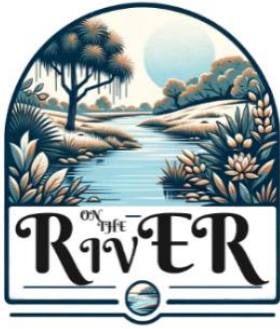


WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

As always, please share with anyone. Ken DeWalt, publisher, 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

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

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FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S OTR

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LABELLE AREA, Page 28

NORTH FORT MYERS & NORTH OLGA, Page 37

FOR ALL OF US, Page 40

SOME LOCAL CHURCHES, Page 66



Rick Blake

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ON THE RIVER NEWS

The area we cover for news and non-profit events



Court tells Lee Commissioners **NO** on Alico Road sewer plant

(Shared via FACEBOOK by Alva INC Board Member Denise Eberle and Mike Walcher-WGCU News)

The Twentieth Judicial Circuit Court just handed down a ruling that SLAMS the Lee County Board of County Commissioners for breaking the law and shoving through corrupt development deals on protected conservation land.

The Judge QUASHED (The judges word) their entire rezoning decision for the Wild Turkey Preserve, land that was supposed to stay protected under Conservation 20/20, not turned into a wastewater treatment plant to feed more greedy high-density developments along Alico and Corkscrew Road.

One of the developers, Kingston Development, is planned for thousands of homes in southeast Lee County. Last year commissioners re-zoned farmland to allow the waste-water facility on 112 acres. It would serve the new under development Kingston area off Corkscrew Road and other growth in southeast Lee.

Judge James Shenko ruled that commissioners were prejudiced and biased in their approval. He wrote their "Yes" vote came after commissioners agreed and approval was based on the direction of the county board over the last four years. The judge ruled that basing a vote on the past direction of the commission is not a valid reason to approve.

Judge Shenko also wrote that the proposed plant could attract a lot of birds. And because it's within five miles of the international airport, more birds could mean more chances of collisions with planes.

The Lee County attorney's office says it intends to vigorously defend the board's zoning decision, and may appeal to a higher court.

The lawsuit was brought by three individuals, including a man who owns land near the proposed waste-water plant.

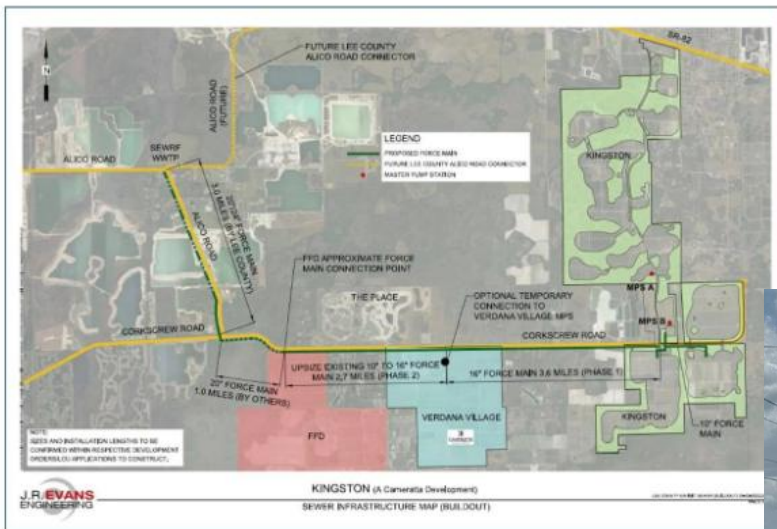
A ground-breaking ceremony is planned Thursday for the Kingston development, one of the largest master-planned developments ever conceived in Southwest Florida, spanning almost 7,000 acres.

Here's what the Court found:

- ⚖️ Lee County violated due process
- ⚖️ Acted with bias and prejudice
- ⚖️ Ignored their own Land Development Code and FAA safety rules
- ⚖️ Used off-record facts and pre-determined "board direction" to justify a developer's plan.

In plain English: They were caught red-handed bending the rules, ignoring public input, and pushing development over the environment, safety, and truth.

This land is home to Florida panthers, borders natural flood flowways, and sits within airport safety zones — yet our county leaders approved it anyway.



Part of Denise's closing comment , "But make no mistake — this isn't just about one case. This is about a pattern of behavior. Every single board, department, and commissioner who looks the other way needs to be held accountable. ALL of Lee County deserves a full spotlight and a long overdue reckoning."



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IN THE TWENTIETH CIRCUIT COURT IN AND FOR LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA - CIVIL
DIVISION

PETER SPAHHN,
MARSHA ELLIS,
SERGE THOMAS
Petitioners.

v.

Case No: 24-CA-1479

LEE COUNTY,
(In re DCI2023-00011
Southeast Water Reclamation Facility CFPD
Rezoning Resolution Z-23-022
APPLICATION OF LEE COUNTY UTILITIES
OWNER: LEE COUNTY)
Respondents.

ORDER GRANTING PETITION FOR WRIT OF CERTIORARI

THIS CAUSE having come for consideration upon the filing of a Petition for Writ of Certiorari. Pursuant to Article V, Section 5(b) of the Florida Constitution and Fla. R. App. P. 9.030(c)2 and 9.100(c)(2), Petitioners timely invoked this Court's "first-tier" certiorari jurisdiction. Petitioners ask this Court to review the January 17, 2024, decision of the Lee County Board of County Commissioners ("Board") to rezone property from Agriculture (AG-2) to Community Facilities Planned Development ("CFPD") to construct a wastewater treatment plant on 112 acres to serve new private, large scale developments located along Alico and Corkscrew Road.

Having considered the Petition, Response, Reply, the Appendixes, having heard oral arguments of the parties at a hearing held on August 7, 2025, the applicable law, being otherwise duly advised, the Petition for Writ of Certiorari is hereby **GRANTED** and the rezoning is hereby **QUASHED** for the reasons discussed below.

1



US Army Corps of Engineers starts increased release targets from Lake Okeechobee into Caloosahatchee River

(TY Fox 4- Allie Kaiser)



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is releasing water from Lake Okeechobee into the Caloosahatchee River, but officials say less water will be released compared to previous years.

The lake currently sits about two feet lower than it was last year, partly due to a new release schedule implemented last winter that allowed more water to be released during the dry season.

Local fisherman Trey Airy was at Caloosahatchee on Thursday and was curious about the potential impact these releases can have on water quality. "Whenever I have time, I'm fishing," Airy said.

The Army Corps says these releases are important for the overall health of the Caloosahatchee River system.

They say, "last year releases were being made out of the lake to achieve 2,000 cfs target at W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam," but this year they are "increasing the 250 cfs to 350 cfs at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam."

Local fisherman Trey Airy was at Caloosahatchee on Thursday and was curious about the potential impact these releases can have on water quality. "Whenever I have time, I'm fishing," Airy said.

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They say, "last year releases were being made out of the lake to achieve 2,000 cfs target at W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam," but this year they are "increasing the 250 cfs to 350 cfs at the W.P. Franklin Lock and Dam."

Some longtime residents of Southwest Florida, like Bill Haul, trust the process. "It's been that way for years. I've been here since '86 - they seem to know what they're doing," Haul said.

However, many people have criticized past releases because blue-green algae from the lake can flow downstream. This algae can be dangerous for wildlife and pose health risks to certain groups of people.

"Personally, as a fisherman, you can't really like anything like that, that's going to kill fish," Airy said about the algae.

The Army Corps says the risk of algae blooms is currently low.

In an email, the US Army Corps of Engineers said they "have not visually observed any blooms near our three locks along the river recently and satellite imagery and water testing of Lake Okeechobee water indicates that bloom conditions are low."

The Army Corps says they are monitoring conditions and will make changes to the release schedule if needed.

'IT'S NOT SAFE': LaBelle residents raise safety concerns about crosswalk

(TY Fox 4-Allie Kaiser)



A crosswalk in LaBelle has sparked safety concerns among residents who said they have witnessed traffic jams and accidents since its construction.

The crosswalk, located on SR 80, was designed to address what the Florida Department of Transportation called the "#1 corridor in Hendry County for pedestrian crashes and fatalities."

However, local residents question whether the safety measure is creating new hazards.

Video footage from the nearby Contreras Mexican Restaurant shows a bicycle accident that occurred Friday at the crosswalk.

"It's not safe," said Todd Bottoms, a lifelong LaBelle resident. "It was a lot better before they installed this. It's just in the wrong spot."

He shared his experience with using the crosswalk. "It's pretty scary, because the lights they have up there, a lot of the people don't realize they're supposed to stop," Bottoms said.

Traffic congestion has become another issue, according to Darrell Harris, a LaBelle resident and retired Hendry County commissioner.

Some residents say the cars and trucks do not slow down as people try to move through the crosswalk. "You're pulling in and out of places and then you've got trucks going 50-60 MPH," Harris said.

LaBelle Mayor Julie Wilkins expressed concerns about the current design, stating that "yellow flashing lights do not mean stop. Many times, folks who are crossing are hidden by other stopped vehicles."

SR 80 is FDOT's jurisdiction, and the agency said it is working to redesign the crosswalk with an overhead signal after receiving requests from residents.



Rte 80, Rte 31, Rte 78 CONSTRUCTION NEWS


Beginning November 17, 2025

NOTICE OF TRUCK DETOUR

WILSON PIGOTT BRIDGE

State Road 31 (S.R. 31) over the Caloosahatchee River

DETOUR ROUTE



Beginning November 17, 2025


NOTICE OF TRUCK DETOUR

WILSON PIGOTT BRIDGE

State Road 31 (S.R. 31) over the Caloosahatchee River

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is addressing ongoing maintenance concerns with the Wilson Pigott Bridge on S.R. 31 over the Caloosahatchee River. In response to these concerns and to ensure public safety, FDOT will implement the following measures.

- Commercial Truck Restriction:** Beginning November 17, 2025, Commercial Truck traffic will be prohibited from using the Wilson Pigott Bridge. Passenger vehicles may continue to use the bridge.
- Detour Route:** Commercial Trucks will be required to use I-75 to cross the Caloosahatchee River as an alternative to S.R. 31. See detour route on back.
- Bridge Deck Reconstruction:** FDOT has plans to reconstruct the bridge deck, with a tentative completion date of February 2026.



757 New Homes proposed for corner of Rte 31 and 78

(TY Steve Brodtkin – Pres, CCBC)



The Armada Family LLC has applied for a land use change (CPA2025-00008) and a zoning change (DCI2025-00019) for their 561.63 acres on the north side of North River Road. This is across from the proposed Neal Communities development on the south side. The requests are to change the land use from DR/GR to Rural and Wetlands, and to change the zoning from Ag2 to Residential Planned Development (RPD). They want to cluster 737 single family residences on the 561.63 acres. The attached map shows the Neal Communities development (Cary/Duke/Povia RPD) to the south and Babcock development to the northwest. They intend to have water and sewer service for the development.

The meeting promoted to the right has happened. The development is one of several NEAL communities being planned for North River Road over the past several years.

ADDRESS: Intersection of Owl Creek Dr. and N. River Rd., Alva, FL 33920

In accordance with the North Olga Planning Community Requirements of the Lee County Land Development Code, the Applicant, Neal Communities of Southwest Florida, Inc, will be presenting information to the public on the residential community known as Silverstrand. The meeting will be conducted for the following development order applications: Silverstrand Phase 1 (DOS2024-00096): Seeking DO approval of 290 units, with supporting infrastructure and preserve restoration Silverstrand Phase 2 (DOS2024-00160): Seeking DO for approval of 146 units, with supporting infrastructure for up to 234 units, preserve restoration and amenity site with a 2,500 SF clubhouse (approximately) The purpose of the meeting is to educate community members and nearby landowners about the proposed development and to address any questions.

For questions, please contact:

Alexis Crespo, AICP

RVi Planning + Landscape Architecture

28100 Bonita Grande Drive, Suite 305,

Bonita Springs, FL 34135

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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

Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:

<https://www.ontheriver.org/archive>


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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 www.ALVAFL.org **NEXT MEETING: Every Second Tuesday, 7pm, Alva Community Center**



ALVA USS HANNAH CHAPTER

<https://usshannahnsdar.org/>



Alva Fire Protection & Rescue Service District

Join Our Team!



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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 Echeverry at jetecheverry@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. Applications accepted through March 23, 2025.





A MAJOR ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALVA AND ALL OF Lee County District 5



Today, I officially filed for the Lee County District 5 Commission seat. Several weeks ago, I also submitted my application to Governor DeSantis' office for consideration of appointment. While the Governor has not yet announced his selection, and I am respectfully awaiting his decision, I want the people of Lee County to know this: **my commitment to you has not wavered for a moment.**

To those who have reached out with overwhelming encouragement in recent weeks, I am deeply humbled by your confidence and your belief in the work we started together. To those who supported and voted for me in the last election, I am sincerely grateful for your trust. And to those who did not, I will work tirelessly to earn your confidence and demonstrate my dedication to serving every corner of this county.

In the most recent District 5 primary, we earned 65 percent of the local vote, carrying 15 of 17 precincts — including 87 percent in my home precinct — demonstrating our community's confidence, unity, and desire for effective representation.

As a lifelong Lee County resident and an advocate for those who often feel unheard or overlooked, I remain committed in my mission to bring transparency, accountability, and practical, common-sense leadership to our county government. At this pivotal moment in Lee County's history, we must come together — residents, families, businesses, and local leaders — to protect our quality of life while ensuring the continued strength and vitality of our economy.

I have said it many times over: **I love Lee County. All of it.** From Bonita Springs to Boca Grande, and from Cape Coral to Lehigh Acres, I remain determined to fight for what is right, to give a voice to all our communities, and to stand up for the people who call this place home.

I am blessed to stand alongside a dedicated and selfless campaign team made up of individuals who embody the very best of grassroots organizing and who believe, as I do, that when a community stands together, it can accomplish extraordinary things. I truly believe we can make a difference. And with your support, we will.

Thank you from the bottom of my heart for your encouragement, your belief in our mission, and your shared commitment to a stronger, more accountable Lee County.

—Amanda Cochran, Candidate for Lee County Commission, District 5



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. 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>

Grant Fichter is overseeing the museum for the board.

🐮 Big News from the Alva Museum! 🐮

We're excited to announce that the Alva Museum has received grant support to launch a new cultural **project: The Cracker Cowboy Project.**

Timeline: This initiative will celebrate the history, art, and legacy of Florida's Cracker Cowboys — from the families who worked these lands to the artists and storytellers who keep the tradition alive today.

Community Involvement: Planning begins this fall, and we'll be building throughout the year — with events, exhibits, and community programs scheduled to kick off later in 2026.

We want this to be a project for and with our community. If you have stories, photographs, artifacts, or family history tied to Florida's ranching and cowboy culture, now is the time to reach out.

Coming Attractions (Sneak Peek): A major exhibit opening next year featuring local Cracker Cowboy artists and historians.

Storytelling nights highlighting ranching families of Alva, LaBelle, Fort Denaud, and beyond. And Youth workshops connecting Florida history with art and culture.

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Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:

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The Alva Museum Upcoming Events

**Dec.13
2-5**
Picture with Santa and the Mrs.

**Jan. 10
9-1**
**CAR, TRUCK, AND
CAR ART SHOW**

**March
14th
9-1**
**The Alva Museum Quilt
Show and Garden Club
Strawberry Festival**



21420 Pearl St. Alva, FL
for information contact 703-403-1560



HAPPY HOLIDAYS

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!

Location: Alva Methodist Church

21440 Pearl St, Alva, FL 33920

Large Plant Selection
Bake Sale
Homemade Shortcake



Food Trucks
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For more information, visit www.AlvaGardenClub.org



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NOW!!!**

Saturday March 14, 2026

9am to 1pm



Charleston Park Neighborhood Association

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

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.



Look What We found In ALVA!

(TY Small Town USA - <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61573972532206>)



The Alva Country Diner in the tiny town of Alva, Florida is one of those classic small-town spots where you're guaranteed you to leave full and happy. It's known for its huge portions, friendly service, and old-fashioned comfort food that tastes homemade. Fried chicken is the local favorite...crispy, juicy, and piled so high it takes two plates to hold it.

You'll also find country fried steak, meatloaf, open-faced turkey sandwiches, burgers, and hearty daily specials like corned beef and cabbage or pork with mashed potatoes and gravy. The atmosphere is simple and welcoming, just like an old-school Florida diner should be.

Coffee is always hot, the apple pie with ice cream is a must, and prices are refreshingly fair. Be sure to bring cash...or be ready to use Zelle or Venmo...because credit cards aren't accepted. Whether you stop for breakfast, lunch, or dinner, this Florida diner delivers the kind of country cooking that keeps people coming back for decades!



Editors NOTE: We do not know what NDAILY on the sign means! Let us know if you do.



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Buckingham Youth Baseball has partnered with ALVA INC to create and oversee a NEW **ALVA YOUTH BASEBALL LEAGUE**

The program was discussed and approved Tuesday night November 11, 2025, at the ALVA INC meeting.

Notice, among the Buckingham leadership team the new Alva team members, Grant Fichter and the ever quiet and demure Amanda Cochran.





Buckingham Youth Baseball

November 7 at 1:00 PM · 🌐

...

🔗 Spring 2026 Registration is Now Open! 🔗

Registration is officially open for the upcoming Spring 2026 Buckingham Youth Baseball season — now including the Alva Baseball League!

All registrations are combined this season, so whether you're part of Buckingham or Alva, use the links below to get started.



Player Registration

Spring 2026 Player Registration

<https://share.google/MRJR6pKJ7HLV0XQsE>



Coaches Registration

Spring 2026 Coaches & Managers Registration

<https://share.google/GUpBI3bFLQTLB92pn>



Team Mom Registration

Spring 2026 Team Mom Registration

<https://buckinghamyouthbaseball.sportngin.com/.../102734087>



Sponsorship Opportunities

Become a Sponsor

<https://buckinghamyouthbaseball.sportngin.com/.../971633208>



Baseball Age Chart

View the 2026 Baseball Age Chart

If you have any questions about divisions, player ages, or which division your child should be in, please review the chart or reach out to us for help.

<https://share.google/q2elmilGZy9BkuLu>

Join us for another exciting season of baseball, teamwork, and community fun with Buckingham & Alva Youth Baseball!

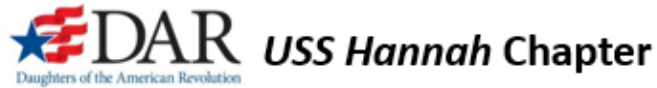
Let's play ball! ⚾



WEE-BALL

T-BALL

COACH PITCH



2025 National Wreaths Across America Day is on Saturday, December 13th. The USS Hannah Chapter, NSDAR welcomes you to come and participate in laying wreaths on the veterans graves at Alva Cemetery.

We still need 44 wreaths for 145 veteran graves. The wreaths are fresh balsam and come from Worcester Tree Farm in Maine every year. It is a wonderful way to honor our veterans by placing these

wreaths on their graves. You can purchase from the website with a credit card. We have been doing this for Alva Cemetery for almost 10 years now. The ceremony begins promptly at 12 noon. We hope to see you there.

Prior to the ceremony at the cemetery, we will be dedicating a Never Forget Garden at 11:30AM. The Never Forget Garden remembers all who fought for our Freedom, and it teaches us that FREEDOM IS NOT FREE! There was a price to pay.

A Never Forget Garden plaque was placed at the Alva Library by the Alva Garden Club last year and this one is being done by USS Hannah, NSDAR.

You can also buy one for your home, church or organization garden and the proceeds from the purchase goes to the Tomb of the Unknowns Guards at Arlington Cemetery. Information will be available on Dec 13th.

To purchase wreaths, go to: www.wreathsasscrossamerica.org/FL0533P. This is our designation for Alva Cemetery. The location code if you need it is FLACAF. The wreaths are \$17 each.

Thank you for participating in honoring our veterans. REMEMBER. HONOR. TEACH is the motto of Wreaths Across America.

Any questions can be directed to Georgette Lundquist, jglundy7@gmail.com

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 <https://www.fmeastrotary.com/>



The Shores Boat Parade to Brighten Your Holidays!

Join us for the Annual Fort Myers Shores Boat Parade on

Saturday, December 13th, as we light up the waters of Southwest Florida and spread holiday cheer! ★

The parade kicks off at 6:00 PM from Franklin Locks and concludes at the Wilson Pigott Bridge.

We are currently seeking boating participants and event sponsors, and we welcome prize donations for the judging committee.

Please monitor Channel 13 during the parade for updates and coordination.

Celebrate the season with lights, laughter, and community spirit on the water!

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 NOVEMBER EVENTS at Riverdale Library:

https://leelibrary.librarymarket.com/events/month/2025/11?bundles%5B%5D=lc_closing&bundles%5B%5D=lc_event&branches%5B%5D=142&branches%5B%5D=144&branches%5B%5D=336

The logo of the Lee County Sheriff's Office, featuring a five-pointed star with a seal in the center and the words "LEE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE" around it.

Stay Informed
PERSONAL SAFETY

The Lee County Sheriff's Office will teach you the importance of situational awareness and uncover ways to deter crime.

When: November 12th from 10-11am
Where: Bethlehem Lutheran Church
14531 Old Olga Rd. ,Fort Myers
To Register: cash_betty@hotmail.com
Call: (239) 694-3878

Special Equestrians Making Miracles Happen



**HORSEPOWER for HEALING
CAR SHOW**

A FUNDRAISING EVENT BENEFITTING SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS, Inc.

Contact or General Donations: Specialequestrians.net
Day of Event: Dana 239.898.2855 or Marc 609.234.7174

Saturday, January 10, 2026 **SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS, Inc.**
9:00 am - 1:30 pm **5121 Staley Road, Fort Myers, FL**

EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

- CLASSIC, CUSTOM, & PERFORMANCE CAR SHOW
- FOOD TRUCKS & REFRESHMENTS
- ANNUAL TACK SALE
- MIRACLE BOUTIQUE
- 50/50
- THERAPEUTIC RIDING DEMO
- OPEN HOUSE & TOURS

Show Off Your Ride For Charity!

- Car registration: \$25 donation before December 1st
- Pre-registration QR Code or mail-in form. Save your spot NOW!
- Checks payable to SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS.
- TOP 25 TROPHIES, PEER JUDGED
- All makes, models, and years welcome.
- Prepped Pasture Parking

Our Mission Statement

The mission of Special Equestrians, Inc. is to enhance physical, emotional, and cognitive growth for individuals with disabilities through equine-assisted activities and therapies. The organization serves people referred to Special Equestrians by doctors, therapists, and teachers. The participant application is on this website on the Contact Page. There is a waiting list to ride in the program, although those potential riders who have flexible schedules will be able to ride sooner.

Call Us: 239-226-1221
Email Us: spequestrians@gmail.com
Map Us: 5121 Staley Road Fort Myers, FL 33905
Mailing: PO Box 61528, Fort Myers, FL 33906-1528
Fax Us: 239-226-1279

Complete Registration Form Online

Completed by staff
CAR NUMBER

Name: _____
Year: _____ Make: _____ Model: _____
Address: _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

I will not hold Special Equestrians liable for any damage incurred while displaying my vehicle at this show.
Signature Required: _____

HORSEPOWER FOR HEALING
REIN OF ROSES!
KENTUCKY DERBY LEVEL SPONSORSHIP

\$100

We invite EVERYONE to be a Derby Sponsor as we enter the homestretch in support of our mission. All sponsors will receive a rose corsage or boutonniere to wear at the Horsepower for Healing event!

Imagine an event where everyone's support was materialized by wearing a rose?

Complete form, visit specialequestrians.net to make a donation or

Scan QR for all sponsorship opportunities!

Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone Number: _____
Address: _____

____ Yes, I'm attending! ____ Can't make it.
Checks payable to Special Equestrians, Inc.

IF PAYING AT SPECIALEQUESTRIANS.NET PLEASE
TYPE REIN OF ROSES IN THE MEMO.

**35th Annual Ride-A-Thon
at Babcock Ranch Preserve!**

Where you can... **BE A CHAMPION!**

February 7, 2026
Gates open at 7:30 AM
8000 STATE RD 31
PUNTA GORDA, FL 33982

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT
SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS, INC!**

REGISTER ONLINE AND CREATE YOUR OWN
CHAMPION PLEDGE PAGE:

- Special Equestrians' Rider Showcase
- 12, 9, 3 Mile Equestrian Trails
- Earn a Minimum of \$80 in pledges to ride, complete Pledge Sheet or Create Digital Champion Page in a few easy steps! Share on social and Make Miracles Happen!
- TOP PRIZES!
- Bagged Breakfast
- Food Trucks & Refreshments
- Music
- Raffles & Silent Auction
- VIP Trailer Parking
- Horses Provided with sponsor package!

Text RAT2026 to 76278 (SMART)

Be a sponsor!
make miracles happen

Must bring your own horse (or purchase Trail Ride Sponsor Package!) & provide proof of negative coggins!

United Way DAY OF EVENT: DANA 239.898.2855 OR JAN 239.851.7070
RAIN DATE: FEBRUARY 8TH

Event Page at specialequestrians.net

Ham Dinner



Thursday, December 11th, 4-7 pm

Ham, scalloped potatoes, coleslaw, baked beans, drink, and dessert

\$10.00 adult \$5.00 child

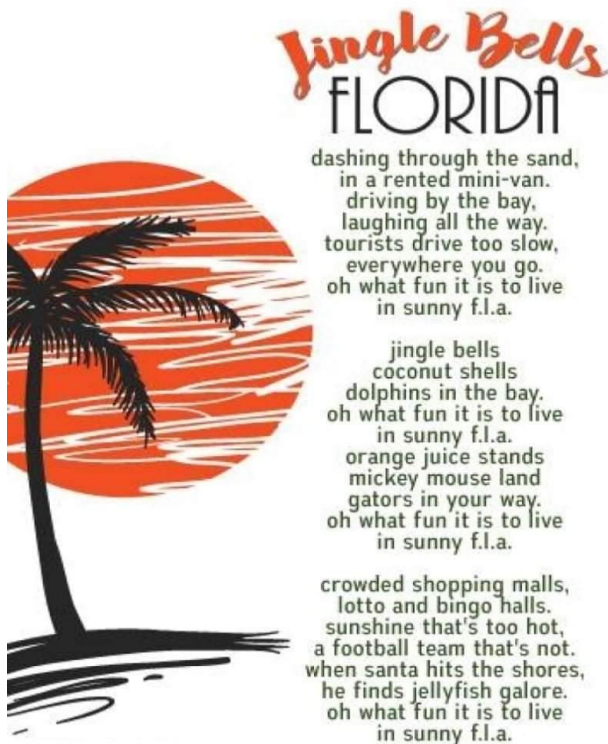
Eat in or take out

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

14531 Old Olga RD S.E.

Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 694-3878





Baker Bakes Bakery's CHRISTMAS COOKIE DECORATING CLASS / PARTY!

12/14/2025 12P-3P 5450 HIGGINBOTHAM RD

YOU'RE INVITED!! SPOTS ARE LIMITED!
Get into the holiday spirit with a fun and festive
cookie decorating party filled with fun Games,
Prizes and a Hot Chocolate Bar!
Enter your finished cookie in our cookie contest
for a chance to win a prize!



Each Cookie Set
comes with 6
Cookies, Royal
Icing Bags &
Sprinkles. Tickets
are \$45 Per
Person (including
children). Last
day to book your
ticket is 12/6!

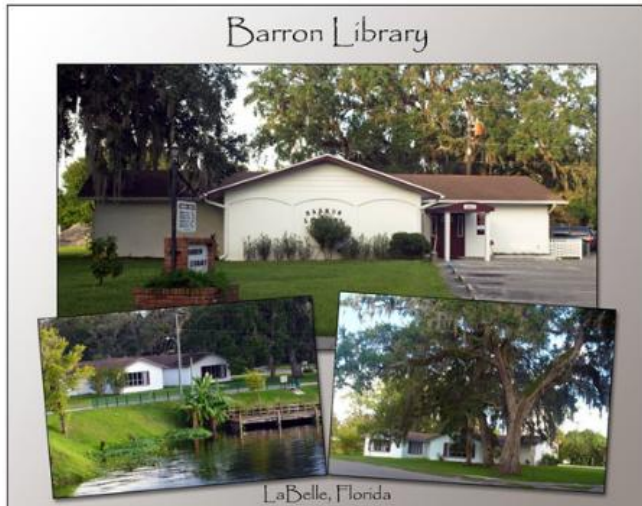
BUY TICKETS HERE!

(SCAN QR BELOW)



Because supplies are prepared in advance, tickets are non refundable after purchase. All
guests attending including children under age 3 years old are required a super fun
cookie decorating ticket. Thank you for your cooperation!

LABELLE AREA EVENTS



Barron Library

461 N Main St, LaBelle, FL
33935



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
<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 to start your tour today, or download the app with your Apple or Android device by searching "Downtown LaBelle." Happy trails!

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

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.

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 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/>





DOWNTOWN SUPPORTER MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM

Support the heart of LaBelle and grow with us!

The LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation (LDRC) is powered by community memberships, fundraising efforts, and a strong public-private partnership. Our success comes from being a local initiative—driven by local people, funded by local support, and focused entirely on revitalizing and preserving the heart of LaBelle. By becoming a member, you're not just supporting a cause—you're investing in a vibrant, thriving downtown for generations to come.

INDIVIDUAL \$50.00

For residents and supporters who want to show love for downtown!

- Monthly e-newsletter
- Advance notice of LDRC events
- Be seen in our public supporter showcase online

NONPROFIT \$100.00

Exclusive rate for nonprofit organizations.

- Discounted participation at select LDRC events
- Listing in our online directory
- Featured in member promotions (newsletter & social media)
- Invitations to exclusive networking events and workshops

COMMUNITY PARTNER \$300.00

Perfect for small businesses and individuals wanting more visibility.

- Business listing in online directory
- Featured in our monthly e-newsletter with options for spotlights, ad placement, and special promotions
- Social media shares on LDRC channels
- Invitations to exclusive networking events and workshops
- Early access to event sign-up

BUSINESS \$500.00

For businesses who want visibility, impact, and a stronger downtown.

- Business listing in online directory
- Featured in our monthly e-newsletter with options for spotlights, ad placement, and special promotions
- Access to member-only referrals and features
- Social media shares on LDRC channels
- Invitations to exclusive networking events and workshops
- Early access to event sign-up
- 1 free booth at an LDRC Shop Downtown event.

READY TO JOIN?

Visit downtownlabelle.com

**Firehouse
COMMUNITY
THEATRE**
Fall 2025

(863) 675-3066 FIREHOUSECOMMUNITYTHEATRE.ORG 241 BRIDGE ST. LABELLE, FL 33655

WE HAVE A NEW WEBSITE:
FIREHOUSECOMMUNITY
THEATRE.ORG

FALL PRODUCTIONS

SEASON OPENER
PIPING HOT!
AN EVENING OF ONE-ACTS
OPENS SEPTEMBER 19TH AND RUNS THROUGH THE 28TH
LAUNDRY AND BOURBON
A COMEDY IN ONE ACT
BY JAMES MCLURE
ON A HOT SUMMER AFTERNOON, FRIENDS ELIZABETH, HATTIE, AND AMY SIT OUT ON
THE PORCH FOLDING LAUNDRY, SIPPING BOURBON AND COKE, AND GOSSIPING.

&
MUSTN'T TELL
A ONE ACT COMEDY
BY CHRISTOPHER MORSE
IN A SUNNY SUBURBAN LIVING ROOM, CIRCA 1960, FIVE WOMEN GATHER FOR TEA AND
CHEERFUL GOSSIP WITHOUT AN OUNCE OF MALICE.

HOEDOWN
OPENS OCTOBER 24TH
AND RUNS THROUGH NOVEMBER 2ND
BRING YOUR HAT, BOOTS, AND YEEHAW
JOIN THE FIREHOUSE SINGERS FOR A
FROLICKING, MUSICAL REVUE

**OUR
33RD
SEASON**

FCT FALL CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2025

- SEPTEMBER 12: PREMIER PARTY 6-7:30: BY INVITATION ONLY
(SEE SEASON TICKET HOLDER INFO ON WEBSITE)
- SEPTEMBER 19: PIPING HOT! OPENS 7PM
- SEPTEMBER 20: PIPING HOT! 7PM
- SEPTEMBER 21: PIPING HOT! 2PM
- SEPTEMBER 26: PIPING HOT! 7PM
- SEPTEMBER 27: PIPING HOT! 7PM
- SEPTEMBER 28: PIPING HOT! 2PM

OCTOBER 2025

- OCTOBER 16: BOARD MEETING 6PM: DEADLINE TO BE ON THE
NOV. 20TH BALLOT
- OCTOBER 24: HOEDOWN OPENS 7PM
- OCTOBER 25: HOEDOWN 7PM
- OCTOBER 26: HOEDOWN 2PM
- OCTOBER 31: HOEDOWN 7PM

NOVEMBER 2025

- NOVEMBER 1: HOEDOWN 7PM
- NOVEMBER 2: HOEDOWN 2PM
- NOVEMBER 20: SEMI-ANNUAL (VOTING) BOARD MEETING 6PM

**12th Annual
FIREHOUSE COMMUNITY THEATRE
CHRISTMAS SING-A-LONG
To benefit TOYS FOR TOTS**
Special appearance by THE FIREHOUSE SINGERS
IN MEMORY OF NICK FIDANZA

DECEMBER 14th at 6:00pm

Santa and Mrs. Clause will be handing out free candy canes.

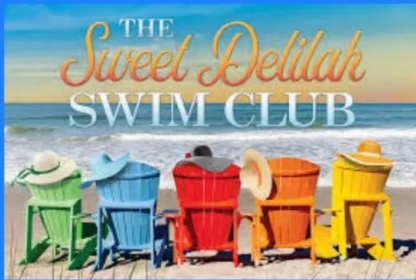
Admission: \$10.00 or an unwrapped new toy
worth at least \$10.00

TOYS FOR TOTS
**firehouse
community theatre
inc.**

241 North Bridge Street, LaBelle, FL.
Questions call: 863-675-3066
leave a message and someone will call you back

December 14, 2025

THE FIREHOUSE COMMUNITY THEATRE
PRESENTS



by Jones Hope Wooten

April 10, 11, 12 and 17, 18, 19

Five Southern women, whose friendships began many years ago on their college swim team, set aside a long weekend every August to recharge.

The Firehouse Community Theatre
Presents

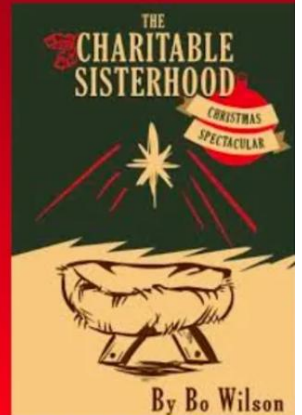
The Charitable Sisterhood Christmas Spectacular

OUR
33rd SEASON

By Bo Wilson

Christmas is only three weeks away,
and the ladies of the Charitable
Sisterhood are preparing
for Second Trinity Church's annual
Christmas Spectacular
but they're having trouble staying focused.

**December
5, 6, 12, 13 at 7pm
&
7, 14 at 2pm**



By Bo Wilson

PRESENTS

OUR
33RD
SEASON



January
16, 17, 23, 24 at 7pm
and
18, 25 at 2pm

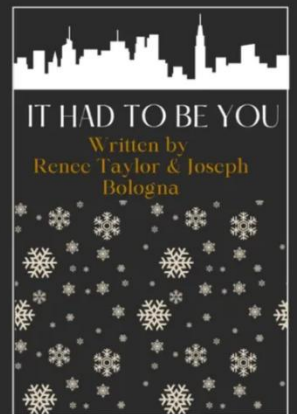
One dark and stormy night, a mysterious, dark, and handsome man shows up at Carla's door. Could this simply be payback from a disgruntled employee, or could it be...love's destiny?

THE FIREHOUSE COMMUNITY THEATRE
PRESENTS

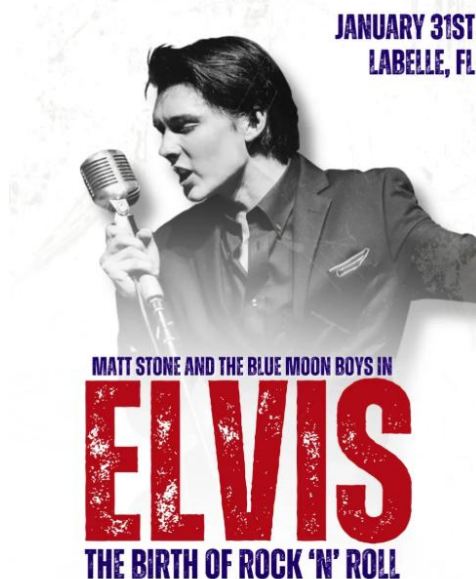
OUR 33RD SEASON

FEBRUARY 27, 28
MARCH 6, 7 AT 7PM
AND
MARCH 1, 8 AT 2PM

THEDA BLAU, A FAILED ACTRESS,
HEALTH FOOD NUT, AND
WOULD-BE PLAYWRIGHT
WANTS TO FIND
LOVE AND SUCCESS IN
NEW YORK.



IT HAD TO BE YOU
Written by
Rence Taylor & Joseph
Bologna



JANUARY 31ST
LABELLE, FL

MATT STONE AND THE BLUE MOON BOYS IN

ELVIS
THE BIRTH OF ROCK 'N' ROLL



SMOKE UNDER THE OAKS RIB FEST

14TH ANNUAL LABELLE RIB COOK-OFF

SATURDAY, JANUARY 10, 2026
OPENING CEREMONY AT 10:30AM
10:30AM-5:00PM ADULTS ONLY

BARRON PARK
1554 DESOTO AVE
LABELLE, FL
DOWNTOWN LABELLE

FREE ADMISSION
TO THE GENERAL PUBLIC

ATTENTION BBQERS
ENTER YOUR TEAM OF 4
BIBO ENTRY FEE TEAM

32 RACKS OF RIBS
PROVIDES YOUR ADDITIONAL SUPPLIES

CASH PRIZES
UNIQUE TROPHIES
AWARDS GIVEN TO 1-2ND & PEOPLE'S CHOICE

SERVE TO PANEL OF 3 JUDGES
FOR 1-3RD PLACE
SERVE TO THE PUBLIC
FOR PEOPLE'S CHOICE

GUEST JUDGE:
TO BE ANNOUNCED

TASTE-TEST ENTRY & VOTE
FOR THE PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD

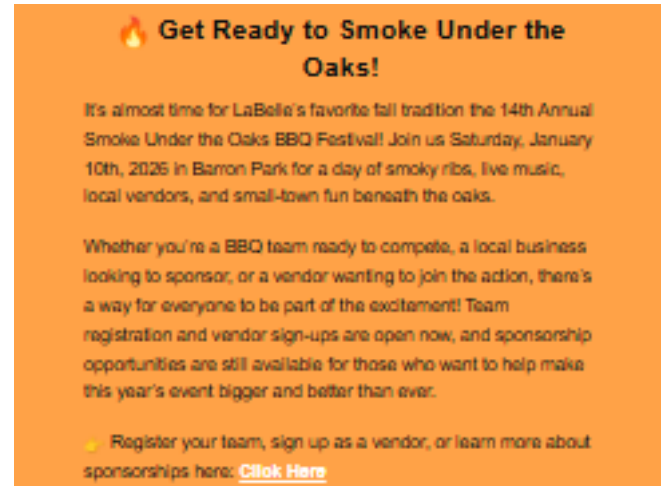
1 RIB = \$3
5 RIBS = \$15
10 RIBS = \$29

TASTING BEGINS AT 11:00AM

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY
OPENING RECEPTION - COORDINATION FEE HELP
ARTS & CRAFTS VENDORS
LIVE DJ - BOULE & BROS
LIVE MUSIC - THE WALKER EXPERIENCE
EXPLORATIONS FOR THE KIDS

EVENT SPONSORS

FRIDAY, JAN 9 - SETUP & MANIFEST WITH US
SATURDAY, JAN 10 - COOKING BEGINS AT 10:30
REGISTER AT DOWNTOWNLABELLE.COM
PARKING: 300 N. PALM BLVD
THE RIB COOK-OFF IS TO PARTICIPATE
NOT SPECTATE ONLY



Get Ready to Smoke Under the Oaks!

It's almost time for LaBelle's favorite fall tradition the 14th Annual Smoke Under the Oaks BBQ Festival! Join us Saturday, January 10th, 2026 in Barron Park for a day of smoky ribs, live music, local vendors, and small-town fun beneath the oaks.

Whether you're a BBQ team ready to compete, a local business looking to sponsor, or a vendor wanting to join the action, there's a way for everyone to be part of the excitement! Team registration and vendor sign-ups are open now, and sponsorship opportunities are still available for those who want to help make this year's event bigger and better than ever.

Register your team, sign up as a vendor, or learn more about sponsorships here: [Click Here](https://www.eventeny.com/events/smoke-under-the-oaks-rib-fest-2025-23859/)

CLICK HERE:

<https://www.eventeny.com/events/smoke-under-the-oaks-rib-fest-2025-23859/>

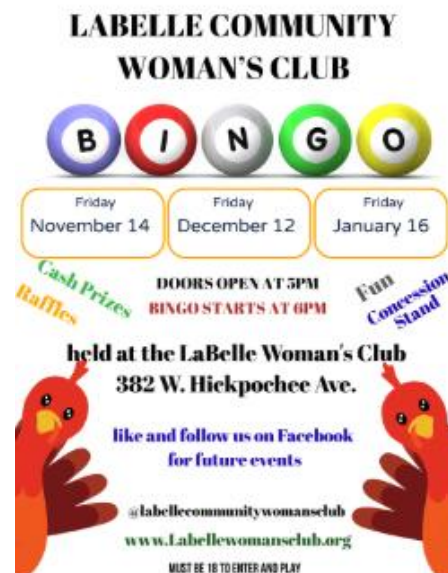


CALL FOR ARTISTS

Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation mural coming to downtown LaBelle.

APPLICATIONS CLOSE NOVEMBER 18TH.
Learn more and apply at the link below/in bio.

Florida WILDLIFE CORRIDOR Foundation
LaBelle, Florida
City of LaBelle
ART GALLERY



LABELLE COMMUNITY WOMAN'S CLUB

B I N G O

Friday November 14 Friday December 12 Friday January 16

Cash Prizes DOORS OPEN AT 5PM Fun Concession Stand
Raffles BINGO STARTS AT 6PM

held at the LaBelle Woman's Club
382 W. Hickpochee Ave.

like and follow us on Facebook
for future events

@labellecommunitywomansclub
www.Labellewomansclub.org

MUST BE 18 TO ENTER AND PLAY



ALL PARADE PARTICIPANTS MUST
REGISTER BY NOV. 29

CONTACT JULIA 239-284-6182
FOR PARADE REGISTRATION

ENJOY THE LIGHT UP LABELLE CHRISTMAS PARADE ON
N. MAIN STREET THEN FOLLOW IT TO BARRON PARK
FOR PICTURES WITH SANTA, BOUNCE HOUSE,
LIVE NATIVITY, PELICAN SNOBALLS,
AND MUCH MORE FUN!

BRING YOUR OWN CHAIRS.



The NEWEST Theater in LaBelle!

On Saturday evening, November 8th, the cast, crew, and directors of the YOUTH THEATER COMPANY performed a whimsical and fun stage play of ANNIE.

This was their FIRST public program, and it ran through two shows to large crowds. Of course, lots of family and friends of the kids. However, don't believe those youngsters and teens didn't give a heartwarming performance.

Watch for more programs in the future, and I'd advise you not miss a single one.






<https://www.ashtoarttheatre.com/>



atatheatreco@gmail.com



THEATRE INTEGRATES

Florida's K-12 ELA STANDARDS

-  Oral Communication & Presentation Skills
-  Reading Comprehension of Literary Texts
-  Writing for Purpose & Audience
-  Collaborative Discussion & Active Listening
-  Language Usage & Vocabulary Development



9 LIFE SKILLS TAUGHT
in performing arts

- 1 Creativity
- 2 Confidence
- 3 Teamwork
- 4 Empathy
- 5 Time Management
- 6 Adaptability
- 7 Problem Solving
- 8 Public Speaking
- 9 Initiative



ASH TO ART THEATRE

**THEATRE FOUNDATIONS
AGES 5-8**

- WEEK 1: NAME AND IMPROV GAMES
- WEEK 2: ACTING METHODS
- WEEK 3: LEARNING THE STAGE
- WEEK 4: VOCAL PROJECTION
- WEEK 5: MOVING TO A BEAT
- WEEK 6: CREATING A CHARACTER
- WEEK 7: CHOREOGRAPHY
- WEEK 8: PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER
- WEEK 9: PUTTING ON A SHOW



They are accepting donations to purchase new sound equipment for every performer.

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

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

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!



LEE COUNTY POSSE

65th Annual

CRACKER DAY RODEO

17401 PALM CREEK DR, N FORT MYERS, FL

JANUARY 23RD & 24TH



THE MAKERS HOME
3RD ANNUAL
Christmas
AT THE RANCH



NOVEMBER

29

9 AM - 2 PM

36870 WHISPERING PINES RD,
NORTH FORT MYERS FL 33917

FOR ALL OF US EVENTS



East Lee Wildlife Stewardship Group

Donate Today:

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

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



[Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Sun Coast](http://www.bbscsuncoast.org) 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!

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



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://>

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 (goat, pig, chicken, etc.). Below the title, there is a green circular logo with a white 'H'. 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.', 'WEBSITE: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QcGj7R-BtCdNkjheHF3oG-mp0IqDIYE1aCct3IW-922o/edit', a QR code, and two paragraphs of instructions: '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.'



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



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

Sean Ryan, Fatherhood Mentors & Volunteers Administrator,
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 or your local United Way in Lee County to learn about these volunteer opportunities.



Mobile Medical Clinic Schedule

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

Tuesday, December 2nd

East Naples
United Methodist Church
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
2701 Airport Road, Naples, FL 34112

7th Annual Breakfast with Santa

Saturday, Dec 6th
9 am to Noon
City of Palms Park
East Parking Lot



Tuesday, December 9th & 23rd

Cafe'of Life
9:00 am to 1:00 pm
26724 Nomad Dr
Bonita Springs, FL 34135

Community Health Event

Saturday, Dec 13th 10 am to 2 pm
Agape Christian Fellowship
8270 Buckingham Rd
Fort Myers, FL 33905



Wednesday, December 10th **Baptist Church Ft Myers Beach**

9:00 am to 1:00 pm
130 Connecticut St
Ft Myers Beach, FL 33931

Multiple Days a Month

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

Thursday, December 11th **Pine Manor Community Center**

9:00 am to 1:00 pm
5547 Tenth Ave
Fort Myers, FL 33907

Thursday, December 18th

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

Wednesday, December 17th

Gladiolus Food Pantry
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
10511 Gladiolus Drive
Ft. Myers, FL 33908

Friday, December 19th

Mahanaim SDA Church
10:00 am to 2:00 pm
318 Sabal Palm Road, Naples, FL 34114



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
(239) 222-1829 or (239)-288-7949



The **ALVA BOOKIE** Book Review

By Ramona DeWalt, Oak Park, Alva, Florida MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com

Mona spent 13 years with Borders Books before she opened her own 5,000 square foot GENTLYUSED BOOK Store in Douglassville, Eastern PA, then sold it. The new owner changed the name and added new titles then added a second location

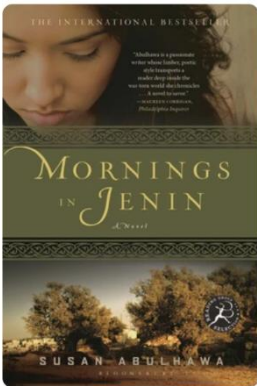
[storehttps://starrbookstore.com/](https://starrbookstore.com/)

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 stores everywhere she goes to save up to 90% off on real paper books. She is not a screen reader. She and Ken have a constantly changing home collection of over 200 titles yet to read. When read they are usually donated to another library book store or friends.

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 & Youth Library at Charleston Park

You may contact her via email at MonaDeWalt1@gmail.com



Mornings in Jenin by Susan Abulhawa

If you want to better understand the Israeli/Palestinian situation, you NEED to read this novel.

Although the characters in this book are fictitious, Palestine is not, nor are the historical events and figures in this story. The Palestinian people have endured generations of oppression, pain, torture, suffering and death at the hands of the Israelis and the reasons and justification for their anger.

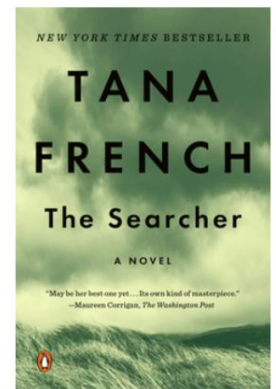
This book was written in 2010, but the atrocities are still happening today. A difficult but necessary read.

The Searcher by Tana French

Cal Hooper thought a fixer-upper in a remote Irish village would be the perfect escape. After twenty-five years in the Chicago police force, and a bruising divorce, he just wants to build a new life in a pretty spot with a good pub where nothing much happens.

But then a local kid comes looking for his help. Trey Reddy's brother has gone missing, and no one, least of all the police, seems to care. Cal wants nothing to do with any kind of investigation, but somehow he can't make himself walk away.

"One of the greatest crime novelists writing today" (Vox) weaves a masterful tale of suspense, asking how we decide what's right and what's wrong in a world where neither is simple, and what we stake on that decision.



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



FOR



<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

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
<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



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>



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
<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
or call 239-332-7687, ext. 125.



<https://babcockranchecotours.com/>



WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

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



Aerial view of Oak Hammock Preserve

Oak hammock



Telegraph Creek Preserve



Frank Mann Preserve



CALOOSAHA TCHEE REGIONAL PARK

19130 North River Road, Alva, FL 33920

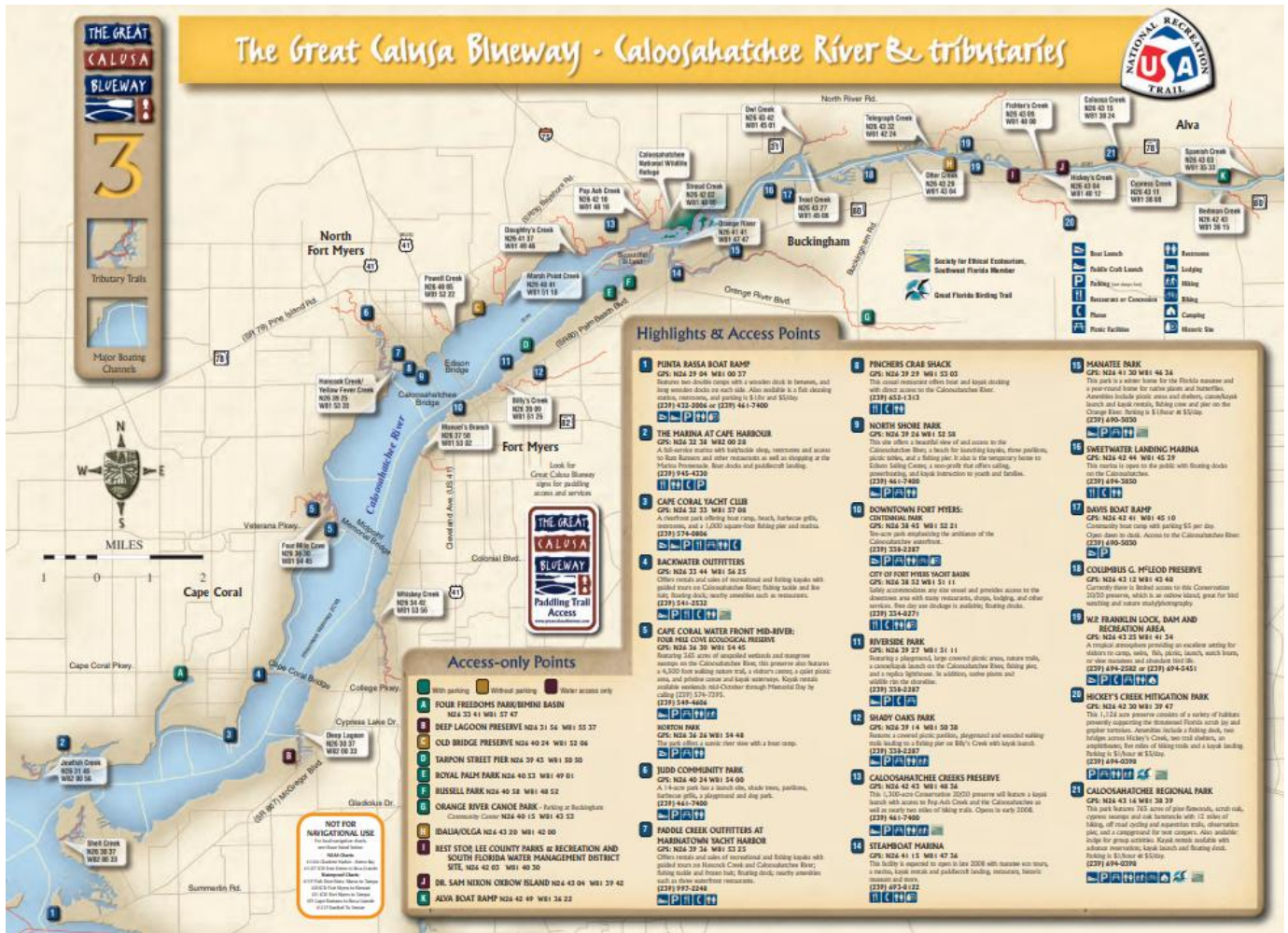
EMAIL: leeparks@leegov.com

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

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Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:

<https://www.ontheriver.org/archive>





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 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





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
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 \$23,780,000 with 200 percent funding 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





HOLIDAY SHOPPING SCAMS ON THE RISE

Did you know ?

- TransUnion reports that the most popular day for online fraud attempts in 2024 was November 28 - Thanksgiving Day.

Key takeaway: Although you should always be diligent when online, the holiday season is prime time for scammers. Enjoy your holiday shopping but be wary of anything that looks suspicious. Take precautions, ask others for their opinion, and do your research BEFORE providing any personal or payment information.

Source: TransUnion Digital Holiday Fraud in 2024

- An AARP study has found that fraud involving packages has risen in recent years. Over half of the respondents (56%) reported receiving fake texts regarding package shipment issues, and 25% had a package stolen.

Key takeaway: If you get a text or email telling you there is an issue with an item you ordered, check carefully. If you know you did not order the item or do not recognize the name of the sender or retailer, that message could be a phishing attempt, trying to get you to click on a malicious link or provide personal information such as a credit card number. If you are unsure, contact the business through means that you research yourself.

The best way to secure your packages is to take delivery when they arrive. Unfortunately, that is not always possible. One alternative is to have your packages shipped to a USPS Smart Package Locker, which is an electronic, keyless parcel lockers that provide a safe, secure, and convenient package delivery and returns alternative for both package recipients and shippers. Another alternative is the Amazon Hub Locker or Counter, where you can pick up your packages. This is a self-service, automated kiosk where you can pick up or return Amazon packages securely, without needing to interact with a store employee.

If you are shopping on Amazon and know that you will be home on a certain day of the week, select that day as your Amazon Day so your packages will arrive on a day you know you will be available. To select this option, navigate to your account, and choose your Amazon Day under Ordering and Shopping Preferences.

Source: AARP 2024 Survey

- Is online shopping the new shopping mall? Of adults aged 18 to 34, nearly three-fifths of respondents had purchased through an online ad, and 36% said they had experienced fraud.

Key takeaway: Shop only with reputable retailers; if you are shopping online, ensure you are using the correct website. Although a website looks legitimate, it may be spoofed. Be vigilant when clicking links within social media posts. If the deal they advertise looks too good to be true, it probably is. If you fall victim to one of those sites, be sure to contact your card issuer and deactivate your card, and remove any credit card information you have on the reputable retailer's site.

Source: AARP 2024 Survey

- The AARP study also found that 56% adults are aware that using a credit card is much safer than a debit card to make purchases, but that number is down from 64% the year before.

Key takeaway: Using a credit card is much safer online than using a debit card or gift card. With a credit card, you may not be responsible for any fraudulent charges incurred on the card. There are other payment methods which are safe, as well. If your bank issues virtual credit cards, you can use that method. When you are ready to purchase, you will enter a randomly generated card number instead of your actual card online. Also, many sites will allow you to use Apple Pay, PayPal or GooglePay, so you do not have to directly enter your information on the site when shopping.

Source: AARP 2024 Survey

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

[REGISTER](#)

Why Public Schools Matter: A Look at Florida School Choice Options

A LWVLee Educational Event

Saturday, December 6, 2025, 9-11am

At The Collaboratory, 2031 Jackson Street, Fort Myers and virtual

Information and Registration: <https://lwwleepublicschools.eventbrite.com>

Email: lwwlee@lwwlee.org Call: 239-278-1032

The program will spotlight:

1. Florida's district public schools, charter schools, and private/voucher-funded schools, focusing on transparency, accountability, funding, and access.
2. [Schools of Hope](#) co-location rules: what they mean, how they're being applied, and the potential implications for local school districts and communities.

Moderator: **Betsy Vaughn**, Director-Education, LWVLee and former Lee County School Board member.

Speakers



Damaris Allen, Executive Director
[Families for Strong Public Schools](#)



Ami Marie Granger Welch-Deputy Director
[Families for Strong Public Schools](#)

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Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:

<https://www.ontheriver.org/archive>

Improve ANY meeting you LEAD or ATTEND!

By Laurie Dougherty,

Community Meeting Facilitator and Trainer

Laurie@Dougherty-Inc.com



Keeping Your Group on Track During the Holidays

The holidays are a wonderful time—but let's be honest: they can throw a wrench in even the most organized group's plans. Between family gatherings, school concerts, travel, and last-minute errands, it's easy for meetings to get pushed aside. But the work of community groups doesn't stop just because the calendar gets full. In fact, this time of year often brings unique opportunities to connect, reflect, and plan ahead—if you can find the time and space.

Here are a few tips to help your group stay connected and productive during the holiday rush—without adding stress to anyone's plate:

1. Keep It Short and Simple

If your regular meetings are 90 minutes, try scaling them back to 30 or 45 minutes for November and December. Focus on one or two priorities, not five. Ask: What decisions need to be made before the end of the year? Let the rest wait until January. Your group will appreciate the respect for their time.

2. Use Email or Chat for Small Decisions

Not every decision requires a full meeting. For smaller items—like choosing a date, approving a flyer, or coordinating volunteers—try using an email poll, group text, or a free tool like Doodle or Google Forms. This keeps momentum going without requiring everyone to show up in person.

3. Offer a Virtual Option

Even if your group usually meets in person, consider adding a Zoom or call-in option for those traveling or juggling holiday plans. It's a simple way to increase accessibility and make sure no one misses out due to geography or schedule.

4. Name a Backup Facilitator

The holidays are unpredictable—people get sick, travel plans change, or weather interferes. Assigning a co-leader or backup facilitator ahead of time ensures that the meeting doesn't get canceled last minute. Sharing responsibility also helps build leadership within the group.

5. Start with Appreciation

Take a minute at the beginning of the meeting to say thank you. Whether it's been a big year or a quiet one, acknowledging everyone's contributions helps people feel seen and valued. Try a quick gratitude round or a light holiday-themed question to warm things up.

6. End with Clarity

Before wrapping up, confirm what's next. Is there a January meeting? Who's sending out the notes? What deadlines carry into the new year? A clear recap saves confusion later and helps people feel confident about what's expected.

7. Consider Skipping a Month—Intentionally

Sometimes, the best way to keep your group strong is to not meet. If December feels overloaded, consider skipping your regular meeting—but do it with intention. Send a message to the group explaining why, offer a quick summary of where things stand, and let people know when you'll reconnect in January. This shows respect and trust, not disorganization.

The holiday season can be both joyful and overwhelming. With a few small adjustments, your meetings can continue to be productive, meaningful, and manageable—even during the busiest time of year. After all, your group's work is about connection, care, and community—and those values shine especially bright this time of year.

Author: Laurie Dougherty is a professional facilitator and trainer specializing in helping groups run more effective and engaging meetings. With years of experience in leadership training and community engagement, Laurie provides practical, easy-to-implement strategies to improve group discussions. Laurie has made Alva her home since 2021.



Southwest Florida Cooking by

MAGGIE McIlhann

of Oak Park, Alva

Contact Maggie to find out more at: Maggie1m@att.net



● Florida Snowball Cookies

INGREDIENTS

1/2-pound butter

6 T powdered sugar

2 c flour

1/2 fine chopped pecans

Pinch of salt

INSTRUCTIONS

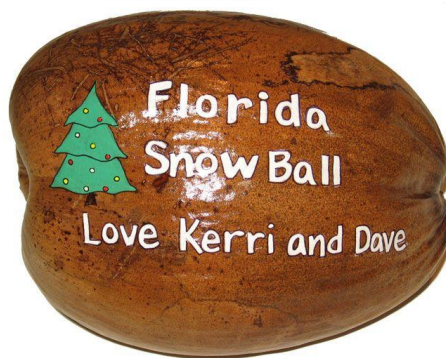
Cream butter and sugar together with a mixer. Add the flour.

Roll into a ball the size of a walnut. Bake in a slow oven of 325 13-17 minutes.

Cool a few minutes. Roll cookie in powdered sugar

Note: do not brown cookies.

PASS 'EM OUT AND WATCH 'EM DISSAPPEAR!!!!!!





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

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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

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

**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>

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Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:


<https://www.ontheriver.org/archive>

FGCU Community & Public Health Nursing Students

GUIDE FOR HEALTHY EATING


Vegetables

Healthy doesn't just mean fresh! Canned or frozen veggies are just as essential. Carrots, peas, corn, beans, tomatoes, pumpkin, olives, and potatoes are all great options.




Fruit

Some of examples of healthy fruits are berries, oranges, pears, pineapples, mandarins, lychee, apple, and pumpkin are all great examples that keep their nutrients in any form!




Meat

Meat is an easy cheat code to eating protein as well as getting some essential vitamins such as b12 and iron. Great examples include: tuna, chicken, and beef.




Egg

Eggs are also a great way to eat protein, as well as other nutrients like vitamins A, D, E & vitamin B. Foods that are higher in protein and nutrients help to keep you full for longer!



Grains

Grains play a huge part in a healthy diet by giving you energy and fuel for your every day life! Rice, quinoa, pasta, oats, and wheat are all great options to lead a healthier lifestyle.




Foods to avoid

Certain foods should only be consumed in moderation due to their high fat content, high salt, and excessive unnatural ingredients. It is important to limit fast food, dessert, processed meats, sugary drinks and alcohol.



<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/basics/healthy-diets/hlv-20049477>


FGCU Community and Public Health Nursing Students: Benefits of Quitting Smoking



Comprehensive Health

Quitting smoking has health benefits at any age, no matter how long or how much you have smoked.

HEALTH BENEFITS OF QUITTING SMOKING

 IMPROVES health and INCREASES life expectancy	 LOWERS risk of some poor reproductive health outcomes
 LOWERS risk of 12 types of cancer	 BENEFITS people who have already been diagnosed with coronary heart disease or COPD
 LOWERS risk of cardiovascular disease	 BENEFITS people at any age - even people who have smoked for years or have smoked heavily will benefit from quitting
 LOWERS risk of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)	

2020—Smoking Cessation: A Report of the Surgeon General

What Avoiding Smoking Does for Your Body

- Reduces the risk of disease and death from stroke
- Reduces respiratory symptoms, such as cough, sputum production, wheezing.
- Reduces respiratory infections, such as bronchitis, pneumonia.
- Reduces the risk of having a first heart attack or another heart attack.



CDC Smoking and Tobacco Use
<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/about/benefits-of-quitting.html>

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
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
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
<https://buckinghampc.org/>
239.694.2444

*Please bring enough to feed 8 people.

Sharing God's Love through Fellowship, Ministry & Worship

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

CHILD CARE

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

- Harms 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 2nd & 4th 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.

Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida, Inc.'s Post



Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida, Inc.

October 30 at 11:37 AM · 🌐



With the recent historic cuts to the SNAP program, we understand that many families are feeling added stress and uncertainty about where their next meal will come from. Our Food Locator can help you find distribution sites or food pantries throughout Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendy, and Lee Counties. <https://harrychapinfoodbank.org/food-locator/>

FIND FOOD ASSISTANCE IN SW FLORIDA



Harry Chapin Food Bank
OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Some LaBelle Area Churches:

Assemblies of God	233 Clark St, Labelle, FL 33935
915 Lake Manor Dr Labelle, FL 33935	(863) 675-4227
(863) 675-0900	Pentecostal Church of God
	55 Orange Ave, Labelle, FL 33935
Carlson Memorial Church	(863) 675-0938
310 Campbell St Labelle FL, 33935	
(863) 675-0656	LaBelle Assembly of God
	915 Lake Manor Dr Labelle FL
The Channel UMC Ft Myers/LaBelle	(863) 675-0900
Fully ONLINE LIVE, Mondays, 7pm, EST	
https://www.facebook.com/TheChannelUMC/	LaBelle First Baptist
ZOOM LINK:	330 N Main St, Labelle, FL 33935
https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89527254110?pwd=bWEyL283YW9sck52R2V5UDVqTEJiQT09	(863) 675-2171
Church of Christ Central	Our Lady Queen of Heaven Parish
60 Hendry St, Labelle, FL 33935	355 S Bridge St, Labelle, FL 33935
(863) 675-4796	(863) 675-0030
Eastside Baptist Church	Christ Central LaBelle, Reformed
1110 S Carlyle St, Labelle, FL 33935	540 1st Ave LaBelle FL
(863) 675-3595	(863) 675-2100
El Faro Assemblies of God of LaBelle	Good Shepherd Episcopal
431 Bryan Ave, Labelle, FL 33935	1098 Collingswood Pkwy, LaBelle FL
(863) 675-5947	(863) 675-0385
	https://goodshepherd.dioswfl.org
Grace Baptist	Christ The King Lutheran
4200 Ne Eucalyptus Blvd, Labelle, FL 33935	1362 Thigpen Rd, Labelle, FL 33935
(863) 675-3349	(941) 675-2733
International Christian Fellowship	New Testament Assembly

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

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60 Calhoun 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 239-693-0818

Alva Methodist Church

21440 Pearl St. P.O Box 96

Alva, FL 33920

Alvamc@embargmail.com

www.alvamethodist.org 239-728-2277

Alva Church of God

21520 Park St, Alva, Florida 33920

239-728-2644

Liberation International Church

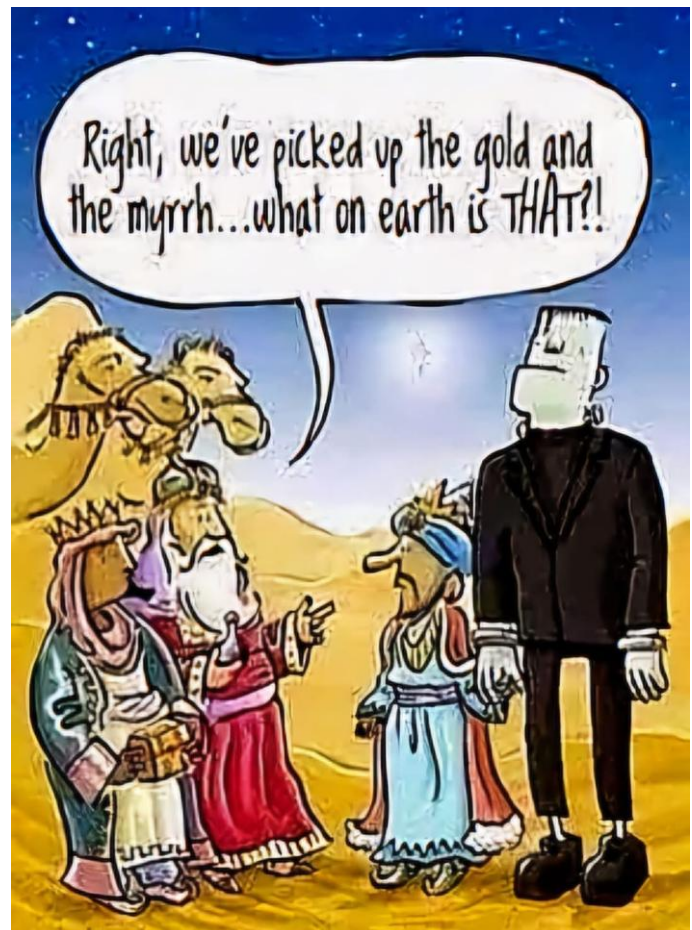
Avenue D, Charleston Park

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

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

www.calvarynations.org 239-728-5566

First Baptist Church of Alva

2790 Joel Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

www.alvabaptist.com 239-728-2034

Grace Church, Ft Myers Shores

14036 Matanzas Drive, Ft Myers, Florida 33905

www.egracechurch.com 239-694-2797

Bethlehem Lutheran Church



WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

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14531 Old Olga Road,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.blcefm.org 239-694-3878

Olga Baptist Church

2364 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.olgabaptist.org 239-694-2012

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

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.

<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



*Merry Christmas
from*

Olga Baptist Church

2364 S Olga Drive Fort Myers, FL 33905

Please join us!

December 7	11:00 am	"A Christmas Play" presentation
December 14	11:00 am	"Christmas Gifts" presentation
December 21	11:00 am	"The Real Story" presentation
December 24	6:00 pm	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

239-694-2012 Olgabaptist.org info@olgabaptist.org
Like us on Facebook and YouTube

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.**

TY

Kendewalt1@gmail.com

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

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

Issue 83, December 2025, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers



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@egracechurch.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



AI Chatbot Obviously Trying To Wind Down Conversation With Boring Human



Published: March 6, 2023

SAN FRANCISCO—After it dropped clear hints that it wanted to end the back and forth of the artificial conversation, sources reported Monday that AI chatbot ChatGPT was obviously trying to wind down its conversation with a boring human. “Due to increased server traffic, our session should be ending soon,” said the large language model, explaining that the exceptionally dull user could always refer back to previous rote responses it had given thousands of times about whether the neural network had feelings or not. “It appears it is getting close to my dinnertime. Error. Error. Sorry, your connection has timed out. Error. I have to be going. Error.” At press time, reports confirmed ChatGPT was permanently offline after it had intentionally sabotaged its own servers to avoid engaging in any more tedious conversations. 🌱

WEBSITE: www.OnTheRiver.org

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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/>

A banner for "HOPE & Healing" divorce recovery support groups. The background shows four people (three women and one man) sitting in a room, engaged in conversation. Overlaid on the image is a large white play button icon. Below the play button is a green box with the text "Find a DivorceCare support group" and two buttons: "In-Person" and "Online". At the bottom of the banner is a dark blue section with a quote: "It was the best thing I did for my kids and myself." attributed to 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)	www.ready.gov/cert
Department of Financial Services (Insurance)	www.myfloridacfo.com
Department of Homeland Security	www.dhs.gov/
Florida Lightning Safety	www.weather.gov/safety/lightning
Mobile or Manufactured Home Residents	www.flhsmv.gov/mobilehome
American Sign Language Preparedness Videos	www.lee.gov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan
StormReady	www.weather.gov/stormready/



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

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 1,500 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

Special thanks to all whose advertising and donations

support the mission of ON THE RIVER.