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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

The deadline for receipt of any materials is the 15th of the month.

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

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FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S OTR:

- LOCAL Alva area development: 400,000 sq ft RETAIL?
- LOCAL history: Don't miss the Alva Museum
- LOCAL Community services: Riverdale & Barron Libraries
- LOCAL club and organization: Veteran's Honor Flight
- LOCAL recipe: Sweet & Spicy Mango Shrimp
- LOCAL Sports: Lee County Archery



www.ONTHERIVER.ORG Archive of all OTR newsletters and lots more, all FREE.

ALVA INC, At the Alva Community Center.

ZOOM access:

<https://zoom.us/join>

Meeting ID: 852-1643-8980

Passcode: 302401



Info@AlvaFL.org WEBSITE www.ALVAFL.org

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

There are a lot of angry people in Alva/North Olga...

... regarding the proposed Cary+Duke+Povia Residential Planned Development located on North River Road just west of North Olga Drive. (see Plan map) A request to rezone a 788+/- acre property from Agriculture (AG-2) to Residential Planned Development (RPD) to allow for a maximum of 1,099 houses, (current allowable density is 771 units), built on 30 ft /40 ft lots with an increased density from 1 house per acre as stated in the North Olga (Northeast County Plan) to 1.4 houses per acre. A companion Comprehensive Plan Amendment (CPA2022-00019) is filed to include the subject Property in the Lee County Future Water Services Area Map and the Future Sewer Service Area Map.

During their presentation at the last North Olga Meeting, there were many residents that were very much against this development because it goes against the North Olga Community Plans

OBJECTIVE 27.1: AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL CHARACTER. Maintain and enhance the viability of the existing and evolving commercial agricultural operations, preserve open space, and retain the rural character of Northeast Lee County. For the purposes of this objective, rural character is defined as those characteristics that convey a sense of rural lifestyle such as large lots or clustered development, ample views of wooded areas, open spaces, and river fronts, working farms and productive agricultural uses, and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands. (Ord. No. 11-14, 18-18)

It is imperative that the residents of Alva and North Olga contact the Lee County Planners that are reviewing this proposed development to express your concerns regarding this development and ask Lee County to follow the Community Plan. SEND EMAILS TO:

Comprehensive Plan Amendment, ID Number - CPA2022-00019

Zoning Application, ID Number - DC12022-00067

Joe Sarracino | Planner,

1500 Monroe St, Fort Myers, FL, office: (239) 533-8984, email: JSarracino@leegov.com,

Dirk Danley Jr, AICP | Principal Planner, email: DDanleyJr@leegov.com

The tentative date for the first Comprehensive Plan Amendment hearing is September 25, 2023 at 9:00 am at 2201 Second St, Fort Myers (downtown)

To make it easier for you, please find below a Go-By letter that you can copy and paste in your email. Please be sure your name and address are at the bottom of the letter.

Best regards,

Alva Inc

Dear Lee County Staff,

As a resident of the Alva/North Olga community I am reaching out to you today to voice my/our opposition to the proposed development by Neal Community on what's known as the Cary+Duke+Povia property. This is not reflective of our rural character or community. Hundreds of homes and duplexes cluster together on 40-foot-wide lots is not consistent with the current requirement of one home on one acre of land.

The transformation of our rural community to an urban one is unacceptable. I/We moved to Alva/Olga intentionally to live and enjoy a rural lifestyle. Less density and less traffic were our goals. Living with like-minded people in open areas with animals and wildlife. The proposed design of this community in no way represents a rural look, feel or lifestyle as our Community Plans states.

This is the last remaining area of Lee County that carries on the traditions of a rural agricultural community, and I respectfully request we leave it that way. There are plenty of other areas in the County left to be developed with higher densities but let's not make Alva/Olga one of them.





ALVA INC list of Major Concerns regarding the 'NNN' High School being planned for Joel Blvd a bit south of Rte 80 by Alva Residents

1. Large School Complex of 3,000 students (average pop.)
 - 1,864 High School Students
 - 1,025 Middle School Students
2. 10-15 years to widen Joel Blvd (Lee County) due to eminent domain
 - Single Lane Roads in surrounding area
 - No Sidewalks
 - Ditches along roadside
 - Packinghouse Rd and Styles Rd will become heavily traveled for cut-through traffic to get to and from the high school.
3. No Municipal Water and Sewer
 - Shallow wells in surrounding residential properties
4. Past Flooding and Sheet flow during the Summer months
 - Exacerbate flooding in the neighborhood.
5. Wildlife Corridor - Conservation 20/20 land
 - 200-acres of conservation land on the south adjacent property
 - 227-acres to the east-southeast adjacent property
 - Wildlife, which include panthers and bears have been observed on site
 - Will destroy corridor to Hickey Creek Mitigation Park due to eventual 4-lane highway
6. Commercial Development- Fast Food Restaurants and Gas Stations near high school

Rural Florida residents strike out when their own commissioner pitches a big development

(TY Florida Phoenix and Craig Pittman, with some editing by this publisher)



I have a confession to make. Some of you may think less of me when you hear it. Others — well, you probably already have a low opinion of me anyway.

Since 1975, I have been a die-hard Boston Red Sox fan. I rooted for them in their many lean years, as well as when they won the World Series in 2004, 2007, and 2013. I have cheered in person for such stars as David “Big Papi” Ortiz and Dennis “Oil Can” Boyd. I’ve even read Ted Williams’ memoir, “My Turn at Bat”, and gave it five stars on Goodreads.

So imagine my dismay when I heard about poor Mike Greenwell!

The onetime Red Sox left fielder has made his Florida neighbors mad. In fact, a few are even suing . They blame him for the ruination of Alva.

You’ve probably never heard of Alva (this is a statewide publication). It’s one of those quiet places in Florida that still looks the way a lot of Florida used to look.

Alva has tall oak trees, verdant citrus groves, and lots of cattle in pastures along a two-lane road. The Caloosahatchee River splits it in half, so there’s a quaint old drawbridge that was built in 1960. Sometimes it sticks.

There aren’t a lot of people, maybe 6,500. Alva is a place “where you can find cows and alligators aplenty,” said Amanda Cochran, a resident for more than 20 years. “It’s got a real small-town feel. We didn’t even have a stoplight until a couple years ago.”

Now, because Greenwell wants to build enough apartments and commercial development on his property to blast that “small-town feel” to Kingdom Come, Cochran and her fellow Alva residents are angry at him. It’s become, as we baseball fans like to say, quite a rhubarb.

Personally, I don’t think the problem is Mike Greenwell, the landowner who wants to make a fortune turning this rural enclave into a hot corner. I think the real problem here is Alva’s developer-friendly county commissioner — who, as it turns out, is also Mike Greenwell.

Be careful with paradise

Some people in Lee County think Alva’s name comes from Fort Myers’ most famous part-time resident, Thomas Alva Edison. An umpire would say these people are off base.

Alva was named by its founder, a Danish sea captain named Peter Nelson, who laid out the settlement in the 1800s. Nelson named the town for a plant with small white flowers that he saw growing there because it was similar to the Danish flower called the alva.



Scientists call it “*sabatia brevifolia*,” and the common name is “Shortleaf rosegentian.” Both of those are such a mouthful I think we can agree that “Alva” is the better choice.

Nelson, by the way, became a county commissioner, and then was suspended from office for drunkenness. He fits in perfectly with a lot of the Florida officeholders who followed.



Caloosahatchee River Bend, OXBOW, near Alva

Alvansians (yes, that’s what they’re called) treasure their town’s sense of history and community, and they have worked hard to keep it. They even wrote it into the county’s comprehensive plan for growth, pledging to make sure any development “occurs in a manner that maintains the rural character and lifestyle of this area.”

For 15 years, the county commissioner representing Alva was on board with that. He was a native named Frank Mann, a jovial old-

school politician who once ran for lieutenant governor. As commissioner, Mann made it his

mission to protect the area’s environmental resources, despite often landing on the losing end of a 4-1 vote. His motto: “Be careful with paradise.”

In June 2022, with two years left in his term, Mann died of pancreatic cancer at age 80. To replace him, his fellow commissioners hastily scheduled a special election for the fall. Five candidates launched campaigns.

Then Gov. Ron “I Love the Smell of a Fresh Concrete Pour in the Morning” DeSantis jumped into the middle of this and picked a fill-in commissioner.

To replace Mann, a Democrat, he appointed Greenwell, a Republican. He also happened to be one of the five candidates in the election. Being the incumbent gave him a leg up on the other four when the election rolled around, and so he won.



The new commissioner, who retired from baseball in 1996, was described by the Fort Myers News-Press as someone who “operates several businesses, including Big League Builders, a general construction company.” This qualification is entirely in keeping with what our pro-development governor looks for in appointees from the University of Florida board of trustees on down to a county commissioner.

Greenwell, when interviewed by the News-Press, made it clear he was a different man than Mann, talking up what a wonderful thing new development could be.

But he added that “we are fortunate in a way because we have Alva, Alva is its own little entity, I want to see it stay rural but that doesn’t mean we can’t go ahead and get the infrastructure” for future growth “that makes it better for the people who live out here.”

This is why I say that Greenwell the commissioner is the real villain here. He claimed he wanted Alva to stay rural, but he knew that one of the major landowners would ensure that didn't happen. You know which landowner — the one who's an ex-ballplayer.

"To have our own county commissioner doing it when he's supposed to be championing our area," Cochran told me, "is just a slap in the face."

Altering Alva

Our fine Legislature has steadily rigged our state laws so that developers can do whatever they want. As a result, Alva is just one of a lot of rural areas all over the state in danger of disappearing. It's as if the pave-it-all crowd is drawn to the wide-open spaces on the map, determined to make them look like everywhere else.

Other big-money developers — former state Sen. Pat Neal, for instance — have been eyeing Alva's greenspace for a while. But nobody had plans as big as Greenwell's. **He wants to build a 400,000-square-foot shopping center and up to a 122-unit apartment complex** on 76 acres off two-lane State Road 31, just over the bridge over the Caloosahatchee. The site has 27 acres of wetlands on it, and he wants to destroy more than 16 of those.



Ralph Brooks

The commercial development alone is so large "it's like eight Walmarts," said Ralf Brookes, the land-use attorney the neighbors hired. "It would be the biggest thing in the whole ZIP code,"

There is nothing like it anywhere else in Alva. But that darn commissioner, the bad guy in this story, chose to push it along anyway, no matter how it would alter Alva.

"There's no rural left when you start doing that," said Wayne Daltry, who served as Lee County's "smart growth" coordinator back when smart growth was something local government valued.

To make it work, Greenwell the landowner needed the commissioners to change the zoning from agricultural to Mixed Use Planned Development. But Greenwell the pro-development commissioner had a conflict of interest, which made this as tricky as pulling a double steal.

Daltry, who spent 20 years as executive director of the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, said a case like this one is rare, if not unprecedented.

"I can't think of the last time a county commissioner submitted a proposal for a development that his own appointees would oversee," Daltry told me.

Even if the commissioner doesn't vote on the rezoning, he said, it's still a conflict of interest. The staff he oversees is likely to fall all over themselves to give him what he wants. After all, Daltry said, "What happens if he DOESN'T get what he wants?"

There was apparently little danger of that with this project. County officials were so eager to please Greenwell they finagled the rules.

Unheard of and not listened to





Current Greenwell Property now rezoned

Making the change in Greenwell's property was a process more complicated than spelling Carl Yastrzemski's last name. He needed both the comp plan and the zoning changed. County officials pushed both of them along with all the slow deliberation of a Chris Sale fastball.

The first step in approving the rezoning request was a hearing run by an examiner in November of last year. No one from the Alva community attended it, for two excellent reasons:

- A)** They didn't know about it because county officials didn't tell them.
- B)** They were still recovering from all the river flooding that occurred as a result of Hurricane Ian. Turns out Alva is in a coastal high hazard area.

Now, a real public servant — one who has his eye on the ball — would make sure those two conditions would not prevent the public from having a say. A real public servant would have postponed the hearing until everyone had been notified and found a way for them to participate.

But Commissioner Greenwell, who supposedly represents Alva, did not look out for his constituents. He looked out for the developer. Mike's developer.

A transcript shows the hearing examiner raised a lot of serious questions about what the developer wanted and how such a massive project would fit in with a rural area. In the end she went along with it. After all, nobody spoke in opposition.

But because the public was not properly notified, the hearing officer had to hold a new proceeding in June.

This time, about a dozen angry Alvanians showed up to object to Greenwell's plans. They pointed out that it, and the Babcock Ranch Development in Charlotte County, now expanded into Lee County, now also would require a wider road, a new bridge and a bizarre definition of maintaining "the rural character and lifestyle of this area."

Oh, if only Commissioner Greenwell had seen how unpopular developer Greenwell was, surely he wouldn't have sided with him!

The hearing officer paid little attention to the neighbors, once again approving the rezoning. Infuriating them further, Cochran told me, was that the officer told them they really should have shown up to object to the change in the comp plan.

That had already gone through the county planning board. The proposed change in the comp plan for Greenwell would so clearly result in a case of sprawl that county officials acknowledged that it might not be kosher.



So, not unlike the time Bill Veeck sent a little person up to bat, they got creative.

They proposed reclassifying 15 other nearby properties as well, for a total of 288 acres, even though the owners hadn't asked for any change, Cochran told me.

"It's unheard of!" Cochran said.

You could say it came at the owners totally out of left field. They didn't find out this was in the works until they received a notice in the mail, she said. Several are planning to fight to change their property back.

Meanwhile, the county staff was racing to see Greenwell's plans approved as if the third-base coach had given the steal sign and they were headed for home — home being the June county commission meeting.

In the dugout

I will say this for Commissioner Greenwell: He did not vote on this project. In fact, he wasn't even in the commission room where it was discussed. He wasn't that far away, either. He was sort of in the dugout instead of on the field. Brookes said the commissioner had moved into a room that was not open to the public, where he could apparently monitor what everyone said and what his colleagues chose to do.

A lot of Alvanians showed up, making the meeting room look more crowded than the pitcher's mound in the famous scene in "Bull Durham." They were not happy.

An Alva resident named Denise Eberle summed up the neighbors' position: "The development does not support or preserve the heritage and rural character. It does the opposite." Then she quoted the hearing examiner calling Greenwell's development "a highly urbanized design with a big box and a sea of parking."

When it came time for the commissioners to make a decision, something odd occurred in this supposedly public meeting, according to Gulfshore Business Magazine, based in Southwest Florida.

One county commissioner moved to deny the change. Just then, a county official entered the meeting room, waved over another county official and held a whispered conference with him. Then the second county official whispered something to one of the developer's representatives.



Recent drone view of Greenwell property

The representative immediately announced that Greenwell was willing to drop the maximum height of the buildings from 60 feet to 45 feet, as if that were the main point of contention. The commissioners then approved the rezoning 3-1.

Afterward, most of the commissioners ducked reporters. Only one, Cecil Pendergrass, was willing to comment. He said he had based his decision on “legal, competent, and substantial evidence as presented and not who the applicant is or anyone’s political or emotional motives.”

Kicking dirt

In all this, Commissioner Greenwell has not said boo to his neighbors — except for Cochran, who says she bumped into him in Publix. It went about as you might expect, with Greenwell yelling that she’d soon be apologizing to him for causing trouble. If they had been on a ballfield, he probably would have kicked dirt on her shoes.

I tried repeatedly to reach Commissioner Greenwell for comment on developer Greenwell. Just like when I was in Little League, I struck out every time. Brookes told me that the Legislature hasn’t left the opponents of this or any other development much of a legal argument to overturn the decision. The suit he filed against the county accuses the commissioners of not properly handling the rezoning.

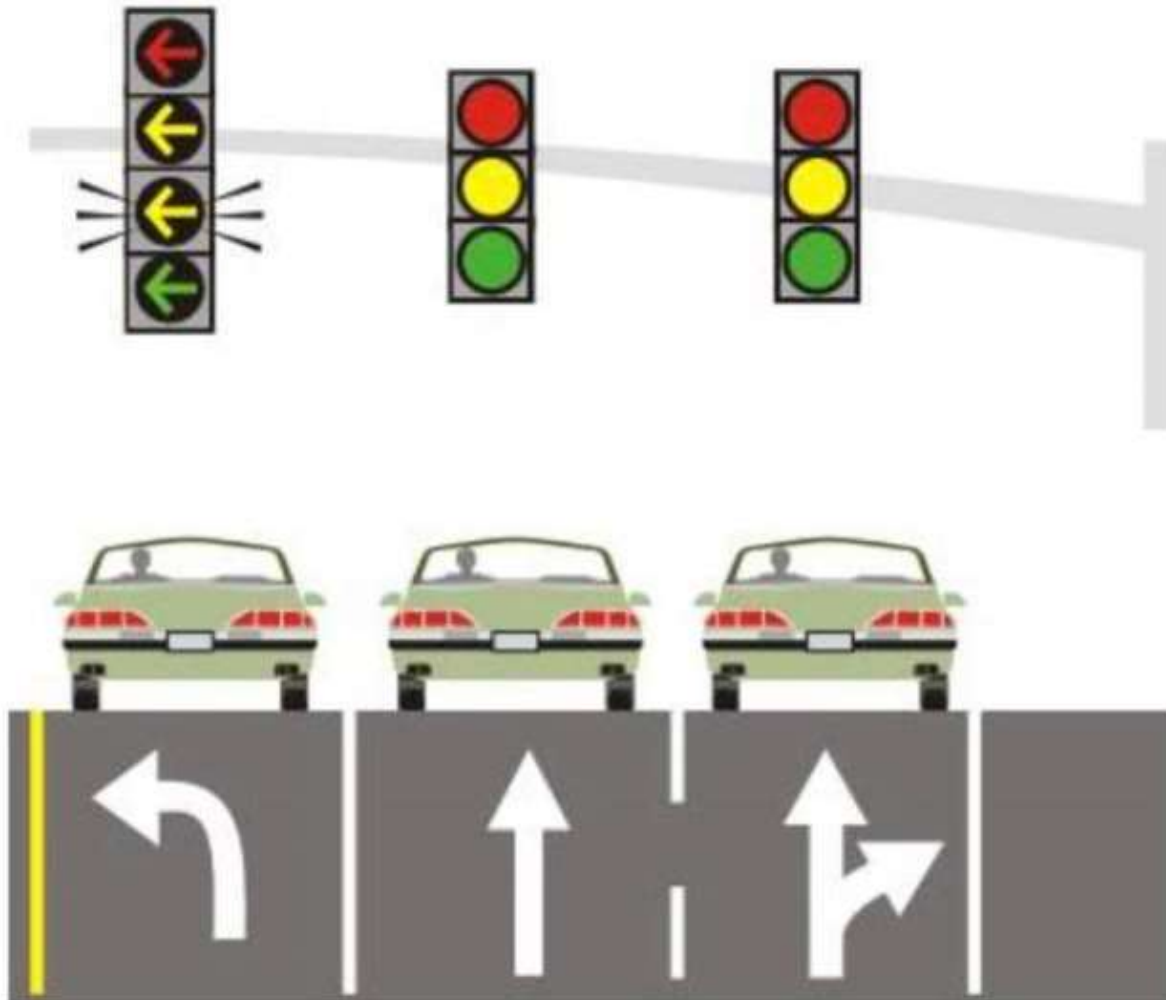
I hope Brookes wins and the commissioners have to redo everything amid even more scrutiny.



NEW at Alva Broadway Street & Palm Beach Blvd



Alva, Florida Friends, Family, & Photos



Alva Fire Control & Rescue Service District

10h · 🌐

!! Attention Alva Residents !!

- 🚦 A left turn traffic signal is currently being installed at the intersection of Palm Beach Blvd., Broadway St. and Packinghouse Rd. 🚦 The flashing yellow or green/red arrows will provide a more direct message for left turns. As always, we encourage and appreciate your attention to traffic regulations and look forward to the additional safety features at this very busy intersection!

- Photo credits FDOT

With gopher tortoise projections 'really harrowing', nonprofits sue over protections

(TY News Press & Amy Bennet Williams)

Federal scientists admit gopher tortoises are in deep trouble.



A 2021 study by the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, the agency that administers the federal Endangered Species Act, concluded that by 2100, some three-quarters of gopher tortoise populations could be gone. Yet despite their own dire survival predictions, the agency denied them the act's protections.

That's why on Wednesday, two nonprofits, the Center for Biological Diversity and Nonuse Education Inc., a conservation group in the Panhandle, sued the service for failing to protect eastern gopher tortoises – the kind that live in Florida.

The agency will not comment on the action. Reached by phone, spokeswoman Jennifer Koches said, "Per service policy, we cannot comment on proposed or pending litigation."

Here are four things to know about the suit.

When the feds were asked to explain their denial, they wouldn't. In March, the nonprofits petitioned the agency to outline why it wouldn't grant the tortoises Endangered Species Act Protection, and they threatened to sue if they didn't.

"We notified the agency of significant deficiencies with their analysis, particularly the fact that they had found overwhelming past declines and projected really overwhelming future declines for this species," said Elise Bennett, Florida director for the Center for Biological Diversity. The outlook is "really harrowing ... yet (they) determined it shouldn't be protected."

Plus, the center found "pretty significant concerns with the way they had done their analysis that indicated things may actually be much worse for the species than their analyses showed," Bennett said. "If you look at the science and you look at their decision, thing just isn't adding up (so) we wanted them to explain the discrepancies."

In May, the nonprofits got their answer: No. "They essentially, they said: 'We believe our decision is right and we stand by it,'" Bennett said. Once again, the nonprofits got back in touch, with the "same exact



concerns we sent the notice about," Bennett said. The difference this time? "Now we're going to bring it before a court."

No one denies that gopher tortoises are in trouble

The federal wildlife service admits the species faces steep challenges. In its comprehensive report published in 2021, its models projected sharp population declines. By its own analysis, three quarters of them could gone in less than a century. Chief among their challenges: The high-and-dry uplands they favor are also sought-after human habitat. When animals compete with humans for building sites, "the animal normally loses," said herpetologist Chris Lechowicz, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation's wildlife and habitat management director told The News-Press in March.

The longleaf pine savannas they once inhabited are already 97% gone, and as people move into the remainder of their homelands, the tortoises also lose food and the ability to move safely from area to area.

Florida protects them, but the protections don't seem to be working.

Gopher tortoises are a protected species in Florida. That means that proposed development in tortoise habitats must get a permit and safely relocate them. But state law offers no habitat protections, which means the reptiles "are being squeezed into increasingly



smaller areas of available habitat," Bennett said. "Combined with booming development, (that) has led to shortages of suitable places to put relocated tortoises." Florida's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has long struggled to find places to put those in the path of development, and state law is "clearly not adequate," said Matthew Schwartz, executive director of South Florida Wildlands Association.

Pro-developer, anti-tortoise? New Florida rule weakens protections of threatened species

The suit is about more than gopher tortoises

Many other animals depend on gopher tortoises, which is why they're called a keystone species.

They support many other animals by digging burrows that provide homes for dozens of other creatures, thus playing an oversized role in the health of natural systems. Plus, many of the species, like the eastern indigo snake which depend on their burrows, are federally listed, making federal protection even more critical, advocates say

No DCF Responsible Fatherhood Initiative Grant Award for SWFL

(TY Sean Ryan, President, Single Dads Outreach, Corp, 239-595-0159)

On July 28, 2023, Department of Children and Families (DCF) in Tallahassee awarded a total of 18 education and direct services Responsible Fatherhood Initiative grants but none of the awards included SWFL, an area that stretches from Manatee to Monroe Counties.

Early in March 2023 the State of Florida made social service history by releasing through DCF the details of a grant application process inviting grassroots, community organizations under the auspices of HB 7065, referred to as the Responsible Fatherhood Initiative. Governor DeSantis signed that legislation into law April 2022 in the hopes of “making better Florida fathers.”

SingleDadsOutReach.org (SDO), a nonprofit 501c3 Florida corporation presently headquartered in Lehigh Acres, had applied for Lee County. SDO is a collaboration between a group of prior and active single dads with sole or joint custody of their children.

SDO’s program offers peer to peer networking, self-improvement through life coaching, mentoring with seasoned fathers, enhancing parenting skills with counselors and case management services to active single dads, the community, the State of Florida and DCF in Tallahassee concentrated multiple awards in Tampa, Jacksonville, Tallahassee, Miami, and Fort Lauderdale.

This is despite Lee County being 8 th in population and the 2nd fastest growing county in Florida behind Polk County whose population is 100,000 people less than Lee County. Tallahassee in Leon County ranks 23rd in population of the 67 Florida counties. Other areas of the Florida also not awarded grants were The Panhandle, Florida Keys and Space Coast.

For more information, [SingleDadsOutReach.org](https://www.singledadsoutreach.org), is available on the internet and SDO has a social media presence through Facebook Groups: Ft Myers Single Dads Outreach and Naples Single Dads Outreach.

SDO is also seeking female or male, working or retired Social Work, Corrections, Education and Law Enforcement professionals with a passion for fatherhood to complete its Advisory Council. Prior seasoned fathers can find out about volunteering as mentors at these sites as well.



SHELTER (863) 675-0997 CLINIC (863) 675-7387 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.



South Florida Wildlands Association

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

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



ALVA HAS A BUY NOTHING FACEBOOK PAGE!

This page is all about getting rid of stuff you don't need/want & helping others in the community!

You can press and hold the QR Code & It will take you straight to our page!

Feel free to join & share with your neighbor. Here's the link also:

<https://m.facebook.com/groups/607856844854663/?ref=share&mibextid=OjTNld>



Lee County Sheriff's Office



FAMILY School Threat & Safety Conversation Guide

1. Do you know what a threat is?

A threat is a declaration of intention to inflict punishment or harm on another.

2. What can threats look like?

Example: Text message, social media, a note, bathroom writing.

3. Why would someone make a threat?

Example: Angry/emotional, for attentions/as a joke, "copycat" incidents, etc.

4. If your friend or someone you know makes a threat, what should you do?

Example: Report it to an adult like the School Resource Officer, Principal, or through FortifyFL.

5. Who can a threat negatively affect?

Example: Students, parents, school, your future.

6. What consequences can come from making a threat?

Example: Detention/suspension, arrest, charged with a felony.

7. What happens if you make a threat and get arrested?

Example: You can be charged with a felony and be sent to juvenile detention. This stays on your record and can affect your probability of getting a job, being able to vote in the future, obtaining scholarships, or even going to college.

For additional information or answers to questions, contact the Lee County Sheriff's Office School Threat Enforcement Team at 239-477-1000.

Howl-o-ween

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NOVEMBER 4

DURING THE SHOP DOWNTOWN MARKETS!



LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation Presents: Unveiling a Brighter Future for Barron Park

On Thursday, July 13, 2023, the City of LaBelle City Commissioners unanimously approved the long-awaited master plan concept for Barron Park. Serving as LaBelle's beloved park since 1911, Barron Park holds an irreplaceable position in the hearts of our community members. With this unanimous decision, we stand together, prepared to embark on a journey that will honor the park's rich history while ushering it into a new era of modernity.

At the heart of our master plan lies a deep commitment to preserving the park's cherished historic features. We understand that the essence of Barron Park lies in its ability to bring joy and solace to our citizens, just as it has for over a century. Through careful consideration and collaborative efforts, we have crafted a vision that will enhance the park's functionality while maintaining its quintessential charm.

For further information concerning the Barron Park Master Plan, please visit our Love Downtown LaBelle webpage. We greatly appreciate your love and support!

With gratitude,

LaBelle Downtown Revitalization Corporation Board of Directors



You don't need a parachute to go
skydiving.
You need a parachute to go
skydiving twice.

BARRON LIBRARY

at the LaBelle Caloosahatchee
Dock Park



USS Hannah Chapter,
Alva, Florida,

<https://usshannahsdar.org/>



Welcome New Citizens

Members of the *USS Hannah* Chapter welcomed eighteen new citizens from twelve countries with gift bags and a hospitality table. Five hundred gift bags were also provided to the USCIS Fort Myers Field Office for distribution to all of May's new citizens.



National Society Daughters of the American Revolution has membership of women who can track their lineage to Patriots who participated in the American Revolution and serve their community in the areas of Historical Preservation, Education, and Patriotism. The *USS Hannah* chapter serves East Lee County and Hendry County. If you are interested in joining, email usshannahsdar@gmail.com.

ON THE RIVER – Connecting ALVA Florida NEIGHBORS and NEIGHBORHOODS monthly, online, FREE



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.



**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 NOW OPEN FOR FREE TOURS

Every Saturday between 10am and 2pm

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

Grant Fichter is overseeing the museum for the board.

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



Calling all Crafters & Creators

Are you interested in being a vendor at our upcoming FREE Community Bluegrass, Craft Fair and Food Truck Event?

Sat. NOVEMBER 4th 12-4 pm on the Field

Email Jen: jbunt@egracechurch.com for more information



14036 Matanzas Dr.
Fort Myers, FL 33905
239-694-2797

Desperate Times Call for Desperate Measures

With another Florida legislative session in the rearview and a Governor fully focused on running for a different office, it seems there are few advocacy actions to consider to improve our state's water quality policies and trajectory.

However, the Florida Right to Clean Water movement is an innovative approach to create fundamental rights to clean and healthy waters via a state-wide constitutional amendment.

This movement is gaining traction in other parts of the world and also passed a ballot initiative in Orange County, Florida by a whopping 89%! But in order to get on the state-wide 2024 ballot, the measure must be supported by large number of registered Florida voters, and organizers could use your help!

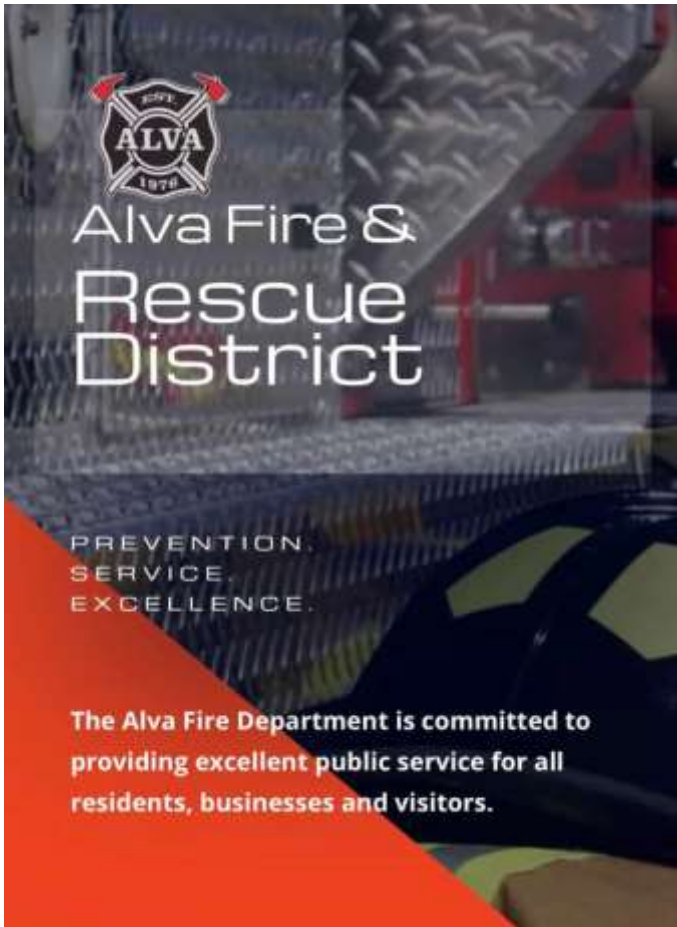
Learn more or volunteer to spread the word at floridarighttocleanwater.org If you have any questions about the petition process or getting involved, please contact info@calusawaterkeeper.org

GET THE PETITION:



https://initiativepetitions.elections.myflorida.com/InitiativeForms/Volunteer/DSDE155A_999_2202_EN.PDF





2660 Styles Road, Alva, Florida 33920

(239) 728-2223

The Alva Fire Control District is Seeking Firefighter Applicants

The Alva Fire Control 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 Department continually strives to provide a caring, courteous and a highly competent Fire and Rescue Emergency Service. We service over 39 square miles of predominantly rural development, approximately 3,200 residents and encompass numerous miles of the Caloosahatchee River. Experience preferred. The Alva Fire Control District has a tobacco and drug free workplace environment.

Minimum Application Requirements:

1. Florida Bureau of Fire Standards and Training Certification
2. Valid Florida Motor Vehicle License & Good Driving Record
3. Clean Criminal History
4. Current State of Florida EMT Certification
5. AHA CRP/BLS Provider

Required Documents:

You must present a copy of the following documents with the application:

1. Florida State Firefighter Certificate
2. Current Florida Motor Vehicle License
3. Current State of Florida EMT Certificate
4. AHA CPR/BLS Provider

To Apply:

Please forward a current resume and application to Chief Kuhn at bkuhn@alvafirecontrol.org or drop-off your resume to Station 121, 2660 Styles Rd., Alva, Florida 33920 between the hours of 9 AM - 4 PM. Applications can be picked up and delivered to Station 121.

The process consists of an application, written test and oral interview. Any applicant offered a conditional offer must be able to pass a physical exam, background check and a drug test. For any questions contact the Alva Fire Department at 239-728-2223

Applications will be accepted until 4 PM on April 22nd.





Health Planning Council SWFL
8961 Daniels Center Drive, Suite 405
Fort Myers, FL 33912

The Health Planning Council of SWFL have partnered with the Federal Government to help consumers in enrolling in high-quality health care coverage through the federal Marketplace. Our aim is to provide free and unbiased support to individuals and their households, helping them understand the available coverage options.

Upon request, we can assist in finding affordable coverage that aligns with your specific needs. We can also guide you through the application process to establish eligibility and enroll in coverage through the Marketplace. Furthermore, our assistance extends beyond the enrollment process, ensuring that you have the necessary tools and resources to effectively utilize and maintain your health coverage throughout the year.

If you have recently received a notice from ACCESS Florida regarding the loss of your Medicaid coverage, as well as a notice from the federal Marketplace offering assistance, we are here to help. Please feel free to contact our office to schedule a time to learn more about health care coverage options for you and your family. Call us at our toll-free line: 1-866-547-2793. You can also visit our website at www.enrollswfl.com to schedule an appointment with your local certified navigators.



NEW LOW-INCOME SPECIAL ENROLLMENT PERIOD

There is a new special enrollment period (SEP) available as of March 2022 that makes it easy for people with low income to enroll in a marketplace plan outside of open enrollment. The information in this FAQ only applies to the federal marketplace.

What is the new SEP for low-income people?

People who are eligible for an advance premium tax credit (APTC) and have a projected income at or below 150% Federal Poverty Line (FPL) (\$20,385 for a household of one and \$41,625 for a family of four in 2023) are now eligible for a new SEP on the federal marketplace that allows them to enroll in a plan *in any month during the year*, without having to experience a qualifying life event. State-based marketplaces (SBMs) have the option to provide this SEP, but they aren't required to. If you live in a state with an SBM, check with your state to see if they will be providing this SEP and when it will be implemented.

Who is eligible for this SEP?

To qualify for the new SEP, a person must:

1. Be eligible for an APTC based on the normal eligibility rules
2. Have an annual projected income that is at or below 150% FPL

This SEP doesn't change the rules for APTC eligibility. People who are not eligible for an APTC under normal rules (such as people who are eligible for insurance through their job) are not eligible for the SEP.

When will the SEP be available and how can it be accessed for people in the federal marketplace (HealthCare.gov)?

The SEP is available now in the federal marketplace. People can access it online through the HealthCare.gov application.

When would coverage begin for someone using this SEP?

For the federal marketplace, a person who enrolls using this SEP will have coverage beginning the first day of the month following plan selection, no matter which day during the month the person applied.

Consumers who think they may qualify should visit HealthCare.gov, call us at 1.866.547.2793, or visit www.EnrollSWFL.com to set up an appointment with their local navigator.





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!

Berne Davis Botanical Gardens

Downtown Fort Myers

2166 Virginia Ave, Fort Myers
Across the street from Edison Fort Winter Estates
Park in the Larchmont Ave lot
No Entrance Fee

Summer hours **ONLY** Tuesday thru Sept.30th 9 AM to Noon

Stroll gardens with bromeliads, hibiscus, rare and tropical fruit, roses, herbs, native plants, and bonsai display.

Visit our new orchid garden.

Looking for a garden club or plant society near you?
Contact the Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council (239) 332-4942.
Check out their website directory for garden clubs and plant societies.

Web site: <http://www.fmlcgardencouncil.com/council-directory/>
FB: Fort Myers-Lee County Garden Council, Inc. | Facebook

Member of National Garden Clubs,
Florida Federation of Garden Clubs &
American Public Gardens Assoc.

Youths and Adults **EXPERIENCE ARCHERY**



Lee County Archers welcomes youngsters, adults, individuals, and families, to experience and enjoy this exciting and emerging sport. An affordable individual or family membership fee provides full range access 24/7. Non-members are also welcome on Thursdays and Saturdays, from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm, for an introduction to the range and/or the basics of archery.

Join us at **Lee County Archers**, where skilled instructors and top-notch facilities await the adventurous. Become a part of our welcoming community.

Visit our website www.LeeCountyArchers.com for more information! Or...

scan the QR Code below.



SWEEPSTAKES DECEPTION



It's illegal for a company to tell someone to pay to enter a sweepstakes contest, or that buying something increases their odds of winning. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recently took action against a well-known sweepstakes operator for misleading consumers about sweepstakes entries and deceiving people for decades.

The [FTC alleged](#) that Publishers Clearing House (PCH) used manipulative language and designs on its website and in its email marketing that tricked consumers, including many older adults, into believing they had to buy products on the PCH website to enter a sweepstakes or improve their chances of winning. Customers who did buy something on PCH.com were in for a few surprises that didn't necessarily involve someone arriving at their door with a giant check and a TV crew.

In their complaint against PCH, the FTC charged the following:

- PCH used a deceptive cycle of emails and webpages that forced consumers through pages of advertisements and sales pitches before they could actually enter the sweepstakes.
- PCH failed to disclose the true price of goods by hiding shipping and handling fees that added an average of 40% to customers' orders.
- PCH's claims about "risk free" purchases were deceptive. Customers were not informed they would have to pay the shipping costs to return merchandise.
- PCH included misleading statements in its Privacy Policy that failed to disclose it share consumer data with other companies to target consumers with third-party ads.

As part of a settlement of the charges that it violated the FTC Act and CAN-SPAN Act, PCH agreed to pay \$18.5 million to the FTC to be used for customer refunds and to make [key changes](#) to its email and internet operations.

In Florida, game promotions or sweepstakes are also regulated by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Game promotions offering prizes totaling more than \$5,000 must file with FDACS seven days prior to commencement of the game promotion. Even game promotions based in other states must be filed if they are conducted in Florida and/or are open to Florida residents and have prizes valued at more than \$5,000.

In addition, a surety bond or statement of trust is required from the operator unless they have conducted game promotions in Florida for at least five consecutive years and they have had no civil, criminal or administrative actions instituted against them for a violation of Section [849.094](#), Florida Statutes (F.S.), during that five-year period. This protects consumers who participate by ensuring compensation if the game operator is unable to award prizes offered in the promotion.

If you're considering participating in a sweepstakes contest, here's what to know:

- Real sweepstakes are free and by chance. It's illegal to ask you to pay or buy something to enter.
- If you sign up for a contest, the promoters might sell your information to advertisers. If they do, you're likely to see targeted ads online and get more junk mail, telemarketing calls, and spam email.
- Scammers try to trick you into believing you won a prize. Never share your financial information or pay fees, taxes, or customs duties to get a prize.
- You can verify that a game promotion is properly registered in Florida by calling the FDACS Consumer Assistance Center at 1-800-435-7352 (English) or 1-800-352-9832 (Spanish), Monday through Friday between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm, Eastern Time.

Learn more about recognizing prize and sweepstakes scams by visiting [Game Promotions/Sweepstakes and Fake Prize, Sweepstakes, and Lottery Scams](#). If you have been a victim of a sweepstakes scam in Florida, visit [Florida-ConsumerHelp.com](#) and [file a complaint](#).

Next Veteran Recognition Honor Flight #25 Scheduled for September 30, 2023

Collier and Lee County Military Veterans are Invited to Register NOW



Collier-Lee Honor Flight is pleased to announce that the next Honor Flight, Flight #25, is scheduled to take place on September 30, 2023. We extend a warm invitation to all military veterans from Collier and Lee County to register for consideration to participate for free in this extraordinary event.

In addition to welcoming veterans, we are also seeking compassionate volunteers to serve as Guardians for our esteemed veterans during these historic journeys. As Guardians, these volunteers will accompany and support the veterans throughout the trip, ensuring their comfort and safety.

Collier-Lee Honor Flight's mission is to provide free air transportation to local veterans, enabling them to visit the memorials in Washington, D.C., dedicated to honoring their remarkable service and sacrifices. These trips serve as a poignant reminder of the valor and dedication displayed by our veterans.

During the Honor Flight, we introduce surprises of recognition and honor, ensuring that each veteran feels deeply appreciated throughout the day. "It is our firm belief that these brave men and women deserve nothing less than our utmost gratitude and admiration," says Debi Lux, Collier-Lee Honor Flight originator.

We prioritize our most senior heroes. Wheelchairs are provided for all veterans to assure their comfort and safety. The support for these trips is made possible by our dedicated military and non-military volunteers and comes at no cost to the veterans.

We encourage individuals and companies to consider sponsoring our Honor Flights, as we continuously seek support for our veteran heroes. Sponsors will receive prominent and continuous mention and recognition on our website as a token of our appreciation for their invaluable contribution.

SGT Richard Erschik, one of the veterans who recently participated in Honor Flight #24, expressed his profound gratitude, stating, "When I got out of the Army in 1967, I had to hide my uniform because of Vietnam War protestors. This Honor Flight experience made me proud, again, that I wore one."



For more information regarding veterans, guardians, and sponsorship opportunities, please visit the Collier Honor Flight website at <https://www.collierhonorflight.org/> or contact us at 239-777-9295.

SCORE Southwest 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 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.



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-l-Lee-County,-FL-jobs.html>

ON THE RIVER – Connecting ALVA Florida NEIGHBORS and NEIGHBORHOODS monthly, online, FREE



Charleston Park Neighborhood Association

2541 Charleston Park Drive, Alva, FL 33920. 239-728-8895
Charlestonpark1926@gmail.com

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



The Great Calusa Blueway Paddling Trail



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

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



www.RichAndLaurieInSouthFlorida.com

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

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

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



The Firehouse Community Theatre, Inc.

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



ARSENIC & OLD LACE

firehouse
community theatre

by Joseph Kesselring

October
27, 28, 29
November
3, 4, 5, 2023

Tickets
CALL: (863) 675-3066 (leave message)
Online
www.firehousecommunitytheatre.com

(Comedy)

Insanity runs in this family; it practically gallops. Meet the Brewsters, some Messmer (theater critic), Teddy (thanks he is Theodore Roosevelt), Jonathan (psychotic escapist), Abby and Martha (nice elderly serial killers) and many others who soon learn not to trust the elderberry wine.



(Comedy)

Insanity runs in this family; it practically gallops. Meet the Brewsters, some Messmer (theater critic), Teddy (thanks he is Theodore Roosevelt), Jonathan (psychotic escapist), Abby and Martha (nice elderly serial killers) and many others who soon learn not to trust the elderberry wine.

October
27, 28, 29
November
3, 4, 5, 2023



(Comedy)

Little Harmon Christmas sets a record attempting to put on a show. (Detailed description of the play follows in the original image.)

December
1, 2, 3 &
5, 9, 10
2023



Drama

As the age of artificial intelligence and Big Data grows, a parallel of algorithms, being humans has a program that simulates what's programmed to be the only one that can truly understand the mind of another to begin the love story the characters must explore?

January
5, 6, 7 &
12, 13, 15, 2024

Til Beth Do Us Part
A 1960s rock musical comedy
(Farce)

Whether you're married, single, widowed, or divorced, you'll find yourself laughing at the antics of a group of friends who have found themselves in a series of hilarious situations.

February
9, 10, 11 &
16, 17, 18, 2024

CAROOTS
WHAT'S A LITTLE MURDER AMONG FRIENDS?
(Comedy, Thriller)

In a Manhattan high-rise, an all-ages party for a thirty-year-old couple turns into a blood-soaked mystery on New Year's Eve. Friends in this play will challenge your preconceptions and explore a human journey with extraordinary twists and turns. All are welcome and you'll have a great time!

March
8, 9, 10 &
15, 16, 17
2024

The Book Club Play
(Comedy)

Books of laughter and literature collide in this comedy about books and the people who love them. The Book Club Play is a hilarious look at the lives of a group of friends who are reading a book together.

APRIL
19, 20, 21 &
26, 27, 28
2024

firehouse
community theatre

241 North
Bridge Street
Labelle, FL

PHONE (863) 675-3066
ONLINE www.firehousecommunitytheatre.com

Six (6) Regular Season shows
Additional talent all year long

A bit of ALVA History

44 Years Ago. And still preserving the past.

Grant Fichter, member of the Museum Board of Trustees and Alva INC continues the preservation today. Contact him or visit the museum every Saturday 10am to 2pm.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/242200452480332/user/100066659181396/>

NEWS-PRESS  **People**
SECTION D SATURDAY, APRIL 7, 1979 *****

*Southwest Florida Lifestyles,
Culture And Entertainment*





News-Press/Rosanne Blowers

The window, in the photo at right, is made of clear and ruby-colored glass and is one of three which were in the old Quanita Chapel built in 1908. The Chapel was blown off of its foundation by a hurricane and the window panels are now part of one wall in the Alva Museum. Through the glass can be seen the First Methodist Church across the street. Above middle, Denny White, an Alva resident, feeds a horse to be a good means of transportation around the small community. Above, a horse is the lone silhouette in an old shed near Alva. In the top photo, one of the rooms of the Alva Museum.

Alva

People are going to be going back

By KATHLEEN POWELL
News-Press Staff Writer

The shy flower of the Caloosahatchee was discovered by a small group of people taking advantage of a field trip arranged by the Lee County Junior Museum and Nature Center on Thursday.

It was a sun-drenched journey into a peaceful past, focusing on the quiet community of Alva, about 15 miles east of Fort Myers between state roads 78 and 80, and was one in the series of events arranged for the nature center's second annual Caloosahatchee Basin Festival which ends Sunday.

"Though I've lived in Fort Myers for eight years and often gone through Alva, I never stepped there before," said Mrs. Frank Hammond of Fort Myers. "I found it absolutely delightful."

Mrs. Hammond was one of about 50 persons who made the trip from the nature center. Her delight in what she saw was obviously shared by the others as they asked questions about the old buildings and homes, seemingly cherished by present owners. Mrs. Hammond said: "I found the town and the beautifully maintained old buildings — especially the Alva Museum — just fantastic. In Alva they are trying to preserve the heritage of the community in a way you see only rarely. The museum is small but has some very uncommen exhibits. I was charmed by what I saw — and I intend to go back."

The safari began in Alva with a talk on the community's historical background by pert and pretty Margaret Foster, president of the Alva Garden Club. Earlier this week, Mrs. Foster and her husband Charles A. Foster appeared in a lecture/slide program on Alva at the nature center.

"One of the things that surprises people about Alva, is the name," Mrs. Foster told Thursday's tour group. "Many think it refers to Thomas Alva Edison, but that is not so." She explained that the name came from a flower seen growing on the banks of the Caloosahatchee by an early river captain, Peter Nelson.

The town, Mrs. Foster said, was platted in 1882 and for a time enjoyed parallel growth to that of its downstream sister community of Fort Myers. In the days when water transportation was the method of travel, Alva was the seventh and main stop for river boats plying the river from Fort Myers to Lake Okechobee. At that time it was part of Monroe County with Key West the county seat. It became part of Lee County in 1887.

In the small, meticulously tended Alva Museum, visitors marveled at the quality and variety of the exhibits. Of special interest were two recent acquisitions. One a six-foot mirror from the oldtime river boat, the Bortha Lee, and the other a Seminole canoe, thought to be between 80 and 100 years old. Carved from a huge cypress tree, the canoe is more than 12 feet long and well pitted with the bore holes its original makers made and then plugged as they tested the thickness of the wood.

Mrs. Foster said the canoe was given to the Alva Museum by Wes and Barbara Cleaves. The mirror is on loan from James D. English II.

The Alva Garden Club originated and maintains the museum and several of its members, in addition to Mrs. Foster, led the Thursday tours. Among them were Irbey Clay, Flora Farmer, Laurie Cotsball and Veechie Goggin.

"It's very unusual for such a small community to maintain a museum of this quality," Mrs. Hammond said after the tour, talking about an exhibit of war-torn bones on a couple of shelves. "I definitely will go back."



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



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



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

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



Six Mile Cypress Slough, Lee County Park

7751 Penzance Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33966

A mile of wonder 30 minutes away from Alva.



Manatee Park

10901 Palm Beach Blvd,
Fort Myers, FL 33905

239 690 5030



Olga Community Park

2325 S Olga Dr, Fort Myers, FL 33905

(239) 533-7275



Hickey's Creek Mitigation Park

17980 Palm Beach Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

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



ALVA BOAT RAMP PARK

21580 Pearl St,

Alva, FL 33920



W.P. Franklin Lock & Dam South Recreation Area

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



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

W.P Franklin Lock & Dam CAMPGROUND

Camp by reservation only

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

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



Alva Community Center PARK

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

Shady lawns & baseball field

Telegraph Creek: Unspoiled kayak trail

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





NORTH FORT MYERS Recreation Park

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

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

Veterans Park Recreation Center

55 Homestead Road South, Lehigh Acres, FL 33936



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



Alva Scrub Preserve



Telegraph Creek Preserve



Oak hammock



Frank Mann Preserve



CALOOSAHATCHEE REGIONAL PARK

19130 North River Road, Alva, FL
33920

EMAIL: leeparks@leegov.com

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



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 PC TIPS MANUAL APP FOR FREE

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 McManis
of Oak Park, Alva
Contact Maggie to find out more at: Maggi1rn@aatt.net



Sweet and Spicy Mango Shrimp

PREP TIME COOK TIME

5 minutes 15 minutes

INGREDIENTS

TOTAL TIME

20 minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 med sz onion, chopped

3-4 cloves garlic, minced

2 tablespoons soy sauce

2 tablespoons lime juice

2 tablespoons sweet Thai chili sauce

1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1-pound cooked peeled, deveined shrimp with tails removed

3 mangoes, chopped

lime and basil for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Heat Olive Oil in a large skillet over medium heat.
2. Add onion and sauté for 5 minutes until softened.
3. Add garlic, soy sauce, lime juice, Thai chili sauce, red pepper and shrimp to the skillet and toss to combine.
4. Cook for 3-5 minutes until shrimp is heated through.
5. Add the mango, stir to incorporate and warm through.
6. Plate the shrimp and garnish with lime.

Serve with rice.





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@bbssun.org**

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

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!



Take the Tour!
Step back in time on your own time!

DOWNTOWN LABELLE
Self-Guided Historic Walking Tour

DOWNLOAD THE APP OR USE YOUR BROWSER!

It's hot as the devil out there!



Now's the perfect time to think cool thoughts about costume ideas for the LABELLE Howl-O-Ween Scary Cute Pet Costume Contest! Great trophy prizes and scary cute fun!

Sign up today!

Have a wiener dog or a small breed dog? Ever heard of the Downtown Doxie Dash?

It's happening at Howl-O-Ween toooooo!! It's cute - SO CUTE!

Race your little friends! Sign up right here:

<https://www.eventeny.com/events/applications/application/?id=1659>

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.



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

The **NEW** Riverdale Branch



RIVERDALE BRANCH LIBRARY
2421 Buckingham Road, Fort Myers





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>



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.





LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR FRIENDS, FAMILY AND NEIGHBORS

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults.

You'll build skills and confidence you need to reach out and provide initial support to those who are struggling. You'll also learn how to help connect them to appropriate support.

AFTER THE COURSE, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO:

- Recognize common signs and symptoms of mental health challenges.
- Recognize common signs and symptoms of substance use challenges.
- Understand how to interact with a person in crisis.
- Know how to connect a person with help.
- Use self-care tools and techniques.

Join the more than

2.6 MILLION

First Aiders who have chosen to be the difference in their community.

REGISTER TODAY FOR IN-PERSON TRAINING!

Date and Time:

September 20-21, 2023

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location:

Hendry County Emergency Management

4425 FL-80, LaBelle, FL

How to Register:

Email Edwin Melendez at

Edwin.Melendez@FLhealth.gov

Learn how to respond with the Mental Health First Aid Action Plan (**ALGEE**):

- A**ssess for risk of suicide or harm.
- L**isten nonjudgmentally.
- G**ive reassurance and information.
- E**ncourage appropriate professional help.
- E**ncourage self-help and other support strategies.



For more information, visit [MHFA.org](https://www.MHFA.org)

Higher Power Church is an online church to search, discover, celebrate, and share Jesus Christ as our Higher Power." It is a safe place for all, especially those in addiction, to grow spiritually with God."



A New Church Near You!
In fact, as close as your living room,
office, kitchen, or phone.

**HIGHER
POWER
CHURCH**
HigherPowerChurch.org

ONLINE ONLY REV. JOHN ZIMMERMAN
WORSHIP WITH US

Reverend John Zimmerman, Ordained Pastor and Evangelist from the Western Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church travels with his wife Christine in their truck and fifth wheel trailer up and down America's east coast all year long.





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

Every week, Friday, 10am-2pm

ALVA UMC

Food Pantry @ Bethany House

Food Pantry: 9am-12pm 2nd & 4th Wednesdays

239-728-2277

CALVARY NATIONS Church

19850 Palm Beach Boulevard, Alva

Every Saturday, 3pm until supplies run out.

239-7285566

St. Vincent DePaul RC

Our Lady's Cupboard Food Pantry

Call (239) 694-3985 for hours open.

Some of our local ALVA area churches:

St. Vincent DePaul's RC Church

13031 Palm Beach Boulevard, Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.stvincentftmyers.org 239-693-0818

Alva United Methodist Church

21440 Pearl St. P.O Box 96

Alva, FL 33920

Alvamc@embarqmail.com

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

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

www.calvarynations.org 239-728-5566

First Baptist Church of Alva

2790 Joel Blvd, Alva, FL, 33920

www.alvabaptist.com 239-728-2034

Grace United Methodist Church, Ft Myers Shores

14036 Matanzas Drive, Ft Myers, Florida 33905

www.egracechurch.com 239-694-2797

Bethlehem Lutheran Church

14531 Old Olga Road,

Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.blcefml.org 239-694-3878

Olga Baptist Church

2364 South Olga Drive

Fort Myers, FL 33905

www.olgabaptist.org 239-694-2012

olgabapch1@embarqmail.com



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.

<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

-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

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



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/

Manatee & Eco River Tours

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



SUNSET CRUISE!

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



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

To book visit our website at: www.ManateeAndEcoRiverTours.com

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Humana goes the extra mile to help you get the care you need. This is more than health insurance. It's human care.

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239-771-9949 (TTY: 711)
 Local Alva agent
 7 days a week
 bwillis12@humana.com

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 to healthcare™

* There's no obligation to enroll.

[†] Humana Inc. First Quarter 2022 Earnings Release, April 27, 2022. Humana is a Medicare Advantage HMO, PPO and PFFS organization with a Medicare contract. Enrollment in any Humana plan depends on contract renewal. **At Humana, it is important you are treated fairly.** Humana Inc. and its subsidiaries comply with applicable federal civil rights laws and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, ancestry, ethnicity, marital status, religion or language. **English:** ATTENTION: If you do not speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call **877-320-1235 (TTY: 711)**. **Español (Spanish):** ATENCIÓN: Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al **877-320-1235 (TTY: 711)**. **繁體中文 (Chinese):** 注意：如果您使用繁體中文，您可以免費獲得語言援助服務。請致電 **877-320-1235 (聽障專線：711)**。



<https://supportukrainenow.org/>

Support Ukraine Now (SUN), we are a community of Ukrainian and international activists. Our mission is to engage the network of leaders in supporting Ukraine.

We work on providing the most effective help to Ukraine, in immediate response and rebuilding, by enabling foreigners (individuals and organizations) to help.



We started as an informational platform, and turned into an ecosystem of diverse projects in the civil sector, economy, diplomacy, and welfare.

Initiated by Global Shapers Hubs in Ukraine (Kyiv, Lviv), and supported by the Global Shapers Community and the World Economic Forum.

<https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/maui-strong>



The Maui Strong Fund is providing financial resources that can be deployed quickly, with a focus on rapid response and recovery for the devastating wildfires on Maui.

HCF will not be collecting a fee for donations to the Maui Strong Fund; 100 percent of the funds will be distributed for community needs.

<https://fortmyers.org/resources/hurricane-information/>

Hurricane Ian

The Greater Fort Myers Chamber of Commerce seeks to provide solutions and strengthen our local economy following Hurricane Ian. Please complete our Business Damage Assessment Form, which you will find below along with numerous hurricane-related resources. This includes important articles, volunteer/donation opportunities, emergency information, FAQs and more.

Wildfires are EVERYWHERE in North America, Europe, Africa...everywhere this year. What can you do to help people dealing with the loss of homes, loved ones, entire communities?

<https://www.redcross.org/donate/donation.html/>



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 – Connecting ALVA Florida NEIGHBORS and NEIGHBORHOODS monthly, online, FREE

ON THE RIVER Alva Community Newsletter – 2023-24 Advertising Rates

The monthly online OTR E-Newsletter is circulated to 12,000+ readers and is FREE to subscribers. We encourage subscribers to 'share' it.

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.

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CONTACT: Ken DeWalt, publisher, with any questions. kendewalt@ontheriver.org

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