owned and Operated

Ad - 12/25)



**GROW YOUR BUSINESS IN SW FLORIDA!**

**EAST LEE COUNTY NEWS** is a monthly direct mail local newspaper for the Daniels Corridor, Gateway, Lehigh Acres, Alva, Buckingham, and The Shores areas! Advertise in the East Lee County News to reach our 20,000+ direct mail readers and up to 2,500 more from our free pickup locations. Share news and special offers with consumers every month!

**ADVERTISE IN THE ROAR**

**NOW SERVING**  
33936 • 33971 • 33972 • 33974 • 33913 • 33966 • 33912  
ALVA • MOST OF BUCKINGHAM AND THE SHORES

2024 THE EAST LEE COUNTY NEWS RATE TABLE

\*Ask about our Island Ads!  
Custom Sizing & Premium Placement

AD SIZES	FULL PG	3/4 PG	2/3 PG	1/2 PG	1/3 PG	ISLAND*	1/4 PG	1/6 PG	1/8 PG	BUSINESS BILLBOARD
OPEN	1850	1525	1445	1045	760	PCI	575	445	325	1x Business Card
3 TIMES	1640	1425	1280	930	720	PCI	530	420	310	\$145
6 TIMES	1475	1260	1170	900	675	PCI	515	390	300	2x Business Card
12 TIMES	1325	1130	1040	825	610	PCI	490	360	285	\$190



(239) 470-5611 | [PRESS@EASTLEENews.COM](mailto:PRESS@EASTLEENews.COM) | [WWW.EASTLEENews.COM](http://WWW.EASTLEENews.COM)



(Paid Ad /295)



## Here's What People Are Saying About Us...

★★★★★

Alva Senior Living is a beautiful new facility that our community truly needed. It's bright, clean, and thoughtfully planned with care in every detail. The staff is warm, professional, and I would absolutely trust them with my own family. Highly recommended.

★★★★★

We recently had the opportunity to tour the brand-new Alva Assisted Living facility, and it's safe to say this is a wonderful and much-needed addition to the Alva community. From the moment you walk through the doors, you're greeted with a warm, welcoming atmosphere that truly feels like home.

★★★★★

I highly recommend this new facility. Its bright, clean and every detail was thought out perfectly. We have needed a facility in our area for a long time and I look forward to watching the residents thrive there! I would absolutely trust their staff to care for my family!

★★★★★

Alva Assisted Living is a true gem in Lee County—combining top-tier care, a beautiful setting, and a compassionate team. Whether you're exploring options for yourself or a loved one, this is definitely a place worth visiting. Highly recommend and trust Juli and her team 100%.

★★★★★

If you're considering assisted living in the Alva area, I highly recommend visiting this beautiful new community. It's a place where seniors can thrive.

★★★★★

The environment is welcoming, clean, and thoughtfully designed to promote independence while ensuring safety and comfort. Residents can enjoy a true sense of community where they'll quickly feel at home.

### ***We Hope You Will Be Our Next Review!***

If you have questions you'd like to ask, schedule a tour, or get a free consultation, we're just a phone call away: **(239) 448-6710**



**alva** SENIOR LIVING  
18401 Palm Beach Boulevard  
Alva, Florida 33920  
(239) 448-6710



WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

(Paid Ad – 4/26)

**CAPABILITY. COMMITMENT. COMMUNITY.**  
**CALL FOR A FREE QUOTE**

**State**  
INSURANCE

**GOODLAD & SWANK**  
INSURANCE, LLC

**Why Not Insure It All  
Under One Roof?**

**239-674-7630**  
**[www.goodladandswank.com](http://www.goodladandswank.com)**  
**702 Leeland Heights Blvd W Lehigh Acres, FL 33936**





(Paid AD – 6/26)

## Manatee & Eco River Tours

March through November – join us for an ECO RIVER TOUR where we leave from Sweetwater Landing Marina on SR 31 in Fort Myers and travel eastbound on the Caloosahatchee River through the original river course (oxbows) learning of the history of the area. Travel through the W.P. Franklin Locks and then return to the marina after a lovely 2-hour narrated cruise.



### SUNSET CRUISE!

Join us for a sunset cruise from Sweetwater Landing Marina going westbound on the Caloosahatchee River. A nice spread of hors d'oeuvres is provided along with water and soda. You are welcome to bring your own beverage if you'd like. Enjoy a leisurely cruise on the Caloosahatchee, watch the birds come into rest for the night and enjoy the spectacular southwest Florida sunsets!



All tours leave from Sweetwater Landing Marina located at 16991 S.R. 31, Fort Myers, FL 33905

To book visit our website at: [www.ManateeAndEcoRiverTours.com](http://www.ManateeAndEcoRiverTours.com)




WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers


(Paid Ad – 11/25)

---


JEANNINE COOK, REALTOR 



---

Jeannine Cook, Realtor  
*The Florida Keys & Southwest Florida,  
not just destinations but lifestyles™*



[www.jeanninecook.net](http://www.jeanninecook.net) 305-794-0184





---

THE FLORIDA KEYS AND SOUTHWEST FLORIDA.  
*NOT JUST DESTINATIONS BUT LIFESTYLES*

---



*Why settle for searching in just one MLS when you can explore three? With over \$37 million in sales in my real estate career, I'm here to help with everything from residential and commercial properties to vacant land. What exciting step are you thinking about in the real estate market? Let's chat and make it happen together!*

PROUD MEMBER OF THE GULF COAST, FLORIDA KEYS & BEACHES (BROWARD/PALM BEACH/ST. LUCIE) BOARD OF REALTORS

---

Paid Ad – 12/25)



**Digital security tailored to the home and/or small business computers, phones, etc.**

**Strong and seamless protection from online threats and human error.**

**I signed on after being advised to by one of our web designers and numerous other users. At the home rate of \$69.00 a month for 3 devices.**

**-Ken DeWalt, OTR publisher**

**I invite you to check it out.**

**<https://refer.eset.com/ab7n3>**

WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

# ALVA EVENTS

---



## ALVA INC

21471 N River Rd, Alva, FL 33920

ZOOM access: <https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 852-1643-8980 Passcode: 302401

[Info@AlvaFl.org](mailto:Info@AlvaFl.org) [www.ALVAFL.org](http://www.ALVAFL.org) **NEXT MEETING: Every Second Tuesday, 7pm, Alva Community Center**

---



## ALVA USS HANNAH CHAPTER

<https://usshannahnsdar.org/>

---



USS Hannah Chapter, NSDAR, congratulates Caleb Golden, of Babcock Ranch, Florida State President of Children of the American Revolution and member of the Billy Bowlegs Society, C.A.R., on the success of his state project supporting Wolfhounds Legacy. The Florida C.A.R.

presented Wolfhounds Legacy a donation of \$6,000.00 at their state conference in February and will continue selling pins (\$10) and challenge coins (\$25) through the Golden administration in April 2025. Wolfhounds Legacy is a Cape Coral based non-profit that pairs dogs from high-kill shelters with veterans and first responders, offering free service-dog training; saving two lives at a time.



If you would like a pin or challenge coin, contact [usshannahnsdar@gmail.com](mailto:usshannahnsdar@gmail.com). Information on Wolfhounds Legacy can be found at [www.wolfhoundslegacy.org](http://www.wolfhoundslegacy.org).



(TY East Lee News-The Roar)

# The Alsatian and the Pioneer's Daughter: The Story of Fichter's Creek

James Kennedy | Community Organizer

As a writer for The News-Press, local resident Betty Hawkins captured many in-person interviews that reflected the history and development of Southwest Florida. With permission from her estate, we wanted to share some of the tales from her collection *Twice Upon a Time: Stories of Southwest Florida's Early Settlers*.

For our first selection, we've chosen a story about the Fichter family's arrival in Southwest Florida. We hope you enjoy reading it — and that it inspires you to explore more of the history that shaped our area.

## THE STORY OF PETER FICHTER

Early in the 1880s, a lone stranger rode into the new settlement at the Caloosahatchee crossing. Intending to stop only for a rest, he found he had reached the end of a pilgrimage which had started years before, far across the ocean.

Born in Alsace-Lorraine, a region wedged between France, Switzerland, Germany, and Belgium, Peter Fichter had left his native land to come to America and join relatives in Cincinnati. He had heard of the lands being granted by the government to homesteaders, and it was his chance to have more land than he had ever dreamed of owning. Learning he must be of age before making a claim, he remained in the rolling hills of Ohio until twenty-one, then journeyed southward hunting for a compatible climate and good soil.

Long months of travel following trails made by other adventurers, animals, and Indians brought him to the Caloosahatchee region and ultimately to the up-river settlement where he must cross over on his southward journey. The warm friendliness of the pioneers encouraged him to stay on for a while and accept their hospitality.

As he sauntered about the countryside, he was impressed with the beauty and fertility of the terrain and began feeling an affinity for the region. One day, while roaming several miles west of the settlement, he came across a verdant section sliced through by a sleepy, meandering creek and knew he had found what he had long sought. He staked out 160 acres, built a modest house, and after improving

the required acreage, cleared out the creekway which his neighbors at the crossing immediately dubbed "Fichter's Creek."

Anxious to help the young stranger and pass on to him their experience in growing things, the settlers shared seedlings from citrus fields they had already started and invited him for substantial meals to break up the monotony of bachelor cooking.

The home of Mrs. Margaret English, who had arrived with her four sons and three daughters in 1876, seemed the center of activity for the budding community, and it was only natural the young Alsatian would gravitate to where companionship and fine food were in abundance.

It was only natural, too, that Margaret's dainty little daughter, Nettie, would catch the eye of the young man who leaned against the great hewn-log mantelpiece and stroked his smart Vandyke beard as he watched her flitting lightly about her maidenly chores. Peter fell in love at once, but little Nettie had a bit of growing up ahead of her, and it was a few years until he asked for her hand in marriage.

There were no honeymoons in those days, and after their wedding the couple drove out the dusty trail to Peter's house bordered by his winding creek. Furniture brought in by sailboat from New Orleans was put off at the Fort Myers landing, and Nettie delighted in decorating her home while Peter worked the land and brought up its potential.

In following years, when two sons and two daughters comprised their family, Peter built a fine two-story house and also added to his holdings by buying the Brenheiser homestead which adjoined his property. As the children grew, the devoted parents warded off the loneliness of their isolation with standing invitations to the English cousins and youngsters in the vicinity to visit at their home.

Nettie, following her mother's custom, always had a stone crock filled to the brim with fragrant fresh-baked cookies, and Peter made available materials for a spacious playhouse and equipment for fishing. As an added feature of attraction, he subscribed to the New York Times, and the pages of

comics, saved for years on end, were a source of pleasure to every child for miles around.

The nearest neighbor at that time was a Frenchman, Alex Longot, who had previously homesteaded on the riverbank across from Peter. As he was in delicate health, the Fichters took him under their wing. Nettie saw to his meals, and the children paid daily visits to "Uncle Alex" to assuage his lonely hours. When the little man became too ill to live alone, the Fichters took him into their home as a member of the family.

At his death, Nettie and Peter learned he had willed his homestead to them, and that, added to their own acreage, placed them among the largest landowners in the area. Now having a clean sweep clear to the river, Peter built sturdy docks from which to ship his fruit and that of neighbors who were beginning to settle nearby. In time, big steamers were putting into his wharf to lay over night, and soon pleasure boats joined the merchant vessels.

Among these was the luxurious yacht Willena out of Chicago, owned by Dr. Peter Fahrney, the patent medicine tycoon. Handsome young John Hasley, captain of the "floating palace," was privileged to leave the boat while in port, and the first evening of their stay walked into Alva, where he was surprised to meet a boyhood chum, Wilbur Watkins, from his home state of Wisconsin.

He was invited to attend a village social and was introduced to Peter and Nettie Fichter's charming daughter, Margaret. It was love at first sight, and a whirlwind courtship began. By the time the Fahrneys were ready to depart for home, John and Margie were engaged to be married. When the Willena hoisted anchor, young Captain Hasley and his pretty bride were aboard.

At Sarasota, Fahrney changed his mind about proceeding north and put into port for a much-extended vacation. All during that time, John and Margie lived aboard and planned for the time when they would have a permanent home. They finally decided, as the vacation wore on, that after returning to Chicago, John would leave the doctor's employ and go back to Wisconsin to buy a farm.

They carried through with their plans and farmed until, weary of long winters of cold and idleness, Florida's warm weather lured them south again. Once more in Margie's homeland, they settled with their little ones — Margaret, Walter, and Hellen — on a parcel of her father's property, built an attractive house, and welcomed two more babies, Peter and Kittie Bess.

Margie's brother, Henry, had married Ruth Walker and moved to Miami. Her other brother, James, having married Olive Whitten of Punta Gorda, had gone back to college for his master's degree in agriculture and was heading up a five-county conservation district centered at Vero Beach. Younger sister, Bess, was still at home with her parents, but they all missed the days of activity and greeted the Hasleys and the return of the zest of old times with enthusiasm.

In the 1920s Nettie and Peter died a few years apart, and Bess continued on in the old homestead until she married. Except for the lazy creek which dreams its way from the Caloosahatchee to the back country, the Fichter name is seldom heard in the area, but three grandchildren live on part of the original homestead and uphold the traditions of their pioneer forebears.

None of the children speak or read German, so they can only look at their grandfather's album from the old country and wonder at the captions and entries on each page. It is understandable they didn't learn the language, for Peter was so determined to be an American that he never resorted to his native tongue.

It had been so long since he had spoken German that when his brother and wife came to see him, the three found they were no longer able to converse. After a brief visit, struggling to communicate with gestures and a remembered word here and there, they said "auf Wiedersehen" — but in their hearts they knew they would never meet again.

Although they said goodbye 100 years ago, Peter's descendants remain in Alva today.

For more information on this article contact [press@eastlenews.com](mailto:press@eastlenews.com) 📧





Photo: The wedding breakfast is for Margaret Fichter (Mrs. Margaret Fichter Hasley) and John Hasley. [From left to right] Peter Fichter, Jeanette Fichter (Mrs. Peter), Bess Fichter, Henry Fichter, Margaret Fichter Hasley, John Hasley, Pauline Parker, and unknown.



Photo: Peter Fichter Homestead. Back row Left to Right] Henry Fichter, Alonzo Lewis, Colin English, Louise Bonniwell, Maurice English, Margaret Fichter, George Bonniwell, Flora English, Helen Scott, Walker Blount, Philip Barney; [Seated Left to Right] Frank Cook, Vivian Lee, Joseph W. Sherrill holding Edwina Parkinson, Charlie Blount, Walter Hicks.



Photo: [Middle Row] Zonie English, Katie English, Perry English, Katherine E. Solomon, Margaret English (Grandma), Jeanette E. Fichter, Flora English, Mary Stebbins. [Back Row Left to Right] A. J. English, Ida English holding J. Daniel, John C. English, Captain J. B. McKinley, Peter Fichter with James N., Hugh Sampson English. [Bottom Row] Maurice English, Henry Fichter, Elizabeth Fichter, Margaret Fichter, Colin English.



Photo: Peter Fichter's son. Henry English Fichter I



Photo: Glenn, Stacy, Amy, Grant Fichter



Photo: Grant, the late Henry "Hank" English Fichter. Glenn.

## A rare photo of a McDonald's staff member collecting apple pie filling in the 1980's



WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



## The Alva Library Museum

21420 Pearl St, Alva, FL  
33920



Public Library, Alva

Originally a public library  
built in 1909, it now serves as a museum of artifacts from the original settlers of Alva.

The library-museum Board is making the building available as small group venue for parties, clubs, etc.

THE LIBRARY IS OPEN FOR FREE TOURS Every Saturday between 10am and 2pm

See a virtual video tour of the Museum at: <http://alvaflmuseum.com> (FOR Virtual Tour)

Grant Fichter is overseeing the museum for the board.

Come on out and check out the Alva Museum this Saturday between 10-2, cool off in the AC and check out some of those long-lost treasures. Also, if you have some Alva area history to share bring it by and let us look at it.

### Alva Fire Protection & Rescue Service District

## Join Our Team!



#### BENEFITS

Florida Retirement System  
Medical, Dental & Vision Insurance  
Employee Health & Wellness  
Uniform Maintenance Allowance  
College Degree & Cert Incentives  
Training Allowance  
Salary Progression Base on Industry  
Years of Service

#### OPPORTUNITIES

Marine Operations  
Public Outreach  
Career Advancement  
Special Events

#### REQUIREMENTS

Valid Driver's License  
Good Driving Record  
FL Bureau of Fire Standards  
& Training Certification  
AHA CPR/BLS Provider  
Pass a Physical Assessment  
Current EMT Certification

The Alva Fire District is seeking qualified applicants for the position of **Firefighter/EMT**. The individual should demonstrate good moral character and judgement, be able to handle high pressure situations and display effective problem solving and leadership skills. The Alva Fire District consists of a tobacco and drug free workplace environment. Experience preferred.

Please forward a current resume, application and certs to Chief Etcheverry at [jetcherry@alvafirecontrol.org](mailto:jetcherry@alvafirecontrol.org) or drop-off your resume to Firehouse 121, 2660 Styles Road, Alva, Florida between the hours of 9 AM - 4 PM. Applications and Acknowledgement & Full Release of Liability may be downloaded from the District's website at [www.alvafirecontrol.org](http://www.alvafirecontrol.org). Applications accepted through March 23, 2025.



## The ALVA GARDEN CLUB



Each month we have special speakers presenting interesting and relevant information. We also plan field trips that enhance our knowledge and inspire good garden practices. Membership in the Alva Garden Club is still only \$10 per person. We meet in the Alva Methodist Church Fellowship Hall the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1 pm.

Everyone is welcomed to join or simply attend the meetings as guests!



## Charleston Park Neighborhood Association

2541 Charleston Park Drive, Alva, FL 33920. 239-728-8895

[Charlestonpark1926@gmail.com](mailto:Charlestonpark1926@gmail.com)

Community Center Activities & Training, Lee County Children's and youth sport park, Events throughout the year, Meetings for all every second Monday of the month at 6pm at the Community Center are also available virtually via ZOOM.



## ALVA MIDDLE FFA

Find us on **FACEBOOK**



[https://www.facebook.com/AlvaMiddleFFA/?show\\_switched\\_toast=0&show\\_invite\\_to\\_follow=0&show\\_switched\\_toast=0&show\\_podcast\\_settings=0&show\\_community\\_review\\_changes=0&show\\_community\\_rollback=0&show\\_follower\\_visibility\\_disclosure=0](https://www.facebook.com/AlvaMiddleFFA/?show_switched_toast=0&show_invite_to_follow=0&show_switched_toast=0&show_podcast_settings=0&show_community_review_changes=0&show_community_rollback=0&show_follower_visibility_disclosure=0)



# BUCKINGHAM & FORT MYERS SHORES EVENTS

---



## FORT MYERS EAST ROTARY CLUB

Fort Myers East Rotary Club has been in existence since 1973, and helps with so many community projects in East Lee County and with District and International Rotary activities.

They meet Wednesday mornings for breakfast at 7:30 AM at the River Hall Country Club. Stop by and join us for an invigorating meeting with good food, stimulating conversation and great speakers! For more information, contact

[FMERC.Secretary@gmail.com](mailto:FMERC.Secretary@gmail.com) <https://www.fmeastroty.com/>

---

Tired of boiling water every time you make pasta? Boil a few gallons at the beginning of the week and freeze it for later.



## Hours

Monday: Closed

Tuesday: Noon-8 p.m.

Wednesday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Thursday: 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Saturday: 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday: Closed

**RIVERDALE BRANCH LIBRARY**  
2421 Buckingham Road, Fort Myers



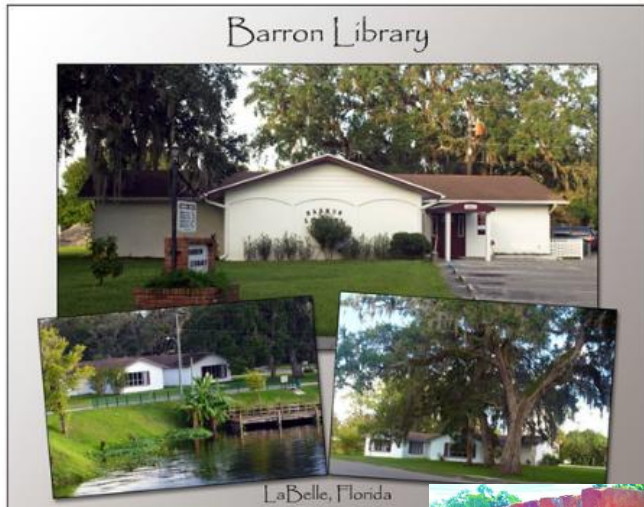
**Click for SEPTEMBER EVENTS at Riverdale Library:**

**[https://leelibrary.librarymarket.com/events/month/2025/9?bundles%5Blc\\_closing%5D=lc\\_closing&bundles%5Blc\\_event%5D=lc\\_event&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336](https://leelibrary.librarymarket.com/events/month/2025/9?bundles%5Blc_closing%5D=lc_closing&bundles%5Blc_event%5D=lc_event&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336)**

---



# LABELLE AREA EVENTS




## Barron Library

461 N Main St, LaBelle, FL 33935



Barron Library is thrilled to announce our collaboration with the Children's Museum of Naples! This incredible museum is dedicated to inspiring children and families to have fun while learning together.



### LIBRARY Access PASS

**Program Details**

- CMON Library Access Pass is good for free admission for up to four guests' (MUST INCLUDE AT LEAST 1 CHILD & 1 ADULT).
- Library Patron with a valid library card may check out a CMON Library Access Pass.
- Patrons must bring the library checkout receipt with them to the museum for entry.
- The pass must be used within seven days of checking it out at the library.

*Libraries are unable to reprint receipts for patrons who lose their receipt. They must check the pass out again.*

**Hours of Operation**  
Daily from 10 AM - 5 PM  
Closed every Wed.

**Children's Museum of Naples**  
15080 Livingston Road, Naples, FL. 34109



### Do you love to bake?

Do you love supporting YOUR Library? Here is the perfect opportunity to do BOTH! Donate your choice of dessert for our annual dessert auction on April 17th, 2025.

Contact Barron Library @ 863-675-0833 or via email at [barronlibrary.2013@gmail.com](mailto:barronlibrary.2013@gmail.com) to sign up!

Let's come together to make a difference in our community. All proceeds from the auction will help supplement Barron Library's annual budget. Every cake, cookie, or pie counts!



## We need you, Friend!

**BECOME A FRIEND OF THE LIBRARY TO:**

- Support projects & activities
- Enhance the use of the Library
- Assist with programming
- Participate in Community Awareness events
- Organize & Conduct Fundraisers
- Lobby local government
- Volunteer in the Library
- Feel good about your contribution to your community

**Please contact Nicole Hellard:**

(865)675-0833  
or  
[nhellard.barron@gmail.com](mailto:nhellard.barron@gmail.com)





WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



HEALTHIER HENDRY & GLADES  
<https://healthierhendryglades.org/>

Humane Center 1200 Pratt Blvd, LaBelle

#### OUR MISSION

The Mission of Caloosa Humane Society is to serve, shelter, and protect the homeless pets in our care. We are

dedicated to finding permanent and loving adoptive homes for our companion animals in need. Our no-kill facility provides low cost spay/neuter services to the community with the goal of reducing the extreme overpopulation of unwanted pets.

SHELTER (863) 675-0997 CLINIC (863) 675-7387 [info@caloosahumanesociety.org](mailto:info@caloosahumanesociety.org)  
<https://caloosahumanesociety.org/>



### LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation

proudly announces the Downtown LaBelle Historic Walking Tour! Take a walk into Old Florida's past through our new self-guided tour, featuring audio clips of those that helped make LaBelle what it is today.

Visit [Downtownlabelle.com/walking\\_tour.com](http://Downtownlabelle.com/walking_tour.com) to start your tour today, or download the app with your Apple or Android device by searching "Downtown LaBelle." Happy trails!



#### Welcome, Katrina Salokar!

We're thrilled to welcome **Katrina Salokar** as the newest member of the LDRC Board of Directors. Katrina brings a wealth of experience and community spirit to our team. She currently serves on the board of the Arts of the Inland Gallery, runs *The Roar* newspaper in Lee County.

Katrina is dedicated to community involvement and her passion for connecting people and preserving local culture aligns perfectly with our mission. We are lucky to have her on board and excited to see the creativity and energy she will bring to our work in revitalizing Downtown LaBelle.



**A New Chapter in LaBelle's Story—Now on Display!**

We're excited to share that a brand-new historic marker now stands at the original site of the LaBelle Jail—one of the earliest symbols of law and order in our community. This sign brings to life a story from our past and helps preserve it for future generations.

A heartfelt thank-you to the City of LaBelle Maintenance Team for their careful installation, and to everyone who contributed to making this project a reality.

**Harry Chapin Food Bank**  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

**FOOD DISTRIBUTIONS AVAILABLE IN HENDRY COUNTY**

**Iglesia Pentecostal  
Casa de Liberacion:**  
225 N Hacienda St,  
Clewiston, FL 33440  
Every other Wednesday:  
September 3 & 17  
October 1, 15, & 29  
9:00 AM

**Our Lady Queen of Heaven:**  
785 Farrey Dr,  
Labelle, FL 33935  
Every other Wednesday:  
September 3 & 17  
October 1, 15, & 29  
9:00 AM

HARRY CHAPIN FOOD BANK IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER

**Harry Chapin Food Bank**  
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

**DISTRIBUCIÓN DE ALIMENTOS DISPONIBLE EN EL CONDADO DE HENDRY**

**Iglesia Pentecostal  
Casa de Liberacion:**  
225 N Hacienda St,  
Clewiston, FL 33440  
Cada otro Miércoles:  
Septiembre 3 & 17  
Octubre 1, 15, & 29  
9:00 AM

**Our Lady Queen of Heaven:**  
785 Farrey Dr,  
Labelle, FL 33935  
Cada otro Miércoles:  
Septiembre 3 & 17  
Octubre 1, 15, & 29  
9:00 AM

HARRY CHAPIN FOOD BANK PROVIDE IGUALDAD DE OPORTUNIDADES

# Calling all Artists!



## Portrait of the Town ART SHOW

**Artwork :**

- Must be submitted on September 2, 3-6pm
- All work must be ready to hang
- No fees
- \$250 Cash Prize
- 2-D Art Only: painting, photography, drawing, mixed media
- A print of winning work will be included in the City's time capsule.

This Show is being sponsored by **First1Bank**  
First 1 Bank of LaBelle

Arts of the Inland  
471 N. Lee St.  
LaBelle, FL

More info and  
show Prospectus  
at  
[artsinland.com](http://artsinland.com)



**CITY OF LABELLE**  
**Commission Meetings**

**SECOND THURSDAY OF  
EVERY MONTH @5:30 P.M.**

City Hall  
Commission Chambers  
481 W. Hickpochee Ave.



Scan the QR Code  
For full agenda  
packet

More information: 863-675-2872  
[www.citylabelle.com](http://www.citylabelle.com)

Meeting are open to the public

IF YOU REQUIRE SPECIAL AID OR SERVICES AS ADDRESSED IN THE AMERICAN DISABILITIES ACT, PLEASE CONTACT THE CITY CLERK'S OFFICE AT 863-675-2872, NO LESS THAN FIVE (5) DAYS PRIOR TO THE ABOVE STATED HEARING DATE.

**NOW HIRING**

Full-time Firefighter/E.M.T.

LaBelle Fire application and job description available on website

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



Submit applications in person at 481 W. Hickpochee Ave, or email to [lisaawbrey@citylabelle.com](mailto:lisaawbrey@citylabelle.com) by November 1, 2024



Coming up:

"Laundry and Bourbon" Sept 19-20-21 and Sept 26-27-28

"Hoedown" Musical Revue Oct 24-25-26, then Oct 31, Nov 1-2

"The Charitable Sisterhood Christmas Spectacular" Dec 5-6-7, 12-13-14

"To Die For" Jan 16-17-18 and Jan 23-24-25

"Elvis" Review featuring Matt Stone, one show only!!  
January 31, 2pm. Call now for tickets, this show always sells out!!

"It Had to be You" Feb 27-28, and March 1, then March 6-7-8

"Sweet Delilah Swim Club" April 10-11-12 and April 17-18-19

Call now for tickets to any show! 863-675-3066. Leave a message and someone will call you back!  
Or go online at <https://firehousecommunitytheatre.org/>

The Firehouse Community Theatre, Inc. is located in beautiful downtown LaBelle at 241 N Bridge Street  
Support local theatre and see a show, volunteer, sponsor a play, or even make a donation!!



WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



## HERITAGE MUSEUM: LaBelle's century-old landmark

**NOW Open Saturday's 10am to 2pm**

<https://www.facebook.com/labelleheritagemuseum/>



## LABELLE NO KILL animal rescue

[https://www.facebook.com/Animalrescue863?rdid=7iFM4y8uy42MalQ7&share\\_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F14dDMLkKZw%2F#](https://www.facebook.com/Animalrescue863?rdid=7iFM4y8uy42MalQ7&share_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F14dDMLkKZw%2F#)

Animal Rescue Inc. Of Labelle Fl. 100% No Kill Non-Profit 501C3 Rescue

1. Dog & Cat Wet and Dry Food
2. Cat Litter, Dog & Cat Flea Medication
3. Dog & Cat Toys, Blankets
4. Laundry & Dish Soap, Trash Bags, Bleach, Pine Sol

All money donations go to the care of the animals such as food, supplies, medications, and vet care

You can also donate to Caloosa Humane Society vet for Animal Rescue inc. Bills 863-675-7378

Animal Rescue is located at 463 East Lincoln Ave. Labelle Fl, 33935 if you like drop off donation.

You can send check or money order to Animal Rescue inc. P.O. Box 2441 Labelle Fl, 33935 or to the owners' cash app. that is used for the rescue Angel Biles \$angeltopdog

You can also contact Angel at 863-342-2076



**Labelle Allstars State Game will be livestreamed on this page!**

<https://www.facebook.com/share/1AaiQX3TWz/?mibextid=wwXIfr>



Friday morning, Hendry County Deputies gathered together at Davis Pratt Park to take part in giving the members of the 12U LaBelle Little League All Star Baseball Team, a huge send off. The boys headed to Melbourne, Florida to play in the State Championship - with lights and sirens - a honorable escort.

Hendry Deputies escorted the team to the Hendry/Glades County Line, while well-wishers lined Bridge Street wishing them the best of luck!

#### **Volunteer Workshop – September 10**

Join us at the LaBelle Civic Center on **Tuesday, September 10** for a special Volunteer Workshop in partnership with Florida Gulf Coast University. This session is designed for local nonprofits and businesses interested in learning how to connect with FGCU students for event and project support.

If you're looking to grow your volunteer base, this is a great opportunity to discover new resources and partnerships. **Please consider RSVPing to help us prepare for the event.**

**VOLUNTEER WORKSHOP**

The LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation is proud to host Florida Gulf Coast University new outreach series bringing resources, expertise, and energy directly our community! Discover how your organization can engage with passionate students through impactful service-learning.

**Why Attend?**

- Expand access to FGCU student support in your county
- Build meaningful connections with fellow agencies
- Learn how to maximize student service-learning impact
- Position your community as a leader in civic engagement

Presented by The Office of Service-Learning and Civic Engagement at Florida Gulf Coast University  
Justin Fitzgerald, Director of Community Engagement & Jamie Wilson, Faculty Development and Partnerships

**RSVP HERE: ENCOURAGED BUT NOT REQUIRED**



# NORTH FORT MYERS & NORTH OLGA EVENTS



## BIT BY BIT SADDLE CLUB, INC.

**"A Fun Show for Horse Lovers of  
All Ages, Disciplines and Skill Levels"**

**9:00 am Show Begins** **Public Welcome!**

**2025 - 26 SHOW DATES:** Oct 19; Nov 9; Dec 7; Jan 11; Feb 15; March 8; April 19

### Classes

- 1 In-Hand Showmanship
- 2 Lead Line Class
- 3 In-Hand Trail/Obstacle
- 4 Trail/Obstacle
- 5 Barrel Race
- 6 Gaited Pleasure -----W/T
- 7 Gaited Pleasure -----W/T/C
- 8 Slow Western Pleasure ----- W/T
- 9 Slow Western Pleasure ----- W/T/C
- 10 Ranch Rail Pleasure ----- W/T
- 11 Ranch Rail Pleasure ----- W/T/C
- 12 Pole Bending
- 13 Novice Box Reining/Boxing --- pattern -- W/T
- 14 Novice Box Reining/Boxing --- pattern -- W/T/C
- 15 W/E Ranch Riding class --- pattern--W/T
- 16 W/E Ranch Riding class ---pattern--W/T/C
- 17 Basic Western Freestyle Dressage -----W/T
- 18 Fun Speed Class
- 19 English Rail Pleasure -----W/T
- 20 English Rail Pleasure -----W/T/C
- 21 English Equitation -----on the rail -----W/T
- 22 English Equitation -----on the rail -----W/T/C
- 23 Command Class -----W/T
- 24 Command Class -----W/T/C
- 25 Fun Class

### TENTATIVE SHOW BILL

**IN Practice Arena!**

**Can be lead line**

Year Membership (single) \$35.00  
Year Membership (family) \$55.00  
Show Cost for Unlimited # of Classes  
Members \$50.00 Family \$70.00  
Non-members \$70.00 per rider  
Cost per class: \$15.00

★★ **Riders Must Choose W/T or W/T/C. Cannot do both.**

**"Show Clinics" are offered on Saturday, a week before the show! Members Only!**

★★ **NEGATIVE COGGINS REQUIRED**

**PLEASE, NO STALLIONS!**

★★ **Riders Receive Placement Awards** ★★

Members also receive points from each show for year end prizes at the club party in late spring.

**FACEBOOK PAGE**  
Bit by Bit Saddle Club

Contact [Adele Smith](#) for more information  
305-799-4651 or E-mail [bitbybit338@gmail.com](mailto:bitbybit338@gmail.com)

**FREESTYLE PERFORMANCES (In Hand & On Back) ➡** These classes are non-judged & will run during lunch break

**LOCATIONS:** Oct 19; Nov 9; Dec 7: Lee Civic Center 11831 Bayshore Rd, North Fort Myers, FL  
Jan 11; Feb 15; March 8; April 19 Lee County Posse Arena 17401 Palm Creek Dr N, Ft Myers, FL

★ **ABSOLUTELY NO HITTING/ ABUSING OF HORSE ANYWHERE, AT ANYTIME!**

★ **PROPER DISCIPLINE EQUIPMENT, HEELED BOOTS, SUGGESTED ATTIRE: SHORT OR LONG SLEEVE SHIRT OR 'CLUB' T-SHIRT, JEANS, BREECHES, LONG PANTS. 18 YEARS OLD and Under MUST WEAR a HELMET!**

★ **MULTIPLE ATTIRE AND TACK CHANGES IN BETWEEN CLASSES ARE NOT NECESSARY!**



# FOR ALL OF US EVENTS

(TY East Lee News-The ROAR)

## The Long Road to Representation: Lee County's Push for Single-Member Districts Heads to the Ballot Box

Katrina Salokar | East Lee County News

In the heart of one of Florida's fastest-growing counties, a decades-long fight for fairer, more accountable local government has reached a turning point.

For more than 75 years, Lee County's five county commissioners have been elected in countywide (at-large) races—even though each commissioner represents a distinct geographic district. Critics say that system has repeatedly diluted the voices of local communities, allowed money and influence from other districts to sway elections, and made it nearly impossible to hold commissioners accountable to the voters they're meant to serve.

Now, thanks to persistent public pressure, a groundswell of bipartisan support, and decisive action by state lawmakers, Lee County voters will have the final say in 2026.

### A HISTORY ROOTED IN SUPPRESSION

The problem of at-large elections in local government isn't unique to Lee County—it has deep historical roots across the country.

Through the Jim Crow era, many states adopted at-large election systems that effectively diluted the voting power of minority and rural communities. Court rulings over the last century have repeatedly affirmed that these systems were designed to suppress representation, not broaden it.

The at-large system was imposed on us in 1947, when the population of Lee County was less than 25,000. Despite explosive growth to over 800,000 residents accompanied by increasingly complex needs, the system has remained unchanged.

### REFORM EFFORTS THAT FELL SHORT

Voters and citizen committees

have repeatedly tried to change the system, but each effort stumbled due primarily to backroom political interference from county commissioners and their closest supporters who would lose control under the district-based model. In most cases, the reforms were never even allowed to make it to the ballot.

Lee County Property Appraiser Matt Caldwell has been blunt in his critique of these failures, calling the county's charter review process a "paper tiger" and arguing that "the deck is stacked," as he wrote in a December 2024 editorial, urging the state legislature to step in and let the voters decide once and for all.

### LEGISLATIVE ACTION CHANGES THE GAME

In a rare show of unity, the Lee County Legislative Delegation responded in early 2025. In January, the delegation voted 6-1 to advance a local bill that would put a single-member district system on the 2026 general election ballot.

That bill—HB 4001—proposes a straightforward change: beginning with the 2028 election cycle, county commissioners would be elected only by the voters in their district, not countywide. Similar models are already in place for Florida's state legislators, school boards, and many city councils.

The bill passed overwhelmingly in the Florida House (94-11) and unanimously in the Senate (36-0). On July 18, 2025, Governor Ron DeSantis signed HB 4001 into law, officially placing the issue on the November 3, 2026 general election ballot.

### THE REFERENDUM QUESTION

The ballot will read: "Shall the method of electing members of the

Board of County Commissioners of Lee County, Florida be changed from countywide voting to single-member district voting, where each commissioner is nominated and elected only by the voters in the district they represent?"

A YES vote supports the transition to single-member district elections, making commissioners accountable only to the voters within their district.

A NO vote keeps the current at-large system, allowing all county voters to vote in every commission race.

### WHY IT MATTERS

Supporters of the reform say this is a matter of simple fairness: If a commissioner is going to represent District 3, for example, only the voters in District 3 should elect that person. Under the current system, voters in the other district areas can outvote the residents of the actual district and effectively impose the commissioner on them. Caldwell and others have noted that nearly 40% of contested commission elections since 1980 have produced outcomes where the district's choice lost due to outside votes.

- Switching to single-member districts, supporters argue, would:
- Make commissioners more accountable to their constituents
- Lower the cost of running for office, allowing more diverse candidates to compete
- Improve transparency and trust in local government
- Reduce the influence of out-of-district special interests

### WHAT'S NEXT

Between now and November 2026, both sides are expected to mount campaigns.

Opponents—many of them current or former elected officials—are likely to warn against "outside interference" or claim the changes could weaken countywide unity.

Supporters, including civic organizations like the League of Women Voters, the NAACP, and the Southwest Florida Business Alliance, are already organizing town halls, registering voters, and preparing a broad educational campaign to make sure voters understand what's at stake.

As Caldwell recently wrote: "This is about putting voters back in charge of their government. Nothing more, nothing less."

### HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Residents who support the change can:

- Join outreach efforts led by civic groups
- Attend public forums and legislative updates
- Volunteer to register and educate voters ahead of 2026
- Share materials and spread awareness in your community
- Most importantly, VOTE YES on the 2026 referendum

To stay informed and get involved as the issue progresses, visit [www.swflba.com](http://www.swflba.com) and sign up for updates from the Southwest Florida Business Alliance.

You'll receive alerts about upcoming meetings, community events, volunteer opportunities, and voter education tools.

After nearly eight decades of debate, the decision will finally rest where it belongs—with the people. In 2026, Lee County voters have the opportunity to vote YES for fair representation, district accountability, and local democracy. 🗳️

## Weekly Southwest Florida high school football schedules for the September on 2025 season.

The schedules are subject to change based on weather and other factors.

(TY News-Press)



### Friday, Aug. 29

Oasis at Glades Central, 6:30 p.m. True North Classical  
at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m.

ECS at St. John Neumann, 7 p.m. LaBelle at Gateway Charter,  
7 p.m.

Bartow at Gulf Coast SFCA at Palmetto Ridge

Marco Island at Ida Baker Golden Gate at Island Coast

Calvary Christian at Lely Aubrey Rogers at Estero

Naples at Barron Collier Bonita Springs at Mariner

Lemon Bay at Cape Coral Fort Myers at Lehigh

Riverdale at South Fort Myers North Fort Myers at Port Charlotte

Canterbury at Santa Fe Catholic, 7 p.m. Bye: Cypress Lake, Dunbar, East Lee County

### Friday, Sept. 5

Bishop Verot at Venice St. John Neumann at Coral Springs Charter, 7 p.m.

Oasis at Clewiston, 7 p.m. ECS at St. Petersburg Catholic, 7 p.m.

SFCA at Sarasota Christian, 7 p.m. Gulf Coast at Lely

Ida Baker at Palmetto Ridge Barron Collier at South Fort Myers

East Lee County at Estero Gateway Charter at Mount Dora Christian

Bonita Springs at Cape Coral Mariner at North Fort Myers

Island Coast at Dunbar Naples at Immokalee

Cypress Lake at Fort Myers Lehigh at Port Charlotte

Babcock at Canterbury, 7 p.m. Bye: Aubrey Rogers, Golden Gate, Riverdale

### Thursday, Sept. 11

Ida Baker at IMG State, 7 p.m.

## Friday, Sept. 12

St. John Neumann at Oasis, 7 p.m. ECS at Gateway Charter, 7 p.m.

Golden Gate at Gulf Coast Palmetto Ridge at Aubrey Rogers

Estero at Barron Collier North Port at Bonita Springs

Mariner at Riverdale Island Coast at Cape Coral

Naples at Sarasota Booker South Fort Myers at Fort Myers

East Lee County at Cypress Lake North Fort Myers at Lehigh

Treasure Coast at Dunbar Canterbury at Miami Country Day, 6 p.m.

Bye: Bishop Verot, Lely, SFCA

## Friday, Sept. 19

Homestead at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m. Orlando Christian Prep at St. John Neumann, 7 p.m.

Oasis at SFCA, 7 p.m. Northside Christian at ECS, 7 p.m.

Ida Baker at DeSoto, 7 p.m. Gulf Coast at Aubrey Rogers

Bonita Springs at Palmetto Ridge Golden Gate at Naples

Sarasota Booker at Lely Cape Coral at Estero

Island Coast at Mariner Fort Myers at Charlotte

Riverdale at Cypress Lake Dunbar at East Lee County

North Fort Myers at Lemon Bay Bye: Barron Collier, Canterbury, Gateway Charter, Lehigh, South Fort Myers

## Friday, Sept. 26

Cardinal Mooney at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m. St. John Neumann at Community School of Naples, 7 p.m.

IMG Junior National at Oasis, 7 p.m. ECS at Glades Day, 7 p.m.

St. Petersburg Catholic at SFCA, 7 p.m. Boca Raton Christian at Gateway Charter

Gulf Coast at Palmetto Ridge Mariner at Ida Baker

Immokalee at Golden Gate Barron Collier at Lely

Aubrey Rogers at Bonita Springs Estero at Cypress Lake

Cape Coral at Charlotte Lemon Bay at Island Coast



Dunbar at Naples      North Fort Myers at Fort Myers  
Riverdale at East Lee County   Port Charlotte at South Fort Myers  
Lehigh at Venice      Berean Christian at Canterbury, 7 p.m.

## Friday, Oct. 3

Oasis at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m.   St. John Neumann at Carrollwood Day, 7 p.m.  
Westminster Academy at ECS, 7 p.m.      SFCA at First Baptist, 7 p.m.  
Gateway Charter at Sarasota Christian, 7 p.m.      Aubrey Rogers at Florida Christian  
Barron Collier at Gulf Coast   Avon Park at Ida Baker  
Clewiston at Golden Gate   Immokalee at Lely  
Charlotte at Island Coast      Fort Myers at Naples  
Cypress Lake at South Fort Myers      Dunbar at Lehigh  
Canterbury at Keswick Christian, 7 p.m.      Bye: Bonita Springs, Cape Coral, East Lee County, Estero,  
Mariner, North Fort Myers, Palmetto Ridge, Riverdale

## Friday, Oct. 10

Bishop Verot at Glades Central, 7 p.m.      First Baptist at St. John Neumann, 7 p.m.  
Moore Haven at Oasis, 7 p.m.      Lakeland Christian at ECS, 7 p.m.  
SFCA at Glades Day, 7 p.m.      Gateway Charter at Babcock, 7 p.m.  
Palmetto Ridge at Immokalee      Ida Baker at Cape Coral  
Golden Gate at North Port      Lely at Aubrey Rogers  
Bonita Springs at Barron Collier      Estero at Lemon Bay  
Mariner at Charlotte      Cypress Lake at Island Coast  
South Fort Myers at Naples      Riverdale at Fort Myers  
East Lee County at North Fort Myers   Port Charlotte at Dunbar  
Bishop McLaughlin at Canterbury, 7 p.m.      Bye: Gulf Coast, Lehigh

## Friday, Oct. 17

Bishop Verot at Gulf Coast, 7 p.m.      Ida Baker at Oasis, 7 p.m.  
Keswick Christian at SFCA, 7 p.m.      Gateway Charter at Glades Day, 7 p.m.  
First Baptist at Palmetto Ridge      Golden Gate at Barron Collier

Naples at Lely                      Aubrey Rogers at Immokalee

Estero at Mariner              Cape Coral at Riverdale

East Lee County at Lemon Bay              Dunbar at North Fort Myers

Clewiston at South Fort Myers              Lehigh at Key West

Marco Island at Canterbury, 7 p.m.    Bye: Bonita Springs, Cypress Lake, ECS, Island Coast, St. John Neumann

## Friday, Oct. 24

Cardinal Newman at Bishop Verot, 7 p.m.    Coral Shores at St. John Neumann, 7 p.m.

SFCA at ECS, 7 p.m.    Westminster Christian at Gateway Charter, 7 p.m.

Immokalee at Gulf Coast              Palmetto Ridge at Golden Gate

Lely at Bonita Springs Barron Collier at Aubrey Rogers

Island Coast at Estero              Cape Coral at Mariner

Naples at Port Charlotte              Fort Myers at East Lee County

North Fort Myers at Riverdale              Lemon Bay at Cypress Lake

South Fort Myers at Dunbar              Sarasota Riverview at Lehigh

Canterbury at St. Stephen's, 7 p.m.    Bye: Ida Baker, Oasis

## Thursday, Oct. 30

Bishop Verot at Palmetto, 7 p.m.    IMG State at SFCA, 7 p.m.

Fort Myers at Dunbar              Charlotte at North Fort Myers

## Friday, Oct. 31

St. John Neumann at North Miami Beach, 7 p.m.    Community School of Naples at ECS. 7 p.m.

Palmetto Ridge at DeSoto, 7 p.m.    Aubrey Rogers at Southwest, 7 p.m.

Oasis at Golden Gate Spruce Creek at Gulf Coast

Ida Baker at Island Coast Lely at South Fort  
Myers

Kathleen at Barron Collier Bonita Springs at  
Estero

Cypress Lake at Mariner Gateway at Cape Coral

Riverdale at Lehigh East Lee County at Palmetto

Bye: Naples



# SAVE THE DATE



## STEP BACK INTO THE GLITZ AND GLAMOUR OF THE ROARING TWENTIES AT OUR CASINO SOIRÉE

◆ SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 2025 | 6:00 P.M.- 9:00 P.M. ◆  
DOUBLETREE BY HILTON AT BELL TOWER SHOPS | HEAVY HORS D'OEUVRES & CASH BAR

Premier Mobile Health Services connects our community's most caring providers with the people who need them most. Our clinics deliver education, outreach and comprehensive health services to underserved areas in Southwest Florida, regardless of insurance status. We serve the medically vulnerable and those who are most at risk of developing and experiencing long-term illnesses and hospitalization. As our county continues to grow, the need continues to rise.

JOIN US FOR AN UNFORGETTABLE EVENING AT THE **PREMIER SPEAKEASY**  
AND ENJOY GAMING, GLAMOUR AND GATSBY VIBES –  
ALL WHILE SUPPORTING A GREAT CAUSE!



YOUR ROUTE TO BETTER HEALTH

Page 1 / 2



## Punta Gorda AIRPORT



### THE BLUE ANGELS

### AND

### One of only two B-29 Superfortresses

**still flying in the world today, see them up  
close right here in Charlotte County.**

 **November 1 & 2 | Punta Gorda  
Airport**

 **Tickets: [FloridaAirshow.com](http://FloridaAirshow.com)**



## *East Lee Wildlife Stewardship Group*

**Donate Today:**

**<https://www.paypal.com/US/fundraiser/charity/5100941>**

Contact <https://www.facebook.com/james.kennedy.96155>



Lee County Government's Post



Give your fertilizer a break for the summer. 🌴 Stop fertilizing from June 1 to Sept. 30 to do your part in helping us protect our beautiful waterways.

Learn how fertilizer use during the rainy season can impact our local environment and the steps you can take to help at <https://fertilizesmart.com/>

#FertilizeSmart #LeeCounty



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
OF THE SUN COAST

Would your child benefit from having a mentor?  
**WE CAN HELP!**

**COMMUNITY-BASED PROGRAM**  
Community-based mentoring relationships involve one-on-one outings and activities, doing things like shopping and dining together. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast provides these outings on the weekends. Children get together with their mentors on weekends evenings. Each mentor is assigned and develops a schedule that works for them.

**SCHOOL-BASED PROGRAM**  
School-based mentoring takes place at school during one class period a week. Mentors inspire their students to reach their potential as they work on school assignments, promote self-confidence and develop a friendship.

**TOGETHER, WE ARE DEFENDERS OF POTENTIAL**

Learn more about the organization and how your child can benefit from a mentor!  
Contact Laurie Waininger at 863-345-0107 or [lwaininger@bbbsun.org](mailto:lwaininger@bbbsun.org)

**INSPIRE POTENTIAL  
BECOME A 'BIG' TODAY**

Big Brothers Big Sisters provides ongoing support and mentorship to the Big, the Little, and the Circle in Florida. We offer mentoring and other helpful resources that are needed to ensure the best possible outcome for every child.

**Community-Based Program**  
Community-based mentoring relationships involve one-on-one outings and activities, doing things like shopping and dining together. Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast provides these outings on the weekends. Children get together with their mentors on weekends evenings. Each mentor is assigned and develops a schedule that works for them.

**School-Based Program**  
School-based mentoring takes place at school during one class period a week. Mentors inspire their students to reach their potential as they work on school assignments, promote self-confidence and develop a friendship.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**  
The Florida Office is located at 1000 N. 1st St. in Tallahassee.  
Laurie Waininger  
lwaininger@bbbsun.org  
863-345-0107

**WWW.BBBSUN.ORG**

Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is here for you and your child.

Reach out to them today.

Or, are you interested in beginning a BIG? There are kids waiting for you!



---

## Lee County Florida 4-H

Are you a 4-H member ages 8-18 and showing a livestock animal? You will need to ensure that your ethics is up to date in order to show at our local livestock shows.

If you're in need of an ethics class, please visit Florida State Fair Agribusiness website at <https://floridastatefairag.com/ethics/>

- Please note classes fill up quickly, and you as the exhibitor/family are encouraged to stay on top of registration. For the full list of classes, please visit the Florida State Fair website (this is updated as classes are added).

A blue poster for the "2024/2025 Youth Livestock Show Ethics and Animal Care Workshop". The word "ETHICS" is written in large, bold letters, with each letter containing a different image of a livestock animal: a pig, a goat, a black chicken, a red chicken, a brown horse, and a black cow. Below the title, there is a small green circular logo with four white arrows pointing outwards. The text on the poster includes: "For a list of available virtual and in person workshops, please visit the website. Note that new workshops are being added as needed." followed by the website URL "https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QcGj7RBtCdNkjheHF3oG-mp0lqDIYE1aCct3lW-922o/edit" and a QR code. A green arrow points from the text to the QR code. At the bottom, there are two lines of text: "Please note all youth must register to attend an ethics session. They are first come, first serve - don't wait to sign up! If these dates don't work in your families schedule, please see the master list for other dates available from other counties!" and "Can't remember if your Ethics Number is still valid? Or what it is? If you need your current number or have any questions, please email us at Emily.Smith@FloridaStateFair.com or call (813) 627-4229."

---

## South Florida Wildlands Association

a non-profit organization dedicated to the protection of wildlife and habitat in the Greater Everglades.

<https://www.southfloridawild.org/>







<https://flcga.org/>

---

## PROVIDING SUPPORT AND ASSISTANCE FOR CITIZENS AND INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISTS WORKING FOR GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN FLORIDA

The Florida Center for Government Accountability gives citizens the necessary tools and information to engage government officials more effectively by helping them better understand what is happening in their local communities and the effect big money has on local politics.

Traditional news outlets, particularly at the local level, face pressures never before seen and are increasingly unable to meet the informational needs of the public due to limited and dwindling resources.

Florida has the most progressive open government laws in the nation, yet citizen and media demands for public records too frequently result in questionable agency-imposed rules and restrictions and unlawful delays and denials. Also, the lack of accessibility of accurate reporting and over accessibility of inaccurate and biased information on or through the internet and social media more often results in misinformation, rather than accurate and well-researched facts. Citizens need access to reliable, fact-based, non-partisan information in order to hold government accountable.

NICK PENNIMAN, PRESIDENT, NAPLES, FL



---

## INTERACTIVE Crime Location Map for Lee County

<https://www.sheriffleefl.org/crime-map-2-0/>

Updated constantly

---

WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



**CIVIL AIR PATROL**  
U.S. AIR FORCE AUXILIARY

# JOIN US!

LEE COUNTY COMPOSITE SQUADRON  
*Adults Ages 19+ and Young Adults Ages 12-18*  
Non-Pilot, Pilot, Drone, Communications and Many Others  
All Training Provided and No Military Experience Required

**FORMATION MEETING • DEC 7TH • 10AM-12PM**  
Base Operations, 5200 Captain Channing Page Drive, Fort Myers, FL  
Contact Lt. Jesse Spencer at [jesse.spencer@flwgcap.us](mailto:jesse.spencer@flwgcap.us) or 239-788-7820

Whatever Your Skill or Interest,  
There Is a Place for You in the  
**CIVIL AIR PATROL**



**VOLUNTEERS SERVING AMERICA! [GoCivilAirPatrol.com](http://GoCivilAirPatrol.com)**



**CONTACT:**

*Calusa Waterkeeper P.O. Box 1165 Ft. Myers, FL  
33902 [info@CalusaWaterkeeper.org](mailto:info@CalusaWaterkeeper.org)*

**239-899-1440**

*"Riverwatch has been dedicated to the protection of the Caloosahatchee River and its watershed, through education and promotion of the responsible use of the river for the enjoyment of all people."*

*That was the original mission statement of the Riverwatch organization, now called Calusa Waterkeeper, back in 1995. As we celebrate our 30th year, we are recruiting passionate individuals to strengthen our continued efforts in upholding our mission to protect and restore the Caloosahatchee River and Estuary. To learn more about our organization, becoming a member, or to participate in our upcoming Ranger program, please visit our website at [www.calusawaterkeeper.org](http://www.calusawaterkeeper.org) or view our press release and register directly at:*

*<https://mailchi.mp/0894b7d6d999/tapsflo>*

***-Lawrence Scrabis, [captscrabs68@gmail.com](mailto:captscrabs68@gmail.com)***

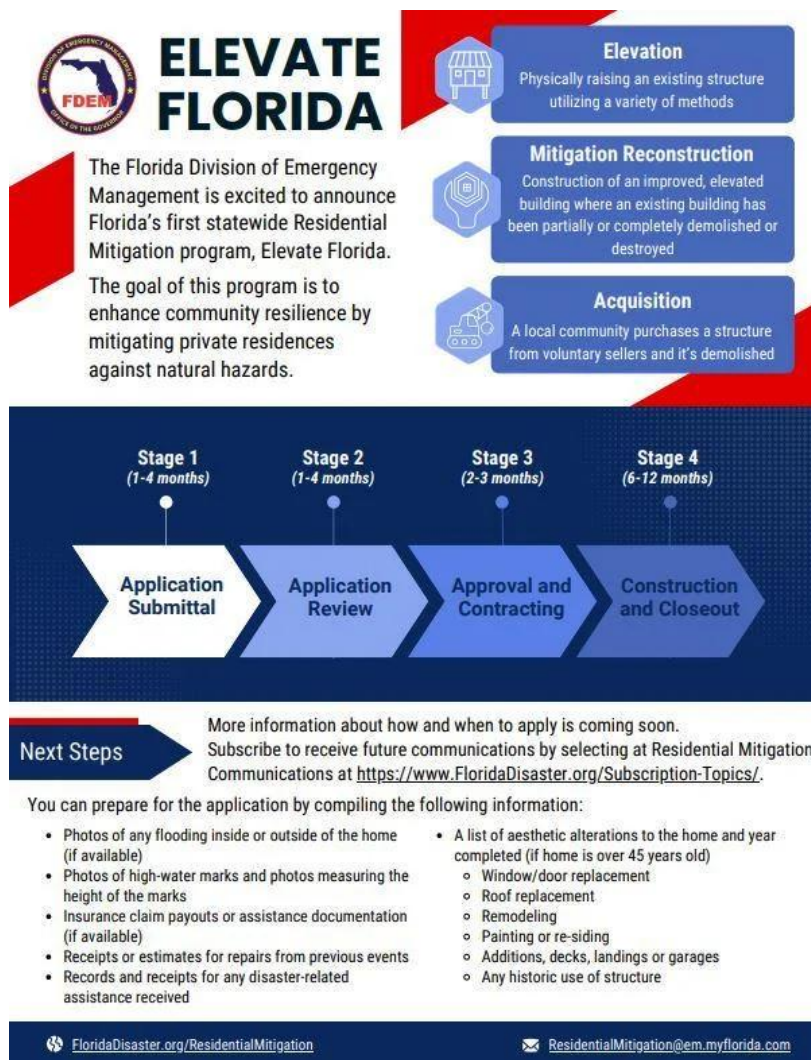


## -----Fatherhood Mentors & Volunteers of Lee County, Florida

Sean Ryan, Fatherhood Mentors & Volunteers Administrator,  
[nearbyclinic@hotmail.com](mailto:nearbyclinic@hotmail.com)

Joshua Krakow, Active Dads Administrator

Single Dads Outreach has leadership opportunities on its Advisory Council for professions, retired or active, in the fields of social work, law enforcement, corrections and education. In addition, Single Dads Outreach services include mentoring from prior, seasoned fathers. Please contact [www.SingleDadsOutReach.org](http://www.SingleDadsOutReach.org) or your local United Way in Lee County to learn about these volunteer opportunities.





## The **ALVA BOOKIE** Book Review

By Ramona DeWalt, Oak Park, Alva, Florida [MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com](mailto:MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com)



Mona spent 13 years with Borders Books before she opened her own 5,000 square foot used book store in Douglassville, Eastern PA. Ramona retired with her husband, Ken, in 2014 and has since made it her purpose to help others learn the joys of reading from helping to build the Children's Library at Charleston Park to sharing her BOOKIE SENSE (like Spidey Sense only better read) with other readers. She and Ken have traveled the continent over the past 10 summers visiting friends, family, historic and natural wonders AND Friends of the Library Used Bookstores to search for desired used books at up to 90% discount under list prices and in great condition.

Mona visits library and thrift used book sales everywhere she goes. She and Ken have a constantly changing home collection of over 200 titles yet to read. When read they are most donated to another library book store or friends.

You may contact her via email at [MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com](mailto:MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com)

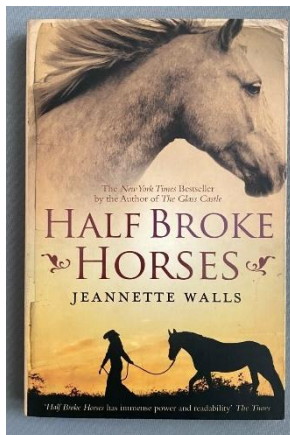
---

**Half Broke Horses by Jeannette Walls** is the true-life novel of the author's grandmother, Lily Casey Smith.

By age six, Lily was helping her father break horses. At fifteen she left home to teach in a frontier town - riding five hundred miles on her pony, alone, to get to her job.

Â This description of her hardly scratches the surface of who she was and what she accomplished in life.

Published in 2009



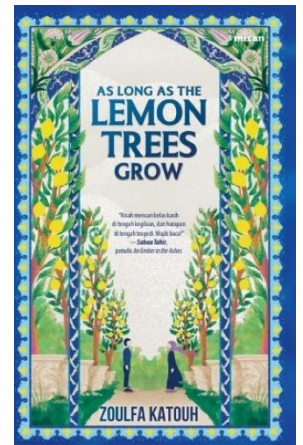
**As Long as the Lemon Trees Grow by Zoulfa Katouh**

"This is my land, and just like the lemon trees that have been growing here for centuries, spilled blood won't stop us". Salama was a pharmacy student when the cries for freedom broke out in Syria. She still had her parents and her big brother; she still had her home and an average teenager's life

Now Salama volunteers at a hospital in Homes, helping the wounded who flex through the doors daily Secretly, though, she is desperate to find a way out of her beloved country before her best friend and sister-in-law, Layla, gives birth. As her desperation grows, her PTSD takes physical shape in the form of companion Khawf, who haunts her every move.

Salama must learn to see the events around her for what they truly are - not a war but a revolution - and decide how she, too, will cry for Syria's freedom.

Published in 2022. (Novel)



**Ramona checks the new Eagle Scout Little FREE Library weekly.**

**It's located in the front yard of the ALVA Historic Library & Museum at Pearl and Julia Streets**

---



*to protect and preserve the rights and liberties of all people in the United States*

<https://www.aclufl.org/>



Did you know? Criminals can try to steal your home or property by illegally recording a fraudulent deed.



Sign up for free Property Fraud Alerts and get notified within 24 hours if someone tries to file a fraudulent deed or mortgage in your name.

<https://www.facebook.com/leeclerkofcourt>



<https://my.lwv.org/florida/lee-county>

**Empowering Voters. Defending Democracy.**

## **SCORE** South West Florida

**2201 Second Street, Suite 500, Fort Myers, FL 33901**

**(239) 533-3102, [ch.admin0219@scorevolunteer.org](mailto:ch.admin0219@scorevolunteer.org)**

### **Serving Lee and Hendry Counties**

We provide free and confidential one-on-one business counseling by phone, email, and in-person in Lee and Hendry counties. We also conduct workshops for both start-up entrepreneurs and seasoned small business owners. SCORE is a fully independent private 501-3C non-profit with accountability to and some funding from the SB

**SCORE Mentors...**with experience in virtually every business category you can imagine help with:

- Business plan development, sales and marketing strategies
- Financing, taxes and E-commerce
- Management, administrative and operational procedures
- Ongoing advice to help your decision making

#### **Life-Long Learning Made Easy**

SCORE mentors, sponsors and local business owners with a specific areas of expertise conduct a variety of very popular, regularly scheduled, low-cost and free educational seminars and online workshops for establishing and managing a successful small business.

#### **Free Resources**

With access to a wide variety of documents, templates and tools to assist you in starting or growing your business, the information provided here covers a wide range of subjects including initial business planning, capital sources, government agencies, and much more.



*Major William M. Footman*

*Sons of Confederate Veterans*

*Camp 1950, Fort Myers, Florida*



Consider joining us at our monthly meeting every 4th Saturday at

Smoke'n Pit Bar-B-Q, 1641 N. Tamiami Trail, North Ft. Myers, FL 33903

Lunch and fellowship - 11:00am, Meeting - 12:00pm

Brigade Commander: Sean McFall

Find out more about us at

Camp Adjutant: Gerald W. Shell, email: [adjutant@camp1950.flscv.org](mailto:adjutant@camp1950.flscv.org)  
<https://www.camp1950.flscv.org/>



*We care for local grave sites of  
Confederate Civil War and  
United States veterans of all  
wars*



## The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail

A 190-mile marked canoe and kayak trail that meanders through the coastal waters and inland tributaries of Lee County, Florida. It attracts everyone from first-time kayakers to advanced paddlers and is home to abundant marine life, shore birds and crustaceans.



<https://www.fortmyers-sanibel.com/calusablueway>

---

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



**Listen to the Podcast and follow on Youtube, and more!**

***For information on where to go and what to do in SWFL!***

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvcRaJr9jghdQOgsnU2B6Pw>



## Fort Myers CAMERA CLUB

Photographers at all levels of ability throughout Lee County are invited to the regular bi-monthly meetings of the Fort Myers Camera Club. Meetings are held the 1st and 3rd Wednesday each month (from November 1 to April 3) from 6:30 to 8:30 pm.

Meetings are held at the All Faiths Church, 2736 McGregor Blvd., Fort Myers. Annual dues for membership are \$30. Novices are welcome and mentoring is available. Various speakers at the meetings cover topics such as critiquing, competition, and instruction.

**See [ftmyerscc.com](http://ftmyerscc.com) website or email [carolheff23@gmail.com](mailto:carolheff23@gmail.com) for additional information about the Camera Club.**

WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



The global farm is not only a hands-on training ground for those searching for help in tropical agriculture, but also an educational tool to make the public aware of hunger related issues and the answers there are to alleviate malnutrition and starvation.

17391 Durrance Road, North Fort Myers, FL 33917 | 239.543.3246 | [info@echonet.org](mailto:info@echonet.org)  
<https://www.echonet.org>



There are six fenced-in "Dog Parks" which allow for off-leash play. On-leash dog walking is allowed at many locations (listed below).

Dogs must be accompanied by an adult and must remain on-leash at all times while walking in the park. Find out more at: <https://www.leegov.com/parks/dog-parks>



## Six Mile Cypress Slough, Lee County Park

7751 Penzance Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL. 33966

A mile of wonder 30 minutes away from Alva.



## Manatee Park

10901 Palm Beach Blvd,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

239 690 5030



## **Olga Community Park**

2325 S Olga Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 533-7275



## **Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park**

17980 Palm Beach Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

-Great for quiet creek kayaking. -Fun for walks and picnics.



## **ALVA BOAT RAMP PARK**

21580 Pearl St,

Alva, FL 33920



## **W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam South Recreation Area**

Franklin Lock Rd. , Alva , FL 33920. Contact: (239) 694-2582



WP Franklin South Recreation Area is a day use area located on the Caloosahatchee River adjacent to the WP Franklin Lock and Dam. Visitors can watch boats traversing the 152 mile Okeechobee Waterway

## **W.P Franklin Lock & Dam CAMPGROUND**

Camp by reservation only

17850 NORTH FRANKLIN LOCK ROAD, ALVA, FL 33920, 239-694-8770

<https://www.recreation.gov/camping/campgrounds/233661>







## Alva Community Center PARK

21471 North River Road, Alva, FL 33920 , (239) 728-2882

### Shady lawns & baseball field

-----



## Telegraph Creek: Unspoiled kayak trail

out-of-the-way, uncrowded, scenic,  
quiet and full of wildlife.

-----



## NORTH FORT MYERS Recreation Park

2000 North Recreation Park Way, North Fort  
Myers, FL 33903,

This park features an 18 hole Disc Golf course , call  
(239) 297-8916

-----

## Veterans Park Recreation Center

55 Homestead Road South, Lehigh Acres, FL 33936



## COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE



### *Community Cafe, Mobile Pantry's, and Meals on Wheels*

HOW YOU CAN HELP: DONATE so that we can continue purchasing food to distribute at our Mobile Pantries. HOST A FOOD DRIVE and collect non-perishable food items to stock our shelves.

VOLUNTEER in the Community Cafe, at a Mobile Pantry, or as a Meals on Wheels Driver. Call (239) 332-7687. [Tami@communitycooperative.com](mailto:Tami@communitycooperative.com) or call 239-332-7687, ext. 125.



### **BABCOCK RANCH ECO TOURS, Museum and Gator Shack Restaurant** Go to website to reserve tours

<https://babcockranchecotours.com/>



Lee County Conservation 20/20 manages over 50 preserves spread throughout Lee County, including within the boundaries of most cities. These preserves combined total nearly 30,000 acres.



Preserves are open daily during daylight hours. Access may be limited at certain locations due to temporary flooding, special restoration projects, or isolated location. Information about each Conservation 20/20 preserve can be accessed from the website:

<http://www.leegov.com/conservation2020/preserves>



*Bob Janes Preserve*



*Buckingham Trails Preserve*



*Daniel's Preserve at Spanish Creek*



*Olga Shores Preserve*



*Alva Scrub Preserve*



*Carter's Lane*



WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



Aerial view of Oak Hammock Preserve

Oak hammock



Telegraph Creek Preserve



Frank Mann Preserve



# CALOOSAHATCHEE REGIONAL PARK

19130 North River Road, Alva, FL 33920

EMAIL: [leeparks@leegov.com](mailto:leeparks@leegov.com)

Shelter rentals, primitive tent camping, Horse and bike trails. **Campground phone: (239) 533-7421**







## LOSS OF HEALTH COVERAGE



You might be eligible for a Special Enrollment Period if you or someone in your household has lost qualifying health coverage in the last 60 days or expects to lose coverage in the next 60 days. Additionally, if you lost Medicaid or Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) coverage within the past 90 days, you may also qualify for a Special Enrollment Period.



Call: 1.866.547.2793  
Visit: [www.EnrollSWFL.com](http://www.EnrollSWFL.com)  
For more information



This program is supported by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$23,780,300 with 100 percent funded by CMS/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, CMS/HHS, or the U.S. Government.



## ASSIST CONSUMERS WITH SEP VERIFICATION FOR COVERAGE LOSS

We are contacting you to inform you that pre-enrollment verification for the Marketplace's loss of Minimum Essential Coverage (MEC) Special Enrollment Period (SEP) will start on Friday, May 16, 2025.

### Impact on Consumers:

If a consumer claims to have experienced or expects a loss of MEC and qualifies for a SEP, but our systems can't automatically verify this loss, they must provide documentation proving the loss or anticipated loss of coverage before using their plan.

A Special Enrollment Period Verification Issue (SVI) will occur when a plan is selected, requiring manual verification for the MEC loss. Consumers will have 30 days to submit the necessary documentation to resolve the SVI. If the SVI isn't resolved within this timeframe, the consumer won't be able to access their health coverage.

LEARN MORE

Contact us  
1.866.547.2793

Visit our website  
[www.EnrollSWFL.com](http://www.EnrollSWFL.com)



## Mobile Medical Clinic Schedule

Patients without health insurance and that show proof of income below 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines pay nothing for care and patients who do not meet income guidelines are provided care at significantly reduced rates.

**HIV Testing is always FREE**  
at any of our mobile clinic locations  
*Know Your Status - Get an Early Diagnosis*

**Multiple Days a Month**  
**Mount Hermon Ministries**  
Call 239-222-1829  
to make an appointment  
2856 Douglas Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33916

**Monday, September 8th**  
**Community Cooperative**  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
3429 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd #4403  
Fort Myers, FL 33916

**Saturday, September 13th**  
**Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church**  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
207 South 9th St, Immokalee, FL 34142

**Tuesday, September 9th & 23rd**  
**Cafe'of Life**  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
26724 Nomad Dr, Bonita Springs, FL 34135

**Wednesday, September 17th**  
**Gladiolus Food Pantry**  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
10511 Gladiolus Drive, Ft. Myers, FL 33908

**Wednesday, September 10th**  
**FMB Strong**  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
820 Buttonwood Drive,  
Fort Myers Beach, FL 33931

**Friday, September 19th**  
**Mahanaim SDA Church**  
10:00 am to 2:00 pm  
318 Sabal Palm Rd, Naples, FL 34114

**Thursday, September 11th**  
**Pine Manor Community Center**  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
5847 Tenth Ave. Fort Myers, FL 33907

**Speakeasy Casino Night Fundraiser**  
Saturday, Nov. 1st from 6 - 9 pm  
Doubletree by Hilton  
at the Bell Tower Shops, Ft Myers



**Walk-In Clinic / Main Office**  
10676 Colonial Blvd, Suite 20  
Fort Myers, FL 33913  
Mon. to Fri. 8:30 am to 5 pm  
[www.PremierMobileHealth.org](http://www.PremierMobileHealth.org)  
(239) 222-1829 or (239) 288-7949





## DISASTER RELIEF – HOW TO CONTRIBUTE WITHOUT GETTING CONNED

When disasters occur, like the recent floods in Texas, we see the best in humanity with the number of people who want to step in and help, giving time and money in hopes of alleviating some of the anguish of those who are suffering. Unfortunately, when money is involved, so are grifters. Here are some tips for making financial contributions to those who actually need it, not the crooks who don't.

The Federal Trade Commission urges people to research the charity for themselves, in particular those requests which come via social media. The Florida Solicitation of Contributions Act regulates solicitation of public contributions and requires full disclosure of certain information from persons soliciting contributions in Florida. Consumers can view the online [Check-A-Charity](#) tool to look up financial summaries of charitable organizations which are registered with the FDACS. You can also review charities at [Give.org](#), through the Better Business Bureau, or at [CharityWatch](#), an independent charity watchdog.

If you have a favorite charity which you trust and that works with disaster victims, give to it. Charities which have demonstrated their good works in the past are usually safer and have an established reputation to uphold. When donating, consider donating by credit card. If a charity insists that you give cash, gift cards, or cryptocurrency, it is likely a scam. Credit card donations provide you with more protection should an issue arise. Crowdfunding sites like GoFundMe or Kickstarter may seem like an easy route, but how do you know where your donation is going? The organizer establishes the goal and the contributions go directly to the organizer. Be sure to find out who is really behind the site, and how the funds will be dispersed to the needy. Also, remember that the donation may not be tax deductible.

If you want to learn more about giving safely, visit [Donating Safely and Avoiding Scams | Consumer Advice](#).





*Southwest Florida Cooking by*

*MAGGIE McManis*

*of Oak Park, Alva*

Contact Maggie to find out more at: [Maggie1m@aol.net](mailto:Maggie1m@aol.net)



## *Grilled Wild Caught Sea Scallops With Lemon Salsa Verde*

8 giant scallops thawed and dry

1/2 tsp Everglades seasoning

1/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp pepper

Pinch of paprika

Pinch of cayenne

Oil a grill mat and place on grill.

Combine seasonings and sprinkle on both sides of scallops as you grill them.

Grill first side for four minutes, turn and Grill scallops at least 2 minutes. Linger, check for doneness and grill additional, checking every minute.

Lemon Salsa Verde

1/2 lemon (with peel), seeded

1/4 C (scant) vidalia or sweet onion

2 garlic cloves

Pinch of Salt and pepper

1 tsp fresh or dried fresh cilantro

2 Tbsp chives

Place all in a food processor and chop until small pieces.

Remove to a small bowl and add 1/3 c virgin olive oil to the chopped and mix.







SWFL Crime Stoppers is NOT a substitute for calling 9-1-1. In the event of an emergency, please call 9-1-1. Those who submit a tip are called "tipsters" and will remain 100% anonymous. No caller ID. No recorded lines. No tracking of phone calls. We want your information, not your name!

Put simply it is a three-part approach to solving the crime problem. SWFL Crime Stoppers relies on cooperation between our community, the media, and law enforcement to provide a flow of information about crime, wanted fugitives and suspicious activities.



## Mission

Volunteer Florida strengthens Florida's communities through national service, fostering volunteerism and leveraging resources.

<https://volunteer.volunteerflorida.org/>



Effective immediately, persons who are experiencing homelessness (living outside, in a car, or other place not meant for human habitation) and seeking permanent housing resources in the Lee County CoC should contact 239-533-7900, and select options 1, 5, then 3, to complete a Coordinated Assessment.

WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



All young people  
**DREAM** of a bright  
future—one that's full of  
**OPPORTUNITIES.**  
**POSSIBILITIES.**

**MENTORSHIP  
MATTERS!**

Today's mentee is tomorrow's  
leader, so let's help them  
shape a **strong future.**

Join us for a **virtual open house** to learn  
more about becoming a **MENTOR (BIG)**

**EVERY WEDNESDAY FROM 4 PM - 4:30 PM**

Contact **Teresa Taft** at **941-586-0707** | [ttaft@bbbssun.org](mailto:ttaft@bbbssun.org)

**JOIN US ON ZOOM AT:**  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81091089176>  
**Meeting ID: 810 9108 9176**



**Give TIME. Give  
MONEY. Give FOOD.**

To make a donation, **call**  
**(239) 334-7007** or visit

[www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)

**We do our best to keep you all informed on where you can get food and how you  
can help.**

**For Food pickup locations:**

<https://harrychapinfoodbank.org/?s=Food+locations>

The **Florida IMMIGRANT Coalition** asks that you copy and print these information cards to share with any person, documented or not, you may know who may be in danger.

ICE and local enforcement of immigration policies have escalated in Southwest Florida. Be aware of your rights.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOUR LOVED ONE WAS PICKED UP BY ICE



### **First, report the raid!**

Contact your local community organization if you have one and share the raid information. If you do not know of any organizations, you can report the raid to the Immigrant Defense Project (IDP) at 212-725-6422. Be ready to provide details about the raid.

**Second, retrieve your loved one's information.** It is important to have your loved one's complete name, date of birth, country of origin, and their A-Number if possible. An A-Number begins with an "A" and is followed by eight or nine digits. This is an identifying number issued by the Department of Homeland Security for anyone who has had contact with any immigration agency.

### **Q: WHAT HAPPENS IMMEDIATELY AFTER ICE DETAINS MY LOVED ONE?**

**A:** If ICE arrests your loved one, they will first be taken to an ICE office for processing and then to a jail where they will be detained. Families will often get a call from their loved one a few hours after the arrest.

### **Q: HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN THE FIRST COURT DATE WILL BE?**

**A:** If your loved one does NOT have an order of removal, in most cases they will be placed in removal proceedings, which means they can fight their case in front of an immigration judge while detained. You can find out when and where the court date will be by calling the Executive Office for Immigration Review (EOIR) Automated System at 1-800-898-7180 or by visiting EOIR's automated website: <https://acis.eoir.justice.gov/en/>.

### **Q: HOW WILL THEY GET A LAWYER?**

**A:** Most detained people are unrepresented, because the U.S. government does not provide an immigration lawyer, even if the person cannot afford one. In New York, some detained non-citizens will be appointed an immigration attorney through the New York Immigrant Family Unity Project (NYIFUP) after their first court date but before their second court date. This program provides a free attorney to individuals who are detained and do NOT have a prior order of removal (see the information sheet on NYIFUP included on page 27). *Important: if you hire a private attorney before the first court date, you will be disqualified from NYIFUP, even if you cannot afford to pay that attorney in the future.*

### **Q: SHOULD WE TALK TO AN IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY NOW?**

**A:** If a loved one has an order of removal you should consult with an immigration attorney right away. It is important to determine whether the loved one already has a prior order of deportation because they will be at imminent risk of deportation and might need immediate attorney intervention.

### **Q: HOW LONG WILL THEY BE DETAINED?**

**A:** If a loved one qualifies for a way to legally stop the deportation in court, they may be detained for many months and sometimes years, all while fighting their case. Under immigration law, some people qualify for a "bond hearing" within the first few months to try and fight their case from the outside while other people are not eligible. Even with a "bond hearing" many people will not be released or they may not be able to afford the bond amount set. Families should make financial plans in order to have money ready for bond and support themselves, for a potentially long period of time, without their loved one's income.

### **Q: HOW CAN I VISIT THEM AND SEND THEM MONEY?**

**A:** Each jail has different rules. Specific updated information can be found here: <https://www.ice.gov/detention-facilities>. In the following page you can find information for the most common detention centers.

### **Q: CAN WE PREPARE NOW WHILE WAITING FOR COURT?**

**A:** Yes. There are documents that the family can start to collect that may help. In addition, if the loved one had an ongoing obligation to report (maybe to criminal court to pay a fee, probation, a rehabilitative program, etc.), it is important to let the point of contact for that reporting know that your loved one is detained. This can be a long to do list - and a great way for organizers or community members to support the family through this process.



## Community of Care

### How Heart Wounds Heal

A group experience to bring healing to wounds of the heart—emotions, spirit, soul—from the unique hurt, trauma or loss experienced by many in their lives. People experiencing deep hurt of all kinds may find relief, reassurance and healing in this offering of care.

Often, those with heart wounds experience exhaustion, increased irritability or, feeling overwhelmed, isolated, or weighed down by grief or seemingly unending need.

These reactions require the security of a safe fellowship space to facilitate healing. The group will be led by compassionate, faith filled facilitators who are trained in Bible based trauma healing.

Together, we will make a safe space for group members to:

- Discover what the Bible says about those who hurt
- Learn about heart or soul hurt and its effects
- Experience being heard and valued
- Release some emotional pain
- Build resilience for the future

**HurtMending Facilitators:**  
**Tee Ormiston**, Adult and Generational Trauma Facilitator/Trainer  
**George Ormiston**, Adult and Generational Trauma Facilitator/Traine  
**Register at:** Eventbrite  
**Contact:** [HurtMending@gmail.com](mailto:HurtMending@gmail.com)  
 Grace for Registration fee waived by emailed request

**12 Tuesdays**  
 3/4 - 5/20

**Time: EST**  
 6:30 - 8:00

Email for Registration  
[HurtMending@gmail.com](mailto:HurtMending@gmail.com)  
 or  
 Follow us on  
 Eventbrite

**Trauma Healing INSTITUTE**

HurtMending Ministry Offering,  
 in collaboration with

**AMERICAN BIBLE SOCIETY**

## Buckingham Presbyterian Church

Join us  
**SUNDAY**  
 10 am Worship  
 Followed by Fellowship

Searching for a welcoming, friendly, Bible-teaching place of worship? Look no further!

Whether it's Sunday services or Wednesday Night Connection, come see what's going on.

**Weekly Sunday Services:**  
 10:00 am - Worship  
 11:00 am - Fellowship / refreshments

**Wednesday Night Connection:**  
 6:00 pm - Pot-Luck Dinner\*  
 6:45 pm - Bible Study

**Buckingham Presbyterian Church**  
 4241 Buckingham Road  
 Fort Myers, FL 33905  
[BuckinghamPresbyterian@gmail.com](mailto:BuckinghamPresbyterian@gmail.com)  
<https://buckinghampc.org/>  
 239.694.2444

\*Please bring enough to feed 8 people.

Sharing God's Love through Fellowship, Ministry & Worship

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (USA)**

## Big Brothers Big Sisters®

### OF THE SUN COAST

# We're Hiring

## JOIN OUR TEAM

### BECOME A MENTOR MANAGER- MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

- Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast is seeking an outgoing, experienced Human Services professional with a passion for working with youth in the role of Mentor Manager.
- BBBS Sun Coast is an Agency that promotes the mentoring relationships between Bigs and Littles for the purpose of igniting the potential in each child served.

**JOIN OUR MISSION APPLY AT**

- [bbbssun.org](http://bbbssun.org)

## CHILD CARE

### of Southwest Florida, Inc.

# NOW HIRING

## EARLY LEARNING TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS

Child Care of Southwest Florida is now hiring full and part-time positions at our locations across Lee County and our centers within Lee County schools.

**Current Locations**

- Children's Garden of LaBelle, LaBelle
- Joseph H. Messina Children's Center, Fort Myers
- P.A. Geraci Development Center, Fort Myers
- The Children's Learning Center, Fort Myers
- The Community Children's Center, Lehigh Acres
- G. Weaver Hipps Early Learning Center, Lehigh Acres

**Opening Soon**

**In-School Early Learning Centers**

- Harns Marsh Middle, Buckingham
- Bonita Springs Middle, Bonita Springs
- San Carlos Park Elementary, Fort Myers
- Ray V. Pottorf Elementary, Fort Myers
- Pelican Elementary, Cape Coral

**SCAN THE QR CODE**  
 to explore career opportunities and apply for open positions online or call (239) 320-7799

**COME GROW WITH US! APPLY NOW**

The school district is neither endorsing nor sponsoring this event, product or service, nor endorsing the views of the sponsoring organization.



# Alva Area FOOD PANTRIES

## Grace Church, Fort Myers Shores

**2nd Saturday every month**

**Food pick-up is by appointment.  
Call the church office at 239-694-2797 for information.**

## Charleston Park Community Center

**239-728-8895**

**FOOD PANTRY**

**Every week, Friday, 10am-2pm**

## ALVA Methodist Church

**Food Pantry @ Bethany House**

**Food Pantry: 9am-12pm 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesdays**

**239-728-2277**

## CALVARY NATIONS Church

**19850 Palm Beach Boulevard, Alva**

**Every Saturday, 3pm until supplies run out.**

**239-7285566**

## St. Vincent DePaul RC

**Our Lady's Cupboard Food Pantry**

**Call (239) 694-3985 for hours open.**

*Some LaBelle Area Churches:*

---

Assemblies of God

(863) 675-4227

915 Lake Manor Dr Labelle, FL 33935

Pentecostal Church of God

(863) 675-0900

55 Orange Ave, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-0938

Carlson Memorial Church

310 Campbell St Labelle FL, 33935

LaBelle Assembly of God

(863) 675-0656

915 Lake Manor Dr Labelle FL

(863) 675-0900

The Channel UMC Ft Myers/LaBelle

Fully ONLINE LIVE, Mondays, 7pm, EST

LaBelle First Baptist

<https://www.facebook.com/TheChannelUMC/>

330 N Main St, Labelle, FL 33935

ZOOM LINK:

(863) 675-2171

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89527254110?pwd=bWEyL283YW9sck52R2V5UDVqTEJiQT09>

Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish

Church of Christ Central

355 S Bridge St, Labelle, FL 33935

60 Hendry St, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-0030

(863) 675-4796

Christ Central LaBelle, Reformed

Eastside Baptist Church

540 1st Ave LaBelle FL

1110 S Carlyle St, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-2100

(863) 675-3595

Good Shepherd Episcopal

El Faro Assemblies of God of LaBelle

1098 Collingswood Pkwy, LaBelle FL

431 Bryan Ave, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-0385

(863) 675-5947

<https://goodshepherd.dioswfl.org>

Christ The King Lutheran

Grace Baptist

1362 Thigpen Rd, Labelle, FL 33935

4200 Ne Eucalyptus Blvd, Labelle, FL 33935

(941) 675-2733

(863) 675-3349

New Testament Assembly

International Christian Fellowship

60 Calhoun St, Labelle, FL 33935

233 Clark St, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 674-0444



Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist

83 Campbell St, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-1435

Saint Matthews Missionary Baptist

929 Caloosahatchee Ave, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-4451

Bethel Holiness

1153 Cornelia Dr SW, Labelle, FL 33935

Church of Peace

814 Fordson Ave, Labelle, FL 33935 (863) 674-0074

New Bethel Baptist

874 Suwanee Ave, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-3205

Upper Room Church of God

345 S Bridge St, Labelle, FL 33935

(863) 675-7001

---

### **Some Alva & Fort Myers Shores Churches:**

**St. Vincent DePaul's RC Church**

**13031 Palm Beach Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33905**

**[www.stvincentftmyers.org](http://www.stvincentftmyers.org) 239-693-0818**

**Alva Methodist Church**

**21440 Pearl St. P.O Box 96**

**Alva, FL 33920**

**[Alvamc@embargmail.com](mailto:Alvamc@embargmail.com)**

**[www.alvamethodist.org](http://www.alvamethodist.org) 239-728-2277**

**Alva Church of God**

**21520 Park St, Alva, Florida 33920**

**239-728-2644**

**Liberation International Church**

**Avenue D, Charleston Park**

**Alva, FL 33920,**

**239-601-4870**

**New Hope Faith Temple of Jesus Christ**

**23210 Avenue D, Charleston Park**

**Alva, FL, 33920 239-770-4974**

Buckingham Presbyterian Church

4241 Buckingham Road

Fort Myers, FL 33905

[www.buckinghampc.org](http://www.buckinghampc.org)

Light of the Nations Filipino Congregation

19850 Palm Beach Blvd (at Calvary Church)

Alva, FL, 33920

239-728-5566

First Spanish Assembly of God Church

2219 Joel Blvd

Alva, FL

Countryside Wesleyan Church

17750 Palm Beach Blvd, Alva, FL 33920

239-368-3270

Calvary Nations Church

19850 Palm Beach Blvd

Alva, FL 33920

[CalvaryChurchSwfl@yahoo.com](mailto:CalvaryChurchSwfl@yahoo.com)

[www.calvarynations.org](http://www.calvarynations.org) 239-728-5566

First Baptist Church of Alva

2790 Joel Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

[www.alvabaptist.com](http://www.alvabaptist.com) 239-728-2034

Grace Church, Ft Myers Shores

14036 Matanzas Drive, Ft Myers, Florida 33905

[www.egracechurch.com](http://www.egracechurch.com) 239-694-2797

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

14531 Old Olga Road,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

[www.blcefml.org](http://www.blcefml.org) 239-694-3878



**Olga Baptist Church**

2364 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33905

[www.olgabaptist.org](http://www.olgabaptist.org) 239-694-2012

[olgabapch1@embarqmail.com](mailto:olgabapch1@embarqmail.com)

**Crossroads Baptist**

10721 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 693-2777

**Fort Myers Shores Seventh Day Adventist**

14830 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers FL

(239) 693-0341

**Olga-Fort Myers Shores Methodist**

14036 Matanzas Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 694-2797

**Olga Baptist**

2364 S Olga Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 694-2012

[olgabaptistchurch@gmail.com](mailto:olgabaptistchurch@gmail.com)

**Rosa De Saron Assemblies of God**

13235 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers FL

(239) 694-8777

**Victory Christian Center Assemblies of God**

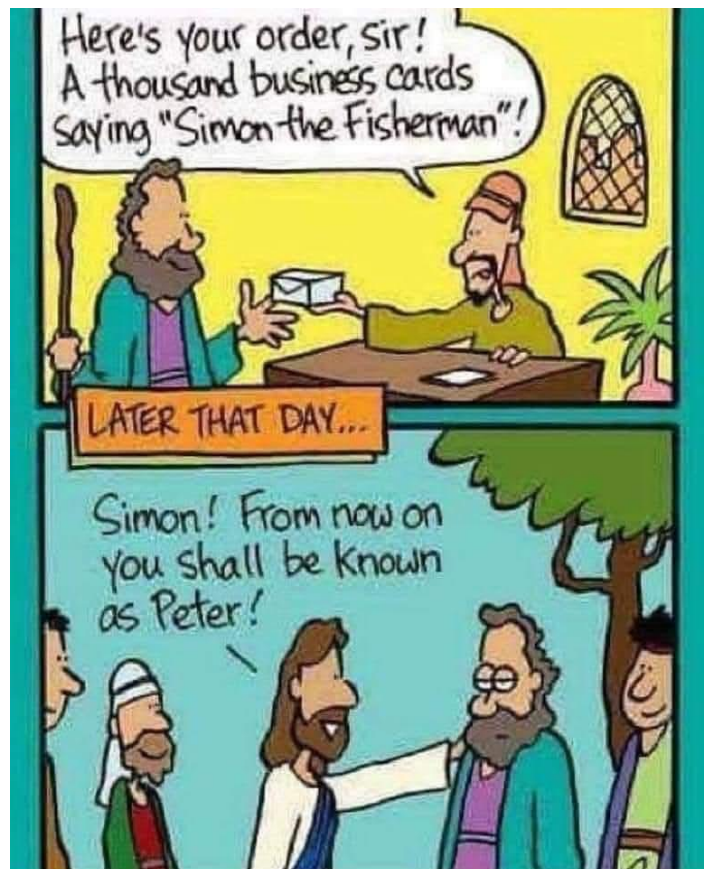
11431 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 694-5131

**Cielo's Abierto's Ministries**

10721 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 297-6472







## 12 Step Programs along the Caloosahatchee

Because Alcoholics Anonymous was exclusive to people who struggled with alcohol addiction, a vast array of other programs were formed to aid and support those in recovery from other addictive disorders. These include the following groups:

Any type of group you do not find listed below may be sought at this website:

<https://www.addicted.org/directory/category/lee-county-3.html>

**Before going to the meeting, confirm time and place by phone**

### ALVA:

**Alva Community Center**, 21471 N River Rd, Alva, FL 33920

-AA Way, 8pm Wednesdays, Big Book, OPEN

**St. Matthews House**, Cypress Creek & North River (rte 78) Roads, Alva

Jill's Place (for women) AND Justin's Place (for men), 239-687-7633 or [intake@stmatthewshouse.org](mailto:intake@stmatthewshouse.org).

<https://stmatthewshouse.org/whatwedo/justinsplace/jills-place-retreat-center>

### FORT MYERS SHORES:

**St. Vincent De Paul RC**, 13031 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers: Fort Myers Shores Group OStAH – Tuesday, 8:00 pm

**Calvary Assembly of God**, 11431 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers:

-Night Owls OD – Saturday, 10:05 pm

### LEHIGH ACRES:

**-AA SUNRISE GROUP - MONDAYS, WEDNESDAYS, FRIDAYS & SATURDAYS 7AM**

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**LEHIGH ACRES (cont):**

**-AA MONDAY AT A TIME - MONDAY 6:30PM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA CHAIR'S CHOICE - TUESDAY 6:30PM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA SPIRITUAL SEARCH GROUP - TUESDAY 8PM**

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA THIRSTY THURSDAYS - THURSDAY 6:30PM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA HERE AND NOW- SUNDAY 6:30PM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres, 33971,

(239) 275-5111

**-NA HOPE WITHOUT DOPE - THURSDAY & SATURDAY 6:30PM**

705 Leland Heights Blvd. E., Lehigh Acres,

(866) 819-5346

**-AA LEHIGH SUNDAY NIGHT - SUNDAY 8PM**

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE - FRIDAY 6:30PM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AL ANON MOVING FORWARD AFG - MONDAY 10AM**

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(888) 425-2666

**-AA FIRST THINGS FIRST - MON-SUN 7AM**

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**-AA NOONERS - MON-SUN 12PM**

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

**LABELLE:**

**Good Shepherd Church, (239) 275-5111, 1098  
Collingswood Pkwy, Labelle**

-AA-PORT LABELLE GROUP – ODH- SUNDAY 7PM

-MAKING THE EFFORT -OLbHD- MONDAY 7:00 PM

-AS BILL SEES IT- OD- SATURDAY 9:00AM

-WED BIG BOOK GROUP- OBBH- WEDNESDAY NOON

-OPEN DISCUSSION -ODH- FRIDAY 7:00PM

**First Christian Church, Rte 29 & Ford Ave, LaBelle**

-LABELLE GROUP-ODAH- THURSDAY 7:00PM

-STEP GROUP-Cst- TUESDAY 7:00PM

**-AI Anon- AFG - THURSDAY 7PM**

138 Ford Ave, Labelle

(888) 425-2666

**-AA-THURSDAY 7PM**

138 Ford Ave, Labelle

(239) 275-5111

**-AA-MEETING AT THE INN - WEDNESDAY 7:15PM**

Port LaBelle Inn, 1568 Oxbow Dr, Labelle

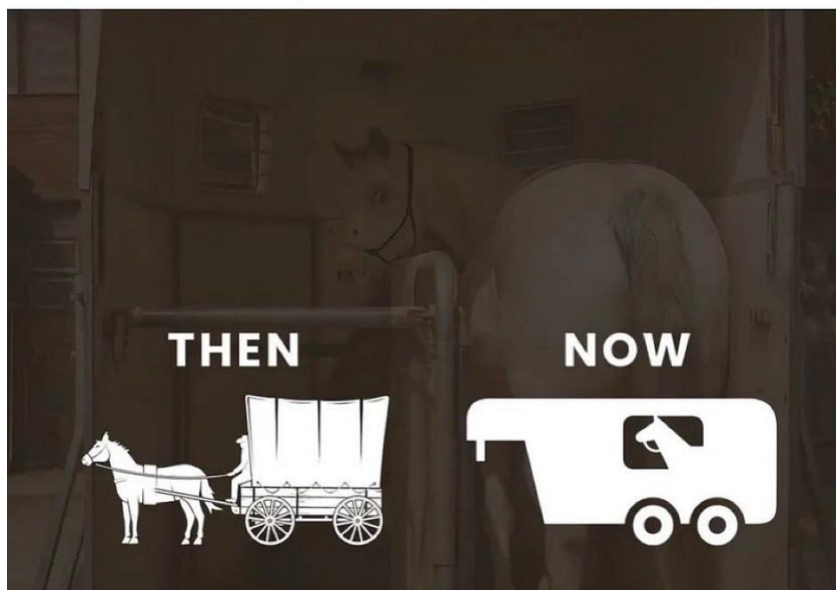
(239) 275-5111

**NOT TODAY - MONDAY 6:00PM**

133 N Bridge St, Labelle

(866) 819-5346

**Well played horse, well played 🤘**



Recovery Meetings at Grace Shores

Meeting Time	Meeting Type	Location
Monday 12 Noon	AA Open	The Lighthouse
Monday 7 PM	Al-Anon	Room 1
Monday 7 PM	Men's AA	The Lighthouse
Monday 7PM	CA	The Cafe'
Tuesday 12 Noon	AA Open	The Lighthouse
Tuesday 7 PM	Men's SAA	Room 2
Tuesday 7 PM	Women's AA	The Community Center
Wednesday 12 Noon	AA Open	The Lighthouse
Thursday 12 Noon	AA Open	The Lighthouse
Thursday 7 PM	AA Open	The Community Center
Thursday 8PM	AA Open	Room 1
Friday 12:00 Noon	Co-ed	The Lighthouse
Friday 12:00 Noon	Al-Anon	Room 1
Friday 7PM	AA Big Book	The Lighthouse
Saturday 7PM	AA Speaker	The Community Center
Sunday 7PM	AA Big Book	The Lighthouse

Celebrate Recovery @ all 3 campuses

Dinner at 6:00, followed by large group then small group meetings.		
Monday 6:45-9pm	Central Campus 2415 Grand Ave., Fort Myers, FL 33901	
Wednesday 6:30-8:30	Ft. Myers Shores Campus 14036 Matanzas Dr., Ft. Myers, FL 33905	
Friday 6:45-9PM	Cape Coral Campus 13 SE 21st PL., Cape Coral, FL 33990	

The Lighthouse is located at 14006 Matanzas Dr. on the west end of campus. All other meeting spaces are on the main campus at 14036 Matanzas Dr. If you have questions or would like someone from our Recovery Team to call you, please call 239-694-2797

If you know of any other 12 step or non-12 step recovery group in the Alva area (From Hendry County Line to Fort Myers Shores, north and south of our river) please let me know its name, location and the phone number for information to list here.

Thank you! [kendewalt@ontheriver.org](mailto:kendewalt@ontheriver.org)



## Caregiver Respite and Support

12:15-2pm  
every 4th Friday

The challenges of being a caregiver of a loved one can be demanding. We invite you to an afternoon of support and care for you. We will serve you and your loved one (if they are able to attend) a delicious, free lunch. We have activities to engage your loved one while you restore with some relaxation and fun. This is monthly gathering is free and open to any caregiver.

You can register by emailing Paula [pwinters@gracechurch.com](mailto:pwinters@gracechurch.com) or by calling the church at 239-694-2797 and leave a message. We will return your call.





## *The Alva* **ONION SLICE**

<https://theonion.com/>

with sincere homage to



News

### **Family Cuts Nursing Home Visit Short So Grandmother Can Get Back To Excruciating Loneliness**

Published: August 20, 2015

TOLEDO, OH—Bending down to hug her in her wheelchair before quickly saying their goodbyes, members of the Schueller family reportedly cut their nursing home visit short Thursday so that their grandmother, Anna Schueller, could get back to her excruciating loneliness. “Well, we probably should be going, because we don’t want to keep Nana from sitting in crushingly painful solitude any longer than we already have,” said grandson Andrew Schueller, adding that, while he’d love to stay longer, he knows this is the time his grandmother usually spends motionless in her chair looking at nothing in particular, overwhelmed by the loss of

connection she once felt with other human beings and the world in general. “Plus, I think we’ve tired her out enough already, so we should really let her get to bed and stare at the ceiling thinking of all that she’s lost. Especially because she’s got a long day devoid of any human warmth tomorrow.” The Schullers added that they’ll definitely be back to visit their grandmother on a day when she doesn’t already have plans to sit blankly in front of the television and silently contemplate whether her ongoing private agony is any better or worse than being dead.



WEBSITE: [www.OnTheRiver.org](http://www.OnTheRiver.org)

Issue 80, September 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

**I have sponsored and recommended these well led and overseen groups for over 30 years in ministry -Ken DeWalt**

<https://www.griefshare.org/>

<https://www.divorcecare.org/>



**HOPE & Healing**  
divorce recovery support groups

Find a DivorceCare support group

☐ In-Person ☐ Online

“It was the best thing I did for my kids and myself.”  
Melissa

The banner features a photograph of four people (three women and one man) sitting in a circle, engaged in conversation. A large white play button is centered over the image. Below the photo is a green bar with the text 'Find a DivorceCare support group' and two buttons for 'In-Person' and 'Online'. At the bottom, a dark blue bar contains a quote from Melissa.



## Important Phone Numbers & Websites

Font Size: [Share & Bookmark](#) [Feedback](#) [Print](#)

AGENCY	NORMAL BUSINESS	EMERGENCY
American Red Cross (Local Chapter)	239-278-3401	239-278-3401
Arson Alert Hotline	800-342-5869	800-342-5869
Blood Donor Centers	888-9-DONATE	
- Lee Memorial Blood Center	239-343-2333	
- Florida's Blood Centers	239-574-3170	
Cape Coral Emergency Management	239-573-3022	911
Cape Coral Police Department (non-emergency)	239-574-3223	911
Dept. of Financial Services (Insurance)	239-461-4001	800-22-STORM
Federal Emergency Management Agency	800-621-3362	800-462-7585
Florida Division of Emergency Management	850-413-9969	
Fort Myers Police Department	239-321-7700	911
Lee County Animal Services	239-533-7387	239-533-7387
Lee County Emergency Information Hotline / United Way 211	239-433-2000	211
Lee County Emergency Management	239-533-0622	239-533-0622
Lee County Government	239-533-2111	
Lee County Health Department	239-332-9501	239-332-9501
Lee County Public Safety & EMS	239-533-3911	911
Lee County Sheriff's Office	239-477-1000	911
Mobile or Manufactured Home Residents	850-617-3004	
National Weather Service/Tampa Bay	813-645-2323	
Poison Information	800-222-1222	800-222-1222
Salvation Army, The	239-278-1551	239-278-1551
Sanibel Police Department	239-472-3111	911
Traffic Conditions in Florida (Current)	511	511
United Way of Lee, Hendry, Glades & Okeechobee Counties	239-433-2000	211

AGENCY	WEB ADDRESS
Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)	<a href="http://www.ready.gov/cert">www.ready.gov/cert</a>
Department of Financial Services (Insurance)	<a href="http://www.myfloridacfo.com">www.myfloridacfo.com</a>
Department of Homeland Security	<a href="http://www.dhs.gov/">www.dhs.gov/</a>
Florida Lightning Safety	<a href="http://www.weather.gov/safety/lightning">www.weather.gov/safety/lightning</a>
Mobile or Manufactured Home Residents	<a href="http://www.flhsmv.gov/mobilehome">www.flhsmv.gov/mobilehome</a>
American Sign Language Preparedness Videos	<a href="http://www.lee.gov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan">www.lee.gov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan</a>
StormReady	<a href="http://www.weather.gov/stormready/">www.weather.gov/stormready/</a>





**You can donate to a number of reputable charities that help Ukraine, including these reported by Google as reputable charities**

**Ukrainian Red Cross Society**, A long-standing and trusted charity that provides humanitarian aid and emergency response

**Come Back Alive Foundation**, Provides technology, training, and accouterments to the Armed Forces of Ukraine

**Razom for Ukraine**, Provides humanitarian relief and recovery, evacuates vulnerable populations, and advocates for Ukraine

**United Help Ukraine**, A charity that has been awarded 4 stars on Charity Navigator and Gold Transparency on Candid

**Hope for Ukraine**, A 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization

### **Other organizations that help Ukraine**

World Central Kitchen

Sunflowers for Peace

Caritas Ukraine

Voices of Children

Vostok SOS



## Warehouse Centre for Humanitarian and Medical Aid to Ukraine

### How your donation can help

Donating money allows organizations to help with whatever is needed, source things locally, and transport items quickly.



### Tax deductions

If you donate to a tax-exempt organization like Hope for Ukraine, you may be able to claim your donation as a deduction on your U.S. taxes.

### Before you donate funds to ANY relief organization, Protect Yourself

Give to established charities or groups whose work you know and trust.

Be aware of organizations with copycat names or names similar to reputable organizations.

Be wary of new organizations that claim to aid victims of recent high-profile disasters.

Do your research. Use the Federal Trade Commission's resources to examine the track record of a charity.

Give using a check or credit card. If a charity or organization asks you to donate through cash, gift card, virtual currency, or wire transfer, it's probably a scam. Learn more about this trick from the FTC.

Practice good cyber hygiene:

Don't click links or open email attachments from someone you don't know.

Manually type out links instead of clicking on them.

Don't provide any personal information in response to an email, robocall, or robotext.

Check the website's address—most legitimate charity organization websites use .org, not .com.

After a natural disaster or other emergency, carefully vet any contractors before hiring them to work on your home or business.

## ON THE RIVER Alva Community Newsletter – Advertising Rates as of March 21, 2025

The FREE monthly online OTR E-Newsletter is circulated to 12,000+ readers including 1,400 individual subscribers. We encourage all to share it as well.

Ads run full across the 9x11" OTR page, then down the fraction of the page you choose.

Advertising rates per each month :

¼ Page... one issue: \$40.00, six issues: \$30.00each, twelve issues: \$25.00each

½ Page... one issue: \$60.00, six issues: \$50.00each, twelve issues: \$40.00each

Full Page... one issue: \$100.00, six issues: \$90.00each, twelve issues: \$70.00each

Upon request we can format ads for you with WORD.doc copy and j.peg photos or logos. We can also scan any copy and/or photos you provide to create a single j.peg of your ad.

You will receive a screenshot proof of the ad for your approval as soon as we have it formatted before its issue is published. Lack of response to the proof will be considered acceptance.

Full payment for all issues contracted for is to be made by the 15th of the month preceding the first month in which the ad is to appear, which is also the date the ad copy is to be received. Payments are to be by check made out to Ramona DeWalt, noted: OTR.

CONTACT: Ken DeWalt, publisher, with any questions. [kendewalt@ontheriver.org](mailto:kendewalt@ontheriver.org)

Special thanks to all whose advertising and donations  
support the mission of ON THE RIVER.

