

# On the RIVER



## *Connecting ALVA Florida NEIGHBORS and NEIGHBORHOODS*

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

The deadline for receipt of any materials is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

Issues go out before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month, and may be edited.

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### FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S OTR:

- LOCAL Alva area news: Major highway expansion
- LOCAL history: Oldest house in Southwest Florida?
- LOCAL Community services: Captains for Clean Water
- LOCAL club and organization news: Alva Garden Club
- LOCAL recipe: Caloosahatchee Chicken Potpie, (NOT Chokoloskee Chicken!)
- LOCAL Sports: Watermelon Man strives for a great 2023!



**WE NEED YOUR COMMENTS!**

**LET US KNOW WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE IN *ON THE RIVER* BY  
EMAILING US AT [WWW.KENDEWALT@ONTHERIVER.ORG](mailto:WWW.KENDEWALT@ONTHERIVER.ORG)**

**WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO OFFER IT!**

[www.ONTHERIVER.ORG](http://www.ONTHERIVER.ORG) Archive of all OTR newsletters and lots more, all FREE including a link to <http://www.alvafl.org/newsletter.html> to see previous Alva INC newsletters archived since 2010

## ALVA INC, At the Alva Community Center.

ZOOM access will be available for those who are unable to attend.



**Info@AlvaFl.org WEBSITE [www.ALVAFL.org](http://www.ALVAFL.org)**

**NEXT MEETING: Every Second Tuesday, 7pm, Alva Community Center**



## Alva INC Oversight Committee reports on the MD80 motorcoach resort planned for Rte 80

Alva INC met on Tuesday January 10<sup>th</sup> and focused on the largest project in years to be planned in the area of the Alva Plan (Lee County development plan for the Alva Area – North and south of the river; Old Olga to the Hendry County line).

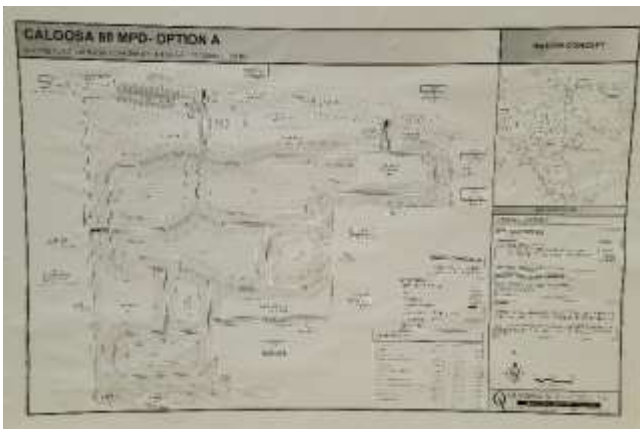
Roxanne Gause reported that there are 3 parcels, totaling 192 acres, owned by Stan Whitcomb on the south side of Rte 80 (Palm Beach Boulevard) From Bateman Road (starting at the Hickey Creek Mitigation Park east boundary and continuing east). One is zoned Urban, the other two rural. Mr. Whitcomb would like to get the rural property rezoned to Sub Outlying Suburban.

This would allow him to build an RV park that would have a total of 783 spaces, most for non-transient



(more than 6 months per year--high end) and the rest for transient RVs, (less than 6 months per ye

If the county does not give him the zoning changes, he could build only 619 RV units. He is also requesting a 30,000 sq. ft. Commercial Strip along Rte 80. If the current request is approved, he would only build 756 units instead of 783. When asked about potable water and sewer issues, Lee County has said they have capacity, at Mr. Whitcomb's expense, to provide public sewer and water that might allow other rte 80 businesses or residences to hookup at their expense, OR might demand those owners connect and close their wells and septic tanks.



Ms. Gause said that Alva Inc's approved Lee County Community Plan would have the retail built only in the 'village' area along Rte 80, near the Alva drawbridge. She shared that the 783 unit plan's estimated population is 2,020, that would increase Alva's population by 67% (Alva's population according to the 2020 US Census is 3,013).

Roxanne also mentioned that in the list of natural fauna species affected by this project the endangered Florida Panther, of which we have had numerous sightings and several road deaths, in recent years was left off the projects list.

Holly Schwartz, reporting for the committee, shared that even at this early stage of the approval process, Lee County's staff have issued two "insufficiency letters" in the project plan that Mr. Whitcomb will have to address.

Denise Eberle also reported that her research tells her that the property with the approved residential zoning was approved and never acted on by the owner 13 years ago, and is currently re-applied for. She also told those gathered that the resort, while originally promoted as an exclusive high end coach resort only, will actually allow all kinds of RVs in other sections of the plan.

Alexis Crespo of Waldrop Engineering, hired by Mr. Whitcomb for the project, shared that there will be no deed restricted sites in the resort, and that there would be a Homeowners Association. She also shared that the first public hearings on the plan will take place this summer and that she and Stan had come to Alva INC this early to get opinions and ideas for the project so they could work them in, where possible, to their planning. Alexis expects the final hearing, with shovels in the ground, by early 2024.

Ms. Crespo also shared that she will present the plan for the commercial part of the property at the February 14 Alva Inc meeting.

Questions from the floor of approximately 40 Alva residents included some by Richard Durling who lives west of Alva off North River Road and owner of Marvin Homes Development. Mr. Durling believes that Lee County will continue to permit new development and highway expansion in our northeast corner of Lee County. Just this week a judge allowed a 10,000-home development that was heavily opposed to begin construction in the southeast section of the county.

Richard suggested we work as much with the developers as we can to plan site plantings and buffers, even architectural plans, if possible. However, he told the room that simply avoiding growth will be a very difficult task.

On that note Alexis Crespo said she would get the Land Development Code that North Olga is working with developers on to Alva INC so that they may possibly ask the county to duplicate the rules for Alva.

The recent article in the Fort Myers News Press shown to the right was mentioned. A new motorcoach resort is being completed now just 5 or so miles east of the Alva drawbridge over the Hendry County line on the south side of Rte 80. Can another resort here be a viable business?



# FDOT plans new Rte 31 bridge, and upgraded road accesses from all directions.

Questions and comments are requested from public in two ways



State Road (SR) 31 from SR 80 (Palm Beach Boulevard) to SR 78 (Bayshore Road) Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study 441942-1

Project Details	
<b>Work Type</b>	Widening
<b>Phase</b>	Study
<b>Limits</b>	SR 31 from SR 80 (Palm Beach Boulevard) to SR 78 (Bayshore Road)
<b>Length</b>	1.4 miles
<b>City</b>	Fort Myers
<b>County</b>	Lee
<b>Road</b>	SR 31 SR 78 SR 80
<b>Study Cost</b>	\$2,000,000



Contact Information	
<b>PD&amp;E Project Manager</b>	Patrick Bateman, PE
	863-519-2792

**I believe the Jan 31 event ends at 7pm.**

-KD

## Events

### State Road 31 from State Road 80 to State Road 78 PD&E Study In-Person Alternatives Public Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, January 31st, 2023

**Start Time:** 5:00 pm

**End Time:** 7:00 am

Attend the SR 31 Alternatives Public meeting in-person on **Tuesday, January 31, 2023**, at The Field House at Babcock Ranch, 43261 Cypress Parkway, Babcock Ranch, FL 33982. Visit the meeting any time between 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. to view the project video and displays, speak with project team members and submit comments or questions.

### State Road 31 from State Road 80 to State Road 78 PD&E Study Virtual Alternatives Public Meeting

**Date:** Tuesday, February 7th, 2023

**Start Time:** 6:00 pm

**End Time:** 7:00 pm

Attend virtually on **Tuesday, February 7, 2023** starting at 6 p.m. This event will include a viewing of the project video and a live question-and-answer component with the project team. Meeting materials will be posted to the project webpage [www.swflroads.com/project/441942-1](http://www.swflroads.com/project/441942-1) by January 23, 2023. Please review the materials before attending the virtual event.

**Register in advance** by visiting: [bit.ly/SR31-SR80-SR78](http://bit.ly/SR31-SR80-SR78) or on the project webpage. Once registered, attendees will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting online. Please note, Internet Explorer cannot be used to register or attend this event.

What we know now is that over 5,000 homes are currently being proposed or have been approved for construction along all of these bridge feeder roads, with a large amount of additional retail space also being proposed. Beyond traffic access, public water and sewer must also be provided. None of the new homes can have wells or septic systems.

# North Olga Residents Group meets to learn about Expansion of North River Road Development



Alexis Crespo led the discussion of changes to the Neal Development Corporation changes to their planned North River Road (Rte 78) development near the unincorporated village of North Olga, about 6 miles west of Alva.

Since originally planned the site has grown to 900 acres with 1000 to 1100 mostly single family homes and some villas (duplex, side by side homes at about 1200 SF). Larger homes are hoped to sell between \$400k and \$1m.

With purchase of additional land, the project is currently called the Cary/Duke/Povia development. After ongoing

meetings like this one here and with the Alva INC residents' group Neal will seek zoning changes to begin the construction process which they now hope to start by the beginning on 2024.

Ms. Crespo shared that the major changes the new land acquisition creates beyond room for additional homes includes:

- Three access roads which do not create additional traffic concerns (pending FDOT and Lee County Road planning). No access road to Duke Highway along the river, but a hope that hydrants on Duke Highway could be installed from this projects water source.



- Two instead of one amenity center for residents of the gated, non-age restricted, community.
- Attractive naturally planted flood berms wherever needed around the perimeter.



- 50 acres of the site will be original wetland preservation and 300 acres of former pasture will be planted preserve with only indigenous trees and shrubs, not to be developed in the future.

Attending residents repeated their concerns about traffic from this development when completed with about 3000 new residents. Also mentioned was the concern since Hurricane Ian for flooding caused not just by the river rise but also over flow from the development onto Duke Highway homes.

In Ian water was known to exit downhill from Babcock Farm communities in Charlotte County to add to the Caloosahatchee rise.

Also shared at the North Olga Meeting:

## OWL CREEK DEVELOPMENT CANCELLED



-Alexis Crespo stated that the OWL CREEK development by DR Horton just west of the Cary/Duke/Povia site has been CANCELLED by DR Horton and that land, while now re-zoned is again for sale by the original owner. No reason for the cancellation was given.

-John, a Babcock Ranch representative, shared that 900 home sales were closed by the community developers in 2022 and they expect a rise above that to occur in 2023.

-John also strongly invites all interested residents to attend the January 31 Florida Department of Transportation open house showcasing FDOTs plans for Rte 31 from the river drawbridge to Babcock Ranch, as well as acceptance of questions for that and Bayshore Road, North River Road and the bridge itself. Come to the Babcock Ranch Field House 5 to 7pm for the presentation and Q/A.

-Chief Underwood of the Bayshore Fire Department updated all on the ongoing construction plans for the Rte 31 fire station, EMS and helipad south of the Charlotte County line on Rte 31.

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# Captains for Clean Water named *Gulfshore Life's* Men of the Year

(TY Wink News, Elizabeth Biro & Joey Pellegrino)



A pair of Southwest Florida boat captains came together to create the nonprofit Captains for Clean Water and educate people about the environment.

Capt. Chris Wittman and Capt. Daniel Andrews of Captains for Clean Water were selected as Men of the Year by Gulfshore Life. (CREDIT: WINK News)

“The vast, vast majority of our supporters are not captains; half of our supporters don’t even fish,” said Capt. Daniel Andrews. “But we have the business community that typically doesn’t want to talk about environmental issues, because they don’t want to impact their tourism. They’re our biggest supporters now.”

“Senate Bill 2508 is a good example of that power, of that movement and the engagement of the people,” said Capt. Chris Wittman. (Note, SB2508 was recently vetoed by Governor DeSantis).

With only a few hours’ notice, troops rallied from around the state to oppose the bill they feared would undo Everglades restoration...

“I personally canceled thousands of dollars’ worth of charters to be here,” Wittman said. “I would say in the room behind me, we have over \$40,000 worth of income that was canceled to be here today.”

“We had about 50,000 people reach out to their elected officials during that time... that’s more captains than we have in the state times five,” Andrews said.

How did two men born and raised in Southwest Florida go from fishing guides to stewards of environmental activism, liaisons of the waterways and Gulfshore Life’s men of the year? Like many, their adult passions started as childhood interests.

“Both of us, as kids, didn’t really care a whole lot about anything else besides being outdoors and fishing, and hunting and hiking, and whatever we could do just not have to be inside,” Andrews said.

“Even if our kids don’t have any interest in fishing or being outdoors, you at least want them to have the opportunity to make that choice themselves, not watch these places [be] destroyed.”

As fishermen and fishing guides, Andrews and Wittman both had front-row seats to the blue-green algae water crisis in 2016.

“We felt the impact of, you know, discharges’ poor management and the symptoms that come along with that,” Wittman said.

In February of 2016, Andrews, Wittman and four other captains penned a petition to the mayor of Fort Myers, and Captains for Clean Water was born.

“The next morning, we wake up, and there’s like 300 people that were like, you know, ‘I’m a local guide, add me to the list,’” Wittman said.

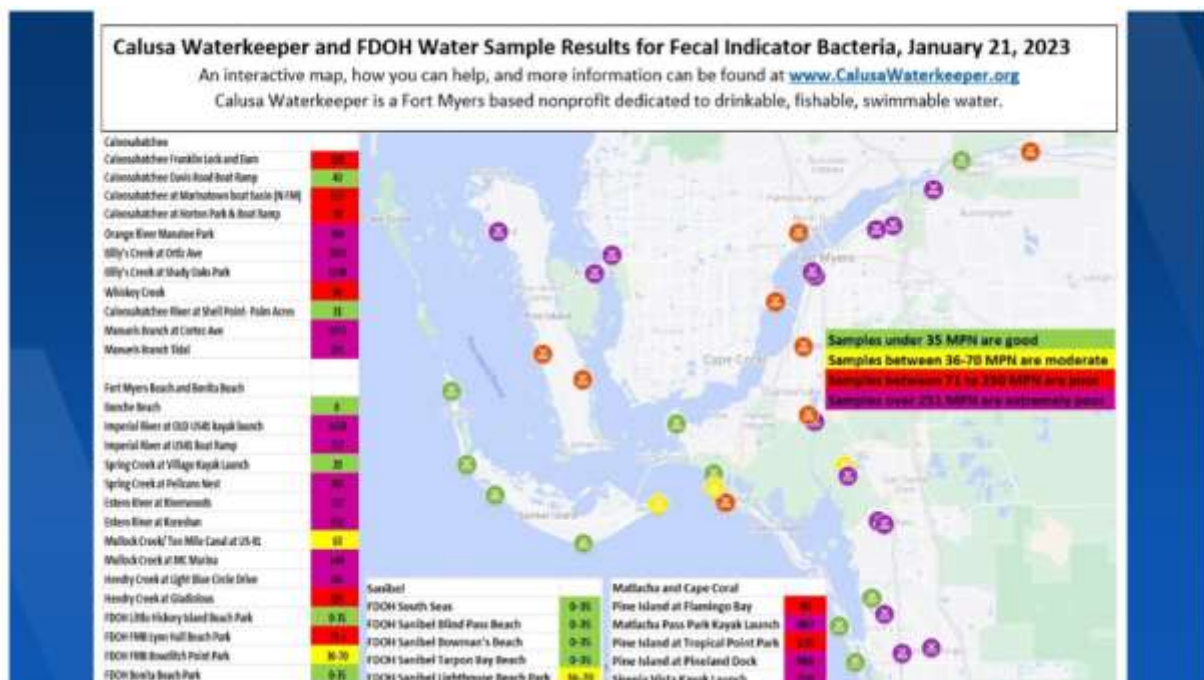
“If people understood the science behind it, and the policy solutions to make it happen, then you actually have a chance at fighting the fight and saving the place,” Andrews said.

Since then, their goals, reach and impact have only grown.

“I think, to see the rise of people holding water quality as the highest standard of what is important to our community, even times outside of crisis, is the biggest measure of the success of organization,” Wittman said.

What do the next six years look like? Continuing the Everglades Restoration Project.

“It’s about maintaining that momentum or even growing that momentum, and we want to see Everglades restoration completed, all 68 projects; we want to see our water specs, and at that point, that’s when we’ll look to what is the next fight.”





# Ross Chastain enters the season as NASCAR's top free agent for 2024

(TY SPORTSNAUT - Austin Konenski)



Ross Chastain has stayed strong through an up-and-down NASCAR career and everything paid off when he signed on to drive the No. 1 car for Trackhouse Racing during the 2022 season and beyond.

Chastain ended the year with two wins, 15 top-5 finishes, 21 top-10 finishes, and a 13.3 average finishing position. While the driver of the No. 1 car came up just short of the championship behind Joey Logano, it was a very successful season.

Trackhouse Racing now goes into the 2023 season with Chastain and Daniel Suarez looking to improve by one spot. However, there is some work to do if the organization wants to continue the partnership moving forward.

It is never too early to look at who will be in the final year of their contracts. This is especially true as Kevin Harvick has announced he will retire at the conclusion of the 2023 season.

As we look at who will become available, one name sticks out among the rest. According to FOX Sports' Bob Pockrass, Chastain is among the drivers who will be free to sign with any team for the 2024 season.

The list includes Chastain, Denny Hamlin, Chase Briscoe, Alex Bowman, Daniel Suarez, Martin Truex Jr., Aric Almirola, Michael McDowell, Justin Haley, Harrison Burton, Todd Gilliland, Ty Dillon, Corey LaJoie, Noah Gragson, and Ryan Preece.

Out of these names, Chastain and Hamlin will end up being the big-ticket options. The driver of the No. 1 car will likely continue with Trackhouse Racing as it remains a perfect fit but nothing can ever be ruled out during the NASCAR silly season process.

Hamlin's situation could be slightly different. The driver of the No. 11 car will be entering the final year of his contract but most importantly, FedEx's contract with Joe Gibbs Racing also expires.

Former Joe Gibbs Racing driver Kyle Busch saw Mars leave the sport and that is why he will drive the No. 8 car for Richard Childress Racing moving forward. This is a different situation but one that requires monitoring.

Among the others, Truex will likely retire or stay with Joe Gibbs Racing at this point. The other four major names (Bowman/Briscoe/Suarez/Almirola) seem likely to stay barring any retirements or unexpected moves.



# RIVER HALL

## **RAIDers, Residents Against Increased Density** **fear they have lost to BIG DEVELOPMENT**

Two years ago, over 100 residents and friends of the Greenpointe Development gated communities collectively named RIVER HALL on Rte 80, Palm Beach Boulevard, Alva, met at the Alva Community Center to take up once again their fight to keep their development owner from expanding the density restrictions of River Hall to allow as many as 400+ new residents, in smaller footprint homes and possibly multi-story condos from building.

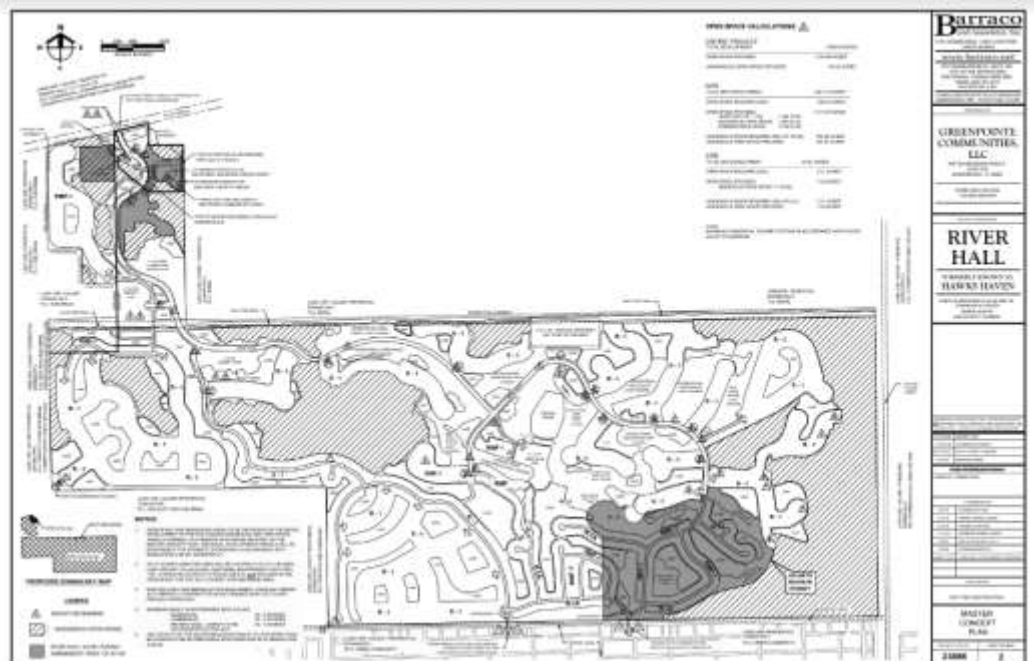
This fight has been going on, and off, for about 15 years. On January 18<sup>th</sup> the fight may have given up the ghost.

Robert Glandorf, current leader of the group called “RAIDers, Residents Against Increased Density” shared through an email that only about a dozen residents showed up at the first of two LEE COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, ZONING and COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT HEARINGS planned about this project. He had hoped for dozens, not one dozen, concerned citizens.

While the county has not made a final decision as of this writing, Mr. Glandorf has resigned from his leadership position, quoting Mike Greenwell, the newly elected commissioner for the Alva Area District, “As long as the applicant is within the governing laws and ordinances of the county, they are going to get what they want.” Mr. Glandorf added, “The only chance we had as a community was to stand together in unison against this density increase. That didn’t happen.”

The second and final meeting date with the Lee County Commissioners has not yet been announced, however

acceptance of Greenpointe’s request to increase density and begin building is expected, as is state approval from Tallahassee.





## **Study suggests US freshwater fish highly contaminated with ‘forever chemicals’**

### **Nationwide report affirms what has been known in Southwest Florida waters for years**

(TY ‘The Hill’-SHARON UDASIN)

Eating just one serving of freshwater fish each year could have the same effect as drinking water heavily polluted with “forever chemicals” for an entire month, a new study finds.

The equivalent monthlong amount of water would be contaminated at levels 2,400 times greater than what’s recommended by the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) drinking water health advisories, according to the study, published Tuesday in Environmental Research.

The research added that locally caught freshwater fish are far more polluted than commercial catches with per- and polyfluorinated substances (PFAS) — so-called forever chemicals that are notorious for their persistence in the body and the environment.

PFAS are key ingredients in jet fuel firefighting foam, industrial discharge and many household products, including certain types of food packaging. For decades, they have leached into drinking water supplies while also contaminating irrigated crops and fish that inhabit local waterways.

Fish consumption has long been identified as a route of exposure to PFAS, according to the study. Researchers first identified such contamination in catfish that inhabited the Tennessee River in 1979.

“Food has always been kind of the hypothesis of how most people are exposed to PFAS compounds,” corresponding author David Andrews, a senior scientist at the Environmental Working Group, told The Hill.

But Tuesday’s study is the first analysis to connect U.S. fish consumption to blood levels of PFAS, while also comparing PFAS levels in freshwater fish with those in commercial seafood samples, the authors explained.

To draw their conclusions, the researchers evaluated the presence of different types of PFAS in 501 fish fillet samples, collected across the U.S. from 2013 to 2015.

These samples were acquired through two EPA programs: the 2013-2014 National Rivers and Streams Assessment and the 2015 Great Lakes Human Health Fish Fillet Tissue Study.

The median level of total targeted PFAS in fish from rivers and streams was 9,500 nanograms per kilogram, while the median in the Great Lakes was 11,800 nanograms per kilogram, according to the study. These levels indicate that the consumption of such fish “is potentially a significant source of exposure” to PFAS, the authors determined.

While the samples included many types of forever chemicals — of which there are thousands — the biggest contributor to total PFAS levels was the compound known as PFOS, responsible for about 74 percent of the total, the researchers found.

Although PFOS has largely been phased out of manufacturing, it used to be the main ingredient in fabric protector Scotchgard, and it lingers on in the environment.



PFOS is so potent that ingesting just one serving of freshwater fish would be equivalent to drinking a month's worth of water contaminated with PFOS at levels of 48 parts per trillion, according to the study.

"The extent that PFAS has contaminated fish is staggering," first author Nadia Barbo, a graduate student at Duke University, said in a statement. "There should be a single health protective fish consumption advisory for freshwater fish across the country."

Although scientists might not know precisely how people are being exposed to PFAS, the study "clearly indicates that for people who consume freshwater fish even very infrequently, it is likely a significant source of their exposure," Andrews said.

Of the 349 samples analyzed in the National Rivers and Streams Assessment, only one sample contained no detectable PFAS, the authors determined.

All 152 fish samples tested in the Great Lakes study had detectable PFAS — and had "overall higher levels of PFOS" in comparison to those in the national assessment.

"PFAS contamination may be of particular concern for the Great Lakes ecosystem and the health of people who depend on fishing on the Great Lakes for sustenance and cultural practices," the authors noted.

Contamination in the Great Lakes, as well as in other lakes and ponds, may be comparatively greater than the PFAS pollution in rivers and streams because these basins don't cycle as frequently, according to Andrews.

"The water doesn't get flushed out as quickly," he said.

Median levels of total detected PFAS in freshwater fish were 278 times higher than those in commercially relevant fish tested from 2019 to 2022.

"It's incredible how different they are," Andrews said.

The data on retail fish came from the Food and Drug Administration's Total Diet Study datasets from 2019 to 2021, as well as a specific sampling of seafood conducted in 2022.

Some commercially caught fish may be less contaminated because they are grown in controlled aquaculture environments, Andrews explained. Meanwhile, large-scale ocean fishing often occurs farther offshore, where PFAS pollution would be more diluted, he added.



Andrews acknowledged, however, that the data on commercially caught fish is much more recent than the freshwater contamination figures.

He also recognized that with the industrial phaseout of PFOS production, the pollution “levels in rivers and streams do seem to be decreasing, which is important.”

“At the same time, the levels are still so high that any fish consumption likely impacts serum levels,” Andrews said.

“But they are moving in the right direction, which I think is

some good news, at least in terms of the rivers and streams.”

While this study did not evaluate whether PFAS uptake is worse in some fish versus others, Andrews pointed to recent tests demonstrating that even small fish with short lifespans can amass dangerous quantities of these compounds.

Last week, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services updated its “Eat Safe Fish” guidelines to limit the amount of rainbow smelt that should be consumed — based on elevated levels of PFOS.

Rainbow smelt — small, silvery fish with short life cycles — are “low on the food web and don’t generally bioaccumulate chemicals,” Michigan Live reported.

The Hill has reached out for comment on the study from the Michigan PFAS Action Response Team, a state Department of Health and Human Services group working on the Great Lakes contamination issue and that oversees the Eat Safe Fish program.

In comparison to commercially caught fish, local freshwater fish consumption can be difficult to quantify, as “there is significant variability with respect to dietary fish intake,” the study authors acknowledged.

But the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that the general population eats about 18 grams per day of fish, with greater consumption occurring among men and adults ages 31 to 50, according to the study.

High fish consumption — eating one or more fish meal per week — is typical among anglers, individuals living along coasts or lakes, communities for which fishing is culturally important and immigrants who hail from countries where fish is a dietary staple, the authors noted.

The researchers therefore characterized exposure to PFAS in freshwater fish as “a textbook case of environmental injustice” in which certain communities are “inordinately harmed.”

Contamination of this food source particularly “threatens those who cannot afford to purchase commercial seafood,” the authors stressed in a statement accompanying the study.

Andrews emphasized the need for both guidance for anglers and action on “this environmental justice issue” from a federal level.

Attention to this subject, he added, must address “this contamination of a source of protein for many communities who rely on it both for subsistence as well as for cultural reasons.”

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A note from Ken DeWalt-

We have known for a long time that our fresh waters in Southwest Florida were not very fresh, and the normal dark color of the tannin infused liquid is not what anyone is worried about.



John Cassani, local, now retired Calusa Waterkeeper biologist, has said for years that an adult should eat no more than one fish a month from the fresh and briny waters of Southwest Florida’s waters and our Caloosahatchee. Children and pregnant mothers are at much greater risk.

Since Hurricane IAN, with huge amounts of metals, chemicals and fecal bacterial matter flushed into the Gulf of Mexico he recommends catch and release for all fish being caught in estuaries and thorough testing can be done by state and county officials.

Also, know where the fish and seafood come from that you consume in restaurants or purchase in stores. It could save your or your children’s lives.

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## Chicken Breast Dinner



Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>,

4-7 pm

Delicious boneless chicken breast, parsley new potatoes, coleslaw, green beans, bun, drink, and delicious dessert

\$10.00 adult \$5.00 child

Eat in or take out

Bethlehem Lutheran Church  
14531 Old Olga RD S.E.  
Fort Myers, FL 33905  
(239) 694-3878



# OUR ROADS THEY ARE A-CHANGING

(TY Steve Brodtkin)

If you wish to learn how our major north south highway may be changed in the not-so-distant future you may sign up to receive news via email, participate in the live meeting described below

(Instead of using the CLICK TO REGISTER button below click here to reach an active link <https://www.swflinterstates.com/south-corridor-vpm/> )

ALSO, our Buckingham and Fort Myers Shores readers want to know what is happening with the long-planned Sunshine Boulevard northern extension is being discussed by FDOT and Lee County for inclusion in a 2035 or beyond budget.

Currently Sunshine extends from Alico to the south, across Lee Boulevard and ends at Harns Marsh.

No discussion reported so far by anyone on the pre-covid Southwest Tollway which may have connected the Orlando area to as far south as Alligator Alley. Its budget was approved by Tallahassee when we were told covid costs killed the project by the end of 2020.

**75 CONNECT**  
SOUTHWEST  
FDOT DISTRICT ONE INTERSTATE PROJECT™

**VIRTUAL PUBLIC OUTREACH MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 13-27 2023**

During this period, attendees will be led through a virtual tour with multiple interactive stations containing video and other static displays all designed to update the public on the current status of the Master Plan.

**LIVE!** **I-75 SOUTH CORRIDOR QUESTION AND ANSWER EVENT** **LIVE!**

**Q&A** **15** **WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY, 2023** **BEGINS AT 6:00 P.M.** **CLICK TO REGISTER** **Q&A**

Register now to attend the LIVE Q&A Event and project team members will be available to answer as many of your submitted questions as possible.

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

Caloosa Humane Center 1200 Pratt Blvd, LaBelle

**OUR MISSION**

**The Mission of Caloosa Humane Society is to serve, shelter, and protect the homeless pets in our care. We are dedicated to finding permanent and loving adoptive homes for our companion animals in need. Our no-kill facility provides low cost spay/neuter services to the community with the goal of reducing the extreme overpopulation of unwanted pets.**

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**South Florida Wildlands Association**

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

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

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**Lee County Sheriff's Office**

Officer Beth Schell led a discussion at Imperial Bonita Estates this month on

**PERSONAL HOME SECURITY, Here are some of the key points she made:**

- Lock cars, houses; do not leave keys in golf carts.
- Have a reliable house watcher for your home when you are away.
- Lock a golf cart wheel or block it when you are gone.
- Don't leave valuables like purses, tablets, phones, guns in your car.
- Double lock doors and windows, especially sliding doors.
- Plant thorny plants under windows thieves could use.
- Use motion sensor lights near entrances.
- ALWAYS call the police, 911, when you suspect foul play. No one will be too busy to act.
- Lee Sheriff's ofc offers FREE active shooter training for all groups, especially church security persons.



# BARRON LIBRARY

at the LaBelle Caloosahatchee Dock Park



*The Alva Chapter USS Hannah,  
Daughters of the  
American  
Revolution*



USS Hannah Chapter, Alva, Florida, <https://usshannahnsdar.org/>

*NSDAR is not a part of, or endorsed by, the Department of Defense*



## **FORT MYERS EAST ROTARY CLUB**

We meet every Wednesday at 7:30 AM at the Cracker Barrel at I-75 (Exit 141) and Palm Beach Boulevard. Contact Ellen Erickson at 239-218-4789 to learn how you can be a part of this long-standing service and fellowship club.



**IMAGINE  
ROTARY**





**The Alva Library  
Museum**  
**21420 Pearl St, Alva, FL  
33920**



Public Library, Alva

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

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

THE LIBRARY IS OPEN FOR FREE TOURS BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

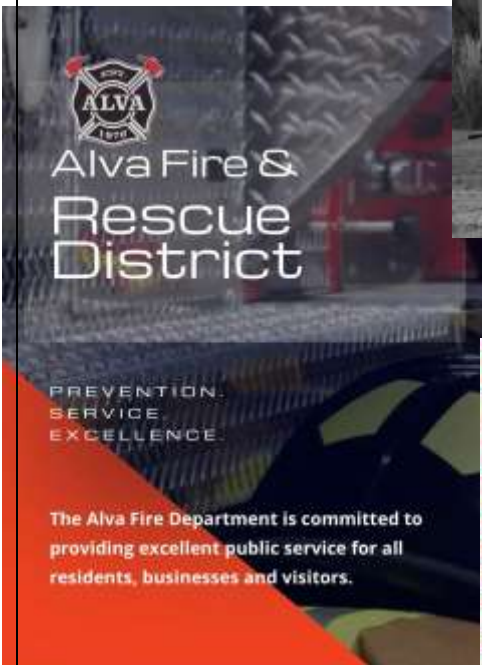
**For information on renting or touring please contact Linda Bush from the Alva library-museum Board.**

The phone number is posted on the front door of the library building.

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



2660 Styles Road,  
Alva, Florida 33920  
(239) 728-2223



- \*Donate***
- \*Volunteer***
- \*Serve***



# The ALVA GARDEN CLUB

Each month we have special speakers presenting interesting and relevant information.

We also plan field trips that enhance our knowledge and inspire good garden practices.

Membership in the Alva Garden Club is still only \$10 per person.

We meet in the Alva United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 1 pm.

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

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## **Alva Garden Club gears up for March 11 Strawberry Festival and Plant Sale**

The Alva Garden Club is in full gear preparing for its annual Strawberry Festival and Plant Sale. The event will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on March 11, 2023, at the Alva Methodist Church, 21441 Pearl St., Alva.

The event features bargain-priced plants of all varieties, scrumptious strawberry shortcake, a bake sale, a book sale and assorted vendors.



The Garden Club enjoyed a **morning cruise along the Caloosahatchee River** in January with an ecological narration by John Cassani, just retired from Calusa Waterkeepers. The cruise was aboard the Riverboat Queen II. The club's February field trip will be a **tour of the Peace River Sculpture and Botanical Gardens in Punta Gorda**.

Applications for the Alva Garden Club High **School Senior Scholarship** are due Feb. 14. Two \$1,000 scholarships are available to selected graduating seniors who will be studying horticulture, agriculture, the environment and other related fields. Applications are available at Riverside High School.

Over the Christmas school break, the club completed its project to create a **garden in the courtyard at The Alva School**. The garden honors teacher Charlotte Lippincott who has taught at the school for 50 years.



FLORIDA POWER & LIGHT PRESENTS:

THE 57TH ANNUAL

# SWAMP CABBAGE FESTIVAL WILD ABOUT HENDRY COUNTY



## FAMILY FUN ALL WEEKEND!

FEBRUARY 25TH & 26TH, 2023

PARADE  
CAR SHOW  
RODEO  
KIDS AREA

ARMADILLO RACES  
5K RUN  
CLOGGERS  
FOOD

LIVE MUSIC  
COMMUNITY STAGE  
BASS TOURNAMENT  
& MUCH MORE!

**Barron Park**  
**LaBelle, Florida**

PERFORMANCES BY:

UNFORGIVEN BAND

CHARLIE PACE BAND

THE SHERIFF'S POSSE

THE BOURBON BROTHERS

MATRASSA LYNN

SHANNON REED

THE WALKER EXPERIENCE

AND

FEATURING:



**Eat A Tree**  
Last Full Weekend of February  
LaBelle, Florida

Sponsored  
in part by:



# SCORE Southwest Florida

**3650 Colonial Blvd, Fort Myers, FL 33966, (239) 931-9807,  
[swflscore@gmail.com](mailto:swflscore@gmail.com)**

If you are dreaming of starting your own business, or needing to grow your current business, the local 30 plus SCORE volunteers and personal certified mentors are waiting for your call or email. And remember, our services are completely FREE. We volunteer to serve so YOU can succeed.

SCORE is a fully independent private 501-3C non-profit with accountability to and some funding from the SBA

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

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

#### Life-Long Learning Made Easy

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

#### Free Resources

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

Contact (239) 931-9807, [swflscore@gmail.com](mailto:swflscore@gmail.com) for more information



## JOB-LINK



Florida Job Link connects talent and opportunity, enabling on-the-spot HIRING! UPCOMING EVENTS BELOW! WE KEEP FLORIDA WORKING! The Best and Brightest Candidates connect with Top Florida Employers face-to-face via our Hiring Events in cities throughout Florida! Florida Job Link is voted #1 Job Fair experience in the state of Florida by attendees!

<https://www.indeed.com/q-Goodwill-I-Lee-County,-FL-jobs.html>



# Charleston Park Neighborhood Association

2541 Charleston Park Drive, Alva, FL 33920. 239-728-8895  
[Charlestonpark1926@gmail.com](mailto:Charlestonpark1926@gmail.com)

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



## The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail

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

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



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

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

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

# The Firehouse Community Theatre, Inc. Announces Their 30th Season!

**241 N Bridge St, Labelle, FL 33935 (863) 675-3066**

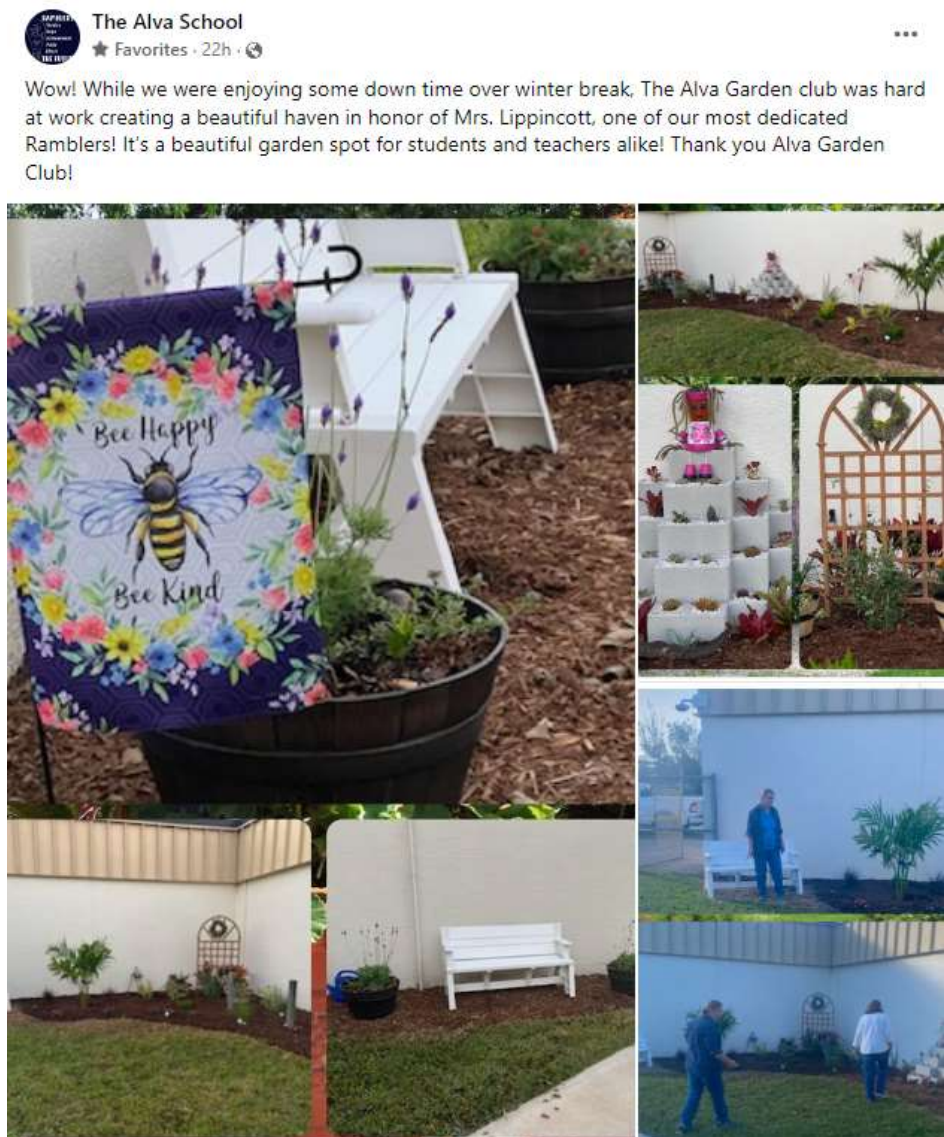
The 30th Season includes the following shows:

"Same **Time** Next Year" (Comedy) February 10, 11, 12 & 17, 18, 19

"Four Old Broads" (Comedy) March 10, 11, 12 & 17, 18, 19

"Divorce Southern Style" (Comedy) April 21, 22, 23 & 28, 29, 30

**A wonderful  
post from the  
ALVA SCHOOL  
Facebook  
Page AND the  
ALVA  
GARDEN CLUB**



# *A bit of ALVA History*

(TY Joanne Iwinski Miller)

## ALVA, THIS OLD HOUSE

If you were to ask me what is the oldest house in Lee County, I would say it is the old English Homestead House that is still standing today. Jim English took me there one time and showed it to me. It was built in 1878 even though LeePa has it being on the tax roll starting in 1900. Compare the 2 photos. (Alva)

Margaret English aka Grandma English and 4 of her children on the back steps of the house they built in 1878 on English Lane in Alva. Constructed of knot pine logs (heart pine). It will last as long as any new owners allow it to!

Joanne Iwinski Miller (2021)







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



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



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

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



### Six Mile Cypress Slough, Lee County Park

7751 Penzance Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33966

A mile of wonder 30 minutes away from Alva.



### Manatee Park

10901 Palm Beach Blvd,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

239 690 5030



### Olga Community Park

2325 S Olga Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 533-7275



## Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park

17980 Palm Beach Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

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



### ALVA BOAT RAMP PARK

21580 Pearl St,

Alva, FL 33920



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

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



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

### W.P Franklin Lock & Dam CAMPGROUND

Camp by reservation only

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

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



### Alva Community Center PARK

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

Shady lawns & baseball field



### Telegraph Creek: Unspoiled kayak trail

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





# Caloosahatchee Regional Park

19130 North River Road, Alva, FL 33920 (239) 694-0398

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

Shelter rentals, primitive tent camping, Horse and bike trails.



## NORTH FORT MYERS Recreation Park

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

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

### Veterans Park Recreation Center

55 Homestead Road South, Lehigh Acres, FL 33936



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

<https://babcockranchecotours.com/>



# Alva Angel's



### Giving back to the families of our community

Are you cleaning out your house and planning to donate the items you no longer want? Please consider donating those items to Alva Angel's. We can pick up small and large items and we will gift those items to people in need or sell the items to raise money for the upcoming holiday season to purchase wish list items.

Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/AlvaAngelsOrganization>



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

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

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



*Bob Janes Preserve*



*Daniel's Preserve at Spanish Creek*



*Carter's Lane*



*Buckingham Trails Preserve*



*Olga Shores Preserve*



*Oak hammock*



*Alva Scrub Preserve*



*Telegraph Creek Preserve*



*Frank Mann Preserve*



**SWFL CRIME STOPPERS**

**SAY IT HERE!**  
**WHY?**  
We guarantee anonymity!  
We pay cash rewards.

**HOTLINE: 1-800-780-TIPS**  
**CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT A TIP**

DOWNLOAD OUR FREE TIPS MANUAL ANY TIME!

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.**



*Southwest Florida Cooking by*

*MAGGIE McMann*

*of Oak Park, Alva*

Contact Maggie to find out more at: [Maggi1rn@att.net](mailto:Maggi1rn@att.net)



## Caloosahatchee Chicken Pot Pie

### PIE CRUST

*3 c King Arthur all-purpose flour*

*1 tsp salt*

*3/4 c lard (cold and diced into pieces)*

*1/4 c butter (cold and diced)*

*1/2 c iced cold water*

Sift flour and salt together. In a food processor, put flour mixture in with butter and shortening. Pulse 8 -10 times. Add 1/4 c iced water. Pulse 8-10 times. Add rest of water and pulse until forms a ball. Remove onto floured board and cut in half, wrap each ball in plastic wrap and refrigerate 30 minutes.

Unwrap one ball and roll out on a floured board to desired shape. Repeat with second dough ball.

For the pot pie, I put a bottom crust rolled out on a buttered/floured glass baking dish and then add the filling. Then top with other ball rolled out and vent with a sharp knife the and decorate with trimmings of pie crust.

### POT PIE

*2 diced or shredded cooked chicken breasts*

*1 small bag of frozen mixed vegetables*

*2 med potatoes cut into bite sized cubes-boiled in water and drained*

*3 stalks celery chopped small*

*1 small onion chopped*

*2 tsp butter*

*1 can Cream of Chicken Soup*

*1 can Cream of Celery Soup (tonight I used left-over chicken gravy instead of soup)*

*2 Tbsp poultry seasoning*

*1 tsp salt*

*1 tsp pepper*

Mix all together and pour into pie crust. I used a 9x13 sized pan. Bake 35 to 40 minutes at 350 or until top is nicely browne





## Become a Certified Calusa Waterkeeper Ranger!

<https://calusawaterkeeper.org/>

All of us in Southwest Florida have been impacted to some degree by Hurricane Ian. The catastrophic damage left in its wake after making landfall on September 28 has been life changing. The disastrous effects on our families, our livelihoods and our community are far reaching and will be felt for weeks and months to come.

We at Calusa Waterkeeper will continue to work to make certain our water is safe and to keep you informed during these difficult times. Our hearts go out to everyone impacted by this devastating event and on behalf of the Calusa Waterkeeper Board of Directors and staff, we wish you well. Remember, we are all in this together. Stay strong.



### Major William M. Footman Sons of Confederate Veterans

*Camp 1950, Fort Myers, FL*



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

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

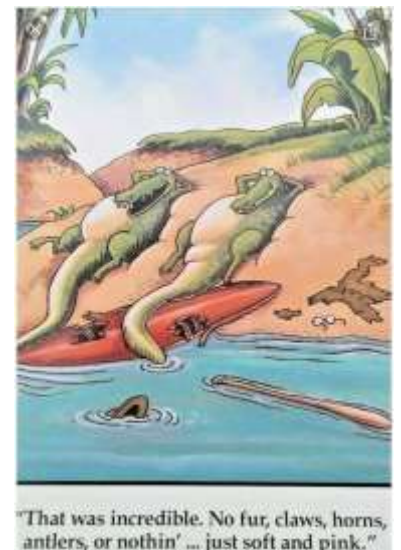
<https://www.camp1950.flscv.org/>



**Do you know how to tell the difference between a crocodile and an alligator?**



**One you'll see in a while and the other one you'll see later.**



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

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



Lee/Hendry County  
Office  
  
8280 College  
Parkway, Suite 201  
Fort Myers, FL 33919  
  
(239) 288-4224



**CALL NUMBER AT LEFT FOR CORRECT ZOOM LINK**





# THE RIVERDALE BRANCH LIBRARY

is undergoing renovations!



**The Alva Park and Community Center,**  
21471 N River Road, will host the Lee County Library System during the renovation of the Riverdale Branch Library.

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## Hours of Service

**Monday – Friday: 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

*Temporary service will begin on Monday, May 23, 2022.*

### Limited service includes:

- Read and Return Materials
- Holds Pick Up
- Computer Access and Printing
- Library Staff Assistance
- Free Programs for all ages
- Exterior book return
- Library card registration

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Sign up for the Riverdale Branch Library Program and Events Newsletter at [leelibrary.net/subscribe](https://leelibrary.net/subscribe) for service updates.



Visit [leelibrary.net](https://leelibrary.net) or call 239-479-4636 for more details.

All programs are free and open to the public. Sign language interpreter available with five business days' notice to library staff. While attending library programs, visitors may be photographed by library staff. Photos become library property and may be used in library promotions. Individuals who do not want to be photographed or recorded are responsible for removing themselves from the area or notifying the photographer of their opt-out status. The school is neither endorsing nor sponsoring this event, product or service, nor endorsing the views of the sponsoring organization.

Rev. 04/22



# Babcock Ranch Art Show

MARCH 11 & 12, 2023



*Save the Date*

Event by ArtFest Fort Myers

42850 Crescent Loop, Babcock Ranch-Punta Gorda, FL 33982

Join us at the Babcock Ranch Art Show! The Art Show is once again a FREE, non-gated event for all members of the Southwest Florida Community. On the second weekend in March, Babcock ranch will have exceptional art by more than 60 select artists. Against the backdrop of beautiful Lake Babcock, the alfresco event in downtown Founder's Square will showcase watercolor, oil and acrylic painting, sculpture, photography, metalwork, jewelry, ceramics, and wood and fiber art. Guests also can enjoy fare from a selection of Southwest Florida's favorite food trucks stationed along Lake Babcock Drive, along with refreshments from Babcock Ranch's Square Scoops, Slater's, Cup A Joe at Curry Creek Outfitters, and the new Lakehouse Kitchen & Bar.

A Builder Expo area in Founder's Square will offer information from Babcock Ranch's team of eight homebuilders about available home designs and the more than two dozen model homes now open or underway in the town's seven neighborhoods. In the newly redesigned Discovery Center in Woodlea Hall, Town Ambassadors will be on hand to answer questions about the sustainable vision behind America's first solar-powered town and its welcoming lifestyle.

For more information about Southwest Florida's new hometown, located just northeast of Fort Myers off Babcock Ranch Road/State Road 31, visit the Woodlea Hall Discovery Center at 42850 Crescent Loop in Babcock Ranch, or visit [www.BabcockRanch.com](http://www.BabcockRanch.com).

**Celebrate CREATIVITY at the Babcock Ranch Art Show!**

The Babcock Ranch Art Show is produced in cooperation with ArtFest Fort Myers.



## IRS REFUND SCAMS

Tax season is just around the corner, and IRS impersonators will be modifying their tactics accordingly. Instead of contacting you about a tax debt and making threats to get you to pay up, scammers may send you a text about a “tax rebate” or some other tax refund or benefit. The text messages may look legit, but no matter what the text says, it’s a scammer phishing for your information or your money.

The government doesn’t text people out of the blue with threats or promises of money. If you click on the link to claim your “refund,” you may expose yourself to identity theft or malware that the scammer could install on your phone or other device.

If someone unexpectedly contacts you about a tax rebate or refund:

- Never click on links in unexpected texts. Don’t share personal information with anyone who contacts you out

of the blue. Always use a website or phone number you know is real.

- Know that the IRS won’t call, email or text to contact you for the first time. They’ll always start by sending

you a letter. If you want to confirm, call the IRS directly at 800-829-1040.

- Find the status of any pending refund on the IRS official website. Visit Where’s My Refund at [www.IRS.gov](http://www.IRS.gov).

- Report unsolicited texts or emails claiming to be the IRS. Forward a screenshot or the email as an attachment to [phishing@irs.gov](mailto:phishing@irs.gov).

If you clicked a link in a suspicious text or email and shared personal information, file a report at [IdentityTheft.gov](http://IdentityTheft.gov) to get a customized recovery plan based on what information you shared. Learn about common scams and ways that you can protect yourself on the Scams and Fraud page at [FloridaConsumerHelp.com](http://FloridaConsumerHelp.com).

# COMMUNITY COOPERATIVE

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



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

**VOLUNTEER** in the Community Cafe, at a Mobile Pantry, or as a Meals on Wheels Driver.

Call (239) 332-7687

Tami@communitycooperative.com or call 239-332-7687, ext. 125.



*Enjoy Fellowship, Music, and Darn Good Food!*

**Thursday, March 9th, 2023**

Sam Galloway Ford  
1800 Boy Scout Drive, Fort Myers, FL 33907

**Soup Bowl Sponsor Table: \$5,000**  
(VIP seating for 10)

**Soup Spoon Sponsor Table: \$2,500**  
(Seating for 8)



Give TIME. Give MONEY. Give FOOD.

To make a donation, **call (239) 334-7007** or visit  
[www.harrychapinfoodbank.org](http://www.harrychapinfoodbank.org)

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

For Food pickup locations:

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





# Alva Area FOOD PANTRIES

## Grace UMC, Fort Myers Shores

Second Saturday Free Meal & Food Pantry, 8am to 2pm

**CALL to RESERVE your FOOD**

**239-694-2797**

## Charleston Park Community Center

239-728-8895

FOOD PANTRY

2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Friday at 10am-1pm

## ALVA UMC

Food Pantry @ Bethany House

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

239-728-2277

## CALVARY NATIONS Church

19850 Palm Beach Boulevard, Alva

Every Saturday, 3pm until supplies run out.

239-7285566

## St. Vincent DePaul RC

Our Lady's Cupboard Food Pantry

Call (239) 694-3985 for hours open.

## Some of our local ALVA area churches:

St. Vincent DePaul's RC Church

13031 Palm Beach Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33905

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

Alva United Methodist Church

21440 Pearl St. P.O Box 96

Alva, FL 33920

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

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

Alva Church of God

21520 Park St, Alva, Florida 33920

239-728-2644

Liberation International Church

Avenue D, Charleston Park

Alva, FL 33920,

239-601-4870

New Hope Faith Temple of Jesus Christ

23210 Avenue D, Charleston Park

Alva, FL, 33920 239-770-4974

Buckingham Presbyterian Church

4241 Buckingham Road

Fort Myers, FL 33905

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

Light of the Nations Filipino Congregation

19850 Palm Beach Blvd (at Calvary Church)

Alva, FL, 33920

239-728-5566

First Spanish Assembly of God Church

2219 Joel Blvd

Alva, FL 33920 239-728-5440

Countryside Wesleyan Church

17750 Palm Beach Blvd, Alva, FL 33920

239-368-3270

Calvary Nations Church

19850 Palm Beach Blvd

Alva, FL 33920

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

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

First Baptist Church of Alva

2790 Joel Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

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

Grace United Methodist Church, Ft Myers Shores

14036 Matanzas Drive, Ft Myers, Florida 33905

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

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

14531 Old Olga Road,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

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

Olga Baptist Church

2364 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33905

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

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

# RECOVERY Groups in the Alva Area



**Types of 12 Step Programs in Lee County, FL:** Because Alcoholics Anonymous was exclusive to people who struggled with alcohol addiction, a vast array of other programs were formed to aid and support those in recovery from other addictive disorders. These include the following groups:

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

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

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

## ALVA:

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

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

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

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

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

## FORT MYERS SHORES:

**Grace UMC**, Fort Myers Shores, (239) 694-2797, 4036 Matanzas Dr, Fort Myers:

-AA COED, Open Disc: Mon, 12pm, office

-AA Men: Mon, 7pm, office

-AA Women: Tues, 7pm, office

-AA COED, Open Disc: Wed, 12pm, office

-AA Open Disc: Thu, 7pm, office

-AL Anon COED: Fri, 12pm, Classroom 2

-AA COED, Open Speaker: Sat, 7pm, Community Center

-AA COED, Open Disc: Sun, 7pm, office

-CHOOSE RECOVERY: 6:00pm, Grace UMC Shores Facebook Page LIVE until COVID-19 is under control.

**St. Vincent De Paul RC**, 13031 Palm Beach Blvd, Fort Myers:

-Fort Myers Shores Group OStAH – Tuesday, 8:00 pm

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

-Night Owls OD – Saturday, 10:05 pm

## LEHIGH ACRES:

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

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

LEHIGH ACRES (cont):

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

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

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres

(239) 275-5111

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres, 33971,



(239) 275-5111

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

705 Leland Heights Blvd. E., Lehigh Acres,  
(866) 819-5346

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

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres  
(239) 275-5111

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres  
(239) 275-5111

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

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres  
(888) 425-2666

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

5513 8th St W, Lehigh Acres  
(239) 275-5111

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

705 Leeland Heights Blvd E, Lehigh Acres  
(239) 275-5111

**LABELLE:**

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

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

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

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

-WED BIG BOOK GROUP- OBBH- WEDNESDAY NOON

-OPEN DISCUSSION -ODH- FRIDAY 7:00PM

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

-LABELLE GROUP-ODAH- THURSDAY 7:00PM

-STEP GROUP-Cst- TUESDAY 7:00PM

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

138 Ford Ave, Labelle

(888) 425-2666

**-AA-THURSDAY 7PM**

138 Ford Ave, Labelle

(239) 275-5111

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

Port LaBelle Inn, 1568 Oxbow Dr, Labelle

(239) 275-5111

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

133 N Bridge St, Labelle

(866) 819-5346

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**IF you know of any other 12 step or non-12 step recovery group in the Alva area (From Hendry County Line to Fort Myers Shores, north and south of our river) please let me know its name, location and the phone number for information to list here. Thank you! [kendewalt@ontheriver.org](mailto:kendewalt@ontheriver.org)**

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## Who We Want To Be AGAIN!

SalusCare is a Fort Myers, Florida based not-for-profit mental health and substance abuse service provider.

SalusCare has 6 locations to serve you throughout Southwest Florida. Our fees are affordable and may be adjusted to the means of our patients based on household income.

SalusCare accepts Medicaid, Medicare, Visa, MasterCard and some major health insurance providers. Please call us beforehand to verify that your insurance is accepted.

SalusCare provides services for all regardless of disability or handicap. Accommodations will be provided upon request. All substance abuse programs and most mental health services are accredited by CARF International, an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services. <https://www.saluscareflorida.org/>



Call our Welcome Center at 239-275-3222 Mon. – Fri. 8:00 am – 5:00 pm to speak with a customer service representative to schedule a Care Connection appointment in-person or via tele-health.

**HOWEVER,**

## SalusCare Crisis Stabilization Unit remains closed due to hurricane damage

(TY WINK NEWS, REPORTER: CLAIRE GALT, WRITER: MATTHEW SEAVER)

Months after Hurricane Ian damaged a mental health care facility, their doors are still closed, meaning people in the Fort Myers area desperate for mental health care are going without. Currently, their hallways are empty, the beds are covered with tarps, and board games are sitting untouched.

“People are dying as a result,” said SalusCare President Stacey Cook.

People are dying because the locked doors lead to the SalusCare Crisis Stabilization Unit. The only mental health crisis unit in Lee County. Since the hurricane, hundreds of patients facing a behavioral health crisis are not getting the help they need, and Cook said that could be life-threatening.

“We’re able to stabilize an individual who is suicidal and homicidal. We’re able to link patients to services that they need in order to become well. So it’s absolutely critical. It’s an important and essential component of healthcare. And it’s missing right now. It is a huge missing link,” said Cook.

SalusCare is also the place where police departments take people having a mental health crisis. Now many of them go to Lee Health.

Two feet of water flooded the SalusCare facility during Hurricane Ian. Now, the center is caught in an insurance battle between wind and water insurance carriers.

SalusCare says it does not have the \$1.5 million to pay for repairs out of pocket. FEMA might be an option, but so far has not offered public assistance.

While SalusCare is fighting hard to reopen its doors, as of now, there is no timetable for when that will be. Before the hurricane, SalusCare received 500 to 600 patients a month through the Baker Act while also caring for 250 to 300 adults and children in crisis.



Come join us at The Venue at Mudge Ranch to listen (and maybe even dance) to live Vegas Style Shows. Enjoy a night out with your special someone or a group of friends. You'll find we are offering a wide variety of genres to fit everyone's taste and style.

- Relive your "yesteryears" with throwback shows and classic music.
- Add a little Rockabilly to your nights.
- Many other fun entertainment genres such as impersonations and comedy!

No matter what your preference, you'll always be able to enjoy a fun show in a fantastic setting - You'll find we're the best place in and around LaBelle to chill with friends. From country to rock, to swing, to pop, and so much more, there's nothing like laughing it up or listening to a live performance to liven up your night!

- Tickets will be available soon.
- Check our website for show dates and availability.
- Follow us on Facebook & Instagram

**Address: 1323 Loblolly Bay Rd SW, LaBelle, FL 33935**



**LaBelle Entertainment**

Visit our website for more information and check out our upcoming shows!

<https://www.labelleentertainment.com>

Most events have dinners available for purchase. Dinners start at 5 PM or 6 PM, depending on show time. Dinners are optional and you may accept or decline the dinner when purchasing your ticket. No dinners will be sold at door. Show tickets may be available at door, cash or check only.

Our event season will open on December 16<sup>th</sup> with a Christmas Show.

## Manatee & Eco River Tours = More Than Just A Boat Ride!



Manatee's travel into the Orange River when the waters of the Gulf of Mexico fall below 70 degrees.

All manatee tours leave from Sweetwater Landing Marina and cruise down the Caloosahatchee into the Orange River where we have an opportunity to observe the manatee in their natural habitat.

Generally, 400-500 manatees visit the area each winter.

Advanced reservations are required! Visit our website at: [www.ManateeAndEcoRiverTours.com](http://www.ManateeAndEcoRiverTours.com) to see the available dates and times for tours and to schedule your adventure! A fun time for all ages!



Captain John Cookman & Kathy Cookman look forward to seeing you onboard the River Queen II. (Blankets are available for cold mornings!)

# Important Phone Numbers & Websites

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

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

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

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## **WE WRITE ALL HOMES INCLUDING OLDER HOMES!!**

### **INTEGRITY INSURANCE AGENCY**

128 W. Charlotte Ave, Punta Gorda, FL 33950



INTEGRITY INSURANCE AGENCY



The Trusted Choice!

Integrity Insurance Agency has been serving all of Florida for over 20 years. The majority of our business is right here in SW Florida. A team of agents, with over 100 years of total experience, we are dedicated to the service we provide to all our clients. We can handle any insurance situation you may have. We provide coverage and service for all items listed below.

Auto, Homeowners, Renters, Condo, Manufactured Homes, Casitas, Flood, Motorcycle, RV, Boats, Golf Carts, General Liability, Commercial Package, Commercial Auto, Workers Comp., Bonds, Liquor Liability, Special Events, Life Insurance, Health Insurance, Long Term Care, Medicare Products, and Professional Liability.

We would be proud to be called your insurance agency. Since we are an Independent Agency we have a number of companies we work with to get you the best coverage for the best price. Call Integrity today and experience the client services we provide. **941-766-1411**. You can go on our website to get more information at [iaagencies.com](http://iaagencies.com)

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 REALTOR<sup>®</sup>  
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**Cell**  
 239-340-3904

**Office**  
 239-693-1959

**Email**  
 PattyWalkerREMAX@gmail.com

**Web**  
 GulfCoastLivingPatty.com

**Address**  
 12928 Palm Beach Blvd., Ste A  
 Fort Myers, FL 33905

Each Office Independently Owned & Operated

**ON THE RIVER Alva Area Newsletter Advertising Rates (current since January 17, 2020)**

This monthly newsletter is a free to subscriber on-line offering. We are not offering anything in print form at this time. We encourage folk to share it with anyone and in any way they wish, and we place the newsletter in the Alva Florida Friends and Family, and the Know Your Neighbors 239, Facebook Pages which have over 3000 subscribers, and the NEXT DOOR ALVA web page which has over 5,000 subscribers. We have over 1,200 personal email subscribers.

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

**Advertising rates per month :**

1/8th Page... one issue: \$15.00, six issues: \$12.00, twelve issues: \$10.00

¼ Page... one issue: \$25.00, six issues: \$20.00, twelve issues: \$17.00

½ Page... one issue: \$45.00, six issues: \$35.00, twelve issues: \$30.00

Full Page... one issue: \$75.00, six issues: \$60.00, twelve issues: \$50.00

Ads will only appear on pages following all articles and nonprofit promotions are formatted. 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 as soon as we have it formatted for your approval 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 in full by the 15th of the month preceding the first month in which the ad is to appear, which is also the date the ad copy is to be received. Payments are to be by check (made out to Ramona DeWalt, noted: OTR.

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

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**Special thanks to all who financially support the mission of ON THE RIVER.**

**We especially encourage our readers to patronize the professional and community supporters who advertise with us.**

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***Happy  
Valentines  
Day!!!***



3000+ may view in Alva Florida Friends and Family <https://www.facebook.com/groups/alva/fl/>

1000+ may view in Know Your Neighbors 239 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/757702127967077>

800+ may view in Fort Myers Shores Neighborhood <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1296361133883401>

5300+ may view in Preserve Buckingham <https://www.facebook.com/groups/665471610185127>

1500+ may view in What's Happening in Buckingham & Alva <https://www.facebook.com/groups/195607809187479>

6500+ may view in What's Happening in LaBelle <https://www.facebook.com/groups/844456866040351>

12,000+ may view in What's Happening in LaBelle Today <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1690641604483126>

3400+ may view in Nextdoor Alva <https://nextdoor.com/city/alva-fl/>

