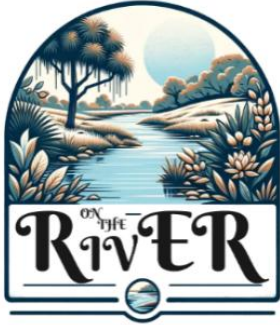


Issue 91, September 2026, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

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
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Rick Blake, 2025

The area we cover along the Caloosahatchee. Email us news of your non-profit events to share by the middle of the month before the event.



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Access link to our ARCHIVE of ALL OTR issues from day 1:
<https://www.ontheriver.org/archive>

LOCAL NEWS

Nov. 17, the traditional date that the Lee County Board of Commissioners welcome a new member to the board, may change. If it does Alva, Inc. will e-blast it out by email and post on Facebook. Request to receive Alva INC



Trish Petroskey

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THE NEWS-PRESS

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Cochran unseats Petrosky in race for Lee District 5



Amanda Cochran reacts during a watch party at the Boathouse Tiki Bar & Grill in Fort Myers on Tuesday, Aug. 18. She won the District 5 seat for Lee County Commissioner over Trish Petrosky. PHOTOS BY ANDREW WEST/FORT MYERS NEWS-PRESS & NAPLES DAILY NEWS

Challenger wins hotly contested county commission battle

Charlie Whitehead
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

The Lee County Commission race for the District 5 seat has been perhaps the most hotly contested local race in Southwest Florida with challenger Amanda Cochran coming out on top. She joined the race against Commissioner-elect Trish Petrosky. "If I were an organized person, I would have a speech ready," Commissioner-elect Cochran told an enthusiastic crowd at the Boathouse Tiki on State Road 31 on the banks of the Caloosahatchee later Tuesday as she heard the results. "Thank you, thank you, thank you."

See COCHRAN, Page 8A



Cochran hugs husband Darius during her election watch party.

Schwartzel wins Republican primary to fill Donalds' U.S. District 19 seat

Naples broadcaster tops crowded Republican field

Mickenzie Hannon
Fort Myers News-Press & Naples Daily News
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Jim Schwartzel won Tuesday's (Aug. 18) Republican primary for Florida's 19 Congressional District, emerging from a crowded field vying to replace Byron Donalds, who gave up the seat to run for



Schwartzel

governor. Schwartzel will advance to the general election and face a Democrat, an NPA candidate and a write-in candidate in November. Schwartzel got 25,595 votes - 29.15%, while Trump-endorsed opponent Catalina Lauf trailed behind receiving 19,210 votes - 21.88%, according to the Florida Division of Elections website at 8:40 p.m. Tuesday. Democrat Victor

Arias got 14,891 votes - 45.46%. Howard Sapp trailed behind with receiving 13,443 votes - 41.04%.

District 19, which covers most of Lee County and the coastal areas of Collier County, is a Republican stronghold, meaning the GOP primary is widely expected to decide its next representative in Washington, D.C.

Cheers and applause echoed outside Schwartzel's election night watch party

See SCHWARTZEL, Page 8A



Race on for next Florida governor

Donalds takes GOP nod with \$11M war chest

John Pacenti
USA TODAY NETWORK Florida

Money talks. U.S. Rep Byron Donalds won the Republican gubernatorial nomination, using a record-setting \$11 million war chest to crush his opponents, blanketing televisions and social media with ads throughout the state.

With 97% of the vote counted Tuesday, Donalds captured 48% of the GOP electorate. Lt. Gov. Jay Collins followed with 25% of the vote, conservative firebrand James Fishback managed 10.5% and former House Speaker Paul Renner trailed with 8.5%.

See DONALDS, Page 9A

Jolly wins Democratic primary in landslide

James Call
Tallahassee Democrat
USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

David Jolly said he would build a coalition of Democrats, independents and disaffected Republicans, and then won the Democratic nomination by a 55-point margin.

The victory sets up a general election battle against Republican Byron Donalds over affordability, gun laws and the direction of state government.

The Associated Press and Decision Desk HQ called the race for Jolly after polls closed at 8 p.m. The latest returns showed Jolly with 66% of the vote, well ahead of Dayna Foster at 11% and Rep. Dotie Joseph, D-Miami, at 9%.

See JOLLY, Page 9A

INSIDE, 5A

3 primary takeaways, 1 surprise

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 Election Day: Tuesday, November 3 Polls open 7 AM to 7 PM	NOVEMBER 3RD

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2026 ELECTION DATES	
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★ EARLY VOTING	AUGUST 3-15 9:00AM-6:00PM
★ GENERAL ELECTION	NOVEMBER 3, 2026
★ EARLY VOTING	OCTOBER 19-31 9:00AM-6:00PM

www.hendryelections.gov



LEE COUNTY

HENDRY COUNTY

City of LaBelle elects new mayor

(TY Okeechobee News-Richard Marion)



Bianca Burke Will & husband Vince Will, Mayor elect of LaBelle

The City of LaBelle has elected a new mayor. Results from the Aug. 18 primary election posted by the Hendry County Supervisor of Elections show that incumbent Mayor Julie C. Wilkins was defeated by Vince Ross.

Vince Ross earned 408 votes, while Julie C. Wilkins earned 291. Incumbent Jackie Ratica was successful in her re-election campaign as Tax Collector on the LaBelle City Commission. Ratica earned 359 votes, defeating Allen Pickles who earned 329 votes.

“I am incredibly humbled and grateful for the trust you have placed in me tonight,” said Mayor-elect Vince Ross after his victory. Thank you to every person who voted, prayed for us, encouraged us, volunteered, shared our message, or supported Team LaBelle in any way.

“I also want to thank Mayor Julie Wilkins for her years of service to our city and wish her and her family the very best,” continues Mayor-elect Ross. “She has dedicated years to this community, and I want to recognize her devotion and love for LaBelle.”

Outgoing Mayor Wilkins thanked the community of LaBelle for the opportunity to serve them over the last 11 years.

“It has been an honor and privilege to serve LaBelle these past 11 years, as a commissioner and mayor”, said Mayor Wilkins. “I am very grateful for the love, support and prayers I have received. I thank God for all of you.”

Lee County considers big changes to development guidelines

(TY WINK NEWS)



Lee County is considering significant changes to its land use codes, concerning some neighbors who fear that it could pave the way for development.

More than 200 people attended a community meeting at the North Fort Myers Recreation Center on Tuesday night, August 25, 2026, at 5pm to learn more.

The county said the proposed changes to the Lee Land Development Plan are designed to increase efficiency

and reduce unnecessary regulations, while maintaining public health, safety, and welfare. County commissioners directed staff to amend the Lee Plan, which is a long-range planning document that guides growth, land use, and development.

The amendments will not increase allowable densities, according to a staff report. However, it would eliminate some Lee Plan goals designed to protect the rural character of areas like Olga, Bayshore, and Alva.

The report said these areas would be moved under the Rural Community Preserves category. That protects the land from being converted to future urban or suburban areas.



By consolidating the land under one code, staff said it's easier to understand and implement.

"There's just a lot of opportunity to make it a more predictable document," said Mike Rozdolski, Lee County director of community development.

However, the changes would eliminate some unique protections - including that new developments in Buckingham's commercial district provide a minimum of 30% open space.

The proposal would also eliminate public input requirements for the land development code amendment process, according to the report.

That includes at least one public meeting for privately initiated applications that propose changing a community plan. That exceeds what's currently required under state law, according to the report.

"They're going to eliminate a lot, and we're just going to become another Miami," Cheryl Fischer of Buckingham said.

The county said it won't change the density or intensity of development. Rozdolski said the county has information and documents available online.

But with more than 100 pages, some say they're scrambling to understand what it means.



"This couldn't be less clear," Michael Hannon of Matlacha said.

The Lee County Planning Agency will consider the changes during a public meeting on Monday.

It will then go through several committees and public hearings before county commissioners eventually vote on it.

Lee County Land Development staff “*explain*” major changes to the Lee County Land development Plan

(Ken DeWalt-OTR)

I arrived at the North Fort Myers Recreation Center about 20 minutes before the 5pm meeting was to start on Tuesday evening, August 25. Folks were just beginning to gather in the lobby to sign in and write up their own comment cards which all were told to use as there would be NO comments or questions taken from the floor and all the cards would be compiled and addressed by the Lee County Land Development Team members making the presentation.



The room filled to over capacity however the brown uniformed and armed police present allowed all to enter regardless. An estimate of crowd size was over 200.

The attendees were home owners of all types, from single wide trailers to \$500k mansions and up. Environmentalists, conservationists, news media and Amanda Cochran, Lee County Commissioner-elect, having won her race against Trish Petroskey last week, was present. She will be sworn in to the commission in November. Beyond the County staff members there was no other commissioner or county representative present.

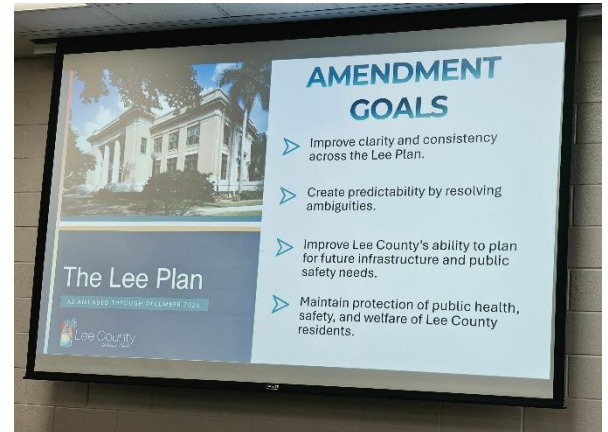
The meeting was started only one minute late and concluded within its allotted hour. As announced there were no comments from the audience permitted.

There was only one low outburst from the people gathered when the proposed elimination of the current requirement for developers to hold public meetings with county residents about any type of development in their county area. This has been a normal procedure for decades and it is how local residents often are first made aware of development plans in the area in which they live.

The presenter smiled and told the audience to "Be nice." It was a smart way to be sure no comments from the crowd would be spoken or get out of hand.



There were NO public questions taken at any time beyond the comment cards



The public's concern for this change is that without public input community led ideas for wise development local issues unknown to professional county staff will be missed. These are often items such as locally known animal populations and paths, hidden historical or archeological sites, and historical comments on flooding, pollution, specific traffic problems known only to local residents.

There was a necessarily quick and very abbreviated presentation of the major changes throughout the proposed plan. Then a repeated request by the presenters for all present to read the entire 100 pages of the plan to better understand it was made, several comment cards were read and responded to and the meeting was adjourned.

The comment cards were answered in this way:

- **Why are we just finding about your sending these major changes to Tallahassee for approval before we had a chance to comment on them?** *There will be 5 public meetings held which residents may attend at the county offices in downtown Fort Myers. These are routinely held during daytime hours. Go to www.LEEGov.org to find the notices.*
- **Where are you planning to put a data center in Lee County?** *Only one, and it will be near FSW airport.*
- **Will there be changes to rural zoning in this plan?** *None.*
- **Will existing 20/20 land be affected?** *No.*
- **Why will public meetings with developers be eliminated before the developer presents to the County Commission?** *The public has always been able to comment at open meetings of the commission and staff. All public meetings are announced following lawful guidelines in the newspaper and on the county website WWW.LEEgov.ORG. Note: There is a three-minute rule for any comments and a tight limitation on what may be shared.*

To the best of my knowledge these were the only public comments addressed by the presenters. Also, though advertised, no questions were taken after the meetings adjournment.

Buckingham Community Association, Inc's Post



Buckingham Community Association, Inc

August 2 at 9:21 PM · 🌐

...

🔴 As of July 2026, the Gopher Tortoise is now listed as Critically Endangered on the IUCN Red List. 🔴 Gopher Tortoises have been listed as Vulnerable since 1996, but research has shown a population decline of over 80% in the last 3 generations. This means that the next classification for Gopher Tortoises would be "Extinct in the Wild", meaning there'd be no wild individuals left. If this species doesn't make a comeback, that could be the next step. So what does this mean, and why are Gopher Tortoises so important?

🌿 Gopher Tortoises are the only tortoise species native to Florida, and their range covers much of the Southeastern states. They are a Keystone species in their habitats, such as Longleaf Pine forests and many Scrub habitats. Their role as a Keystone species is due to their burrowing habits, as the burrows they dig can benefit over 350 different species, many of which rely solely on the tortoises and their burrows to survive. These burrows provide an essential shelter from threats like fire, storms, and predators. Without Gopher Tortoises to build those burrows, many species would be at risk due to the loss of this shelter. Plus, some other species like certain moths and beetles, would likely go extinct if Gopher Tortoises were lost.

🌲 A major threat to this species is habitat loss, with research showing that only 3-5% of the original Longleaf Pine forests remain in the Gopher Tortoises' range. This loss of habitat pushes the tortoises into unfamiliar areas, leading to them being at risk from other threats. At Florida Wildlife Hospital, a majority of Gopher Tortoise patients come in with wounds from vehicle strikes, pet attacks, or unknown trauma. ❤️

Here are some tips to help keep Gopher Tortoises safe: Take care around roads, and make sure there are no tortoises under vehicles before driving away. If you see a tortoise in the road, you can safely move it across in the direction it was heading. Keep dogs on the leash, especially in places where Gopher Tortoises are known to live. Respect their space! It is illegal to harm, feed, or otherwise harass Gopher Tortoises. 🚗

If you find a tortoise in need of rescue, contact FWH at (321) 254-8843.





Alva, Florida Friends, Family, & Photos

James Kennedy · Admin · Group expert · All-star contributor · August 1 at 8:57 PM · 🌐



Hendry County Sheriff's Office

July 31 at 9:23 AM · 🌐

NOTICE OF BRIDGE SERVICES REGARDING THE FORT DENAUD SWING BRIDGE

Please be advised that beginning on Monday, August 3, 2026, Hendry County's bridge consultant, Hardesty & Hanover, LLC, will be performing bridge inspection services on the Fort Denaud Swing Bridge over the Caloosahatchee River in LaBelle, FL.

Bridge personnel will be inspecting the bridge. Motorists and pedestrians should use extra caution when traveling through the work zone.

Hardesty & Hanover, LLC will be providing engineering design and permitting services to develop a set of construction plans for the rehabilitation of the Fort Denaud Swing Bridge.

Services will include, but will not be limited to, planning, design and permitting, surveying, archeological research, subsurface explorations, field inspections, etc.

Services are expected to last approximately one hundred fifty (150) days.

Services will occur during weekdays, Monday - Friday, 8:30am – 4:30pm.

Hendry County would lose \$16.7 million under property tax amendment

(TY Lake Okeechobee News, Richard Marion)

Local government in Hendry County is set to lose \$16.7 million in revenue annually if voters approve the cuts to property taxes on the ballot this November.

According to data released by the state of Florida's Revenue Estimating Conference in June, local governments throughout the state will lose \$12 billion annually in revenue by early next decade. By 2031-32, Hendry County's local governments would be looking at roughly \$16.7 million a year in foregone non-school property tax revenue relative to current law.



The Hendry County government absorbs most of that loss -- about \$10 million -- once fully phased in. The county's independent special districts pick up nearly a \$5 million loss. The City of Clewiston absorbs roughly a \$1.27 million loss in revenue annually, while the City of LaBelle loses roughly \$480,000.

The dollar amounts are a fraction of what larger counties like Miami-Dade would see, with each looking at about a \$1 billion in revenue loss. But smaller counties tend to run leaner budgets with less cushion to absorb recurring revenue loss, meaning a multimillion-dollar annual reduction can carry more relative weight locally, even if the statewide total is comparatively small.

Florida lawmakers voted on June 2 to approve a constitutional amendment proposed by Gov. Ron DeSantis that would ask voters to begin phasing out property taxes on homesteaded homes.

The proposed constitutional amendment would need approval from 60% of voters to take effect. If passed, it would gradually increase the homestead exemption on primary residences from \$50,000 to \$150,000 in 2027, then to \$250,000 in 2028, after which it would be adjusted annually based on the Consumer Price Index. New Florida residents who arrive after Dec. 31 this year would have to wait five years before qualifying for the benefit.

The proposal also required local governments to use remaining property taxes solely for core public needs, including public safety, education and schools, infrastructure, and natural resources.

The amendment would also tighten protections for non-homestead properties by cutting the cap on annual assessment increases from 10% to 5%.

Lee County looking at overhaul of growth plan

(TY News Press-Charlie Whiehead)



Trish Petrosky, not shown in full commission photo

Lee County commissioners considered a major amendment for the Southeast Lee Community Plan on Wednesday, August 19 that could pave the way for development.

At a July 27 airing to the Local Planning Agency the proposed changes, meant to deal with 11 developer-proposed amendments received since 2023, the commissioner-appointed board gave the amendments a unanimous 4-0 approval.

All the developer representatives present at that hearing had praise for the amendments. Three environmental groups who attended see it differently.

Slow down, say advocates

"I plan to ask for a pause in the process to ensure that adequate evaluation occurs before any changes are made to the management of this sensitive area," said Matt DePaolis, environmental policy director for the Sanibel-Captive Conservation Foundation.



DePaolis told the Local Planning Agency when that advisory board

recommended commission approval on July 27 that the county seems to be in a rush to say Yes to the 11 developer proposals without any real evaluation of whether it should say Yes.

DePaolis was not alone. Representatives from the Conservancy of Southwest Florida and Florida Audubon echoed his concerns.

Now the South Florida Wildlands Association has joined in. The SFWA has already sued Collier County over the loss of panther habitat there.

Focus shifts from Collier to Lee County

"SFWA's ongoing work on Florida panther conservation focuses on resisting rapid development across remaining rural lands in Southwest Florida — home to the last breeding puma population in the eastern United States," the group's web site states. "Through public testimony, written comments, and engagement with decision-makers at the county, state, and federal level, SFWA has consistently warned that continued habitat loss — now reduced to less than five percent of the panther's historic range in the Southeast U.S. — places the species on a direct path toward extinction."



"Absent meaningful policy change, SFWA anticipates further legal action to prevent irreversible harm to Florida's most iconic endangered species."

In an email Matthew Schwartz, SFWA executive director, urged opposition to the amendment. He said the group's focus on panther habitat loss in Collier County is shifting north.

“Now the focus is shifting to neighboring Lee County,” he said.

Schwartz said that the elimination of a 300,000-square-foot cap on non-residential development and the removal of a Priority Restoration Strategy could mean more habitat loss and fragmentation as well as increased groundwater consumption and more traffic.

County planners, presenting the amendment to the LPA, said they had gone beyond what is required in seeking public input on the changes. They said that the 300,000-square-foot cap is not feasible, as previous approvals and lawsuit settlements have already gone past that number. They claim that allowing increased commercial and retail use will mean people who will live in the already-approved residential development will not have to drive as far to access services and jobs.

Southeast Lee has historically seen only low-density residential, agricultural uses and mining. It is dominated by the Density Reduction-Groundwater Resource Area, an 83,000-acre swath east of the interstate and south of State Road 82 that was created in 1990 to eliminate a state challenge to the county growth management plan.



Those involved back then are concerned too. Bill Spikowski was a Lee planner and growth management coordinator who helped create the DR-GR and was involved in amending the plan for the area as recently as 2010.

Spikowski said that the changes seem designed to give the developers what they asked for.

“I know where the county’s going, and it’s not good,” he said.

“They’re throwing stuff out because developers have asked for changes. It goes from science-based to ‘Here’s what the developers want.’”

The August 19 hearing took place in commission chambers at the Old Lee County Courthouse. Commissioners were asked to transmit the amendment to the state for review. After state review it will be returned, possibly with suggested changes. Commissioners would then hold a hearing to adopt the changes.

TY Citizen Portal for this August 19 2026 update:

Lee County commissioners voted to transmit county-initiated Lee Plan text amendments (CPA 2026-00003) for expedited state review under Florida statutes; changes include updates to wetland policy references, commercial limits in non-urban areas, mixed-use overlay criteria, recognition of Lee Tran services, MUD clarifications, and glossary definitions.

Lee County proposes \$713K Orange River project to address flooding risks

(TY Gulf Coast News-Samantha Carlson)



Lee County leaders are discussing the possibility of making a \$713,000 state funding request to address flooding risks along the Orange River, a major drainage system serving approximately 80 square miles, including Lehigh Acres and Buckingham.

In 2017, Hurricane Irma caused significant flooding in Buckingham, leaving homes submerged and roads impassable.

Lisa Brantly rode out the storm.

"The next thing we know, the water started to rise, and it rose quite fast." She said, "We all sat on the bed for the entire night while it was just flooded all around us. Everything was floating."

The county said the proposed project would include removing a sandbar that formed in the Orange River after Hurricane Irma and realigning the upstream ditch near the Florida Power & Light discharge canal.

Lee County proposes \$713,000 Orange River project to address flooding risks.

The draft legislative agenda outlines \$500,000 for dredging and \$213,000 for ditch realignment.

Officials said the improvements would help address chronic flooding risks, particularly during heavy rain or storms, and reduce emergency response costs over time.

These funding requests are still preliminary, and Lee County commissioners are scheduled to review their legislative policy at a workshop Wednesday afternoon at 1:30 p.m.



Lee County proposes \$713,000 Orange River project to address flooding risks

Neal Communities buys 788 acres in Alva for \$34.1M

(TY Gulf Shore News-David Dorsey)



Neal Communities acquired 788 acres in Alva for \$34.1 million in back-to-back transactions, a pair of deeds filed with the Lee County Clerk shows.

Longtime Lee County families Cary and Duke sold their land two decades after first trying to sell it to Bonita Bay in 2006, only to have that deal fall through when the Great Recession began.

The Povia-Flint families sold their portion of the land concurrently with Cary and Duke in early August.

Parts of the land lie between North River Road to the north and the Caloosahatchee River to the south, just east of Babcock Ranch Road, also known as State Road 31.

Combining the new acreage with about 200 adjacent acres Neal Communities purchased from D.R. Horton in 2023, known as Owl Creek, gives the Lakewood Ranch-based home developer the opportunity to build hundreds of new homes. The precise number of homes will depend on the sizes the company can sell, said Pat Neal, founder and chair of Neal Communities.

"Most deals like this take four or five years, and most involve a lawsuit or lawsuits," Neal said. "Almost everyone has a circuit court appearance. People don't want any more houses.

"I'm trying to have more patience than most public companies. Public companies have bosses, and those bosses have bosses."

In this case, Neal said he couldn't close until he had all the permits. He said his company spent about \$1.2 million on permitting fees.

Neal said he sold his first home for \$19,800 in 1970. Since then, he said his company has built about 27,000 homes in 147 different projects in Sarasota and Manatee counties over the past 56 years. Neal has built homes in Lee County, with Kingston off Corkscrew Road one of his latest projects.

"The risks have become bigger," Neal said. "It takes longer. And a house is much less affordable than it was in 1970. But people still want to come to Florida."

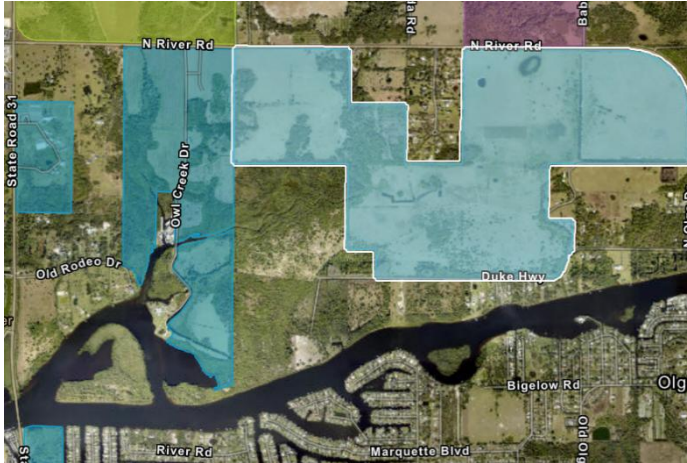
The newly acquired land was rezoned in March 2025 and entitled to allow a maximum of 1,099 dwelling units, along with private, on-site recreational uses and supportive infrastructure. Phase One will have 290 single-family homes and amenities, according to the development order.



The homes will be clustered on about 315 acres, while 473 acres — 60% of the land — will be converted to retention ponds and conservation land, the development order states.

Neal said he would try to balance the natural surroundings, restoring native habitat on legacy farmlands and creating empty spaces adjacent to the housing.

“We will take the native pasture and return it to pine and palmetto, as it existed before clearing, cattle grazing, and before the property was civilized at the turn of the previous century,” Neal said. “By that, I mean returning the land to how it looked in the 19th Century.”



Homes on the former Cary-Duke-Povia properties will range from \$350,000 to \$750,000, Neal said. The community would resemble Canoe Creek in Parrish in Manatee County and will have an array of luxury amenities, such as a pool, tennis, pickleball, bocce and walking trails.

“They’re scheduled to break ground Jan. 2, 2027,” Neal said of the sites. The model homes would break ground about April 1, 2027, and the first homes would be ready in March 2028, he said.

The Aug. 7 land purchase consummated a real estate deal four years in the making, one that generated controversy among dozens of Alva residents who spoke at public meetings against the density of homes approved during the rezoning process. The rezoning process before the Lee County Board of County Commissioners played a role in motivating one of those residents — Amanda Cochran — to launch her political career. She will be seated as Lee County’s newest county commissioner in November. She lost to incumbent Mike Greenwell in the District 5 primary in 2024, then defeated incumbent Trish Petrosky in the open primary Aug. 18.

Cochran received 67,038 votes (55%) to Petrosky’s 55,392 (45%), according to the unofficial preliminary count — nearly double the combined 61,671 votes cast in the 2024 District 5 primary, when Greenwell defeated Cochran 55% to 45%.

Greenwell and Petrosky each were appointed by Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis following the deaths of their predecessors. Frank Mann died in June 2022, and Greenwell died in October 2025.



During that entire span, Neal Communities has had the Alva land under contract. It brought the land through the rezoning process, which was approved unanimously in March 2025.

Owl Creek site adds to Neal Communities’ Alva holdings

The Owl Creek property in Alva sits adjacent to 788 acres Neal Communities acquired for \$34.1 million. The developer purchased about 200 acres at Owl Creek from D.R. Horton in 2023 and plans homes priced from about \$290,000 to \$450,000 there.

About 40 Alva residents asked Lee commissioners not to vote for a sewer extension that ended up being approved unanimously in January 2024 with no public discussion among the commissioners.

The land's history under the recent sellers runs more than a century deep.

A handful of Lee County families began acquiring it in the 1920s, said Keith Cary, a retired Lee County Circuit Court judge who spent 31 years on the bench. His great-grandfather, J.C. Duke, moved to the area known as Alva from Kentucky in 1915.

J.C. Duke ran "some sort of sawmill," Cary said.

"A lot of people were cutting timber back in those days," he said. "So, that's really the beginning of it. He had a son and a daughter. His daughter, Gladys, was my father's mother."

The Cary-Duke parcel comprised approximately 475 acres. It sold for \$20.6 million. Cary said he counted "about 21 adults" from multiple families who will share the proceeds.

Charlie Flint and his family owned the 313 acres, known as the Povia property, before it passed to his daughter Mary Povia. That land sold for \$13.5 million.

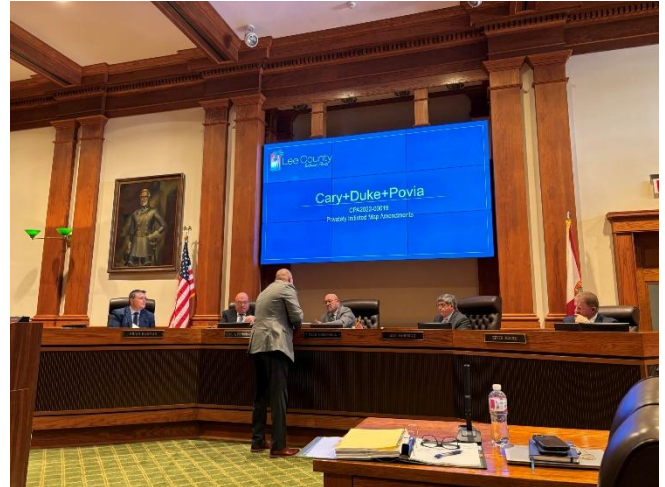
The combined price of \$34.1 million breaks down to about \$43,000 per acre and \$31,000 per dwelling unit, which in this case is the more important metric, said Matt Simmons, a property appraiser with Maxwell, Hendry & Simmons.

"It's actually pretty reasonable with where the market is," Simmons said. "Overall, if we were looking at Lee County more broadly, we would expect to see maybe a lower price per unit in 2026 compared to 2022. No sale takes place in a vacuum.

"What's making the price on this consistent with the market is its location. It's a highly desirable corridor to locate in. For development tracks, you have the continued development of Babcock. From a location standpoint, that made that land a little bit more valuable. Market conditions are down, but the location is more favorable."

Justin Thibaut, CEO of land brokerage firm LSI Companies, wasn't involved with the sale. But he had been tracking it, wondering when it would close, for weeks.

"While the circumstances surrounding the zoning and permitting for this property became quite vocal and controversial, I expect given Neal's track record, they will deliver a nice product for this location," Thibaut said. "The pricing for the land is commensurate with market norms and maybe slightly above,



given that this deal was put together many years ago with varying factors like the cost of capital having increased through the course of this deal.

“It’s nice to see that although this was a controversial zoning, through final permitting there will be a nice chunk of this property perpetually preserved.”

A broker wasn’t involved on the family’s side of the deal, Cary said.

“That was kind of the unusual thing,” Cary said. “We didn’t have our own broker. We didn’t have any signs up with LSI or Cushman & Wakefield or Fred Burson or anybody. We didn’t have any sign saying property was for sale. We were approached by Neal Communities. We didn’t market it.”

Cary still lives in Alva. He said he understood why some of his neighbors didn’t want his family to sell the vacant land, which for decades has been cow pasture. But the growth and development accelerated with Babcock Ranch’s inception, Cary said, changing the dynamics of the area.

“I’m glad it’s over,” Cary said of the sale. “It’s just inevitable. State Road 31 is going to be four lanes well before you know it. Babcock Ranch is just going crazy. They’re starting a second Publix up there. When I grew up out here, I was thinking who in the world is going to move out here? It was the middle of nowhere. Now look at it.”



(TY Okeechobee News-Annie Wills)

Commissioners approve rezoning for development

By Annie Wills

HENDRY COUNTY NEWS

LABELLE — At a meeting of the Board of Hendry County Commissioners in May, a rezoning was requested to authorize the development of a residential community of 58 single-family detached homes to be built on the south side of Fort Denaud Road. Due to several concerns expressed by the board and the public, that rezoning was tabled until adjustments were made to the proposed plan.

At the regular meeting on Tuesday, July 28, it was once again brought back before the board for approval.

In May, Commissioner Mitchell Wills had a lot of questions and concerns regarding what was proposed for the stormwater management and how that would impact Fort Denaud Road and the surrounding residences that already experience some

flooding.

At the meeting on Tuesday night, J.D. DeForge, a civil engineer for the project, explained that a berm, 3 feet in height, would be constructed around the perimeter of the development. This will create a bowl to catch all of the stormwater and direct it to the stormwater management system. Included in that will be some dry retention to further treat the water before it leaves the site. He explained that there will be one discharge point along Fort Denaud right-of-way.

According to DeForge the pre-development discharge rate today is about 137 cfs (cubic feet per second) "A cubic foot is about the size of a basketball," he said. "So it would be like having a 137 basketballs rolling past your feet every second." After the perimeter berm is constructed, the controlled structure will let

• See **Rezoning** on page 2

Rezoning

• From page 1

the water off much slower at a rate closer to 5.36 cfs. Another concern at the May meeting was regarding traffic. At the time the plan proposed using Murray Road for construction vehicles entering and exiting the development. Commissioner Wills was worried that the road would not be able to sustain

the weight of heavy construction vehicles in its current condition.

The new proposal states that construction vehicles shall access the site through the shared connection to Fort Denaud Road.

The board voted and approved the ordinance to rezone the subject property with the conditions and modifications recommended by staff.

Lee County schools to merge two special needs centers into one flagship campus

(TY WINK NEWS)



The School District of Lee County is moving forward with plans to consolidate Buckingham Exceptional Student Center and Royal Palm Exceptional Center after lifting a temporary pause on the project.

See earlier WINK News:

https://www.winknews.com/news/lee/parents-fight-lee-county-plan-to-move-buckingham-special-needs-school/article_6e13a305-72d5-4d94-90f2-81ee572cf64c.html

The district informed parents that it will establish a state-of-the-art flagship Exceptional Student Education center on the

Royal Palm Exceptional Center campus.

The pause, which began in April, came after Buckingham parents and staff raised concerns about the relocation and whether the Royal Palm campus could meet the specialized needs of Buckingham students.

At the time, parents told WINK News they valued the care and sense of community at Buckingham. "Buckingham is a family away from home. A sense of normalcy," Felishia Wilson said.



The district says that feedback helped shape its updated consolidation plan.

"When we paused this process in April, we did so to listen, reassess, and ensure we were creating an environment that puts the safety, dignity, and specialized care of our students first," said Chuck Vilardi, Regional Associate Superintendent. "We heard from our families what they want, incorporated those ideas into our plan, and look forward to continued collaboration to build a model ESE facility that truly serves the unique needs of every child."

The updated plan combines specialized programming from both campuses into a modernized facility. Key features include specialized physical modifications, integrated behavioral and educational support, and a focus on real-world independence.

The district is also launching a structured transition process to keep families informed throughout the consolidation. Parents and guardians will be invited to participate in a series of meetings and committees, with monthly updates provided to stakeholders.

The updated campus is expected to open to students in August 2027.

Contributing Columnists

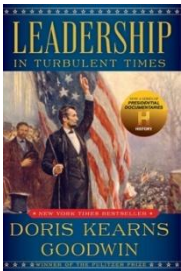
RAMONA RECOMMENDS

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 GENTLY USED 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/)

Ramona retired along 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



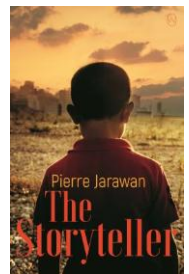
Leadership in Turbulent Times by Doris Kearns Goodwin, a NEW publication.

In Leadership, Goodwin draws upon the four presidents she has studied most closely -- Abraham Lincoln, Theodore Roosevelt, Franklin D. Roosevelt, and Lyndon B. Johnson (in civil rights) -- to show how they recognized leadership qualities within themselves and were recognized as leaders by others. By looking back to their first entries into public life, we encounter them when their paths were filled with confusion and disappointment.

Leadership tells the story of how they all met with dramatic reversals that disrupted their lives and threatened to shatter forever their ambitions. Nevertheless, they all emerged better fitted to confront the contours and dilemmas of their times.

The Storyteller by Pierre Jarawan , The search for a missing father.

Samir leave the safety and comfort of his family's adopted home in Germany for volatile Beirut in an attempt to find his missing father. His only clues are an old photo and the bedtime stories his father used to tell him. The Storyteller follows Samir's search for Brahim, the father whose heart was always yearning for his homeland, Lebanon. In this moving and gripping novel about family secrets, love, and friendship, Pierre Jarawan does for Lebanon what Khaled Hosseini's Kite Runner did for Afghanistan. He pulls away the curtain of grim facts and figures to reveal the intimate story of an exiled family torn apart by civil war and guilt. In this rich and skillful account, Jarawan proves that he too is a masterful storyteller.



Southwest Florida Cooking by

MAGGIE McMann

of Oak Park, Alva

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



Pimento Cheese Spread

INGREDIENTS

- 4 ounces Cream Cheese, Softened
- 1/2 cup Mayonnaise
- 1 Tablespoon Dijon Mustard
- 1 Tsp Frank's hot sauce
- 1/2 teaspoon Black Pepper
- 8 ounces Sharp Cheddar Cheese, Grated
- 8 ounces Monterey Jack Grated
- 4 ounces Sliced Pimentos, Drained

DIRECTIONS

Combine cream cheese, mayonnaise, Dijon, hot sauce and black pepper in the bowl of an electric mixer. Mix it until totally combined (if you have a few lumps from the cream cheese, you won't see them later!) Add the cheddar and Monterey jack and mix gently until combined. Use a rubber spatula to scrape the bowl and make sure all the ingredients are mixed together. Stir in the pimento. Taste and mix in more of whatever you think it needs. Add more cheese if you like the pimento cheese to be less creamy; add less if you like it to be more creamy. Refrigerate pimento cheese for at least 2 hours before serving.



The COLORADO CORNER

For a taste of nature that does not thrive at near sea level this new OTR column comes from wildlife photographer James DeWalt, our son, who has lived in his 9,000 ft high village of Nederland, Colorado for over 25 years. He is an avid wildlife and nature photographer, and we thank the MOUNTAINEER, his local newspaper, for allowing us to share some of his articles which he creates for them.



The Beast Behind the Beauty

A deeper understanding of our amazing hummingbirds



I recently headed out one early morning to a very special place I was introduced to last year, a private hummingbird "sanctuary". This land is near and dear to my heart after having formerly hosted as many as 1,000 birds a day myself. The trip and subsequent research for this article opened my eyes to a new understanding of these amazing birds, and they are not as delicately benign (fighting aside...) as they seem.

This year's numbers have already begun to dwindle. The ongoing drought has diminished seasonal wildflower growth and lifespan. This reduction of a seemingly essential part of their diet is apparently giving them cause to pack up early now that breeding and fledging of young is winding down. Normally this sanctuary would likely have double the population I sat with, but there were still an estimated 1,000 or more birds buzzing about.

Hummingbirds here in Colorado typically spend equal time between the feeders, flowers and interestingly, bug catching. In fact, with many hummingbird species, arthropods make up the largest percentage of a bird's diet. This roundly answers the oft asked question of what the birds feed on when they arrive in the spring, well before our wildflowers begin to appear.

While they are most known for their delicate feeding from flowers, hunting for insects has largely gone unnoticed and under-studied. As it turns out, they are incredibly adept predators. In fact, an article published by ornithologist Helmuth Wagner in 1948 featuring his study of hummingbirds in Mexico concluded that the species he observed were not dependent on flowers at all. Studies of stomach content in some birds showed as much as 79% consisted of digesting arthropods.

While we understand the adaptive development of the long bills for reaching nectar deep in flowers, it is now thought that this specialization has more depth (pun intended). A longer bill also allows the birds to hover near and catch insect prey without causing alert with their beating wings.

Evolutionary development goes even further! Some species have a lower bill that bends in the middle to better catch and consume insects in flight. What makes this more interesting is that they do so without any sort of joint to facilitate the bending. Previous studies showed some species with the ability to bend their upper bill, but new high-speed video captures show evidence of the lower bill bending as well. This allows for a larger opening with which to catch their prey.

Their hunting methods vary widely. Hover-gleaning is a method like flower feeding whereby they hover near a spider web or leaves and pluck insects with their tongues. In the case of spider webs, they will take both small spiders as well as insects already caught in the spider's web.

A second method is known as Sally-hawking. This also involves hovering, but they do so within a swarm of insects, plucking them from the air much like a swallow.

Sally-gleaning is the third method. This often involves spying their prey from a relatively unobtrusive perch. Once spotted they fly to it and pick it off the surface (tree bark, leaves, etc.), returning to their perch to consume the prey.

It has been noted in North American species that females tend to forage for insects more than males. To that end, the females also typically have longer bills than males. In all hummingbird species, the females are the sole caretakers of young, requiring a much greater need for protein from insects for both themselves and their young.



PHOTO: The Hummingbird Whisperer, Facebook

Bugs aside, all food is helpful for their balanced diet. Putting out feeders is an oft-disputed subject in terms of ethics. While not in any way necessary, it is not harmful and is in fact helpful (bearing in mind one uses the "simple syrup" of 4:1 water to sugar ratio and not pre-made and dyed chemicals).

Feeding has obvious benefits during our spring snowstorms when both flowers and insects are scarce. Further, the caloric intake and subsequent "fattening up" is a great boon as they bulk up late in the summer in preparation for their long flight to their winter homes. Just remember to keep those feeders from their larger neighbors, the humming-bears...

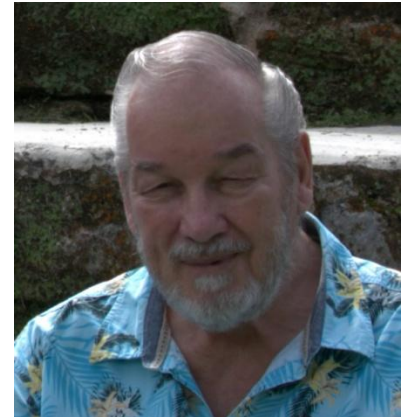


ONE MAN'S OPINION

**By Norman Cannon of
North Fort Myers**

**Please direct any comments or questions to Mr.
Cannon of North Fort Myers,
normancannon@embarqmail.com**

**Mr. Cannon wants to hear reasonable and
respectful comments and questions from readers.
Please feel free to share his articles and email
address with others with similar concerns.**



LIQUID GOLD

What is liquid gold? It is one of the most abused substances on Earth. It is one of the most wasted substances on Earth. But, worst of all, it is one of the most-taken-granted-for substances on Earth. It is a substance that all life on Earth depends on. What is this precious substance? It is water.



Apparently, we believe there is an infinite supply. Why else would we waste TRILLIONS of gallons each and every year. Look at our slice of paradise here in Southwest Florida. The method our duly elected officials seem to prefer is to sink another straw into our aquifers. These same politicians allow the reckless paving over of ground necessary for the recharge of our aquifers. They take our wastewater, “clean” it, and pump it deep into the Earth never to be seen or used again. And they call all of this “best practices”.

What are some of the problems caused by present policies?

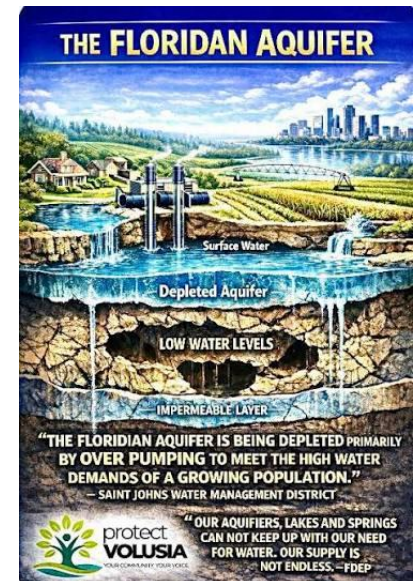
Sinkholes across Florida.

Saltwater intrusion into the aquifers.

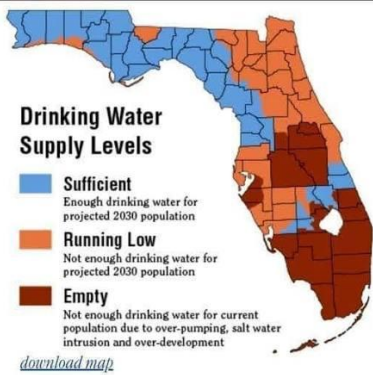
Aquifers running low/out during dry spells.

What are some of the solutions?

The obvious place to start is better building practices, which is a subject local politicians seem to know nothing about. This would slightly slow down usage and also allow more water to recharge the aquifer through ground penetration. (At best, this is a small step, but not the solution.) The downside here is that we, the voters, keep electing the same non-responsive politicians. Their modus operandi is



quite typical of politicians. Let's kick the can down the road for others to worry about. Heaven forbid that we should look at long-term plans.



Desalination. The Gulf is as close to an infinite supply of water as you could have. The downsides here have been the amount of energy required, and the brine solids left as an after product. The upsides are strides in efficiency that have taken place reducing energy requirements. Add to that the licensing, here in the United States, of small modular nuclear power.

<https://www.nuscalepower.com/exploring-smrs/smr-101/the-types-of-smrs>

This would eliminate the power requirements. Also in the works is a system using solar power which in addition to producing potable water, produces lithium and produces no brine solids.

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2026/05/260530053418.htm>

Reusing the water. There is more than one method used. One is to treat the water to being potable and injecting it back into the aquifer. This would definitely reduce the load and greatly prolong the life of our aquifers. Another benefit would be a slowing down/stopping of saltwater intrusion into our aquifers. A further benefit would take place because we would keep more water in our aquifers at all times, reducing the chance for sinkholes. A system such as this is presently being used in Orange County, CA, Big Spring, TX and Scottsdale, AZ.

<https://smartwatermagazine.com/blogs/mehul-patel/how-orange-countys-gwrs-revolutionized-water-reuse>

<https://whyy.org/segments/from-toilet-to-tap-a-texas-town-makes-the-most-of-its-pre-owned-water/>

<https://slenvironment.com/blog/exploring-water-reuse-initiatives-in-wastewater-utilities>

There are test programs underway here in Florida.

<https://www.sjrwmd.com/streamlines/recycled-water-will-help-district-and-florida-ensure-sustainable-water-supplies/>

Unfortunately, I do not think any of these solutions will even be entertained as long as we, **THE VOTERS**, turn a deaf ear and do not educate ourselves on solutions because it is clear our representatives do not.



Healthy Aging with Laurie



Three Simple Habits That Can Help You Stay Independent

One of the questions I hear most often is, “What is the most important thing I can do to stay healthy as I get older?”

There isn’t just one answer. The good news is that staying healthy doesn’t require expensive equipment or hours at the gym. In fact, many of the best habits are simple, free, and easy to begin today.

Each month in this column, I’ll share practical ideas to help you stay active, independent, and enjoying the things you love. We’ll talk about movement, nutrition, brain health, and simple lifestyle habits that can make a real difference.

Let’s start with three habits that benefit almost everyone.

1. Keep Moving

Our bodies were designed to move. Walking is a wonderful place to start, but don’t stop there. As we get older, it’s also important to include activities that build strength, improve balance, and maintain flexibility. The goal isn’t to become an athlete. It’s to make everyday activities—like climbing stairs, carrying groceries, gardening, or getting up from a chair—feel easier.

Remember, doing a little every day is far better than doing a lot once in a while.

2. Keep Learning

Your brain enjoys a workout too. Learning something new helps keep your mind engaged and may support healthy brain function. Read a book, learn a new recipe, take a class, practice a musical instrument or even tackle a crossword puzzle. Better yet, do something that combines learning with social interaction. You’re never too old to discover a new hobby or develop a new skill.

3. Eat to Fuel Your Body

Food provides the energy your body needs to stay active. Choose colorful fruits and vegetables, include protein throughout the day, drink plenty of water, and enjoy treats in moderation.

Healthy eating doesn't have to be complicated. Small improvements made consistently often have the biggest impact over time.

Healthy Aging Is About Living Well

Growing older doesn't mean giving up the activities you enjoy. It means taking care of yourself so you can continue enjoying them for years to come.

You don't have to change everything overnight. Pick one small habit and practice it consistently.

Small steps often lead to lasting results.

Laurie's One-Minute Challenge

This week, add one healthy habit to your daily routine:

- Take a 10- to 15-minute walk.
- Try standing up from a chair without using your hands.
- Read a chapter in a book.
- Add one extra serving of vegetables to your dinner.

Choose just one. By next week, it may already feel like a natural part of your day.



Laurie Dougherty is an instructor at Fuego Pilates in Fort Myers Shores. She enjoys helping adults of all ages improve their strength, balance, flexibility, and confidence through movement. She teaches beginner, Recovery and Level 1 classes and believes it's never too late to start moving.

Disclaimer: This column is intended for educational purposes only and should not replace medical advice. Always consult your physician or another qualified healthcare professional before beginning a new exercise program or making significant changes to your diet or health routine.

laurie@dougherty-inc.com



ChatGPT

Made Simple

by:
Rich Erschik



25+ years helping
beginners and seniors
use technology to
improve their life.

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**Simple Prompts**
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**Monthly "Wow" Moments**
New prompts each month
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**WHAT IS
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ChatGPT is a tool you can
talk to that helps you think,
write, plan, and figure
things out—fast.

Think of it like a really
smart assistant that never
gets tired of your questions.

**WHERE DO
I FIND IT?**

Go to:

chat.openai.com

Or download the ChatGPT
app from the App Store or
Google Play.

**HOW DO I
GET STARTED?**

It's simple.

- Click Sign Up
- Use your email
- Create a password

That's it—you're in.

No tech skills needed. If you
can send a text, you can use this.

**WHAT'S A
"PROMPT"?**

A prompt is just what
you type.

A question.
A request.
An idea.

That's it.

Example:
"Plan a simple dinner
for tonight."

THIS MONTH'S "WOW" PROMPTS

Retype them into ChatGPT and watch what it comes back with.

1

PROMPT: "Explain artificial intelligence to me like I'm a beginner. Give me three examples of how I could use it in everyday life."

2

PROMPT: "Here is an email I wrote. Make it clearer, friendlier, and more professional without making it sound like it was written by AI: [paste email here]"

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Meeting ID: 852-1643-8980 Passcode: 302401

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

The Alva School

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LIVE MUSIC!
6-9PM

Permanent Jewelry, Baked Goods, Hat Bar, Western Clothing, Candles, Art Kits, Greeting Cards, Perfumes, Vintage Jewelry, & MORE!!

TOSTADAS

TY ALVA MUSEUM

The old house on Palm Beach Boulevard, just west of the Alva turnoff, has finally been torn down. For years, its fate seemed inevitable. Time, weather, and neglect had left it standing like a lightning-struck tree, an unmistakable landmark, but one that had become dangerous and beyond saving. Most people knew it as an eyesore, and in the end, demolition was probably the only realistic outcome.

But a hundred years ago, it was something entirely different.

It was a new home and the office of Dr. Archie S. Byle, one of the pioneering physicians who cared for families across East Lee County, Fort Denaud, and Fort Myers. Built in 1928, the house served as both his residence and medical practice, where countless rural residents sought treatment and where generations of local families began their stories. Local accounts even recall Dr. Byle delivering babies in homes throughout the community.

In 1941, the property was purchased by Sam and Florence Snyder, who made it their home for decades. Sam's own story reflected the history of early Alva—arriving in the area to work in the groves for a dollar a day before building a life here. After the Snyders, the home passed through several owners, remaining a recognizable landmark even as it slowly slipped into decline.

Thankfully, before the house was lost, Joanne Iwinski Miller researched and documented its history in a wonderful article she wrote in 2022. Because of her work, and with the discovery of photographs of both the house and its original owners, we can remember it for what it once was, not simply the weathered shell so many of us drove past, but a place that once represented hope, healing, and the future of a growing community.

Buildings don't last forever. Memories do, if we choose to preserve them.

Today, the house is gone, but its story remains. Sometimes that's the most important part of preservation: making sure that when the physical landmark disappears, the people and history connected to it are not forgotten.

Special thanks to Joanne Iwinski Miller for her research and to Bill Byle for providing historical photographs and family information that helped preserve the story of this remarkable old home.





ALVA USS HANNAH CHAPTER

<https://usshannahnsdar.org/>



Alva Fire Protection & Rescue Service District

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REQUIREMENTS

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

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

Please forward a current resume, application and certs to Chief Etcheverry at jetcherry@alvafirecontrol.org 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.





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.

JOIN or DONATE to the museum here:

<https://www.alvaflmuseum.com/donations--memberships.html>

Meet Florida Author, Gregory Enns at the Alva Museum

Join us **Saturday, October 10, 2026**, for a special appearance by Gregory Enns, sixth-generation Floridian and author of *Cow Creek Chronicles*.

Published by the University Press of Florida, *Cow Creek Chronicles* tells a true story set in Florida's historic cattle country, bringing to life the people, landscapes, and traditions that helped shape our state's ranching heritage.

During his visit, Gregory will discuss the inspiration behind the book, Florida's unique cattle culture, his family's deep Florida roots, and the research that brought this remarkable story to life. Whether you're interested in Florida history, pioneer families, the Seminole people, or the legacy of the state's cattle industry, this is an event you won't want to miss.

Due to limited seating, we will be asking attendees to RSVP. Time slots will be announced soon.

Bring your questions, meet the author, bring your copy of *Cow Creek Chronicles* to have it signed, or pick up a copy at the event, and join us in celebrating the people, places, and traditions that make Florida's cattle country unlike anywhere else.

Please share this event with anyone who loves Florida history!

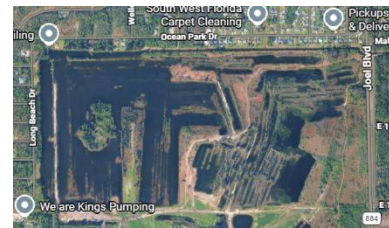
ALVA GARDEN CLUB



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.

Frank Mann Preserve NEWS



Communit
Children's
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Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District

21h · 🌀

🌱 Project Update: Frank Mann Preserve Stormwater Storage & Water Quality Improvements 💧

Design work for the Frank Mann Preserve project is nearing completion, and permit applications will soon be submitted as the project moves into the next phase.

Formerly known as the GS-10 property, the Frank Mann Preserve was acquired through Lee County's Conservation 20/20 program and provides a unique opportunity to enhance both environmental conservation and regional stormwater management. Through a partnership between Lee County and the Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District (LA-MSID), the District is working to design and maintain a stormwater storage and water quality system within the preserve.

Since the initial planning stages began, the project has progressed through several important steps, including the development and approval of a Land Management Plan, coordination with Lee County, and the advancement of engineering design.

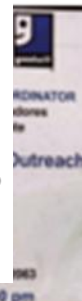
Once complete, the improvements at Frank Mann Preserve will help provide additional stormwater storage capacity, improve water quality, and support the District's continued efforts to protect our community and natural resources. 🌱

Thank you to our partners at Lee County and everyone involved in helping move this important project forward. Stay tuned for additional updates as the project progresses!

Monday - Friday: 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

od

8-8895





We are Doghouse Rescue Academy - a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization in Alva focused on helping make the world around us a better, happier place. We are a network of foster-based rescuers whose sole mission is to help adoptable dogs find homes.

Let us help you find your happily "fur"ever after!

<https://doghouserescueacademy.org/>

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



ALVA MIDDLE FFA

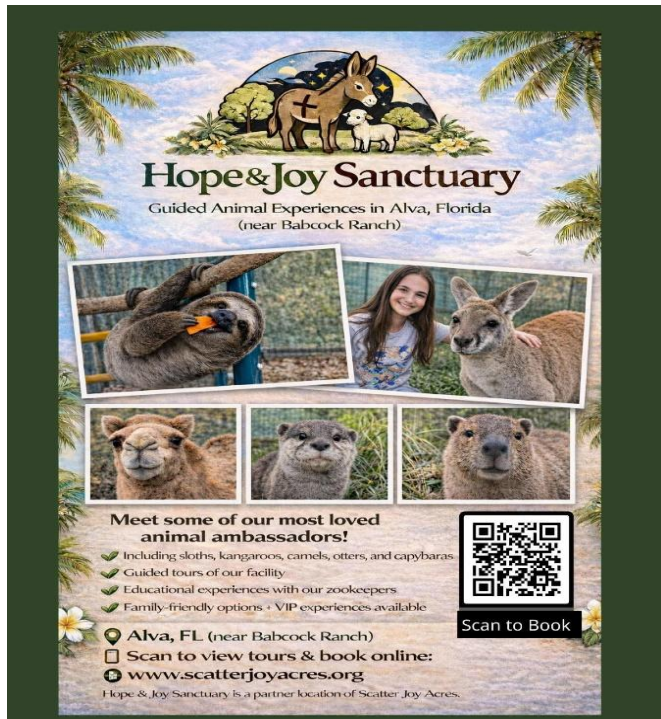
Find us on FACEBOOK



https://www.facebook.com/AlvaMiddleFFA/?show_switched_toast=0&show_invite_to_follow=0&show_switched_tooltip=0&show_podcast_settings=0&show_community_review_changes=0&show_community_rollback=0&show_follower_visibility_disclosure=0



Alva Middle FFA Chapter 1-11 Florida State Fairgrounds
November 21-22, 2026, 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM
So excited to be at this year's COTC Conference in Tampa at the Florida State Fairgrounds. The annual Chapter Officer Leadership Training is a great way for officers to further their leadership skills, build relationships with other Florida FFA Chapters as well as bring new ideas to their chapter.



Hope & Joy Sanctuary
Guided Animal Experiences in Alva, Florida
(near Babcock Ranch)

Meet some of our most loved animal ambassadors!

- ✓ Including sloths, kangaroos, camels, otters, and capybaras.
- ✓ Guided tours of our facility.
- ✓ Educational experiences with our zookeepers.
- ✓ Family-friendly options • VIP experiences available.

Alva, FL (near Babcock Ranch)
Scan to view tours & book online:
www.scatterjoyacres.org
Hope & Joy Sanctuary is a partner location of Scatter Joy Acres.

Scan to Book



BIRTHDAYS ARE BETTER WITH ANIMALS!

HOPE & JOY SANCTUARY

CELEBRATE YOUR BIRTHDAY
at Hope & Joy Sanctuary!

Host an unforgettable birthday surrounded by amazing animals, friends, and fun!

EVERY BIRTHDAY INCLUDES:

- MEET AMAZING ANIMALS**
Up-close encounters with our friendly residents.
- PRIVATE PARTY AREA**
Celebrate, eat, open gifts & enjoy your special time.
- FUN FOR ALL AGES**
A celebration everyone will love!
- PHOTO-WORTHY MEMORIES**
Capture moments that last a lifetime.
- CUSTOM EXPERIENCE**
Add-on options to make your day extra special.
- SUPPORT OUR ANIMALS**
Your celebration helps support their care & future.

PERFECT FOR:

- ✓ Kids of all ages
- ✓ Animal lovers
- ✓ Family & friends
- ✓ Unique celebrations
- ✓ Making memories that last a lifetime!

LET'S MAKE THEIR DAY Wildly Special!

INQUIRE OR BOOK TODAY!

Email Us
events@scatterjoyacres.org

Book Online
www.scatterjoyacres.org

WE CAN'T WAIT TO CELEBRATE WITH YOU!



Event by Apex Promoz FL



Caloosahatchee Regional Park



Tickets

runsignup.com/Race/FL/Alva/CaloosaAR



Public · Anyone on or off Facebook

Caloosahatchee Regional Park MTB Trails • Alva, Florida

Get ready for an unforgettable trail experience at the 2026 Caloosa Fest, featuring a Half Marathon and 5K Trail Race on the rugged, beautiful trails of Caloosahatchee Regional Park.

This event brings together trail runners of all experience levels for a day filled with challenging terrain, great views, community fun, and outdoor excitement.

Whether you're tackling the half marathon or cruising the 5K, this event offers something for everyone!

Schedule of Events — Saturday, December 5th, 2026

Half Marathon Trail Race: 7:30 AM start

5K Trail Race: 8:00 AM start

Vendors and demos on-site throughout the morning.



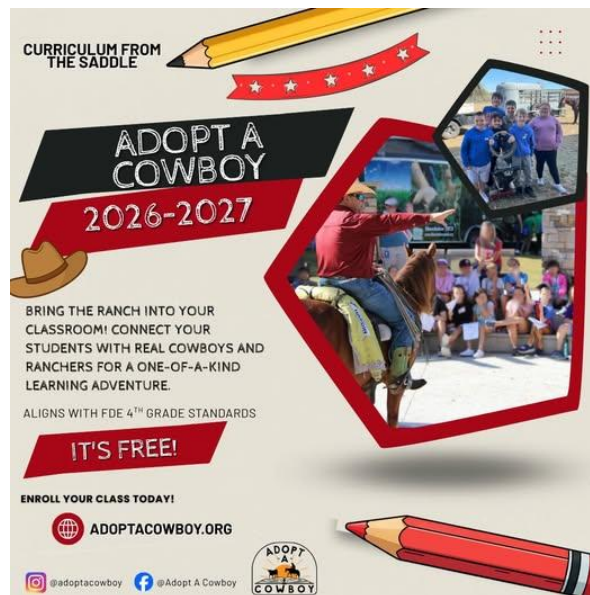
Lee County Public Safety

about an hour ago · 🌐

A new public-access emergency response cabinet has been installed at [Caloosahatchee Regional Park](#)! The cabinet is equipped with an AED, a tourniquet and Naloxone.

With the park being a popular destination for biking, walking and other outdoor activities, these tools will be a valuable resource for both visitors and first responders. The cabinet is also connected to our 911 CAD system, allowing dispatchers to direct callers to its location during an emergency while alerting nearby registered responders.

Together, we're helping make our parks safer and improving access to lifesaving equipment throughout Lee County. | [Lee County Parks & Recreation](#) See less



BUCKINGHAM & FORT MYERS SHORES EVENTS And Services



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.fmeastroty.com/>





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 Classes 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

Please Help Us To Help Them



Abuse Counseling & Treatment, Inc.
Domestic Abuse Shelter

*We are looking for donations of New
OR*

*Gently Used Outdoor Toys
for the Children.
Cash Donations also Accepted.*



They need our help.



Questions: Please call 239-693-0351
If you can help, please bring items by March 10, 2026 to:
American Legion Auxiliary Unit 351
4800 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33905

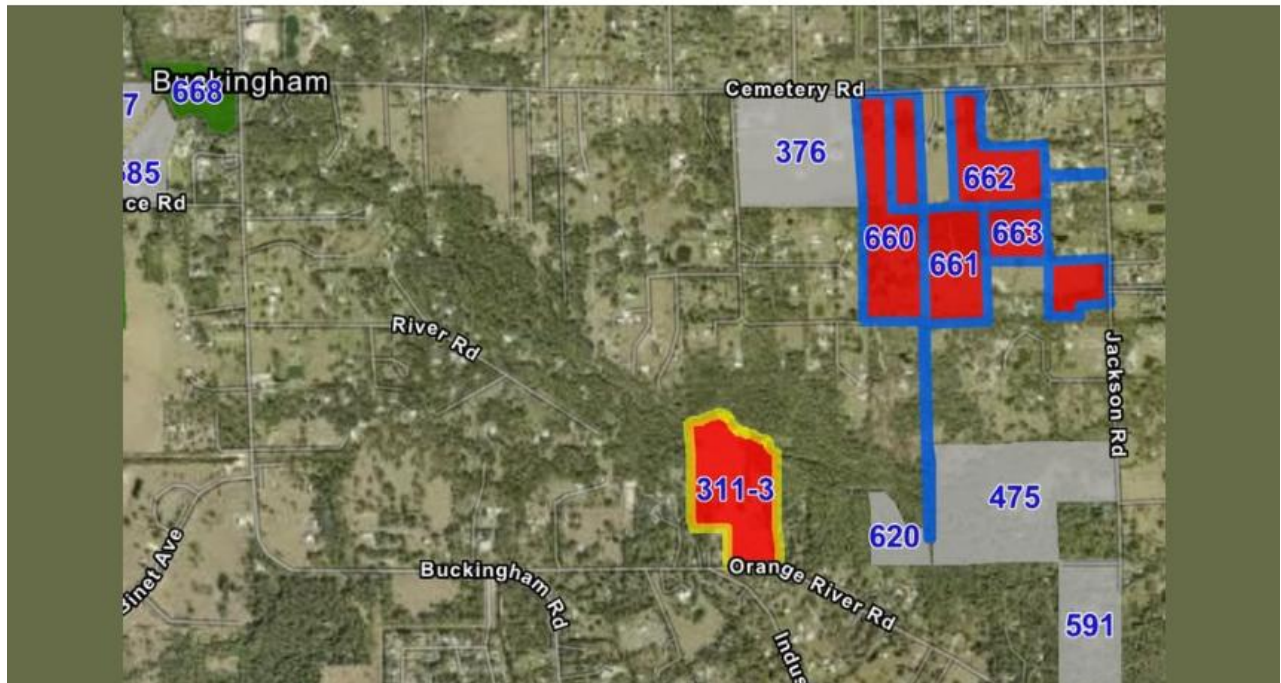


Buckingham Community Association, Inc

16h · 🌐

...

New parcel that we will need support with for 2020 conservation program review 311 -3 a nice 29 Acre





August In-Branch Events

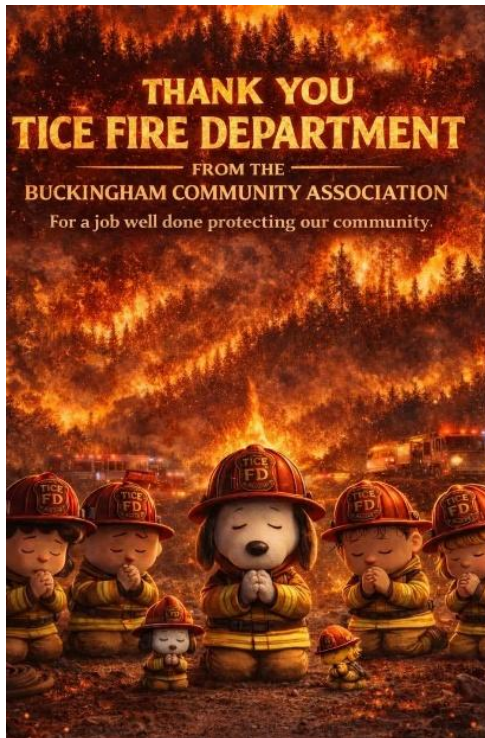
Explore free programs for every age
this month.

[View Calendar of Events](#)

Registration is required for events marked with an asterisk (*) and opens 30 days
before program date.

[https://leelibrary.librarymarket.com/events/month/2026/08?bundles%5Blc_closing%5D=lc_closing
&bundles%5Blc_event%5D=lc_event&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336](https://leelibrary.librarymarket.com/events/month/2026/08?bundles%5Blc_closing%5D=lc_closing&bundles%5Blc_event%5D=lc_event&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336&branches%5B142%5D=142&branches%5B144%5D=144&branches%5B336%5D=336)

**Riverdale Library booksale Sept. 4, 5. 10 a.m.
- 4 p.m.**



FALL CLASSES

at the Barn

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!

ALL CLASSES START IN SEPTEMBER!

Schedules, class descriptions, and registration are available through our online registration form.

Animals and Kids
Healing Hearts.
Building Confidence.
Creating Connections.

JR. EQUINE VET EXPLORERS
with Ms. Kim

Tuesdays
10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

- Anatomy
- Body Systems
- First Aid
- Real Veterinary
- Bandaging
- Skills
- Hoof Care

\$375
12 WEEKS

ART
with Ms. Sherry

Wednesdays
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM

- Drawing
- Painting
- Mixed Media
- Creative Projects
- Build confidence through art

\$330
12 WEEKS

MUSIC
with Ms. Brooke

Thursdays
9:00 AM - 10:00 AM

- Sing
- Play Instruments
- Music Games
- Build Confidence

\$405
12 WEEKS

GRACEFUL GROWTH
PARELLI NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP
with Marcella Spadafora

Build confidence while learning communication, leadership, and partnership with horses.

- Lessons with Marcella
- Practice Days
- Bonding Day

\$110
PER WEEK ONGOING
Lesson & Practice Bonding Day

HOMESCHOOL ENRICHMENT CO-OP
A unique day combining:

Gardening Art Music Horsemanship Leadership & Friendship

Mondays
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Ages 5 and up

\$880
8 WEEKS

Ready to join us?

Choose your classes and reserve your spot today!

Register Online:
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfHh0c8adC63TEyN4LrplK0koh8IqG3jEVBNSNLau10gAWbPQ/viewform?usp=header>

4901 Neel Rd.
Fort Myers, FL 33905

animalsandkidsfl@gmail.com

239-810-7494

Step Up
for students
APPROVED PROVIDER

Animals & Kids INC

HORSES & HEROES OPEN HOUSE

VETERAN'S WELCOME DAY

COME JOIN US!

TOUR THE FACILITY

GET AN OVERVIEW OF HORSES & HEROES

MEET THE HORSES

OBSERVE A GROOMING SESSION & OBSTACLE COURSE DEMO BY OUR VETERANS

PLEASE RSVP BY
CALLING OUR OFFICE
239.226.1221
OR SCANNING THE QR CODE BELOW

THERE IS NO CHARGE TO OUR VETERANS TO PARTICIPATE IN HORSES & HEROES

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT
SPECIALEQUESTRIANS.NET/PROGRAMS-SERVICES/VETERANS

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2026
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM

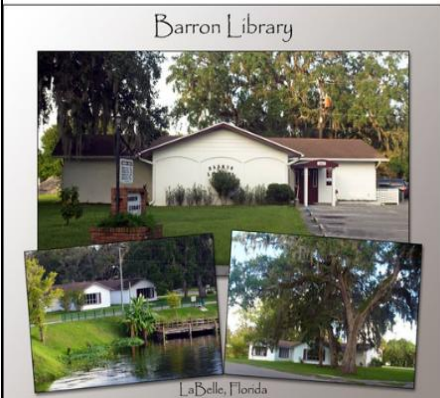
LOCATION:
SPECIAL EQUESTRIANS, INC.
5121 STALEY RD, FORT MYERS, FL 33905

THE PROGRAM IS DESIGNED TO TEACH UNMOUNTED HORSEMANSHIP SKILLS USING A GROUND-BASED PROGRAM PROMOTING A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE VETERAN & THEIR HORSE.

THE HORSEMANSHIP SKILLS ARE TAUGHT IN AN ENGAGING AND SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENT, THROUGH A CURRICULUM OF ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PROMOTE POSITIVE SKILLS WITH THE VETERAN'S CHOSEN HORSE.

LESSONS ARE FRAMED TO HELP VETERANS LEARN AND GROW USING NATURAL HORSEMANSHIP PRINCIPLES





461 N Main St, LaBelle, FL 33935



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



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



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!

NOW HIRING
Full-time Firefighter/E.M.T.
LaBelle Fire application and job description available on website
www.citylabelle.com
Submit applications in person at 481 W. Hickpochee Ave, or email to lisaawbrey@citylabelle.com by November 1, 2024

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.

YOU'RE INVITED TO HELP PLAN FOR OUR CITY'S FUTURE
Plan Our Growth to 2050: Next Steps
Join us for a Community Workshop to review the draft updates to LaBelle's Comprehensive Plan, the blueprint guiding our city's growth through 2050. Learn how community input has shaped the current amendments and share your feedback as the plan moves forward, and help us prioritize future changes.
Community Workshop
Thursday, July 30, 2026
6:00pm - 7:30pm
Civic Center Building
481 W Hickpochee Ave,
LaBelle, FL 33935
Join Us!
Contact Us (863) 675-2875 www.citylabelle.com

LA BELLE DOWNTOWN
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	NONPROFIT \$100.00
For residents and supporters who want to show love for downtown!	Exclusive rate for nonprofit organizations.
- Monthly e-newsletter - Advance notice of LDRC events - Be seen in our public supporter showcase online	- 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	BUSINESS \$500.00
Perfect for small businesses and individuals wanting more visibility.	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 - Social media shares on LDRC channels - Invitations to exclusive networking events and workshops - Early access to event sign-up	- 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

The NEWEST Theater in LaBelle!

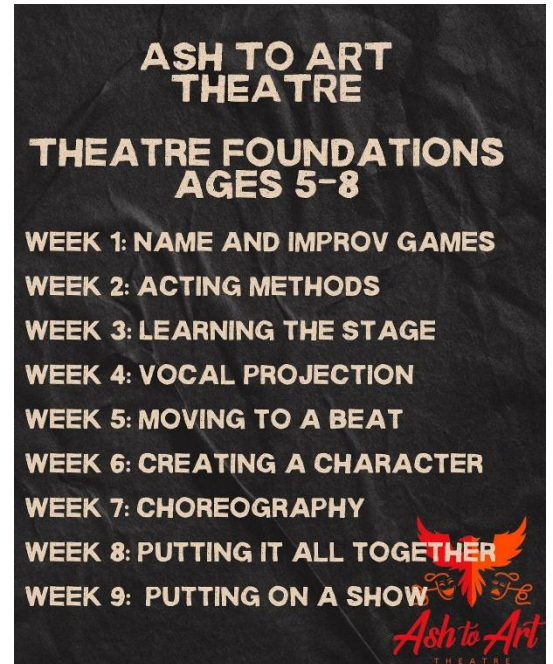


On Saturday evening, November 8th, the cast, crew, and directors of the YOUTH THEATER COMPANY performed a whimsical and fun stage play of ANNIE.

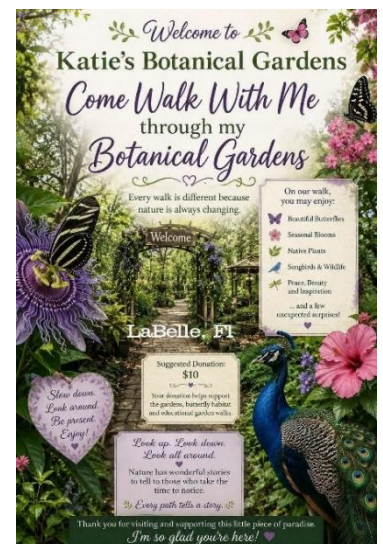
This was their FIRST public program, and it ran through two shows to large crowds. Of course, lots of family and friends of the kids. However, don't believe those youngsters and teens didn't give a heartwarming performance.

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

<https://www.ashtoarttheatre.com/ataatreco@gmail.com>



<https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=muse%20community%20association>



SPEED NETWORKING Event

HOSTED BY: *Riverside* The Heart of the River

CO-HOSTED BY: *The Greater LaBelle* Chamber of Commerce

SEPT. 10 | AT 6 PM

MUST RSVP

7305 CO RD 78, LABELLE, FL 33935

MORE INFORMATION

(863) 675-0125

Riverside The Heart of the River

SAVE THE DATE

OCTOBER 17, 2026

PAWS, PUMPKINS & MUDDY MUTTS

Fall Festival / K9 X Games

A Dog + Human Mud Run & Obstacle Challenge

Benefitting **Big Cypress German Shepherd Rescue**

Children's Obstacle Course • Luring Course
K9 Demo's • Fall Fun
Vendors • Raffles • Food • Music
Fun For The Whole Family • Pet Costume Contest • Pumpkin Patch • Children Activities

HELP RESCUE, REHABILITATE & REHOME GERMAN SHEPHERDS

PRESENTED BY **CANINE HEALTH SOLUTIONS**
Proudly supporting the health, performance and well-being of every dog.

HOSTED AT **GRASSY RUN RANCH**

3133 Dixie Rd, LaBelle, Florida 33935 | K9 X Games and Luring Course 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM | Fall Festival 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM

25TH ANNIVERSARY

CALOOSA HUMANE SOCIETY

LOVE Unleashed GALA

BUILDING Furever FAMILIES FOR 25 YEARS

A NIGHT OF COMPASSION, COMMUNITY & SECOND CHANCES

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 2026 | 5:00 PM | LaBelle Civic Center

Together, we save lives.

ARTS OF THE INLAND

LaBasel 2026

Miami's Art Basel meets LaBelle by Arts of the Inland

471 N Lee St.
LaBelle, FL 33935

Art Workshops

Installations

Gift Shop

Local Coffee

Food Trucks

Sat 9/5
10 AM - 5 PM

Sun 9/6
1 PM - 5 PM

(863) 843-5505
www.artsinland.com



TEXT TO 911

HENDRY COUNTY, FLORIDA



A FAST, EASY WAY TO GET HELP
WHEN YOU CAN'T CALL.



Text 911 in an emergency
when it is not safe or possible to call.

HOW IT WORKS



1. TEXT 911
In an emergency, open your text messaging app and text 911.



2. ANSWER QUESTIONS
A 911 dispatcher will respond by text. Answer their questions and follow their instructions.



3. SHARE LOCATION
If possible, enable location services when prompted so we can find you faster.



4. HELP IS ON THE WAY
Stay where you are and keep the conversation going until help arrives.

WHEN TO TEXT 911



You are in danger and cannot speak.



You are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability.



It is not safe to make a voice call.



You have a voice plan that does not allow calls.

IMPORTANT TO KNOW

- Text to 911 is available throughout Hendry County, Florida.
 - Standard text messaging rates may apply.
 - Do not text and drive.
 - If you can call 911, please do.
- CALL IF YOU CAN. TEXT IF YOU CAN'T.



WE ARE HERE TO HELP.

HENDRY COUNTY 911 – PROTECTING AND SERVING OUR COMMUNITY.

For More Information Visit: PREPAREHENDRY.COM





LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation

22h · 🌐

🔧 SHOP DOWNTOWN FIX-IT FESTIVAL 🛠️

We're exploring interest from local businesses, makers, tradespeople, and skilled vendors who may want to participate in the Shop Downtown Fix-It Festival this November at Barron Park.

The event would highlight professionals who repair, restore, sharpen, clean, reshape, and refresh everyday items—promoting sustainability while showcasing local talent and craftsmanship. ❤️

We're looking to connect with:

- 🧵 Seamstress or Tailor
- 👒 Hat Vendor — steaming, shaping, and repairs
- 👜 Leatherworker or Leather Repair Specialist
- 👞 Cobbler or Shoe Repair Professional
- 🕒 Watch and Jewelry Repair Specialist
- 🔪 Knife Smith or Sharpening Expert
- 🔫 Gunsmith or Firearm Cleaning and Repair Specialist
- 🚗 Auto Detailer
- 🔥 Welder or Metal Fabricator
- 💻 Computer and Phone Repair Technician
- 🎸 Instrument Repair Specialist

Know someone who would be a great addition? Share their business name, tag them below, or send us a recommendation!

Vendors who offer these services are also encouraged to contact us directly. We're especially interested in connecting with local independent businesses and skilled individuals who take pride in their work.

#ShopDowntown #FixItFestival #ShopLocal #SupportSmallBusiness #LocalVendors #LaBelleFL #SWFL

NORTH FORT MYERS & NORTH OLGA EVENTS

And Services

OCTAGON WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

**41660 Horseshoe Road • Punta Gorda, FL
33982 • 239-543-1130**



Most mentioned offerings



Tiger Viewing



Lion Viewing



Guided Wildlife Tours



Bear Encounter



North Fort Myers Senior Expo
Tuesday, September 1, 2026 • 10am-1pm
Lee County Civic Center

★ **CRACKER DAY** ★
YOUTH RODEO
★ **2027** ★
★ JANUARY 9TH, 2027 ★

Your sponsorship helps us invest in the next generation of rodeo champions and keep the cracker cowboy heritage alive!

★ **SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES** ★

ADDED MONEY SPONSOR	BUCKLE SPONSOR	AWARDS SPONSOR	
★ \$100 Thank you on social media	★ \$2100 ★ • Social media recognition • Rodeo program recognition • 2 VIP tickets to January 2027 Cracker Day Rodeo • (1) VIP parking pass • Banner hung in the arena • 1 year Posse membership	★ \$2000 ★ • Social media recognition • Rodeo program recognition • 2 VIP tickets to January 2027 Cracker Day Rodeo • Banner included • 1 year Posse membership	
★ \$200 Thank you on social media + rodeo program	 Thank you 4M SERVICES for sponsoring our Buckle Sponsor!	 Thank you of Southwest Florida for sponsoring our Awards Sponsor!	
★ \$300 Social media + rodeo program + arena announcement			INCLUDED BANNER DISPLAYED AT THE RODEO!
★ \$400 Social media + rodeo program + arena announcement + banner displayed at the rodeo			
★ \$500 All of the above + 2 entry tickets to the January 2027 Cracker Day Rodeo		BUILDING CONFIDENCE. TEACHING CHARACTER. KEEPING TRADITIONS STRONG.	
★ \$1000 All of the above + 2 general admission tickets to the January 2027 Cracker Day Rodeo + 1 year Posse membership			
INCLUDES BUSINESS DISPLAYED AT BOTH CRACKER DAY RODEOS	★ EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF OUR YOUTH! ★		

Whitney Singletary 239-462-2704 TO SPONSOR OR FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT: Whitney Singletary@realtivexecutives.com Thank you for supporting our youth!



LWV LEAGUE of WOMEN VOTERS
OF LEE COUNTY

Presents



OUR WATERS, OUR VOTE
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA WATER SUMMIT 2026



SIERRA CLUB
Calusa Group

September 19, 2026
2 - 4 p m
Collaboratory
2031 Jackson St.
Fort Myers, FL
33901

[register here](#)



"The **vote** is a **power**, a **weapon**
of offense and defense, a **prayer**."

Carrie Chapman Catt
Founder League of Women Voters



Expert Speaker
Royal C. Gardner
Professor of Law

- Director of the Stetson Institute for Biodiversity Law and Policy
- Author, *Waters of the United States: POTUS, SCOTUS AND WOTUS* and the *Politics of a National Resource* (2024)



Expert Speaker
Gil Smart
Executive Director VoteWater

- Non-partisan grassroots environmental advocacy group
- Columnist, long-time investigative reporter in Pennsylvania and Florida's Treasure Coast



Expert Speaker
Matt DePaolis
Environmental Policy Director
Sanibel Captiva Conservation Foundation (SCCF)

- Non-profit dedicated to science-based research and advocacy
- Protecting Southwest Florida's coastal ecosystems, land preservation, wildlife monitoring, and environmental education

Sponsorships Available for Organizations

Moderator, Marsha Ellis, 2nd VP of LWVLee and Sierra Club Calusa Group executive committee

GIVEAWAYS, FREE ADMISSION, HEALTH SCREENINGS, VENDORS, FOOD TRUCKS, AND TIKI GOLF CART RIDES



SENIOR EXPO
PRESENTED BY WE KNOW LIFE & HEALTH

OCTOBER 10
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

LEARN MORE  www.weknowlifeandhealth.com/seniorexpo | 800.385.1755

NORTH FORT MYERS RECREATION CENTER, 2000 NORTH RECREATION PARK WAY NORTH FORT MYERS, FL 33903

FOR EVERYONE!



The poster is titled "ETHICS" in large, bold letters, where each letter contains a different image of a livestock animal: a pig, a goat, a black chicken, a red chicken, a brown horse, and a black cow. Below the title is the subtitle "2024/2025 Youth Livestock Show Ethics and Animal Care Workshop". A green four-leaf clover icon is centered below the subtitle. The text reads: "For a list of available virtual and in person workshops, please visit the website. Note that new workshops are being added as needed." Below this is the website URL: "https://docs.google.com/document/d/1QcGj7R-BtCdNkjheHF3oG-mp0IqDIYE1aCct3IW-922o/edit" with a green arrow pointing to a QR code. At the bottom, it says: "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."

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).



Calusa Waterkeeper

July 29 at 8:29 AM · 🌐

Our research is helping answer an important question: Do toxins produced by blue-green algae become airborne?

In this WGCU Gulf Coast Life interview, leaders from [Brain Chemistry Labs](#) and [Calusa Waterkeeper](#) discuss newly published research, what the team found, what it means for Southwest Florida, and the questions scientists are still working to answer.

Whether you live, work, boat, or recreate on our waterways, this conversation provides insight into an emerging area of water quality and public health research.

🔊 Listen to the full interview or read the transcript:
<https://www.wgcu.org/.../researchers-develop-tools-to...>

[#WaterQuality](#) [#BlueGreenAlgae](#) [#Cyanobacteria](#) [#SouthwestFlorida](#) [#CleanWater](#)
[#CalusaWaterkeeper](#)



- 52 -

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

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

EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT

SWFL HISTORICAL SOCIETY DECK REBUILD



PRESERVING HISTORY. STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY.

I am a Life Scout working toward the rank of Eagle Scout, and I have chosen to support the Southwest Florida Historical Society by rebuilding their outdoor deck. This deck provides a welcoming space for visitors, events, and educational programs that connect our community to its history.

Prepared. For Life.®
Thank you for considering a donation to help make this project a success!

WE ARE SEEKING DONATIONS OF MATERIALS

BOARDS (PRESSURE TREATED LUMBER)

LENGTH	QUANTITY NEEDED	PRICE EACH (LOCAL HOME DEPOT)	TOTAL
16 ft	17	\$20.28	\$344.76
12 ft	17	\$15.18	\$258.06
8 ft	12	\$10.18	\$122.16
TOTAL FOR BOARDS			\$724.98

SCREWS

USE	QUANTITY NEEDED	ESTIMATED TOTAL
Deck Screws (For the deck)	578	Included in total below
Step Screws (For the steps)	64	
Riser Screws (For the risers)	32	
TOTAL FOR SCREWS (ESTIMATED)		\$64.00

PROJECT MATERIALS TOTAL (ESTIMATED)
Total for wood: ~ \$730.00 | Total for screws: \$64.00

\$788.98
GRAND TOTAL (ESTIMATED)

YOUR SUPPORT WILL:

- PRESERVE A COMMUNITY TREASURE:** Help maintain a local landmark that educates and inspires.
- IMPACT FUTURE GENERATIONS:** Support programs and events that keep our local history alive.
- STRENGTHEN OUR COMMUNITY:** Your contribution helps create spaces where the community comes together.

Every Board Makes a Difference!

REACH ME AT:
239-295-2528
tiagopassos21@gmail.com

PARTNER WITH ME:
Your donation of boards and screws will directly contribute to the success of this project and leave a lasting legacy for our community.

Thank You!
— FOR YOUR SUPPORT —

★ TOGETHER, WE CAN BUILD A BETTER FUTURE BY RESTORING OUR PAST. ★

FLORIDA ALLIGATOR SEASON



- APRIL — COURTSHIP**
- MAY-JUNE — MATING**
- LATE JUNE-JULY — NESTING**
- MID-AUGUST-EARLY SEPTEMBER — HATCHING**

! HEAR BABY GATORS? BACK AWAY. MOM MAY BE NEARBY.



VINTAGE MARKET DAYS®
PRESENTS
"TEAM VINTAGE"
SEPTEMBER 18-20
Lee Civic Center
FT MYERS, FL

VMD
VintageMarketDays®
www.VintageMarketDays.org

<https://events.humanitix.com/host/634846b1d35e72787460ccf0>



East Lee Wildlife Stewardship Group

Donate Today:



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

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

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://>



ee County Florida 4-H

- 54 -

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

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



Ranger Academy - Fall 2026 Session Open Enrollment

Session Schedule

Module 1: Ranger Program Introduction
Saturday, September 12, 2026 | 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Module 2: Advocacy
Saturday, September 26, 2026 | 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Module 3: Pollution & Monitoring
Saturday, October 3, 2026 | 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Module 4: Restoration
Saturday, October 24, 2026 | 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Location

Six Mile Cypress Slough Preserve
Multi-Purpose Room
7751 Penzance Blvd
Fort Myers, FL 33966

Ranger Academy Training is a science-based educational program for citizens interested in playing an active role volunteering to help Calusa Waterkeeper protect and restore our Southwest Florida waterways. Training is facilitated through a combination of classroom lectures, inter-active breakout activities and hands-on field experiences. Participants will learn how to identify and monitor water pollutants, increase public awareness about water quality and advocate for clean water across our jurisdiction.

Participants must attend all courses and complete each in-field training experience to become a certified Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger.

Enrollment in the Ranger Academy Training program is a \$125 donation that helps to cover the cost of the educational materials. Upon successful program completion participants will receive a certificate of completion, an Annual Membership and a CWK Ranger Baseball hat.



Ranger Academy Training is a science-based educational program for citizens interested in playing an active role volunteering to help Calusa Waterkeeper protect and restore our Southwest Florida waterways.



Enrollment in the Ranger Academy Training program is a \$125 donation that helps cover the cost of educational materials and includes an annual CWK Membership.

SCAN TO REGISTER



How to Prepare for a Hurricane: FPL Safety Tips

Submitted by Florida Power & Light Company

Safety is the cornerstone of FPL's commitment to our customers and employees. It is not a matter of if, but when the next hurricane will hit our state, which is why it's important to be proactive in planning for the six-month-long hurricane season.

Whether you're a longtime Floridian or new to the state, having a plan in place is the best way to stay safe this storm season. Below is a list of what you can do before, during and after a storm.

What is a Hurricane Emergency Plan?

Determine whether your home or business is located in a flood or evacuation zone and review local evacuation routes.

Consider whether you will shelter in place at your home or evacuate, as well as where you would go and whether you need a separate plan for pets.

The Division of Emergency Management recommends that drivers keep their gas tanks at least half full throughout hurricane season. Electric vehicle (EV) owners should aim to maintain a charge between 50% and 80% at all times.

Reach out to your local emergency management office if you or anyone you know has special medical needs, in case of evacuations. Apply for our Medically Essential Service designation if someone in your home relies on electric-powered equipment.

What Should a Hurricane Emergency Kit Contain?

Build an emergency kit with non-perishable food, bottled water, flashlights, batteries, medications, and a first-aid kit.

Determine your backup power source. Don't forget phone chargers, power banks, and a waterproof container for important documents.

Don't forget information such as insurance policies, health cards, birth certificates, Social Security cards, a list of emergency contacts, and a recent copy of your FPL bill.

How to Prepare Your Home for a Hurricane?

Move patio furniture and outdoor items indoors, fasten doors and windows, and cover valuables and furniture with plastic and move away from windows.

Turn off and unplug unnecessary electronics, including pool equipment, and set your refrigerator and freezer to their coldest settings to keep food fresh longer during an outage.

DO NOT attempt to trim trees or vegetation near overhead power lines yourself – only hire qualified, line-clearing professionals to trim trees and other vegetation near power lines. Visit FPL.com/trees for more information on our tree trimming policies.

Look up and note the location of power lines before you begin working on a ladder. Be sure that any ladders or scaffolds are far enough away so that you – and the ends of the tools you're using – don't come within 10 feet of power lines.

What are the Important Safety Steps After a Hurricane?

If you're planning to use a portable generator, read and follow all the manufacturer's instructions. Be sure to set it up outside – not in your home or garage – and connect appliances directly to it. Do not wire your generator directly to your home's breaker or fuse box, as the power you generate may flow back into power lines and cause injuries.

Stay far away from and do not touch any downed power lines or flooded and debris-laden areas that may be hiding downed power lines. If you see damaged electrical equipment, please call 911.

How Can Floridians Stay Informed After a Storm?

Bookmark FPL.com and save 1-800-4-OUTAGE (1-800-468-8243) to your cell phone to report and check the status of your restoration.

Stay informed by following your local news and FPL's social media pages for updates on storm conditions and heed warnings.

Facebook: [@fplconnect](https://www.facebook.com/fplconnect)

Instagram: [@insidefpl](https://www.instagram.com/insidefpl)

X: [@insideFPL](https://twitter.com/insideFPL)

FPL (Florida Power & Light Company) works year-round to be ready for severe weather and urges customers to prepare by making safety a priority this storm season.

For more tips, visit FPL.com/storm.



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.



Your Best Friend is Waiting

Lee County Domestic Animal Services (LCDAS) has lovable pets of all ages, sizes and breeds waiting to meet you. Every adoption includes spay or neuter surgery, age-appropriate vaccinations, a microchip and a county pet license, making adoption both simple and affordable. Whether you're searching for a playful puppy, a calm senior or something in between, your new best friend may be just a visit away.

Click here to learn more or visit **leelostpets.com** to browse adoptable animals today!



Calusa Humane Society and Veterinary Clinic

★ 🌟 Sponsorship Spotlight 🌟 ★

We are thrilled to announce that NASCAR's very own **Ross "Melon Man" Chastain** 🍌 has stepped up as a Tailwagger sponsor!

You might've just seen him at the Daytona 500!

His generous donation will make a huge difference in the lives of rescue animals, and we couldn't be more grateful. 🐾 🐾

Be sure to cheer him on this season—because he's not just winning on the track, he's winning for the paws! 🐾 🍌 🏠



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>

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



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

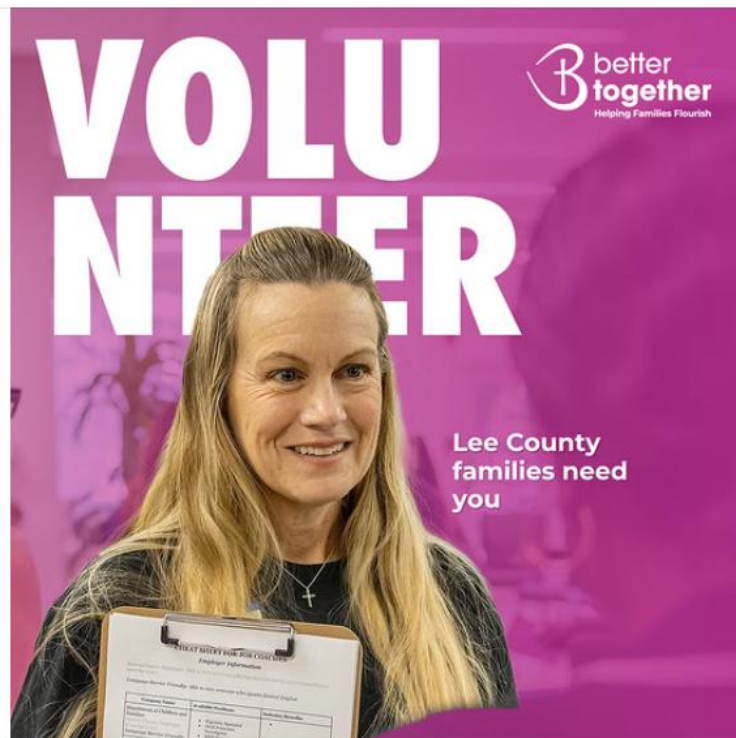
Find out more about us at

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*

In Lee County, parents working through addiction, job loss, or instability need encouragement, not judgment. Become a mentor and help them reach goals like safe housing or steady work. Just 1-2 hours a week can change the future for a whole family.



BETTERTOGETHERUS.ORG

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>



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).

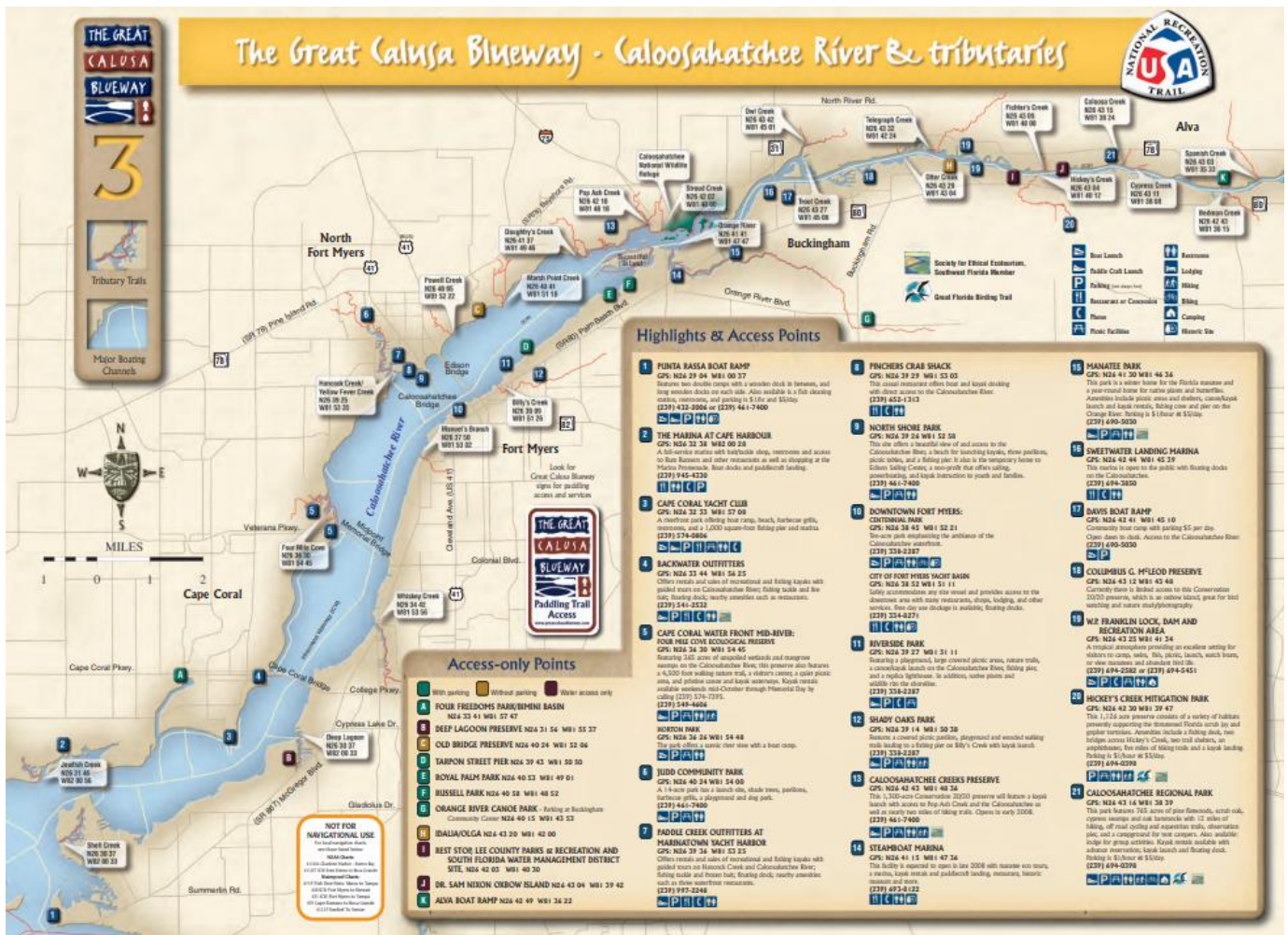
Dogs must be accompanied by an adult and must remain on-leash at all times while walking in the park. Find out more at: <https://www.leegov.com/parks/dog-parks>



Interactive map from Lee County of ALL 20/20 preserves

<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f72a22abf3d7430fb0f40362624f6c41>

Click to link below to all





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



NEW LAWS PROTECTING CONSUMERS

Florida has more than a few new laws designed to protect consumers. Effective as of July 1, 2026, the laws below add or enhance current consumer protection efforts. We have outlined the basics of these new laws, what consumers should look for, and where to report violations. An informed consumer is a smart consumer!

In October 2025, lawmakers introduced [SB 290, a broad consumer-protection bill that, according to Governor DeSantis](#), “builds on the [Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services’](#) reforms to protect Florida agriculture, consumers, and rural communities . . . It also protects the health, security and freedom of Floridians.” Here’s a snapshot of some of those new laws:

- **Gas-Powered Equipment:** Local county or municipal governments are prohibited from enacting ordinances that restrict the use of gasoline-powered farm or landscape equipment. This does not restrict encouragement to use alternative fuels.
- **Commercial Solicitation:** A person may not engage in commercial solicitation at a dwelling that clearly displays a compliant “No Commercial Solicitation” sign. The sign must:
 - be at least 8.5 inches by 11 inches in size.
 - be clearly visible to approaching individuals.
 - contain the following language, or substantially similar language, in letters that are at least 1 inch high: “THIS DWELLING IS DESIGNATED PRIVATE PROPERTY. NO COMMERCIAL SOLICITATION IS PERMITTED PURSUANT TO SECTION 501.062, FLORIDA STATUTES.”Consumers can report violations related to commercial solicitation to local law enforcement; providing the salesperson’s name and the company name will assist in the investigation. For more information, visit our [website](#).
- **Fumigation Insurance:** Insurance requirements have increased for pest control businesses who perform fumigations. These licensees must now meet the requirements for minimum financial responsibility for bodily injury and property damage, consisting of (a) bodily injury coverage of \$1 million per person and \$2 million per occurrence; and property damage coverage of \$1 million per occurrence and \$2 million in the aggregate; or (b) combined single-limit coverage of \$2 million in the aggregate. For more information, visit [Pest Control Compliance Assistance - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services](#).



www.FloridaConsumerHelp.com
1-800-HELP-FLA(435-7352) • Mon-Fri, 8a.m. - 5p.m., EST • 1-800-FL-AYUDA(352-9832)

Approved in June 2025 but effective July 1, 2026, SB 606 revised [section 509.214, Florida Statutes](#). Restaurants in Florida which include an “operations charge” on their bill must divulge the amount or percentage of the fee and explain the purpose of the fee to the public on menus, websites, mobile apps and the customers’ tab. Think credit card surcharges, delivery fees, automatic tips and other charges added, excluding taxes. Violations of this law can be reported at [General Complaint Form – MyFloridaLicense.com](#).

Next is [SB 386](#), which allows consumers to report defective farm equipment to the manufacturer or its authorized service agent and requires the manufacturer or service agent to replace or repair the equipment at no cost to the consumer. Violations of this law can be enforced by civil suit or you can enter a complaint for mediation on our website at [File a Complaint - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services](#).

Lastly, there are updates to the Florida Pet Law, [Section 828.29, Florida Statutes](#), which provides standardized health requirements for dogs and cats sold within Florida. These updates require that financing terms be disclosed to consumers before purchasing a new pet and allow consumers to terminate any financing agreements without penalty if the animal is later determined to be unfit for purchase due to disease or illness. It also requires pet dealers to provide veterinary records and written notices informing buyers of their consumer rights under Florida Law. Report violations on our website at [File a Complaint - Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services](#).

These updates reflect Florida’s continued commitment to strengthening consumer protection across many industries. When consumers understand their rights, they are empowered to make better decisions and ensure businesses operate responsibly, helping build a safer and more transparent marketplace for everyone.



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>



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.

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

NOW HIRING

EARLY LEARNING TEACHERS & ADMINISTRATORS

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

Current Locations

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

Opening Soon
In-School Early Learning Centers

- Harns Marsh Middle, *Buchingham*
- 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.

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

Big Brothers Big Sisters OF THE SUN COAST

QR CODE



LWVLee Events

free public invited

Register Now

Saturday, September 12, 2026, 1:30-4pm

[flyer](#)

Candidate Forum Bonita Springs City Council, Districts 3 and 5 and

Proposed Ballot Measures for Florida and Lee County
Bonita Springs Public Library, 10560 Reynolds St., Bonita Springs, FL 34135 and virtual.

This program is not sponsored/endorsed by the Lee County Library System.
Information and Registration

<https://2026BonitaSpringsForum.eventbrite.com>

Saturday, September 19, 2026, 1-4pm:

[FLYER1](#)

Our Waters, Our Vote Southwest Florida Water Summit 2026
Collaboratory, 2031 Jackson St. Fort Myers 33901 and virtual.

Information and

Registration: <https://SWFWatersummit2026.eventbrite.com>

Saturday, October 3, 2026. 9am-12pm.

Ballot Measures for Florida and Lee County
and

Meet Candidates

Collaboratory, 2031 Jackson St. Fort Myers 33901 and virtual

Information and Registration: <https://2026BallotMeasures.eventbrite.com>

Community Events

public invited



Alligators can live up to 100 years which is why there is an increased chance that they will see you later





CollaboratorySM



Our History

Fifty-two years ago J. Tom Smoot, Jr. created what would become Collaboratory, and continues to serve with us to this day

As early as 1969, together with representatives of the three local banks with trust departments, Tom began the task of creating a community foundation for the Southwest Florida area. Because the IRS regulations affecting community foundations had not been developed, the Foundation would not come into formal existence until 1976.

Your Community Foundation

Because we are entrusted with our donors' philanthropic funds, our first priority as a community foundation is responsible stewardship of these gifts. We are diligent at managing donor funds, guiding investments with oversight from our board of directors and finance committee, adhering to strict investment policies with an eye on long-term growth, keeping donor intent, and granting with the greatest return on investment in our community.





September 2026 Mobile Medical Clinic Schedule

Florida residents 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.

Coming Soon! 2 locations in Arcadia	Tuesday, September 15th Community Cooperative 10:00 am to 1:00 pm 3429 Dr Martin Luther King Jr Blvd #1403 Fort Myers, FL 33916
Tuesday, September 1st Kairos SDA Church 9:00 am to 1:00 pm 701 Camellia Drive, North Fort Myers, FL 33903	Wednesday, September 16th Gladius Food Pantry 9:00 am to 1:00 pm 10511 Gladius Drive, Ft. Myers, FL 33908
Tuesday, September 8th & 22nd Cafe'of Life 9:00 am to 1:00 pm 26724 Nomad Dr, Bonita Springs, FL 34135	Thursday, September 17th Sunshine Health 9:00 am to 1:00 pm 4901 Palm Beach Blvd., #80, Fort Myers, FL 33905
Thursday, September 10th Pine Manor Community Center 9:00 am to 1:00 pm 5547 Tenth Ave, Fort Myers, FL 33907	PAMPERED BY PREMIER Mommy & Baby Wellness Day FREE COMMUNITY EVENT Saturday, September 16, 2026 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Health Screening Required Free Diapers & Wipes After Screening Pre-Registration Required 10676 Colonial Boulevard, Unit 20 Fort Myers, Florida 33913 Questions? 239-266-0674

Back to School
 If your child needs a school or sports physical before hitting the field, court, or track - we've got you covered. No insurance? No problem! Patients who qualify receive care at no cost.

Visit us at our walk-in clinic OR out in the community at one of our mobile clinic stops

Call us at 239-222-1829 to schedule your appointment today

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

**Premier Mobile Health Services screenings are supported by the Florida Department of Health through the Clinical Health Care Screening Grant Program and are provided at no cost to Florida residents who qualify under the 200% of the Poverty Guidelines. Through this program, we screen for cancer, diabetes, hypertension and heart disease. In addition, we screen for scoliosis in children ages 9-18.

PAMPERED BY PREMIER

Mommy & Baby Wellness Day

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

Saturday, September 19, 2026
9:00 AM - 12:00 PM

- Health Screening Required
- Free Diapers & Wipes After Screening
- Pre-Registration Required

**10676 Colonial Boulevard, Unit 20
 Fort Myers, Florida 33913**

Questions? 239-266-0674

Diapers and wipes available while supplies last.

LEE COUNTY NAACP 5110-B

JOINING WITH OUR NATIONAL NAACP AND OTHER CIVIL RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS

Commemorating the **63RD YEAR OF THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON**

MARCH ON WASHINGTON: DEFEND THE VOTE

PROTECT OUR VOTE Protecting voting rights against ongoing legislative and judicial rollbacks.	DEFEND OUR DIGNITY Countering attacks on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives.	DEMAND ECONOMIC JUSTICE Demanding fair wages, affordable housing, affordable groceries, and economic dignity for all families.
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WE MARCH. WE PROTEST. WE VOTE. WE WIN.

LOCAL MARCH & PROTEST
U.S. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE
 2110 First St., Fort Myers, FL 33901
FRIDAY, AUGUST 28, 2026
10:00 A.M.

OUR RIGHTS. OUR VOICES. OUR FUTURE.

Stand with us. TOGETHER, WE KEEP THE DREAM ALIVE.

FLORIDIANS FOR DEMOCRACY

RALLY OF HOPE

ONE DAY AFTER THE 63RD ANNIVERSARY OF THE 1963 MARCH ON WASHINGTON

"THE TIME IS ALWAYS RIGHT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT." — DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Floridians for Democracy and Mount Olive A.M.E. Church are hosting the **RALLY OF HOPE**. It is not a protest. Born from a cross-partisan coalition of neighbors, veterans, retirees, and faith communities, it is a "revival" of hope, solidarity, and shared civic responsibility. This gathering is open to all who believe that democracy must be actively defended.

WHEN: SATURDAY, 3 PM ET, AUGUST 29, 2026

The date is not chosen lightly. We will gather on the same moral ground that Dr. King and hundreds of thousands of Americans once claimed — not in nostalgia, but in continuation. The work they began is unfinished. It is up to us, now!

WHERE: MOUNT OLIVE A.M.E. CHURCH
2160 VERONICA S SHOEMAKER BLVD, FORT MYERS, FL 33916

DESIGNED TO:

- Unite individuals across races, faiths, generations, and political perspectives
- Equip attendees with practical steps to defend democratic participation
- Drive voter registration and civic engagement ahead of upcoming elections
- Inspire action rooted in purpose, not anger

HASHTAG: #RALLYOHOPE #HOPEINACTION #STRONGERTOGETHER



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

MORE places to receive FOOD...

LaBelle & Hendry County

The Salvation Army of LaBelle (Faith-Based) Address: 133 N. Bridge St., LaBelle, FL 33935 Phone: (863) 674-1441 Services: Food pantry assistance, emergency financial aid, and hosting site for mobile food distributions

. LaBelle United Way House (Secular) Address: 133 N. Bridge St., LaBelle, FL 33935 Phone: (239) 433-7560 or (863) 675-5220 Services: General social services, emergency food aid, and referral services for Hendry and Glades County residents.

Barron Park Mobile Pantry (Harry Chapin Food Bank) (Secular) Address: N. Bridge St. & Park Ave., LaBelle, FL 33935 Schedule: 2nd Tuesday of each month, 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM. Services: Drive-thru/walk-up mobile food distribution providing fresh produce, protein, and shelf-stable goods. Bring photo ID.

Alva & Nearby East Lee County

Alva United Methodist Church Food Pantry (Faith-Based) Address: 21440 Pearl St. / 21330 N. River Rd., Alva, FL 33920 Phone: (239) 728-2277 Schedule: 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month, 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Services: Emergency food packages for residents of the Alva area.

Fort Myers Shores Food Pantry (Secular/Community) Address: 14830 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33905 (Serves the corridor directly west of Alva) Phone: (239) 693-0341 Schedule: 2nd Tuesday of each month, 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM. Services: Emergency grocery assistance. Photo ID required.

Our Lady's Cupboard / St. Vincent de Paul (Faith-Based) Address: 13031 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33905 (Serves East Lee County/Alva area) Phone: (239) 694-3985 Schedule: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. Services: Choice food pantry providing non-perishables and fresh food options.

St. Martin de Porres Outreach Community (Faith-Based) Address: 4711 Palm Beach Blvd., Fort Myers, FL 33905 Phone: (239) 693-4711 Services: Food pantry distributions and hot meal programs serving eastern Lee County residents.

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

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

Some Alva & Fort Myers Shores Churches:

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

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

(239) 694-2012

2790 Joel Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

olgabaptistchurch@gmail.com

www.alvabaptist.com

239-728-2034

Grace Church, Ft Myers Shores

Rosa De Saron Assemblies of God

13235 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers FL

14036 Matanzas Drive, Ft Myers, Florida 33905

(239) 694-8777

www.egracechurch.com

239-694-2797

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

Victory Christian Center Assemblies of God

11431 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33905

14531 Old Olga Road,

(239) 694-5131

Fort Myers, FL 33905

Cielo's Abierto's Ministries

www.blcfm.org

239-694-3878

10721 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 297-6472

Olga Baptist Church

2364 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.olgabaptist.org

239-694-2012

info@olgabaptist.org

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

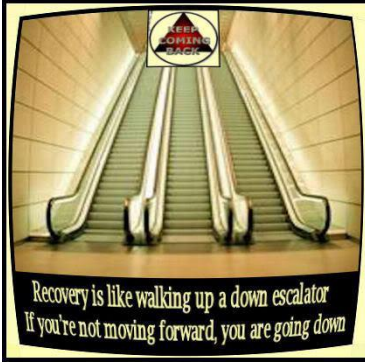
14036 Matanzas Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 694-2797

Olga Baptist

2364 S Olga Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905





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

-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

-Al 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

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



Caregiver Respite and Support 12:15-2pm every 4th Friday

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

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

Issue 91, September 2026, Circulation: Over 1,500 subscribers, 12,000 social media readers

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

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

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



A banner for "HOPE & Healing divorce recovery support groups". The background shows four people (two women and two men) sitting in a circle, engaged in conversation. Overlaid on the image is a green play button icon. Below the play button is a green box with the text "Find a DivorceCare support group". Underneath this box are two buttons: "In-Person" with a location pin icon and "Online" with a computer monitor icon. 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.leegov.com/publicsafety/emergencymanagement/plan
StormReady	www.weather.gov/stormready/



You can donate to a number of 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

Some of Forbes BEST 2025 CHARITIES TO SUPPORT:
Start by checking with your own church or social group.



American Red Cross

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



The Salvation Army

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



**Partners
In Health**

Partners In Health

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



EARTHJUSTICE
BECAUSE THE EARTH NEEDS A GOOD LAWYER

EarthJustice

<https://earthjustice.org/>



The Nature Conservancy

<https://www.nature.org/en-us/>



Venezuela Earthquake Relief

A powerful earthquake has struck Venezuela, causing widespread damage to homes, health facilities, and critical infrastructure while disrupting essential services for affected communities. As emergency responders assess the full extent of the damage, many families are facing urgent needs for

medical care, clean water, food, shelter, and other lifesaving assistance. In response, local and international nonprofits are mobilizing to deliver emergency relief, strengthen health services, and support long-term recovery efforts. This list highlights highly rated organizations providing critical assistance to people impacted by the Venezuela earthquake from emergency medical care and relief supplies to recovery funding and support for vulnerable families.

How can you help?

Charity Navigator has compiled a list of trusted nonprofits actively responding to the Venezuela earthquake. Your donation today can help provide emergency medical care, food, clean water, shelter, and long-term recovery support for affected communities. Give to one or several through the Giving Basket and help deliver critical aid when it's needed most.

https://www.charitynavigator.org/discover-charities/where-to-give/venezuela-earthquake-relief/#charity_list



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.**

