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## Papa Bill McGinnes & his bagpipers are back to greet the Great Green Horde



Papa Rocco's Sponsors Annual St. Patrick's Day Walking Parade • (Story on Page 8)



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## GULF SHORES CITY COUNCIL

# City considers turning old hospital into new Justice Center

By John Mullen

Gulf Shores took up issues on two huge projects planned by the city at the March 4 council work session.

The council discussed a contract with Police Facility Design Group to present a plan to retrofit the former Sacred Heart Hospital south of Cotton Creek Drive and east of State Route 59.

"The City contracted with PFDG for the design of an all-new Justice Center which would combine the police department, jail, and municipal courts under one roof, a memo from Construction Manager Clint Colvin states. "Unfortunately, when the bids were received in December, all bids came in significantly over budget. In an effort to keep the project within budget, the decision was made to retrofit the former Sacred Heart Building with the Justice Center. This will provide the updated facility so desperately needed by the GSPD within the original budget for the project.

The project will also include adding a jail to the rear of the building and the total cost for the design would be \$1.5 million.

Second, the council considered a second amendment to the contract with Goodwyn Mills and Cawood on the design of the new high school, raising the contract amount from \$6.4 million to \$7.8 million. The second amendment will also include a practice pavilion and both will up the price for the school to more than \$138 million.

Gulf Shores also plans to approve a new 95 unit hotel in midtown Gulf Shores on West Second Street north of the Happy Pappy coffee shop.

Townplace Suites at Midtown is the proposed brand for the site at 1550 W. Second St. and staff plans to approve the hotel plan with conditions including getting permission from the FAA to be taller than 50 feet for the elevator and parapet. It will be a four-story building and 298 parking spaces are included.

Another request before the city's planning commission is for a two-building development in the same area as Townplace Suites. Developers are seeking to incorporate residential, office, retail and restaurants uses in the development. It is part of the overall PUD approved by the council in February of 2023.

"The PUD was designed and approved as a nine-lot mixed use, pedestrian-oriented commercial project with professional office, retail, restaurant and residential uses," a staff memo on the Jan. 9 planning commission agenda stated. "The entire infrastructure for the PUD has been constructed, including parking drive aisles, pedestrian sidewalks, stormwater drainage, lighting, dumpster pads and screening, and landscaping."

The request then was to remove one of the buildings on the site and the mobile vendor court to build a 100-room hotel. At its November 2022 meeting, the planning commission gave a 9-0 favorable recommendation for the proposed changes.

There are more than 17,000 vacation rental properties on the Alabama Gulf Coast between condos, beach houses and hotels. There are a total of 2,473 hotel rooms in Gulf Shores and Orange Beach and none in Fort Morgan.

During the work session, the March 4 work session city council also discussed:

- A Restore Act-funded project to help switch residents from septic tanks to city sewer service as part of a \$5.9 million grant to improve water quality, habitat and shorelines on Little Lagoon. The program manager will be Grants and Coordinator Dan Bond.

- Replacing Bobbie Rooker as the Library Advisory Board's bank signatory and adding Mary Allison Bauer as president and signatory. The same resolution will remove Robert Malone as Public Building Authority chairman and bank signatory.

- Adding four new travel cards for the police department for officers to use for training, conferences and other uses permitted by executive staff.

- Hiring Blue Zones to create a blue zones map of safe pathways to the schools for \$19,986 focusing on the Gulf Pines neighborhood which will soon see traffic rerouted from Canal Road because of construction of the pedestrian bridge.

- Giving permission to apply for an Alabama Public Library Service grant to help employees Kelli Day and Shelby Newhouse complete work on a master's degree in library and information studies. The application would be for \$10,500 and if successful would be awarded this summer. This is the second year for the library to apply after successfully securing the grant in 2023.

- Replacing 26-year-old lighting for fields at the Sportsplex with Musco LED equipment for \$1.4 million.

- Granting assembly permits for the 2024 Hangout Music Festival, for S'mores on the Shore events on May 23 and Aug. 1, World Make Music Day on June 21 and the Sunset Music Series at Gulf Place on the town green in Sept.

The City also announced the commencement of the paid parking season at Gulf Place and Lagoon Pass among others at several public beaches from March 1 to Nov. 30. Residents and property owners can enjoy the benefit of free parking at these sites with a valid Hurricane Re-Entry Pass. Residents also have access to the East Gulf Place Resident Only Parking Area.



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## AROUND TOWN



### Larry Bender: Foley's robotics teaching volunteer gem

The Baldwin County Schools District has asked the community to "take a moment to thank and honor the robotics volunteer & mentor Larry Bender, who is a real value to Baldwin County Schools." Larry (pictured in class) has been volunteering his time and expertise on STEM and robotics in six Foley area schools for 10 years. Despite dealing with Parkinson's he has organized parts, classrooms, robotic kits, and teams, built example robots, and helped kids day after day, week after week. He completely designed and built a working robotics classroom for teacher Danielle Ludlow, and taught teacher Thomas Thorjusen how to organize tools, inventory and bin parts, and make team kits. Larry also went to all of the competitions, including the Alabama VEX State Championships. He ran scoring and did inspections at all local tournaments.

Larry also owns over \$10,000 in robotics parts and kits that he has let Foley students use to expand their capabilities.

"Unfortunately, Larry has been slowed down by a brain tumor and other complications," said Ludlow. "He is now going back to Indiana to his summer home and be with his family. Thank you Mr. Bender for your dedication to BCBE schools and the Robotics programs."

### O.B. Coast Guard Auxiliary Safe Boating Class March 23

The US Coast Guard Auxiliary, Flotilla 3-10 is partnering with the City of Orange Beach to present a Safe Boating class on March 23 at the Orange Beach Fire Department, 25855 John M. Snook Drive (off Hwy 161).

Course material is from the National Association of Safe Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and Alabama supplemental material with a final quiz and Certificate for the Alabama boat operators' certification. The class will start promptly at 8 a.m. and is expected to complete about 3 p.m., with pizza provided for lunch.

If available, Orange Beach Marine Police will present a short discussion on area waterways and safe boating. The course covers Boat Familiarization, Trip Planning, Safe Boat Operations, Legal Boat Operation Requirements (Life Jackets, navigation lights, sound devices, fire extinguishers, etc.), Boating Emergencies, and Enjoying Water Sports. Additional material on local Law Enforcement (LE), area waterways, the IntraCoastal Waterway (ICW), and boating knots will be covered. Minors taking the class must be accompanied by a parent or responsible adult. Cost is \$35 for materials, payable by cash or check at the class with additional family members, First Responders and military \$15. To register, email BoatSafe310@gmail.com and include how to spell your name, or contact Glenn Conrad, Flotilla 3-10 Public Education at 850-786-7566.

# Papa Rocco's St. Paddy's Walking Parade will roll again

## Fun times back for Papa Bill McGinnes & company on March 17

By Fran Thompson

It was way back in 1983 when Bill McGinnes decided to bring his concept of "warm beer & lousy pizza" to downtown Gulf Shores.

One year later, The Island's favorite Scotsman (by way of Michigan) assumed leadership of the annual St. Patrick's Day (March 17) Walking Parade in his new hometown.

The concept is simple: A throng of revelers - young & old, local & snowbird - follow Papa sponsored bagpipers to most of the bars in downtown Gulf Shores. Grand Marshall McGinnes may not be walking the entire route this year, but he has secured the GSPD to keep paraders safe in their journey.

The procession starts around 9:30 a.m. from Papa Rocco's, located two blocks from the beach on Hwy. 59.

Papa Rocco is paying for the Gulf Shores Police Dept. to help with traffic control and safety concerns, and the GSPD even suggested that McGinnes talk to the other business owners on the parade route about sharing the cost of providing security. "I appreciate that. And it's important to me that everybody remains safe. But the whole idea when we started this thing was to go in and help them get a little jump start to the season, not ask for money. So, I would just as soon pay for it myself since it's become part of my legacy at this point."

The March 17 parade of pubs has been a Gulf Shores tradition since the mid-1970's when then Pink Pony Pub owner Vince Murphy recruited the late bagpiper Jocko McLain and a few friends to visit a list of bars that mostly no longer exist.

There was no such thing as a spring break season back then, as many local restaurants and retailers closed up shop between Labor Day and Memorial Day weekends.

"When Vince Murphy started this, there were maybe 30 people," McGinnes said. "No way we ever dreamed it would get this big. I am getting calls from all over the U.S. This has become a really big deal, and all we were trying to do was make it be a good time while giving a little jump start to the local pubs."

Murphy passed the baton to local character John Kelliher, who led the swarm behind Jocko into Papa Rocco's just after McGinnes opened his restaurant in 1984. Kelliher, The Colonel to his friends, deemed McGinnes worthy of the grand marshal's position in 1989.

"We didn't have a spring break tourists back then. It's gotten a lot bigger, obviously. I'm expecting the biggest crowd yet," McGinnes said. "People come from all over Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. Our snowbirds love it. And we do get some spring breakers."

"We even have grandkids of some of the originals coming out with us," McGinnes added.

The Green Horde is easy to find, as the crowd takes over the grounds at every stop, and this is just the seventh parade since the passing of the beloved McLean, the parade's original bagpiper, who died in August of 2017 at his home in Canada.

But although Jocko is gone in body, his spirit will always be a big part of the festivities and the heart and soul of the parade, according to McGinnes.

"I met Jocko at the American Legion and we immediately sat down and killed off a bottle of Irish whiskey between us," McGinnes said. "We started talking about Scotland and the Rangers (soccer team) and it was like we had known each other for years. There were a couple of years when we hitched a ride back to Papa Rocco's, but I can't do that anymore."

McGinnes said he loves that the parade is a way for wintering grandparents to spend a fun day with their adult children

and adult grandchildren. He added that a big part of the parade's allure is that it is often a reunion for old friends that know for sure they will see each other on St. Patrick's Day in downtown Gulf Shores.

"We want to make sure that people are being safe when crossing public roads. That's paramount. People need to stay safe," he said.

"I'm not even sure we should be calling it a parade," he added. "But we are not sure what we are doing besides having fun," McGinnes said. "I do know that lots of people come up and tell me they look forward to this every year."

The Gulf Shores Police Dept. has asked all participants to drink from plastic cups (see Papa Rocco's advertisement on page 2), stay on the sidewalks, obey traffic signals and use discretion when consuming cocktails.

McGinnes will pay to bring bagpiping pipers led by his nephew (Neil McGinnes) to signal when it is time to move to the next pub. They will also play songs at most every stop.

"Jocko was the original," McGinnes said. "He was doing it way before my boys came down and played. We were close for many years. Jock gave me my first kilt."

After leaving Papa Rocco's, the parade will proceed to The Ice House, Mudbugs, The Steamer, Desoto's, The Hangout, The Pink Pony, Gulf Island Grille and Hooters. The crawl ends around 2 p.m. at Mikee's. But by then most of the crowd will have been left behind to eat a meal at one of the other stops.

**Pictured:** Bill McGinnes and award winning bagpiper Neil McGinnes, who happens to be Bill's nephew.







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# 50th Annual Orange Beach Festival of Art March 9-10

The 50th annual Orange Beach Festival of Art is set for March 9-10 on the joint grounds of the Coastal Arts Center of Orange Beach and Waterfront Park on Canal Road. Festival hours are Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

A relaxed, uncomplicated layout, easy to enjoy in just a few hours on beautiful waterfront grounds, the art selection is fine-art focused and free.

Public parking located at both the Island Church and the Orange Beach City Hall complex. Shuttle service is provided with an all-day pass for \$5.

Parking for guests approaching from east Orange Beach is at the Orange Beach Presbyterian Church. There are two designated spaces for golf carts adjacent to the kids' playground and west of the festival entrance on Canal Rd.

There is also a fenced-in area inside the fest for bicycles and limited handicap parking on the front grounds of the O.B. Community Church.

The festival will feature more than 100 booths of local and regional fine art, plus exciting acts on the performing arts and music stages. Live visual arts demonstrations include hot glass blowing and cool clay sculpting.

Savory gourmet offerings will be presented in the Culinary Arts area and food vendors include Shack Street Food, Will Yum's food truck and Tin Tin's Rock n Roll Food Truck.

Children can dive into fun hands-on experiences in the Kids Art Alley will open with the festival on Saturday and at noon on Sunday. Kids' Art Alley ticket price: \$5 for 6 tickets. Orange Beach Wildlife Center staff will be there to give kids of all ages can get up close and personal with animal ambassadors of all types.

The show was selected as Best Art Show in Alabama for three of the past four years by Alabama magazine and is currently ranked nationally at #76 for the top

100 fine art and design shows.

"With our focus on presenting truly gifted and professional fine artists, the show has garnered a reputation among designers and decorators, said CAC Director Desiree Hodge. "But patrons of all types can find both fun and affordable original art."

More info: [OrangeBeachArtsFestival.com](http://OrangeBeachArtsFestival.com), facebook or call 251-981-ARTS (2787).



## MUSIC STAGE '24

### Saturday

10:15 am - Wylie Pete  
11:45 am - Groovinators (**Pictured**)  
1:15 pm - The Destinations  
2:45 pm - J.E.R.I.

### Sunday

11:00 am - Zoe Burdette  
12:30 pm - Roman Street  
2:00 pm - Swamp Symphony

## PERFORMING ARTS STAGE '24

### Saturday

10:30 am - Riley's Balloon Magic Show  
11:15 am - Coasal Ballet - Nutcracker  
12:15 pm - Gulf Coast Jujutsu  
1:00 pm - Gulf Coast Line Dancers  
1:45 pm - Expect Excellence Music Studio  
3:00 pm - Entertainment Ignited Fire Dancers

### Sunday

11:15 pm - Magic Comedy Show  
12:15 pm - South Baldwin Dance Center  
1:00 pm - Mariachi Jalisco Band  
2:00 pm - Excelsior Band  
3:15 pm - G.S.P. Nature Center Raptor Demo



## Foley BBQ & Blues Cook Off March 8-9 at Heritage Park

The 16th Annual Foley BBQ & Blues Cook Off, an event that features award-winning barbecue, local musicians, food vendors, craft and retail vendors, and a kids' zone will be held March 8-9 at Heritage Park in downtown Foley. The fest kicks off on Friday night from 5 -9 p.m. with live music, food trucks, and a full bar.

Saturday's festivities begin at 10 a.m., with the highlight being the 30 backyard division cook teams from across the Gulf Coast competing for Grand Championship and "People's Choice" titles.

Admission is \$10 per day and includes food samples and live music from Foley High School bands, The Three57s, and (**pictured**) The Defrosters. More info: [foleybbqandblues.net](http://foleybbqandblues.net).

Fest proceeds benefit the South Baldwin Chamber Foundation, an organization that enriches education, and betters students' lives within in South Baldwin.

## March 9 mini golf tourney includes OBHS golf teams

The Meet The Mako Mini Golf Tournament will be held with the girl's and boy's high school golf teams from Orange Beach High School at Beachside Mini Golf in Orange Beach on Saturday, March 9 from 1-4 p.m. This will be a chance for the team, their friends, schoolmates and family to have fun a mini golf tournament before the season begins. Guests can come watch or play mini golf. If they wear Mako apparel they will receive \$2 off.

## Perdido Key Lighted Night Market March 28 at Villagio

The Perdido Key Area Chamber's Lost Key Lighted Night Market will take place at Villagio, (13700 Perdido Key Dr.) on March 28 from 5-8 p.m. Each of the 35 vendors will decorate their tent with unique lights and will have opportunities for attendees to purchase arts and crafts, handmade jewelry, sample local flavors and catch a performance from Mike Diamond, a

familiar voice at the Flora-Bama (6:30-7:30 p.m.) More info: [perdidochamber.com](http://perdidochamber.com).

## East Verbena Ave. project includes decorative lighting

Foley City Council will spend \$144,515 to improve lighting, parking and drainage and the roadway on East Verbena Ave. The project includes work next to commercial buildings at the site to reshape existing parking stalls and make improvements to the concrete, landscaping and right of way near the east side of Alabama 59.

The added alternates will also pay for decorative lighting and improve drainage around local businesses. The city also approved new sidewalks along Hwy. 59 from the planned improvement site south to Commercial Bank.

"That building is so low and that asphalt is so high that water wants to go into the building," Hellmich said. "So, they're actually improving the drainage behind it, where it connects back to that alley," said Mayor Ralph Hellmich. "We own the parking. It's all public parking. So, it will be a benefit to all the businesses in the area and it will look good too."



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## AROUND TOWN



### Underdogs Community Plant Sale For Paws is March 16

The 4th Annual Save Underdogs Annual Community Plants For Paws Sale will be held on Saturday, March 16 from 10 a.m. 'til 4 p.m. at the Perdido Key Sports Bar. The fundraiser will feature a unique variety of flowers, vegetables and herbs for sale. Gorgeous hanging floral baskets and ferns will also be available as well as a beautiful selection of locally grown plants and flowers from local growers.

Proceeds benefit Save Underdogs and allow the non-profit to continue its mission of a group of volunteers that has been dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating & re-homing over sick, injured, abused and unwanted animals since 2004. More info: Facebook, saveunderdogsrescue@gmail.com or saveunderdogs.com.

**Pictured:** Jan Payne Mazzullo shares pictures from a past Save Underdogs plant sale.



### Students host Gulf Shores Gives Back Day on March 14

Get ready for a wave of service! Gulf Shores City Schools will launch Gulf Shores Gives Back, a new community-wide service day on March 14. This inaugural event is all about uniting our students, teachers, and community in a collective effort to strengthen the heart of our beautiful city. Spearheaded by the Gulf Shores City Schools' Mental Health Advisory Committee, all GSCS students will participate by tackling a variety of projects, ranging from beach cleanups and park revitalization to delivering meals to those in need and spreading cheer at local nursing homes.

The entire community to be a part of the wave:

- Visit [gsboe.org/gsgivesback](https://gsboe.org/gsgivesback) to explore the various projects and find one that speaks to your interests.
- Sponsor a school project: Show your support by sponsoring a student project and helping to make it a reality.
- Join a project: The Learning Campus at Gulf State Park has partnered with the Center of Ecotourism to pot and transplant native plants for habitat restoration projects. Just head to the Learning Campus any time from 9 a.m. till noon. No RSVP is needed, and supplies will be provided.
- Partner with the Christian Service Center: Contact the Christian Service Center at 251-968-5256 to find out how you can support the needs of this community-wide service organization.
- Spread the word: Share the excitement with your friends, family, and neighbors.

The day will kick off with a rousing pep rally at the middle school practice field at 8:30 a.m. Then, it's off to the various project sites throughout the city. In the event of rain or severe weather, March 15 has been selected as the backup date. Gulf Shores Gives Back is more than just a day of service; it's about fostering a culture of giving back, building connections, and celebrating the spirit of Gulf Shores by making a lasting impact on our community!

### Turtle Watch volunteer meeting March 19 in G.S.

Share the Beach is gearing up for the sea turtle nesting season that begins in May, and it's time for volunteers to start making plans to attend the annual information meeting for Baldwin County volunteers on Tuesday, March 19 at 6 p.m. at the Erie Meyer Civic Center in Gulf Shores. Visit [joinACF.org](https://joinACF.org) for more volunteer info.

Returning volunteers and anyone interested in becoming a new volunteer along our coastline in Baldwin County should plan to attend. Now is also the time to adopt a nest in support of the program. Nest adopters will receive a certificate, along with updates on their nest outcome later in the season. sponsor Info: email [sjohnson@joinACF.org](mailto:sjohnson@joinACF.org).

### Elks Irish Pub Mystery Dinner Theater March 9

**By Kelly Lyons**

Elks Lodge 2782 in Foley will be having a Irish Pub Mystery Dinner Theater on March 9. Traditional corn beef dinner to be served. Tickets will go on sale. You can purchase them at the Elks for \$40 a person prior to the event and \$45 at the door. Buy your tickets in advance to save money. The lodge is located at 2621 S Juniper St. in Foley. More info: 251-971-2782.

### 13th PIJWC Bunny Hop 5K/Fun Run April 6 Wharf

The Pleasure Island Junior Woman's Club will host the 13th Annual Bunny Hop 5K and Fun Run on Saturday, April 6th at the Wharf in Orange Beach. Register for the race on [runsignup.com](https://runsignup.com) or contact [kray413@gmail.com](mailto:kray413@gmail.com) for info. Proceeds raised from this event are part of the Ann Reese Grote Memorial Scholarship that is given to Pleasure Island graduating high schoolers.



### Wharf Boat & Yacht Show returns to O.B. March 15-17

The Wharf Boat and Yacht Show returns to Orange Beach March 15-17 with over \$100 million worth of boats, yachts and marine products for sale and on display from both established companies and new businesses.

Consistently named "Top Boat Buying Show" in the northern Gulf, the show has an exhibitors list that reads like a Who's Who of the marine industry. There will be 120 wet slip boats and yachts on display, 700 sport & console boats on land, a bridge-walk area featuring exhibitor displays, an event stage for instrumental seminars and live music, and marine artist Larry Rackley's kid's art classes. Visitors can also find the latest tech advances in marine electronics and fishing gear. Fest hours are 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Sunday. Admission is \$15 per person, with kids 12 and under admitted free. Three day passes are \$25. Info: [wharfboatshow.com](https://wharfboatshow.com).

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital is the event beneficiary. If you love boats, boating, fishing or just being on the water, you don't have to try to imagine it. You can see it for yourself at this show. **Pictured:** Orange Beach fun at the 2023 boat show.

#### Schedule

- **Friday:** Red Carpet Spectacular ~ 10 am - 6 pm
- **Saturday:** Ladies Day 10 am - 6 pm
- **Sunday:** Military Appreciation Day ~ 10 am - 4 pm
- **Tickets:** At the gate: \$15; 3 day passes \$25; 12 & under free







# EASTER BRUNCH BUFFET



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## BREAKFAST FAVORITES

Scrambled Eggs | Fresh Herbs  
Bacon & Country Sausage  
Hashbrown Potatoes Casserole  
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Assorted Breakfast Pastries  
(including Banana Bread, Danish, Orange Cinnamon Rolls)

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(Rosemary Au Jus, Creamy Horseradish)  
Assorted Mustards,  
Classic Parker Rolls  
**Shrimp & Grits**  
(Delta Grind Grits, Spiced Cajun Cream Sauce)

## COLD BUFFET

Seasonal Fruit Display  
(Honeydew, Cantaloupe, Pineapple, Seasonal Berries)  
Strawberry & Spinach Salad  
(Baby Spinach, Red Onion, Goat Cheese, Strawberries)  
Caesar Salad  
(Romaine lettuce, Herb Croutons, Garlic Caesar Dressing)  
Deviled Eggs  
(Southern Style, Avocado Stuffed, Sundried Tomato Filled)  
Ambrosia Salad  
(Mandarin Oranges, Pineapple, Miniature Marshmallow)

## HOT BUFFET

**Roasted Sweet Corn Chowder**  
(Sweet Corn, Yukon Potato, Crispy Onion)  
**Baked Ham**  
(Brown Sugar Glaze, Clove, Cherries)  
**Roasted Salmon**  
Dill Dijon Cream  
**Crispy Brussels Sprouts**  
(Double Smoked Bacon, Peppadew Peppers, Fresh Herbs)  
**Green Beans**  
(Shaved Garlic, Sundried Tomatoes)  
**Four Cheese Scalloped Potatoes**  
(Southern Style)  
**KIDS BUFFET**  
Crispy Chicken Tenders  
(Ketchup, Honey Mustard, Ranch Dipping Sauce)  
Potato Barrels (Ketchup, Mustard)  
Creamy Peanut Butter & Jelly Sandwich  
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## AROUND TOWN

### Art on the Wild Side Gulf Coast Zoo March 23

The Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo's Art on the Wild Side will be held on Saturday, March 23. VIP entrance is at 5:30 p.m., and general admission is at 7 p.m. The evening will include food from the finest local restaurants, drinks, live entertainment from the ISING Live Band and photo ops with the zoo's animal ambassadors. Attire is safari theme or cocktail.

VIP tickets include access to the entire zoo from 5:30-7 p.m., giraffe feeding, keeper chats, exclusive hors d'oeuvres, drink stations, and other event activities. General admission tickets are \$125 or \$100 for zoo members. Contact the zoo directly for VIP tickets and sponsor info.

The fundraiser's online auction is from March 16 until March 23 at 9 p.m. and includes exclusive artwork from zoo animal artists, adventure packages from the zoo, local attractions, and other exquisite items. Whether they were painted with paws, claws, fur, footprints, or nose boops, the art created by your favorite zoo animals is a true masterpiece. Info: [algulfcoastzoo.org](mailto:algulfcoastzoo.org) or call (251) 256-7008 or email [development@algulfcoastzoo.org](mailto:development@algulfcoastzoo.org).

"The support we receive from this fundraiser is critical for the zoo's animal care and educational programs," said Paula White, AGCZ's Director of Development. "This year, your support is even more exciting, the Zoo Board of Directors have chosen to designate a portion of the proceeds to help expand the zoo's big cat collection, with the possibility of bringing a new pair of tiger cubs or cheetahs to the zoo in the future."

- The Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo is home to more than 300 animals. Your support of this event helps provide continual care and enrichment to all of the animals who call it home.
- At the heart of the zoo's mission is education. Your support of this event helps expand the hearts and minds of students of all ages through enriching hands-on experiences and engaging programs.
- Your support of this event provides on and off-site conservation programs about endangered species at the zoo and in the wild. These programs allow people to engage with wildlife and influence them to protect the world around them.
- Animal care (daily diets, healthcare, activities) to over 300 animals each day. It costs approximately \$5,000 per week to feed the zoo's residents..

For tickets, sponsorship packages or more info, call (251) 256-7008, email [development@algulfcoastzoo.org](mailto:development@algulfcoastzoo.org) or visit [algulfcoastzoo.org](http://algulfcoastzoo.org).



#### BUCEE THE BEAVER BIRTHDAY PARTY:

Bucee, the beaver who weighed only one pound when it was brought to the Orange Beach Wildlife Center three years ago, celebrated his third birthday early this month. "Bucee spent the majority of his birthday sleeping (typical beaver!), but when he finally arose from his beauty rest he got to enjoy his birthday cake! Safe to say he was a big fan," posted Wildlife Center staff. "Thanks to all the staff who came to celebrate his special day, and of course to all the interns we've had help us raise this silly guy over the last 3 years! We love you, Buc."



### Pleasure Isle's newest women's krewe debuts at O.B. Parade

Although they just came together this past summer, Pleasure Island's newest women only Mardi Gras krewe, The Maidens of Mischief, was ready to debut its float and its sassy attitude in time for last month's Fat Tuesday Orange Beach parade.

The group started with 29 members, many of them formerly Swans, and that number will jump to a full membership of 50 by the time invites go out following socials this spring, including a spring fling on Sunday, March 10 from 3-5 p.m. at Live Bait that is open to all interested women. For more info or a membership application, visit [maidensofmischief.com](http://maidensofmischief.com) or facebook.

"We are a group of ladies that wanted to make our own Mardi Gras," said one of the krewe founders. "We all talked about it, and we are all a little mischievous. So the name kind of fit us. We all liked it."

"It absolutely fit and everybody there at the time thought it was perfect for us," added a second founding member.

The Maidens may never crown a queen and they may or may not host their own ball. For now they are happy to get their Laissez les bons temps rouler on at the Monde Balle in Robertsdales for formal gatherings.

"We believe we are all queens," said one of the founders.

The krewe will use the traditional Mobile and New Orleans style krewe model for invitation only secret societies. And members prefer to remain anonymous when addressing the media.

The Maidens have already sponsored a silent auction in partnership with the Gulf Coast Athletic Club golf tourney and they set a fest record for the amount of tips they collected during their volunteer shifts selling beer during last October's National Shrimp Fest.

They are also participating in an upcoming event benefitting The Lighthouse, and they are open to working with other community and philanthropic groups on additional charity fundraising endeavors.

The krewe could grow past 50 if the membership decides that is in its interest, but all the current members agree that the members they do have quickly bonded to become a special group.

"Some of us were strangers to each other trying to remember names when we started and we've now become almost like a family," said one founder. "We are a great group of ladies of all ages and different backgrounds and lifestyles. But everybody in our krewe likes to have a good time and we are doing that."

**Pictured:** Maidens of Mischief at the OB Mardi Gras Parade, volunteering at the Shrimp Fest and attending the Monde Balle in Robertsdales.





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## AROUND TOWN

### Robertsdale Rotary Rodeo March 8-9

The Robertsdale Rotary Club will host its 24th Annual PCA Championship Rodeo March 8-9 at the Baldwin County Coliseum in Robertsdale. Doors open at 5:30 each night and the rodeo begins at 7:30 p.m. Both nights include a full rodeo, kids activities and concessions galore. Admission is \$15 for adults, \$10 for children 6-12. Friday is kids night. All children under 12 admitted free.

### GSHS Band Boosters to host March 9 gala at GSP Lodge

The Gulf Shores Band Boosters will host the Music of the Night Gala on Saturday, March 9 from 7-10 p.m. at The Lodge at Gulf State Park. Tickets are \$60 each or two for \$100. The evening includes live music, dancing, hors d'oeuvres, a silent auction and a cash bar. Tickets can be purchased online at eventbrite.com. More information can also be found on the GSHS band's facebook page.



### FBISF presents Songs & Stories March 8 at OWA Theater

The Frank Brown Songwriters Festival will present Songs & Stories - A Songwriter Showcase on Friday, March 8 at OWA Theater in Foley (205 North OWA Blvd.). The Krickets will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. and Sugarcane Jane will follow at 8:30 p.m. Both groups will sing and talk about their songs, and there is a meet and greet afterwards. Tickets are available at visitowa.com.

As a special incentive, attendees can save their ticket stubs which can be used, based upon seating availability, for free admission to the Florida-Bama Main Room on the night of your choice during the 2024 Frank Brown Songwriters' Festival (November 7-17).

The Krickets are an Americana trio from the gulf coast whose music is what Paste Magazine calls "a truly stunning, one-of-a-kind sound." Two-time IMA Song of the Year winner in both Folk and Alt Country categories, the band's music is genre-bending Americana steeped in their signature folk harmony. Their new single Pay No Mind, released last year, produced by Rick Hirsh (Wet Willie, Greg Allman Band) features a fresh soul-rock inspired sound for the band. (thekrickets.com).

Sugarcane Jane, the Alabama based Americana duo comprised of husband-and-wife Anthony Crawford (vocals, acoustic guitar, harmonica, kick drum) and Savana Lee (vocals, bass guitar), have been crafting music deeply rooted in folk rock for over a decade. They are adored for their homegrown brand of mostly acoustic Americana, drawing influences from Anthony's prior bandmates such as Neil Young, Steve Winwood, and Dwight Yoakam. (sugarcanejane.com).

### Pleasure Island retail sales: A record \$1.44 billion in '23

Gulf Shores and Orange Beach Tourism (GSOBT) officials announced that visitor spending on lodging rentals in Gulf Shores, Orange Beach and Fort Morgan reached \$880 million, just one percent below 2022's mark of \$890 million. Retail sales once again were up over the previous year, setting a new record at \$1.44 billion, according to GSOBT's President and CEO Beth Gendler.

"While we were down slightly on taxable lodging rental revenue, we know Alabama's beaches continue to be the favorite vacation spot for millions of visitors," said Gendler at the recent Alabama Tourism Summit.

"Just looking at the past three years shows the consistency of visitation by season, year-over-year," she added. "This consistency is vital to our local businesses because consistent occupancy levels throughout the year mean they can keep their staff employed all year to deliver consistent, friendly service to our guests no matter when they visit."

### Foley cuts down old 80 ft. flagpole near town center

An 80 ft. flagpole that stood near the intersection of Alabama 59 and U.S. 98 for 20 years has been cut down and laid on the parking lot near The Book Exchange. The pole was erected in 2003, replacing a 60-foot wooden pole on the same site. The pole was replaced by a taller structure in 2023. The new pole is 90 feet tall and located on the east side of Alabama 59 about one block south of the previous location. The city flies a 20-foot by 30-foot flag on the pole 24 hours a day. Foley is also developing a small park on the site. Foley officials had discussed removing the old pole and placing it in another location. The cost, however, was considered too high to make the move economical.



### Midday Melodies at Heritage Park every Wednesday

Midday Melodies, a music-at-lunchtime event in Foley's Heritage Park, will be held on consecutive Wednesdays, March 6 to March 27 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. The music lineup: March 6 - Wiley Pete; March 13- (pictured) Just Roger; March 20 - Josh Chavers; March 27- Zack Chavers. Info, visit visitfoley.org or call 251-943-1300.

Midday Melodies will take place entirely outdoors near the fountain in the park. Picnic blankets or lawn chairs are welcome. Pick up a lunch from one of Foley's many restaurants or bring your own. Free parking is available around the perimeter of the park located at 104 N. McKenzie Street, just across the pedestrian bridge on Hwy. 59.

### March 9 Foley UMC Arts & Crafts Show includes food options

The Foley United Methodist Church Arts & Crafts Show will be held on Saturday, March 9 from 9 a.m. 'til 2 p.m. at the church's campus at 915 N. Pine St.

"Join us to shop for all those unique local arts & crafts that you cannot live without," said Shirley Roddenberry. "Many beautiful gift items will be available for Easter, Mother's Day & graduation. Of course, you always need those little gifts tucked away for birthdays and hostess gifts. Lunch will also be available for purchase. Come see us for a fun day."

### St. Michael's Cardinals in the Courtyard will be on March 23

St. Michael Catholic High School in Fairhope (11732 St. Michael Way) will host the Eighth Annual Cardinals in the Courtyard on March 23 at 7 p.m. The theme is Paint The Town Red and all proceeds directly benefit the SMCHS Cardinal Fund, which supports faculty needs, supplements financial aid, and enhanced campus security measures. Last year's event raised over \$150,000. The evening will include a special performance by The Six Piece Suits, Caricatures by Kathy, and showcase an auction of art from well-known local artists. A variety of sponsorship packages are available at stmichaelchs.org or by emailing ashleybonner@gmail.com or andrea@kaisersir.com.

### Big Lagoon Kiwanis Club Egg Hunt March 30 at Kids Park

The Kiwanis Club of Big Lagoon will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt with the Easter Bunny on Saturday, March 30 at 10 a.m. The park is located at 10004 Gulf Beach Hwy. Children will be separated into three ages groups. The "real" Easter Bunny will be there and there will be prizes for the kids' game-winners. Festivities also include post egg hunt fun and games.



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## AROUND TOWN



### 'Bama hosts March 16 Warrior Half Marathon & 5K

The Flora-Bama's 11th Annual Beach Run/Walk for America's Warriors, with 100% of the registration fees going to the Special Operations Warrior Foundation, will be held on Saturday, March 16, with a half marathon scheduled at 7:30 a.m. and a 5K Run & Walk at 9 a.m.

The start and end point is the beach behind the Flora-Bama, located at the Florida-Alabama state line directly on the Gulf of Mexico. All 5K runners will be headed into Alabama and all 1/2 marathon runners will be headed into Florida. Both runs are entirely on the beach.

The Special Operations Warrior Foundation ensures full scholarship grants and counseling to the surviving children of Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps special operations personnel who lose their lives in the line of duty. It also provides immediate financial assistance for severely wounded special operations personnel and their families.

Late registration fees are \$100 for the half marathon and \$35/\$40 for the 5K, and trophies will be awarded three deep for all age groups in the run, the walk, and the half marathon.

Special awards will be given for overall male and overall female, and T-shirts are guaranteed to the first 400 registered participants. The race party includes a great selection of food, Busch products from the Lewis Bear Company and live entertainment. Register at [itsyourrace.com](http://itsyourrace.com). For more race information or to volunteer your time, email [events@florabama.com](mailto:events@florabama.com)



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## GSOBT moving forward with new sportsplex north of Intracoastal

### Conceptual plan includes 24 youth fields, indoor facility, RV park & retail space

The Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism leadership has chosen an architectural firm to begin the initial conceptual site plan for a sports complex on 111 acres it owns on the north side of Coastal Gateway Blvd. (County Road 8 East) adjacent to the Foley Beach Express in Gulf Shores.

The planned Herbert J. Malone Sportsplex will be named after the agency's longtime director Herb Malone, who 30 years ago helped create Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism along with state representatives Walter Penry and Steve McMillan, local publisher Gary Ellis and others. The sportsplex will include accompanying retail space and 51-spot RV park and it will be built in phases.

Russ said the site for the facility is 111.26 acres located on the north side of Coastal Gateway Blvd. (County Rd 8 East) adjacent to the Foley Beach Express. Plans include 69.37 acres for outdoor fields, 10.79 acres for an indoor facility, and 14.6 acres for retail/commercial space.

Phase 1 of the project will focus on the outdoor complex, which will include six diamond flex fields, six multi-purpose fields, and one championship field.

The total capacity for youth sized fields would be 24, and the design will also include a press box, training room, check-in/ticketing area, kitchen and café seating.

Phase 2 will focus on building an indoor facility with more than 87,000 square feet of indoor court

space for basketball, volleyball, wrestling, and pickleball, along with bleacher seating.

The indoor building would also have areas for a café, sports medicine clinic, and a small family entertainment area such as an arcade and/or boutique bowling alley.

"Because of the location, we also want to make sure there are amenities that benefit this growing neighborhood," said Michelle Russ, Vice-President of Sales, Sports & Events for GSOBT. "The plans also include retail and commercial space for restaurants, coffee shops, and the like."

Russ said the Gulf Shores and Orange Beach recreational facilities are already being heavily used by the cities' school and recreational teams. So, there is a need to alleviate sports tourism play from those city owned complexes.

The continued growth of the sports tourism industry and increased competition from other youth sports tourism destinations make this growth essential for the Alabama Coast to stay competitive in the booming market.

There is no set timetable for the construction of the new sportsplex. The parcel of land is located to the west and north of the Auburn University satellite facility. The far north end of the property meets the city of Foley line and is close to the Orange Beach city limits.

The project goal is to fill the facility gap to grow sports and event tourism while enhancing residential needs. More info: [GSOBSports.com](http://GSOBSports.com).



Cathy Deal Photo

### Blue Angels open practices at NAS Pensacola start on March 26

The world's best flight demonstration team, Pensacola's own Blue Angels, are back in Pensacola and will host their first open practice on-board NAS Pensacola on March 26 following the team's air show at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in New Orleans the previous weekend. Gates open at 9:30 a.m., and the Blues take off at 10:30 a.m.

NAS Pensacola reopened to the public in May of 2023 nearly three years after the 2019 terrorist attack on the base that left three dead and eight others injured.

The Blue Angles will sign autographs in the

Naval Air Museum atrium following many of the shows. Visit for more info.

Blue Angels 2024 practice schedule: March 26, 27; April 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17, 23, 24, 30; May 1, 7, 8, 14, 15, 28, 29; June 4, 5, 11, 12, 18, 25, 26; July 16, 17, 23; August 21, 27; September 4, 10, 11, 17, 24; October 16, 22, 23.

The Blue Angels Pensacola Beach show is July 13 and the team's homecoming shows at Naval Air Station Pensacola are Nov. 2-3.

All U.S. citizens or U.S. nationals 18 and older must have a state-issued identification card or passport to enter NAS Pensacola.



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## AROUND TOWN



### Bill Whyte and Brent Burns March 13 at Mile Marker 58

Bill Whyte will join local Trop Rock royalty Brent Burns for a special March 13 concert on the Mile Marker 58 back deck at The Wharf in Orange Beach. The waterfront show will include a 5 p.m. meet 'n greet before the 6-8 p.m. show. Cover charge is \$10.

"Bill will be in the area for a show in Mobile and he is going to come down early so we can work on a few songs," Burns said about his longtime musical collaborator. "We go back and forth with songs all the time over the internet, including three or four we have in the works right now."

Burns first included co-writes with Whyte on his third album, Tropical Nuts, and he estimates that they have written around 50 songs together since then, including eight songs on Burns' latest release, Lots of Beaches to Go.

"We are like brothers from the same mother, and we love to cut up," Burns said. "We get after each other when we talk on the phone just like we do when we are on stage. The guy cracks me up and I think I crack him up, too."

The tongue-in-cheek tone of two Burns/Whyte co-writes from Burns' recent release are evident by the titles: "Dead People's Clothes," and "Things You Shouldn't Do When Drinking."

Whyte has been writing songs and performing at corporate events, casinos, fairs and comedy clubs since he was a teen.

He has a song on the album that won the Grammy in 2017 for Best Contemporary Christian Album and wrote the title track on the Joe Nichols CD "Crickets." His songs have been recorded by Ray Stevens and Cledus T. Judd among many others. In 2016, he landed a #1 Gospel Bluegrass song for "He's A Coming" recorded by Darin and Brooke Aldridge.

Whyte is also an accomplished radio broadcaster and has hosted morning shows in Cincinnati, Milwaukee, Indianapolis and Nashville. He has been nominated three times for the CMA Air Personality of the Year and is in the Nashville Broadcasters Hall of Fame.

Burns has released 12 additional CDs since 1999's Livin' The Life (Jimmy Buffett Only Wrote About) put him among the Trop Rock lumina. His Trop Rock awards have reached double digits. They include Song and CD of the Year for 2012's "Don't Come Knockin' If The Tiki Hut's Rockin'." In 2021, Burns was presented the TropRock Music Association Lifetime Achievement award.

At least a part-time resident since he took a summer residency at the Gulf Shores Holiday Inn in 1972, Burns was named Pleasure Island's official music ambassador by the Convention & Visitors Bureau in 2006.

He also has a box full of plaques that thank him for the philanthropy that has continued to be his hallmark for 50 years. A long-time supporter of Habitat For Humanity (\$1 donation for each CD sold), Burns reaches out to many other charities, both local and national. He received a special WAVE award for his humanitarian work through his Brent Burns Charitable Foundation.

Burns' first taste of national attention came when he released Cheaper Crude or No More Food in 1980 in response to the previous year's OPEC oil price hike. Brent spent \$1,800 that he didn't really have to record the single with a DJ friend from Phoenix, and it ended up selling 200,000 copies the first day and 500,000 copies the first month.



### GSHS GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM ADVANCES TO FIRST EVER FINAL FOUR:

The Gulf Shores Dolphin girls' basketball team advanced to its first ever AHSAA Class 5A state tournament with a 54-44 home win against Eufaula in the Class 5A South Regional Championship game on Feb. 21. Regional MVP Maya Griffin scored 24 points and was named MVP. Fellow senior Margaret Myers also earned a spot on the All-Tournament team with her MVP teammate.

Other members (gsboathletics.com) of head coach Brian Sexton's record setting team include Keylee Brock, Mary Jones, Olivia Morroni, Kate Cimino, Reagan Myers, MJ Lyons, Natalee Cerne, Kayleigh Jacks, Rayla Pierce, Anna Murray, Mariana Cervantes, Ansley Warner, Michaela Tristyn Bagget, Taylor Bjorgum, Kylie Meeks, Alyssa Thompson, Keyona Royal and Skylar Gant. The Dolphins beat St. Paul's - 45-38, Rehobeth - 47-16 and BC Rain - 52-24 during their post season run. The Dolphins lost in the Championship Tourney semis 54-34 to Scottsboro. Thompson led Gulf Shores with 11 points, and Myers finished with 10 points, five rebounds and two blocked shots in that game. Royal had eight points and 10 rebounds. Jasper defeated Scottsboro 48-40 in the Class 5A AHSAA championship game. The Dolphins finished the season (29-7).





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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Vietnam Vets Memorial replica & exhibit stops in Robertsdale May 9-12

The Wall That Heals exhibit, which includes a three-quarter scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington D.C. along with a mobile Education Center, will be at the Baldwin County Coliseum in Robertsdale from May 9 until May 12 (at 2 p.m.). Open to the public 24 hours aday, the exhibition is free and all ages are welcome.

This is the 29th season of The Wall That Heals and it will be on display in 31 communities during the year.

gin. Since its dedication, The Wall That Heals has been displayed in nearly 700 communities throughout the nation.

The replica is 375 feet in length and stands 7.5 feet high at its tallest point. Visitors have the opportunity to do name rubbings of individual service member's names on The Wall. In addition, the 53-foot trailer that carries The Wall transforms to become a mobile Education Center featuring a timeline of the war and a collection of items that have been left at The Wall. Visitors experience The Wall rising above them as they walk towards the apex, a key feature of the design of The Wall in D.C. The replica is constructed of Avonite, a synthetic granite, and its 140 numbered panels are supported by an aluminum frame. Machine engraving of the more than 58,000 names along with modern LED lighting provide readability of The Wall day and night.

### City Rhythm Big Band hosts dance on March 23 at Loxley Civic Center

The City Rhythm Big Band will host a Mar 23 St Patrick's Dance at The Loxley Civic Center from 2-5 p.m. Tickets are \$15 per person, and the event is byob beverages and snacks. Water/cups and ice will be provided. The Loxley Civic Center is located at 4198 Municipal Park Dr. on the westside of Hwy. 59. Future dances will also be from 2-5 p.m. Dates include: Apr 27 - Spring Dance; Jun 22 - Summer Dance; July 27 - Late Summer Dance; Oct 26 - Fall Dance; Nov 23 - Thanksgiving Dance. Holiday Performances: May 27 - Memorial Day Dance.; July 4 - Independence Day Dance; Sept 2 - Labor Day Dance; Dec 28 - Christmas/New Year's Dance.

### WED, MARCH 6

- JB Dyess: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Shawn Lackey Duo: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- John Kueller: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Delta Donnie & Elaine Petty: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
- Gary Story: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange BVeach.
- Jay & Eric: 2; Front Porch, Lillian.
- T Bone & Bo: 5; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Melodius Allen: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
- Mike Diamond: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
- Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Saucy Fuzz: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Jeremy Russow: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Open Jam w. Nigel Dickie & Friends: 6; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Karaoke: 7; Al.Gulf Coast Music Hall, Foley.
- JW Karaoke: 6; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Open Jam: 7:30; Good Time Charlie's; Foley.
- Karaoke: 6; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Pickleball: 12:30-3:30 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ

Church, Gulf Shores.

- BBRC Running Club: 5:30 p.m.; Big Beach Brewery in Gulf Shores; lafleet-feet.com.
- Karaoke: 9; The Office, Foley.
- Bingo: 10 a.m.; American Legion Post 99; Foley.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center.
- Food Ministry at Morgan's Chapel United Methodist Church: 8-9 a.m.; 6325 Cty Rd 10, Bon Secour, (across from Swift School); 251-979-2005.
- Prayer Shawl Ministry: Noon; Perdido Bay UMC Activities Center, 13660 Innerarity Point Rd., (Innerarity Point) Pensacola.
- Food Ministry For Hungry Families: 8:30-10 a.m.; Grace Lutheran Church, corner of West 23rd Ave. and West 4th St. in Gulf Shores; 251-968-5991.
- Bread Ministry: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Orange Beach United Methodist Church Brook's Center.
- Food Bank: 9 - 11 a.m every Wednesday, Perdido Bay Baptist Church, 12600 Sorrento Rd. Pensacola; call for eligibility requirements at (850) 492-2604.
- Gulf Shores Garden Club: 9:30 a.m.; first Wednesday of each month September thru May; Gulf Shores Adult Activity Center; new members and guests always welcome.w
- Al-Non: 12:30; Live Oak AFG, St John's Episcopal Church, 401 Live Oak Ave., Pensacola.

### THU, MARCH 7

- Phil & Ced: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Ronnie Presley: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Hippie Jim: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange

Beach.

- Wire & PaPa: 2; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Gary Story Open Mic: 6; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Jonathan Puzan: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Tyler Ward: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
- Wes Loper: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Justin Colvard: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach..
- Karaoke: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Funky Lampshades: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Tim Robinson: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Jeremy Russow: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 9; The Office, Foley.
- Elaine Petty: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.
- Andy Andrews Live: 12:15; Andy Andrews General Store & Museum; The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Bridge: 11:30 a.m.; Orange Beach Senior Center, 251-981-3440.
- Trivia Night: 6; Towne Tap, Foley.
- Karaoke/DJ w. Kelly: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 6; Tacky Jacks, Ft. Morgan.
- Tim Roberts: 6; The Tin Top Restaurant, Bon Secour.:
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Texas Hold 'em: 7; The Office, Foley.
- Gulf Shores Methodist Church Bread Ministry: 8am; every Thursday; South

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## PROMISES MADE: PROMISES KEPT

*A Personal Note From*

**DR. E. GAYLON McCOLLOUGH**

***Please read the following message carefully; then share it...***

Because there appears to have been some confusion surrounding recent business transactions, a birthday event, and previous email, I offer the following collection of truths:

From the day I relocated my practice to the retirement community of Gulf Shores, Alabama, I've been asked two recurring questions by friends, associates, and patients alike:

1. ***"Are you retired?" or***
2. ***"When are you going to retire? I want to have you perform one final touch up on me before you do."***

My research shows that as a result of a misinformation campaign conducted by former associates, prospective and former patients think that I am no longer performing surgery.

However, the indisputable truth is this: ***Retirement is not on the horizon. I am in excellent health and continue to perform facial and nasal plastic surgeries because I enjoy helping people from all walks of life look better and feel better about themselves.***

So once again, please allow me to stress ***a promise*** that I've made to my patients, friends, and colleagues for at least a decade.

***When in the best interest of my patients, I decide that retirement is the right way forward—ONE YEAR IN ADVANCE—I'll be the one to announce it; and (as with this communique) I'll do so through every available communication outlet available!***

So, until you hear it directly from me, ignore all reports of ***ANYTHING*** related to my doing anything other than what I have done throughout my career: Suit up, ***personally perform*** every surgical procedure that is scheduled with me as the surgeon, and do everything in my power to provide world-class plastic surgery for reasonable fees to fellow human beings at a world-class surgical and recovery facility.

It's a promise that I pledge to keep.

With gratitude for your enduring trust, confidence and support, I remain,

E. Gaylon McCollough, MD FACS  
 Founder and Managing Partner,  
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 251-967-7600  
[drmccollough@mccolloughplasticsurgery.com](mailto:drmccollough@mccolloughplasticsurgery.com)



## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### Duckman Jam April 12-13 on the Flora-Bama Beach

Spring Break at Flora-Bama will be even hotter, as Riley Green is releasing his two-day Duckman Jam At Flora-Bama to the beach behind the famed Lounge on the Line April 12-13.

Green will be headlining both nights, and he will be joined by Tracy Lawrence and Jake Worthington on April 12, and Drake White and Ella Langley on April 13.

"Flora-Bama has always been a big deal to me," Green said in a release. "I've been going there since I was a young kid, sneaking in on vacation with my family. It's the first place I ever saw a writer's round. I remember going down there as a teenager and standing by the stage, hoping to play."

"It's pretty exciting to go back and have my own two-day festival there," he added. "Having Tracy Lawrence and Drake White there will make it a really fun weekend."

Davis Nix, Ryan Dyer Duo, Jonboy Storey, Tim Roberts Band, Bruce Smelley Band, Mike Diamond, Brandon Giles Band and the Dalton Bush Band are also scheduled to play the fest. Green also played a beachside spring show at the Flora-Bama in 2020. His most recent album, "Aint My Last Rodeo," was released in October. He has already charted with "There Was This Girl," "Different 'Round Here" and "Mississippi Or Me."

Tickets and more info: [florabama.com](http://florabama.com).

### Foley named nation's top cost-effective retirement spot

By Guy Busby

A national study found that Foley is the most cost-effective retirement location in the United States.

The survey by GOBankingRates looked at the best and worst locations for a practical retirement. As the population ages and more baby boomers retire, many are looking for nice temperate locations where they can get the most for their money. Foley came out on top according to this study.

The study analyzed 100 cities in the country with a large population of adults who are 65 or older. The cities were ranked based on factors such as the average home value, property taxes, home health costs, the price of groceries and utilities and whether the state the community was in taxed Social Security benefits.

The study found that Foley was the best place for a cost-effective retirement as well as being an attractive location. The study was also reported by Travel and Leisure magazine.

GoBankingRates listed factors such as Foley's location just north of the Gulf beaches and the fact that 30.7% of the population is 65 or older.

Prices are low compared to other communities. The annual cost of a home health aide is \$46,218 and the annual cost of groceries is \$4,326 and the cost of utilities is \$3,858.

Alabama also does not tax Social Security benefits.

Other cities in the top five for retirees were Mountain Home, Arkansas; Hot Springs Village, Arkansas; The Villages, Florida and Bella Vista, Arkansas followed by Pinehurst, North Carolina; Green Valley, Arizona, North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, Fredericksburg, Texas and Punta Gorda, Florida.

Malibu, California was listed as the worst place to retire economically. The average price of a home in Malibu in 2023 was almost \$3.84 million, compared to \$296,232 in Foley. The property tax rate in Malibu is 0.73%, while the rate in Foley is 0.39%.

Campus; (251) 968-2411.  
• Grief Support Group: noon-1:30 p.m.; First Presbyterian Church of Foley; 195 E. Berry Ave.; for all who are grieving; 943-8325.  
• Al-Anon: 7; Orange Beach Presbyterian Church, 26640 Canal Rd.

### FRI, MARCH 8

• Bo Grant: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.  
• River Dan Band: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.  
• Justin Jeansome Band: 10; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.  
• Midnight Shepherds 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.  
• Light Travelers: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.  
• Brandon Giles & Band: 7; Magnolia Hotel; Foley.  
• Les Linton: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.

• Allan Renfro: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.  
• Broke & Done: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.  
• High Cotton: 9; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.  
• Barney Wells & The Rambling Souls: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.  
• Donna Slater: 3; Front Porch, Lillian.  
• Rhonda Hart & Elaine Petty: 6; Front Porch, Lillian.  
• Rachel Lane, Destiny Brown, Renee

Amelia: 9:30; Front Porch, Lillian.  
• Christina Crystal: 5; CoastAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.  
• Justin Colward: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.  
• Rob Joyner: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.  
• Kelly Poole: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.  
• Just Roger: noon; King Neptunes; Gulf Shores.  
• Just Roger: 5; Picnic Beach; Gulf

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**May 13th-23rd: OUPV Captains Class**  
**May 24th-26th: Upgrade To Master 100 Ton**  
**May 27th: Assitance Towing (Day Classes)**

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# WHAT'S HAPPENING

- Shores.
- Blind Mulletts: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
  - Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
  - Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
  - Cedrick Brooks: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
  - Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
  - Pickleball: 6-9 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
  - Davo: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.
  - Bubba 'N Them: 6; The Point; Innerarity Point.
  - Guided Pier Walk: 9-10 a.m.; Gulf State Park Pier; Gulf Shores.
  - Open Mic: 7; American Legion Post 199; Fairhope.
  - Karaoke w. Kelly Ann: 6; American Legion Post 99; Foley.
  - Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.;

- all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center; corner of West 19th Ave. and West 2nd St.
- Bingo: 5:30; Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5659; Elberta.
  - T.O.P.S. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly); weigh-in 9; meeting 9:30; Foley Sr. Center, 304 E. Rose Ave.; 251-979-1075.
  - Al-Anon: noon; Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church, Gulf Shores.

## SAT, MARCH 9

- Opera "La Fortza del Destino" by

- Verdi, a new production in high definition from The Metropolitan Opera, 11 a.m. (early start time); CMX Pinnacle 14; Gulf Shores. Verdi's grand tale of ill-fated love, deadly vendettas, family strife.
- Bo Grant: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
  - Clay Watson Duo: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
  - Rockstar Fish: 10; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
  - Christian Comedy Fest: 7; OWA Theater, Foley.

- Orange Beach Festival of Art: 10-5; Orange Beach Waterfront Park.
- BBQ & Blues: 5; Heritage Park, Foley.
- The Melodramatics: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Gage & The Get Downs: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- The Groovinators: 7; Magnolia Hotel; Foley.
- Gypsy Pearl: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Gambino Duo: 11 a.m.; Tacky Jacks;



## Orange Beach Invasion returns to The Wharf March 22-24

Orange Beach Invasion returns for its 8th year in Orange Beach March 22-23 after setting a record for attendance last year with more than 72,000 spectators on hand to view specialty bikes, trucks and autos from all over America. Hours are 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 9 a.m. - noon on Sunday.

Presented by American Force Wheels, The Invasion showcases an impressive array of hot rigs, from lowriders to muscle cars and vintage hot rods. The event also includes live music, family entertainment and booths from top industry names exhibiting cutting-edge products and the latest in automotive innovations.

chrome-plated world of graphics, big wheels and sky-high lift kits. Tricked-out and jacked-up trucks, cars and motorcycles are all part of the Orange Beach Invasion at The Wharf this weekend.

Although Orange Beach and Gulf Shores police received numerous complaints from locals about how loud Invasion attendees were (mufflers, horns, stereos) while driving on local roads, there were fewer problems reported in 2023



**GULF SHORES PLACES 200 TRASH & RECYCLING BINS ON BEACHES:** Gulf Shores Public Works staff recently placed more than 200 trash and recycling bins on city owned beaches and boardwalks. The bins are conveniently placed to make it easy for residents and guests to dispose of their waste responsibly, helping keep our shorelines pristine. During peak seasons, the bins will be emptied twice daily. The collected items are then transported to the Gulf Shores Recycling Center.

## High Heel Golf Scramble March 22

Indulge in a day of fun by gathering together a group of Golf Divas, or first-time players, to play in a foursome at the High Heel Classic Golf Scramble at Lost Key Golf Club with a shotgun start at 10 a.m. on March 22.

This is a fun tournament for all levels of play, and even if you have never played, the best ball format means all you need is at least one person on your team who can hit the ball. Trophies for the Queens of the Green will be awarded. Registration fee of \$100 per golfer or \$400 per foursome includes beverages, lunch, and a golf gift for every player. Solo golfers are welcome and will be placed on a team.

"Gentlemen are welcome to volunteer to serve as valets or concierges," said PKACC President Tammy Thurow.

Teams can show off their girl power by blinging out the golf cart with fun decorations to show team spirit. The best-decorated golf cart will win a prize. The fun will carry on throughout the event with games, giveaways, and contest holes. This tournament is produced by the Women Mean Business Committee of the Perdido Key Area Chamber of Commerce. This year's charity of choice for the event will benefit the Centre for Excellence. More info: PerdidoChamber.com or call 850-492-4660.

## Easter bunny at CoastAL March 30-31

Easter weekend at CoastAL Restaurant in Orange Beach will include visits from the Easter bunny on March 30 from 11 a.m. 'til 1 p.m., and March 31 from 11 a.m. 'til 2 p.m. Also Sandcastle University will be out on the beach creating something fabulous beginning at 11 a.m. on March 30. Come out and join in the fun! The Easter Bunny will also be hopping around for photo ops with guests. Coastal is located directly on the Gulf of Mexico adjacent to Hwy. 161. Info: coastalrestaurant.com.

## Gulf Shores Lions Golf Tourney April 5

Registration and sponsorship opportunities are open for the 49th Annual Gulf Shores Lions Club Charities Max Wilson Memorial Golf for Sight Tournament scheduled for Friday, April 5 at Gulf Shores Golf Club.

The club's largest fundraiser of the year, the 4-ball tourney utilizes a blind draw to pair up two person teams to give everyone a fair chance

to win regardless of handicap. Registration starts at 10 a.m., with a shotgun start slated at 11:30 a.m.

The \$200 per person (\$400 per two man team) entry fee includes a post tournament meal, fabulous prizes and supports the many Lions Club charities. The entry fee also includes green fees, cart rental, range balls, a raffle ticket, and three beverage tickets. Cash Prizes will be awarded on each and every hole in addition to prizes for the top three teams.

Various levels of sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information and to reserve your spot in the tournament, please contact Kew Taybi at (859) 380-0781 or Bruce White at (251) 967-3323.

All money raised will be used to support charities for the visually impaired and blind and the Miracle League of Coastal Alabama baseball field and boundless playground being built in Summerdale.

"We actually don't care what your golf handicap is because there is no way for anyone to sandbag with our format," said White, the tourney director.

## Mustang & Mega Car Show March 9

The 44th annual Gulf Coast Regional Mustang & Mega Car Show will be held in Downtown OWA on Saturday, Mar. 9. The show will include Contemporary Cars, Classic Cars, Trucks, Mustangs and Motorcycles. Other activities: Carnival & Lawn Games on OWA Island; RC Car Racing on OWA Island; The Defrosters on OWA Island at 11 a.m.; The Midnight Shepherds on OWA Island at 1 p.m.

## G.S. Breakfast w. the Bunny Set March 23

The Easter Bunny will make a special appearance in the City of Gulf Shores to enjoy breakfast with families on Saturday, March 23, at the Erie H. Meyer Civic Center. Beginning at 8 a.m., a traditional pancake breakfast with sausage, eggs, and bacon will be served, and children will have an opportunity to meet and take photos with the Easter Bunny. The Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo will also be onsite with a few of their furry friends from the zoo! There will also be raffle ticket drawings." Admission is \$5 each, while children 3 years old and younger are free. Tickets can be purchased at the door. The Erie H. Meyer Civic Center is located at 1930 W 2nd St. Info: gulfshoresal.gov or call 251-968-1171.



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Orange Beach.  
 • Three Bean Soup: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.  
 • High Cotton: 9; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.  
 • John Joiner: 2; Front Porch, Lillian.  
 • Brandon Giles: 7; Front Porch, Lillian.  
 • Jessie Duncan: 1; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.  
 • Trevor Finley: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.  
 • Roger Howard: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.  
 • Matt Erdman: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.  
 • Alan & Ashley: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Gulf Shores.  
 • Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.  
 • Smokey Otis: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.  
 • Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.  
 • Cedrick Brooks: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.  
 • Piano Bar: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.  
 • The Defrosters: 2; Flying Harpoon II; Orange Beach.  
 • Karaoke: 6; Tacky Jacks, Ft. Morgan.  
 • Karaoke w. Bobby Lee: 6; American Legion Post 199; Fairhope..  
 • Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.  
 • Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermen Market: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Foley.  
 • Baldwin County Genealogical Society: 10 a.m.; public invited; Foley Library; 319 East Laurel Ave.  
 • Optimist Club of Perdido Bay: break-

fast every Saturday at 7 a.m. at the Lillian Community Club in Lillian; (251) 961-2620.  
 • Ladies AA: 9 a.m. & 11 a.m.; Perdido Bay UMC Activities Center, 13660 Innerarity Point Rd., (Innerarity Point) Pensacola.

### SUN, MARCH 10

• Orange Beach Festival of Art: 10-4; Orange Beach Waterfront Park.  
 • Ashley & Alan: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.  
 • Dalton Bush: 1; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.  
 • Jenna McClelland: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.  
 • Lisa Christian: 11 a.m.; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.  
 • Mike Estep & Mike Kevier: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.  
 • Kyle Brady: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.  
 • Johnny Hayes: 1; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.  
 • Johnny Barbato & Britt: 4; Front Porch, Lillian.  
 • Destiny Brown: 4; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.  
 • Mike Diamond: 11 a.m.; The Tin Top Restaurant; Bon Secour.  
 • Pottersville Duo: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.  
 • Thomas Jenkins: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.  
 • Truman Holland: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.  
 • Wiley Pete: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.  
 • Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.  
 • Al-Anon: 6; Grace Lutheran Church,

Gulf Shores.  
 • Trivia Night: 6; Towne Tap, Foley.  
 • Sunday Potluck: 12-2; Fraternal Order or Eagles Lodge; Hwy 98, east of Beach Express; Foley.  
 • Rodger & Elaine: 6; American Legion Post 44, Gulf Shores.  
 • Bends & Brews Yoga: 11 a.m.; in the courtyard; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.  
 • Liza Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.  
 • The Defrosters: 2; Flying Harpoon II; Orange Beach.  
 • The Hubmeister: 5; Hub Stacey's at the Point; Innerarity Point.  
 • League Pool: 7; The Office, Foley.

### MON, MARCH 11

• Saucy Fuzz: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.  
 • Jesse Duncan: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING



### Fairhope Art Festival is March 15-17

The Fairhope Arts and Crafts Festival will welcome artists from all over the United States to the charming streets of downtown Fairhope March 15-17 from 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. daily. The fest attracts more than 200 exhibitors from around the country and has earned several prestigious national awards for the quality of its art and for promoting appreciation of the arts and supporting art education.

All fest proceeds go back into the community through local scholarships and grants available to students and organizations in the Fairhope community. The festival is free. More info: [Fairhopeartsandcraftsfestival.com](http://Fairhopeartsandcraftsfestival.com).

#### Entertainment Schedule

##### Friday, March 15

9:45 - Festival Opening Ceremony  
11:00 - Coastal Band  
1:30 - Jane Hannah Band  
4:00 - Gabriel Willis

##### Saturday, March 16

10:00 - Mobile Symphony Strings  
11:00 - Gypsy Chick Belly dancers  
12:00 - 2024 Dogwood Trail Court Introductions  
12:30 - Schrader's Suzuki Strings Academy  
2:00 - Gypsy Pearl  
3:00 - Kalyn Muller

##### Sunday, March 19

11:00 - University of South Alabama Trombone Ensembles  
12:00 - Jason Abel  
02:00 - Dyversatile Dance Crew

#### Haven Red Carpet Pet Adoption

The Haven, a Fairhope based No Kill animal shelter and Greer's Markets will co-host a special Red Carpet Runway adoption event on March 16-17 in the Greer's Supermarket parking lot on Section St. Attendees can expect to find a wide selection of dogs of all shapes, sizes, and breeds, each eagerly awaiting their forever homes. More info: [havenforanimals.org](http://havenforanimals.org).

Greer's, a long-standing partner of The Haven, graciously provides the space for this event, further demonstrating their commitment to animal welfare in the community. The Haven extends its heartfelt gratitude to Greer's for their support.

"We love and appreciate the communities we serve," said Jan Greer Endfinger, Vice President of Human Resources and Marketing.

### Fri. fish-frys at local Catholic churches

The annual Lenten fish-frys at Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church (2304 E. 2nd St.) in Gulf Shores, St. Thomas By The Sea (26547 Perdido Beach Blvd.) in Orange Beach and Holy Spirit Catholic Church (10650 Gulf Beach Hwy.) in Pensacola will continue every Friday thru March 22. Meals are all served eat-in or take-out.

Hours are 5-6:30 p.m. at Our Lady of the Gulf. Cost is \$15 for a meal that includes delicious fried fish, hushpuppies, baked beans, cole slaw, a drink, and good fellowship.

The Our Lady of the Gulf Alter Rosary Society will be selling desserts for consumption on site or to go. Prepared by Gulf Shores' finest fry-cook using a secret recipe and sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 10903, the fish-frys are a huge hit with locals and snowbirds. Proceeds benefit Baldwin County Catholic schools.

The Knights of Columbus will be serving fish dinners every Friday at the St. Thomas by the Sea Parish Hall from 4-6 p.m. Plates include fried fish, hushpuppies, French fries, coleslaw, dessert and a drink. Beer is available for a donation.

Located in the heart of the Grande Lagoon neighborhood, Holy Spirit will serve fish and fixins from 5-7 p.m. and the cost is \$12 for adults or \$8 for children for a full meal.

### Local artist featured in documentary

Gulf Shores based artist and gallery owner Susan McCollough (**pictured**) is featured in the documentary film series, "Art Titans: Masters of the New Era," which will debuted at the esteemed MNN Studios in Manhattan on Feb. 24. The document will be broadcast on Vivid Arts Network TV.

The documentary series showcases the stories, visions, and impact of artists who are shaping the contemporary art scene through a series of intimate portraits of ten master artists, each with their own unique story and transformative impact on the art world. Through the lens of some of the most influential and innovative artists of our



time, the series delves into the creative processes, inspirations, and challenges that define the current art world. This series not only highlights the artists' significant contributions but also examines their role in shaping the future of art.

According to Viviana Puella, editor of ArtTour Int. Magazine and co-director of the series, "Susan N. McCollough brings vibrant energy to her works, characterized by bold colors and dynamic compositions."

"This is a celebration of her achievements reflecting the diversity and dynamism that propel the art industry forward."

Ryan Dyer: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.

- Roger Howard (open mic): 6; Loria's; Orange Beach.
- Open Mic: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see [florabama.com](http://florabama.com); Perdido Key.
- Square Dancing: 6:30; Fairhope Christian Church, Fairhope, 850-206-5084.
- Lisa Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Smokey Otis & Mark Laborde: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Bridge (11 a.m.) & Bingo (6 p.m.):

American Legion Post 44, Gulf Shores.

- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center; corner of West 19th Ave. and West 2nd St.
- League Pool: 7; The Office, Foley.
- Celebrate Recovery: (Christ centered 12 step program); Monday evenings at 6 p.m.; Island Church in Orange Beach; 251-967-4840.
- Overeaters Anonymous: 6; Holy Spirit Episcopal Church; Gulf Shores, 616 Ft. Morgan Rd.; 251-709-5907.
- Al-Anon: 7; Orange Beach Presbyterian Church, 26640 Canal Rd.

### TUE, MARCH 12

- JERI: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf

### Cheryl Ritchie will represent G.S. at Ms. Senior AL Pageant

Cheryl Ritchie, a Gulf Shores resident since 1987, was officially crowned as the Ms. Senior Gulf Shores delegate by the Ms. Senior Alabama organization and will represent the city in the upcoming statewide competition for Ms. Senior Alabama at the Daphne Civic Center on June 1.



Ritchie, an associate broker at Re/Max White Sands, and 13 other delegates from across the state will perform opening and closing musical numbers as a group. The contestants will also walk the stage in evening gowns, be interviewed for 45 seconds about their philosophy of life, wear another outfit that fits their personality and bring a prop to the stage that reveals one of their passions or hobbies or something that helps keep them active in their community. A member of the worship band at Crossview Church in Pensacola, Ritchie will bring her guitar on stage during that part of the pageant.

The women in the pageant serve as shining examples of the remarkable senior women who are making a positive impact throughout Alabama, showcasing the invaluable contributions of empowered senior women, according to Ms. Senior Alabama Inc.

A native of Vestavia Hills and an Auburn grad, Ritchie and the other delegates will also tape segments that will be screened during the competition.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

Shores.

- Matt Erdman: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
- Brooks Johnson: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.
- Trivia: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Ty Taylor Trio: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Gage & The Get Downs: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Jam Night: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Lisa Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Andy Andrews Live: 12:15; Andy Andrews General Store & Museum; The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Karaoke w. Kelly: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Bridge: 11:30 a.m.; Orange Beach Senior Center, 251-981-3440.
- Texas Hold 'em: 7; The Office, Foley.
- GriefShare Support Group, 6; Point Baptist Church, 13801 Innerarity Point Rd, Pen-

sacola; 601-278-6973.

- Manna Center Food Pantry: 9-11 & 2-4; First Baptist Church of Gulf Shores; 2300 West 1st St.; adult & children's clothes, computer access, limited financial assistance. Info: 251-948-2485.

- Orange Beach City Council Meeting: 5 p.m.; City Hall; 980-INFO.

- Beginner's Pickleball: 1-4 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.

- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.

- Overcomers Outreach: 7 p.m.; First Baptist Church of Orange Beach; 980-1705.

- Foley Kiwanis Club: noon; Vallarta's, 1145 S. McKenzie St., Foley; 859-771-6091.

- Foley Lions Club: noon; Wolf Bay Lodge, Foley.

- Al-Anon: 7 p.m.; Lillian United Methodist Church, 12770 N. Perdido St.

### WED, MARCH 13

- Shawn Lackey Duo: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.

- John Kueler: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.

- Kevin Swanson: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Mor-

gan.

- Mike Diamond: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.

- Jay & Eric: 2; Front Porch, Lillian.

- John Joiner & Darrel Roberts: 5; Front Porch, Lillian.

- Justin Colvard; 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.

- Platinum Premier; 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.

- David Wiley: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.

- Tim & Drake: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.

- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.

- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.

- Saucy Fuzz: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.

- Jeremy Russow: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.

- Bingo w. Tim Roberts: 5; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.

- Open Jam: 7:30; Good Time Charlie's; Foley.

- Karaoke: 7; Al.Gulf Coast Music Hall, Foley.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING



**FOLEY NATIONAL ARCHERY COMPETITION DRAWS RECORD NUMBERS:** The Hoyt/Easton Pro/Am topped the event attendance record they set in 2023 when the competition returned to Foley's Graham Creek Reserve for the ninth year February 22-25. More than 2,000 shooters representing 40 states and four countries competed. "Probably the largest contributing factor to the success in Foley is the City itself," said ASA President Josh Grine. "Foley is an amazing location with plenty of hotels, restaurants, and incredible people. The shooters all feel and experience the amazing hospitality that Foley offers."



**ALABAMA GULF COAST ZOO'S JETT PASSES:** The Alabama Gulf Coast Zoo announced the passing of Jett, a 13 year old gray Timberwolf who arrived at the Zoo with her siblings Jake and Luna at just 6 days old from a conservation group in Florida. Jett was always the protector of the pack, alert and watching out for her brother and sister. She loved being able to tear apart boxes for enrichment or take a dunk in her pond. Jett enjoyed training with her keeper and voluntarily participated in her own vet care. It was through this training keepers were able to monitor her health closely. Unfortunately, a bone cancer mass on her jawbone and other conditions worsened and her quality of life became compromised, and the best course of action was to humanely say goodbye. She is survived by her brother Jake, who is also under close health watch by his animal care and veterinarian teams. Jake is continuing to receive special care and attention. Timberwolves are a large canid species that live in many different regions of the world. The largest number of Timberwolves can be found in the northern region of their range in Canada and Russia. Their average lifespan in the wild is 3-5 years of age. In human care, they can live on average up to 15 years old. "Jett's passing comes shortly after the loss of her sister a few months ago," said Joel Hamilton, Executive Director. "The loss of any animal in our care is always a challenge and the loss of Jett is felt deeply by the entire care team and the community who watched these three sibling wolves grow up at the Zoo." Timberwolves are often persecuted throughout their range due to conflict with humans over depredation on livestock and exaggerated concerns regarding direct threats to humans. Yellowstone National Park however has seen an immense change due to the reintroduction of the gray wolves back into the ecosystems. Wolves are causing a cascade of improved ecological changes, including helping to increase beaver populations and bringing back aspen and vegetation due to the wolves keeping the elk populations down within the park.

### Rubber Ducky Regatta is at OWA on March 23

The Rubber Ducky Regatta, benefiting Ronald McDonald House Charities of Mobile, is back this year in a brand-new location – OWA Parks & Resort in Foley. On March 23, 10,000 adopted ducks will be dropped into the lake at OWA and will race to the finish line, where the top three ducky adopters will win fabulous prizes.

Festivities will begin at 11 a.m. with family-friendly activities and games, bounce houses, vendors, specials at Downtown OWA stores and restaurants, and more. The race will begin at 1 p.m., followed by the awards ceremony. At 2 p.m., Nashville country music star Tyra Madison will take the stage on the OWA Island. This concert is free to the public. Throughout the day, participants and spectators can purchase Chance to Win tickets for great prizes.

Rubber Ducky adoptions directly benefit the hundreds of families who call Ronald McDonald House of Mobile their home away from home while their sick or injured children receive life-saving medical care at one of the area hospitals.

Duck adoption packages range from one duck for \$5 to 100 ducks for \$350. Visit [rubberduckyregatta.com](http://rubberduckyregatta.com) to adopt your duck(s) and support the hundreds of children who need their families by their side while they get well. For more info, contact Diana Brewer, [diana@rmhcmobile.org](mailto:diana@rmhcmobile.org) or call 251-694-6873.

Every year, more than 650 families from Baldwin and Mobile counties, and surrounding areas, count on RMHC of Mobile so they can be steps away from their child in the hospital. Without Ronald McDonald House, this would not be possible.

- Karaoke: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Bingo: 10 a.m.; American Legion Post 99; Foley.
- BBRC Running Club: 5:30 p.m.; Big Beach Brewery in Gulf Shores; lafleet-foot.com.
- Karaoke: 9; The Office, Foley.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Pickleball: 12:30-3:30 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Orange Beach Friends of the Library: 10; Library meeting room; 978-4106.
- Food Ministry at Morgan's Chapel

- United Methodist Church: 8-9 a.m.; 6325 Cty Rd 10, Bon Secour, (across from Swift School); 251-979-2005.
- Food Ministry For Hungry Families: 8:30-10 a.m.; Grace Lutheran Church, corner of West 23rd Ave. and West 4th St. in Gulf Shores; 251-968-5991.
- Bread Ministry: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Orange Beach United Methodist Church Brook's Center.
- Food Bank: 9 - 11 a.m every Wednesday, Perdido Bay Baptist Church, 12600 Sorrento Rd. Pensacola; call for eligibility requirements at (850) 492-2604.
- Gulf Shores Lions Club: noon; 2nd & 4th Wednesday; noon; Adult Activity Center, Gulf Shores; 251-968-2823.
- Al-Non: 12:30; Live Oak AFG, St

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### PIER & SHORE FISHING OUTLOOK

By DAVID "THE PIERPOUNDER" THORNTON

It appears that Spring is winning the weather battle along the Baldwin County coastline, with a string of above average temperature days warming the Gulf and backbay waters into the low to middle 60s, a little above average. 65 is the temperature usually triggering fish to become more active and hungry.



Sheepshead are often the first species to respond to the warm up as they move toward the mouth of bays and inlets, gathering in prespawn schools near most any hard structures. Piers, docks, seawalls and jetties become sheepshead magnets during March, leading up to the spawn. Most are caught using live shrimp freelined around the structures, though finding live bait can be a real challenge as demand really ramps up, even as supplies are dropping. Sheepshead may also feed directly on the barnacles and small crabs clinging to these structures themselves especially on sunny days. So, that is when fiddler crabs really shine as the best bait. When sheepshead are holding near the bottom, so-called Football and Free-swinging jigs provide an excellent means of presentation to the sheepshead which are notorious bait stealers. Hence the nickname "convict fish", due also to their vertical black and white stripes. But their incisor like teeth which resemble that of a sheep, are where they get their true name. Ghost shrimp are another great bait for sheepshead whenever they are schooling on the bottom, especially on a cloudy day with a moderate current. Try a Carolina rig or single drop rig presentation for best results.

Spanish mackerel are true harbingers of spring in this part of the fishing world. Their migratory pattern brings them back to Alabama coastal waters once the temperature sustains above 65 degrees. Mostly small ones show up first, 10 inch to 14 inch fork length (FL). But quickly, larger specimens 16 to 18 inch FL follow. Traditionally it was not unusual at all for hundreds of spanish mackerel to be caught almost daily from the Gulf State Park Pier during this period. But that will not be an option this spring as the pier remains closed during repairs. Still, good numbers of mackerel can be caught from the west jetty at Alabama Point, and along the seawall or beaches near Perdido Pass where an incoming tide is best for mackerel fishing. Most any small jig (½ ounce), or lures like the Gotcha plug or small hard lures such as Rapala X-Rap (#6 or #8) will garner bites from the ravenous mackerel. Be sure to protect your lure (and investment) with a foot or two of heavy, clear monofilament (30# to 50# test). That should be thick enough to prevent being cut off by those razor sharp mackerel teeth most of the time. Just check the leader and line periodically for nicks which could lead to losing your lure and fish.

The newly opened Seawall Park under the west end of the Perdido Pass bridge continues to be a hub of activity for redfish, both slot and over slot-sized. Nights with an incoming tide have been especially productive near the end of the running tide, though action slowed around the previous NEAP tide period. This upcoming fortnight will experience a NEAP tide around March 11th, just after the New Moon, and coincidentally the

change to Daylight Savings Time. The fish won't care about that, but the tide times will spring forward as well. The time of high tide progresses forward about an hour later each day following the NEAP. Numbers and sizes of sheepshead have been increasing in that area as well, and the jetties should be holding even more sheepshead as we progress through March.

Activity seems to be picking up along the Gulf beaches as we get these prolonged warm ups especially after a number of bright, sunny days. This helps warm the relatively shallow waters in the surf zone and back bays stimulating the fish to want to feed more. Solitary, large black drum continue to prowl the surf, but a few more pompano are starting to show up too. Though in many places the long shore sandbar is a hundred yards or more from the beach. That means it takes a herculean cast to reach the back slope of the sandbar where the fish are more likely to be traveling or looking for food. Only rarely will much of anything besides hardhead catfish be holding in the wide and deep longshore trough this time of year. So, your best bets for success will be making an extremely long cast out to the sandbar, or in close where the water changes color 30 to 40 yards off the beach.

The water remains too cool for wade fishing without chest waders, so that isn't much of an option open to anglers at this time. Another area that will be open to anglers in Perdido Key is at the Gulf Islands National Seashore east of Johnson's Beach. Several new beach access areas are now open (as of March 1st.) This is traditionally a great stretch of beach for pompano fishing.

Gulf State Park Romar Beach access recently reopened, sporting an enlarged parking lot, bathroom house, and outdoor showers. Meanwhile, work on the Gulf State Park Pier repairs continue intermittently as weather allows. Progress is meticulous and slow due to stormy periods and workers having to remove debris 8 feet or more below the bottom to allow room for replacement piling to be set into precise locations. So far 9 of the 21 pilings have been set, including a couple of piling caps and some spans. In due time, these will form the backbone to bridge the shoreward pier to the free-standing octagon. Then some work will need to be done to shore up some of the piling damaged during hurricane Sally in September 2020. But once the water work is completed, the pace should pick up significantly. Still, they have a long way yet to go with new ipe wood rails and floor panels all the way out to and including the end octagon, plus placing the water and electrical lines, lighting, and getting the elevator working.

Access to the beach at Mobile Street off Fort Morgan Road will be restricted over the next few months as the boardwalk is being replaced. Anglers will be able to access the beach by using the Emergency Vehicle sand trail west of the current boardwalk. The Project also includes improvements to the 30 vehicle parking lot to allow better drainage so rainwater will not stand for days as it now does. Currently beach erosion has encroached almost to the dune line near the access point, so there may be a drop off there now. The replacement structure promises to be ADA compliant, meaning it will have a ramp and not just stairs. So it will be easier for anglers to egress once the project is completed.

Maintenance dredging at Little Lagoon Pass continues to make headway by removing much of the sand that nearly choked off the flow of water through the mouth of the channel. Fishing there should improve as more water flow is restored once the channel depth is returned to that required by law. Be vigilant of drop offs and deep holes while wading in the area, especially when the water is dingy. And keep an eye out for the kids! But the pass is a historically good fishing spot, even though you have to pay to fish there now.

John's Episcopal Church, 401 Live Oak Ave., Pensacola.

### THU, MARCH 14

- Frank Brown Songwriters Festival writers Johnny Hayes and Jenna McClelland: 5:30; free concert; Waterway Village; Gulf Shores.
- Phil & Ced: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Brian Hill: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Justin Colvard: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Damian Lamb: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.
- Brittany Bell: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Tyler Ward: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
- Barstool Surfers: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
- Wire & PaPa: 2; Front Porch, Lillian
- Gary Story Open Mic: 6; Front Porch, Lillian
- Just Roger: 4; Ice House; Gulf Shores.
- Just Roger: 5; Picnic Beach; Gulf Shores.
- Karaoke: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.

- Funky Lampshades: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Tim Robinson: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Jeremy Russow: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Elaine Petty: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.
- Andy Andrews Live: 12:15; Andy Andrews General Store & Museum; The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 9; The Office, Foley.
- Trivia Night: 6; Towne Tap, Foley.
- Grief Support Group: 1-3; Gulf Shores First Baptist Church; 251-968-7369.
- Karaoke: 6; Tacky Jacks, Ft. Morgan.
- Karaoke w. Kelly: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Bridge: 11:30 a.m.; Orange Beach Senior Center, 251-981-3440.
- Bingo: 5; open to all; Amvets Post 2018; 13085 Wisconsin St.; Elberta.
- Gulf Shores Methodist Church Bread Ministry: 8am; every Thursday; South Campus; (251) 968-2411.
- Al-Anon: 7; Orange Beach Presbyterian Church, 26640 Canal Rd.

### FRI, MARCH 15

- Delta Donnie: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Midlife Crisis: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.



**FISHING FUN:** (clockwise from top left) Shawn and Cindy Mckallagat along with grandson Liam Fleming are from Boston like Redfish much better than bluegill and were rewarded with a bonus pompano; Cheyenne Rebecca of Atmore landed this beautiful 28-inch redfish at Seawall Park on Perdido Pass using live shrimp; TC Mehmet Sengul landed this bull redfish at Seawall Park near the Perdido Pass Bridge in Orange Beach on a live pinfish; Jordan Gooding greeted this sizable black drum that gave him quite a pull, then he put it back in the Gulf.



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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### COOKIN' WITH CAROLYN

BY CAROLYN GODFREY

#### Spiced Pecans

2 cups pecan halves  
1/4 sugar  
4 Tbsp. butter, melted  
2 tsp. salt  
1/2 tsp ground red pepper  
4 tsp. Worcestershire sauce  
Stir together all ingredients; spread in a lightly greased 13-x 9-inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 10-12 min. or until lightly toasted, stirring mixture once.  
Yield: 2 cups  
**Enjoy.**

### Baldwin County Animal Shelter needs volunteer dog walkers

The Baldwin County Animal Shelter is in urgent need of volunteers to help with walking the dogs as well as playing with the dogs outside to help them get their daily exercise while also socializing them. Volunteers must be 18 years of age and fill out a volunteer packet [baldwincountyal.gov/departments/animal-shelter](http://baldwincountyal.gov/departments/animal-shelter) or in person at the shelter at 15240 County Road 49 in Summerdale Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 5 p.m. The primary purpose of the volunteer program is to get citizens involved in making the shelter the best facility it can be. For more info, call 251.972.6834.



**FOLEY NATIONAL ARCHERY COMPETITION DRAWS RECORD NUMBERS:** Orange Beach firefighter Will Hearn, FireMedic Jordan Flynt, FireMedic Austin Lesinger and Captain Kevin Lanford participated in the March 2 New Orleans Memorial Stairclimb, which honors the fallen heroes of September 11, 2001 as well as local fallen heroes. The local contingent, along with more than 300 other first responders, climbed 84 flights of stairs. It was not an easy task, but they started together and finished together. Never forgetting means never forgetting.

- Grits & Greens: 10; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Cordial Bros Pink Floyd Tribute: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Wharf Boat & Yacht Show: 10 a.m.; The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Fairhope Arts & Crafts Fest: 10-4; Downtown Fairhope.
- Drew Travis & Friends: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Alvarado Road Show: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Ashley Raines & Elaine Petty: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
- Ronnie Pressley: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.
- Doc Rogers & the Rock Dodgers: 7; Magnolia Hotel; Foley.
- The Groovinators: 7; Magnolia Hotel; Foley.
- Jesse Taylor: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Tyler Ward: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Justin Colward: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.
- David Wiley: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
- Tom Foolery: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
- Rockstar Fish: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Donna Slater: 3; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Jason Justice: 6; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Just Roger: noon; King Neptunes; Gulf Shores.
- Just Roger: 5; Picnic Beach; Gulf Shores.
- Saucy Fuzz: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see [florabama.com](http://florabama.com); Perdido

- Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Cedrick Brooks: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Pickleball: 6-9 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Davo: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.
- Bubba 'N Them: 6; The Point; Innerarity Point.
- Guided Pier Walk: 9-10 a.m.; Gulf State Park Pier; Gulf Shores.
- Open Mic: 6; American Legion Post 199; Fairhope.
- Piano Bar: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Karaoke w. Kelly Ann: 6; American Legion Post 99; Foley.



### Gulf Shores to host Waterway Village Concert Series in place of Zydeco Fest

The City of Gulf Shores has released the lineup for the free concert series it announced as an alternative to the Waterway Village Zydeco & Crawfish Festival that it has sponsored since 2014.

And it is a good one that will include world class zydeco bands led by Rosie Ledet and Chubby Carrier on April 4. The concerts will be held at the original zydeco site on the Intracoastal Waterway just west of Acme Oyster House and across from the city owned parking lot on East 24th Ave.

"Last summer, as we were looking ahead to construction with the pedestrian bridge, the detour through the Meyer Park area, the ability for the businesses in that area to continue to support the Zydeco Crawfish Festival," Director of Recreation and Cultural Affairs Grant Brown said when announcing the end to the fest last month.

Grant said the city budgeted \$25,900 for the series, and there is a chance that the Zydeco Fest will return at a future date.

"We left the possibility open absolutely. Brown said. "It's just not a commitment until we see how the development in that area unfolds. Or, maybe we move the event to a new location."

The city will sponsor live music every Thursday at 5:30 p.m. March 7 through April 11. Each concert will include two bands. Food trucks will be onsite at each event, and the Coastal Alabama

Business Chamber will be selling beverages.

This summer's Music at Meyer Park series is still on the city calendar with show dates listed as June 21, July 18 and August 15.

The adjacent Gulf Coast Arts Alliance gallery will extend hours on concert nights. For more information, please visit [gulfshoresAL.gov](http://gulfshoresAL.gov) or call 251-968-1171.

#### CONCERT SERIES LINE-UP

March 7: Matt Schofield and This Side of 49.  
March 14: Frank Brown Songwriters Festival writers Johnny Hayes and Jenna McClelland.  
March 21: Jamell Richardson & Joslyn & The Sweet Compression.  
March 28: Everette and Crawford & Power.  
April 4: Rosie Ledet and Chubby Carrier.  
April 11: Grayson Capps.

**Pictured:** Fairhope High School grad Grayson Capps has been hailed by NPR for his "unbridled energy and authenticity." he first emerged as a solo artist in 2005 with his debut record, "If You Knew My Mind." American Songwriter wrote about the record: "Take the poetry of Texas troubadour Townes Van Zandt, combine with Steve Earle's edgy attitude and stir with a little cup of the bayou-blues (think Howlin' Wolf) and you start to get a taste of Capps's scrumptious gothic gumbo."

He has since gone onto release similarly exalted albums, and his enduring live shows have earned him devoted followings in both the US and Europe.





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- .25 oz simple syrup
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Combine tequila, juice and syrup in mixer with ice. Shake hard. Pour into flute glass and top with champagne.



### Vodka Lemonade

- 4 oz vodka
- 3 cups lemonade
- fresh mint
- ½ cup sliced strawberries
- lime

Combine vodka, lemonade, half the strawberries and half the mint in bowl. Muddle until mashed. Fill jar with ice. Add remaining mint and berries to the jar. Pour in vodka lemonade mix over the ice. Garnish each glass with lime.

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## WHAT'S HAPPENING



**SNOWBIRD RAFFLE RAISES \$5,400 FOR LOCAL FIRE DEPTS.:** The Snobird Calendar Raffle was again very successful. Chiefs from the three local fire departments were each presented with a check in the amount of \$1,800 for a total donation of \$5,400. The checks were presented at the Feb. 28 ticket drawing at the Gulf Shores Fire Dept. **Pictured:** Brad Beyer, Chief Jeff Smith, Chief Lee Steiner, Chief Mark Sealy, Jerry Louward.

### Master Gardeners Plant Sale April 4-6 under Fish River Bridge

The Baldwin County Master Gardeners Spring Plant Sale will be held April 4-6 at Weeks Bay Reserve from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Reserve is located just west of the Fish River Bridge on Highway 98 at Safe Harbor, directly across from the Weeks Bay Reserve Visitor Center, 11300 U.S. Highway 98, Fairhope. This sale will offer a big selection of annuals, perennials, herbs, shrubs, trees, hummingbird attractors, heirloom and rare plants. Experts, including several growers and the Baldwin County Master Gardeners, will be on hand to help with selections and to answer questions, and free gardening seminars will be held onsite at 10 a.m., 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. Proceeds from the plant sale benefit the BCMG Scholarship Fund. Info: visit [baldwincountymastergardeners.com](http://baldwincountymastergardeners.com).

### No alcoholic beverages on Gulf Shores beaches 'til April 28

The City of Gulf Shores, in an effort to get ahead of rowdy behavior from millennials here for spring break, will ban alcoholic beverages on public beaches through April 14. This is the ninth year the city has passed such an ordinance.

The City of Orange Beach Police Department also put spring break revelers on notice that theirs is not a party town and underage drinking, illegal drug use, disorderly conduct or any other breach of the peace will not be tolerated.

"If you choose to violate the law, you will go to jail. This is your only warning," OBPD stated. "If you are looking for a party town, the City of Orange Beach is not it."

"The City of Orange Beach welcomes all guests for Spring Break. Our city is a beautiful, family-oriented beach resort community. During Spring Break, we traditionally experience increases in underage drinking, disorderly conduct and illegal drug use," the OBPD stated.

- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center; corner of West 19th Ave. and West 2nd St.
- T.O.P.S. (Take Off Pounds Sensibly); weigh-in 9; meeting 9:30; Foley Sr. Center, 304 E. Rose Ave.; 251-979-1075.
- Al-Anon: noon; Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church, Gulf Shores.

### SAT, MARCH 16

- Flora-Bama's Beach Run-Walk for America's Warriors 5K & 1/2 Marathon: 7:30 & 9; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Wharf Boat & Yacht Show: 10 a.m.; The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Fairhope Arts & Crafts Fest: 10-4; Downtown Fairhope.
- Lee Yankie's Secret Stash: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Kyle Wilson: 2; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Meredith Hicks: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Tyler Livingston & The Absolutes: 10; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Stephen Sylvester: 5; Sassy Bass Amazin' Grill; Fort Morgan.
- JERI: 7; Magnolia Hotel; Foley.
- Alvarado Road Show: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Mac Walter: 11 a.m.; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.
- Gringo Fife: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.
- Destiny Brown: 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Swamp Water Symphony: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Justin Fobes: 1; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Mel Knapp: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant;

- Orange Beach.
- Basch Jernigan: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.
- Chris Hergenroder: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
- Kat Deal: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
- John Joiner: 2; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Bat Bennett: 6; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Rachel Lane: 10; Front Porch, Lillian.
- Brandon Giles: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.
- Crosstown: 7; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see [florabama.com](http://florabama.com); Perdido Key.
- Cedrick Brooks: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 6; American Legion Post 44, Gulf Shores.
- Karaoke w. Bobby Lee: 6; American Legion Post 199; Fairhope.
- Piano Bar: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- The Defrosters: 2; Flying Harpoon II; Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 6; Tacky Jacks, Ft. Morgan.
- Texas Hold 'em: 7; The Office, Foley.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermen's Market: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., Foley

### SUN, MARCH 17

- Papa Rocco's St. Patrick's Day Walking Parade: 9:30 until; starts at Papa's & ends at Mikees.
- Wharf Boat & Yacht Show: 10 a.m.; The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Tipsea Manatee: 1; Big Beach Brewery;

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14  
K-6 Educator Appreciation STEM Evening



03  
23  
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03  
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03  
31  
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## WHAT'S HAPPENING



### WORK BEGINS ON 73-ROOM FOLEY HOTEL:

Work is underway for Foley's newest hotel, a four-story facility with 73 rooms next to the Foley Farmers' and Fishermen's Market at the northeast corner of Mifflin Road – County Rd/ 20 – and Koniar Way. Foley Mayor Ralph Hellmich said the hotel, located near the growing commercial area and city recreation complex, will be a benefit for economic growth and sports tourism, and proudly noted that it was being built by local investors using local financing. While the company name is Cobblestone Hotels and Suites, most of the 73 units in the Foley facility will be standard hotel rooms with a few suites. The 40,487 square foot building will also include a breakfast area-bar, an outdoor pool and an outdoor seating area-patio.

Another hotel, the Fairfield Inn with 107 units, is also under construction. When both hotels are open, the combined capacity will increase the number of hotel rooms in Foley by almost 20%. Also planned is a resort-style hotel to be built at OWA. The OWA hotel is scheduled to open in 2025. The Cobblestone company will work with the city to improve parking, lighting and sidewalks. Cobblestone is based in Wisconsin and has about 170 hotels in operation or under construction.

Gulf Shores.

- Crab Riot: 5; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Fairhope Arts & Crafts Fest: 10-4; Downtown Fairhope.
- Kyle Wilson: 11 a.m.; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Johnny Hayes: 3; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Funky Lampshades: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- City Rhythm Band Dance: 2; Loxley Civic Center; Loxley.
- Rebecca Barry Duo: 5; Lucy Buffett's

LuLu's; Gulf Shores.

- Hippy Jim: 5; Tacky Jacks; Orange Beach.
- Justin Moyer 5; Tacky Jacks; Gulf Shores.
- Mike Diamond: 1; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Kaleb King: 4; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Chase Brown: 11 a.m.; The Tin Top Restaurant ; Bon Secour.
- Adam Tyler Brown: 4; Woodside Rest. at Gulf State Park; Gulf Shores.
- Zoe Burdette; 5; Carver's Steak House;

Orange Beach.

- Mone Polk and Friends: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
- Johnny B & Britt: 4; Front Porch, Lillian
- Portersville Duo: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Tim & Drake: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Al-Anon: 6; Grace Lutheran Church, Gulf Shores.



### Ballyhoo Fest postponed until April 6-7 Poarch Creek Indians are still set to perform

The tribal dancers from the Poarch Creek Indians will still be the major attraction when the postponed (from March 2-3) Ballyhoo Fest returns to the shores of Lake Shelby (20115 State Park Rd.) at Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores April 6-7. Hours are 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. on Sunday.

The fest is a showcase for fine artists from all over the Southeast and includes fiddler and banjo competitions. But at its core, the fest has always taken pride in being a cultural exchange with the Poarch Band of Creek Indians, who will perform traditional dances dressed in spectacular ceremonial regalia at noon and again at 4 p.m. on Saturday. Each of the dances has a specific meaning. And the audience will be invited to join the tribe for their last dances.

The Poarch Creek Indians are descendants of the original Creek Nation, which once covered almost all of Alabama and Georgia. Unlike many southeastern tribes, the Poarch Creeks were not removed from their tribal lands. They have lived together for over 150 years as the only nationally recognized tribe in Alabama.

The fest's Sunday banjo and fiddle competitions are sponsored by Flora-Bama and the Frank Brown International Songwriters Fest. Both competitions include separate youth and adult divisions and will award cash prizes totaling \$3,000.

The fest includes a children's art tent, live art demonstrations and unique food. Parking is available across from the Lake Shelby fest site at Gulf State Pier for \$5, and limited handicapped parking is available on festival grounds. Attendees can also drop off and pick up at the park entrance, then park across the street and walk over the bridge to the festival. Shuttles and parking will also be available at the Gulf State Pavilion and The Gulf State park Fishing Pier. For more fest info, visit ballyhoofestival.org.

### PERDIDO BEACH RESORT HALF MARATHON & 5K HAS SUCCESSFUL DEBUT:

From the course, to the perks and amenities, from the facilities to the post race party, Perdido Beach Resort in Orange Beach earned rave reviews from the 350 athletes who participated in the inaugural Perdido Beach Resort Half Marathon, Fun Run and 5k Run on March 2. But PBR's Marketing Director Abby Tait said she is most proud of the kindness the PBR staff showed to the participants from check-in through the awards ceremony on PBR's gulfside back deck. "We will address a few issues we had with signage on the half marathon course, but the turnout was great and the party was super fun," she said. "The staff did a good job and so many people commented on how helpful and kind everybody was." Tait said PBR has already set a date, March 8, for next year's race, which raises funds for The Jennifer Claire Moore Foundation, a local non-profit whose vision is to create a compassionate and informed community that instills positive mental health and resiliency in Baldwin County youth for generations to come. More info: jennifermoorefoundation.com.





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## WHAT'S HAPPENING

- Roger Howard hosted Songwriters Series: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.
- Trivia Night: 6; Towne Tap, Foley.
- Sunday Potluck: 12-2; Fraternal Order or Eagles Lodge; Hwy 98, east of Beach Express; Foley.
- Bends & Brews Yoga: 11 a.m.; in the courtyard; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Lisa Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- The Defrosters: 2; Flying Harpoon II; Orange Beach.
- The Hubmeister: 5; Hub Stacy's; Innerarity Point.
- League Pool: 7; The Office, Foley.

### MON, MARCH 18

- Saucy Fuzz: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Tyler Brady: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Tim Roberts: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Roger Howard (open mic): 6; Loria's; Orange Beach.
- Karaoke: 5; Front Porch, Lillian
- Open Mic: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Square Dancing: 6:30; Fairhope Christian Church, Fairhope, 850-206-5084.
- DJ Hank: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.

- Lisa Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Smokey Otis & Mark Laborde: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
- Bridge (11 a.m.) & Bingo (6 p.m.): American Legion Post 44, Gulf Shores.
- League Pool: 7; The Office, Foley.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center; corner of West 19th Ave. and West 2nd St.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Celebrate Recovery: (Christ centered 12 step program); Monday evenings at 6 p.m.; Island Church in Orange Beach; 251-967-4840.
- Overeaters Anonymous: 6; Holy Spirit Episcopal Church; Gulf Shores, 616 Ft. Morgan Rd.; 251-709-5907.
- Bingo: 6; American Legion Post 99, Gulf Shores.
- Al-Anon: 7; Orange Beach Presbyterian Church, 26640 Canal Rd. 8.

### TUE, MARCH 19

- Trivia: 6; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Ty Taylor Trio: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Stephen Sylvestger: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
- Rachel Lane: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
- Brent Varner: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
- Bat Bennett: 5; Front Porch, Lillian
- Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange

- Beach.
- Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
- Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
- Gage & The Get Downs: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
- Jam Night: 6; Big Beach Brewery; Gulf Shores.
- Lisa Zanghi: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
- Andy Andrews Live: 12:15; Andy Andrews General Store & Museum; The Wharf, Orange Beach.
- Danny Grady: 3; American Legion Post 44; Gulf Shores.
- Bridge: 11:30 a.m.; Orange Beach Senior Center, 251-981-3440.
- Karaoke w. Kelly: 8; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
- Texas Hold 'em: 7; The Office, Foley.
- Manna Center Food Pantry: 9-11 & 2-4; First Baptist Church of Gulf Shores; 2300 West 1st St.; also adult & children's clothes, computer access, limited financial assistance. Info: 251-948-2485.
- GriefShare Support Group, 6; Point Baptist Church, 13801 Innerarity Point Rd, Pensacola; 601-278-6973.
- Beginner's Pickleball: 1-4 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Kiwanis Club of Big Lagoon: 6 p.m.; Point Baptist Church, 13801 Innerarity Point Rd., Pensacola.

- Al-Anon: 7 p.m.; Lillian United Methodist Church, 12770 N. Perdido St.
- ### WED, MARCH 20
- JB Dyess: 7; Pappa Rocco's; Gulf Shores.
  - Shawn Lackey Duo: 8; SanBar at The Wharf, Orange Beach.
  - John Kueler: 5; Lucy Buffett's LuLu's; Gulf Shores.
  - Adam Tyler Brown: 6; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
  - Zach Chavers: 5; CoastaAl Restaurant; Orange Beach.
  - Chris Hergenroder: 5; Carver's Steak House; Orange Beach.
  - Bad Bones: 5; The Angry Crab Shack; Orange Beach.
  - T Bone & Bo: 5; Front Porch, Lillian.
  - Chris Beverly: 7; Sandshaker at The Wharf; Orange Beach.
  - Just Roger: 5; Live Bait; Orange Beach.
  - Flora-Bama Rest. Complex Possible Probables: see florabama.com; Perdido Key.
  - Flora-Bama Family Friendly Bingo: 1-4 p.m.; free; family friendly; Flora-Bama; Perdido Key.
  - Saucy Fuzz: 10; The Undertow; Orange Beach.
  - Jeremy Russow: 6; Ms. Nancy's Lobby Lounge at Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach.
  - Bingo w. Tim Roberts: 5; Tacky Jacks, Fort Morgan.
  - Jeremy Perkins: 7; Gelato Joe's; Foley.
  - Karaoke: 9; The Office, Foley.
  - Ricky Johnson & Friends: 5; American

- Legion Post 44; Foley.
- Karaoke: 7; Al Gulf Coast Music Hall, Foley.
- Open Jam: 7:30; Good Time Charlie's; Foley.
- Open Jam w. Nigel Dickie: 6; Tacky Jacks, Gulf Shores.
- Karaoke: 6; Hub Stacy's, Innerarity Point.
- Bingo: 10 a.m.; American Legion Post 99; Foley.
- BBRC Running Club: 5:30 p.m.; Big Beach Brewery in Gulf Shores; lafleeft-foot.com.
- Open Mixed Doubles Tennis: 7:15 a.m.; all levels welcome; Gulf Shores Tennis Center.
- Pickleball: 8:30-11:30 a.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Pickleball: 12:30-3:30 p.m.; Christ Church, Gulf Shores.
- Food Ministry at Morgan's Chapel United Methodist Church: 8-9 a.m.; 6325 Cty Rd 10, Bon Secour, (across from Swift School); 251-979-2005.
- Food Ministry For Hungry Families: 8:30-10 a.m.; Grace Lutheran Church, corner of West 23rd Ave. and West 4th St. in Gulf Shores; 251-968-5991.
- Food Bank: 9 - 11 a.m every Wednesday, Perdido Bay Baptist Church, 12600 Sorrento Rd. Pensacola; call for eligibility requirements at (850) 492-2604.
- Bread Ministry: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.; Orange Beach United Methodist Church Brook's Center.
- Al-Non: 12:30; Live Oak AFG, St. John's Episcopal Church, 401 Live Oak Ave., Pensacola.

## Kenny Chesney returns to stadiums for 2023 tour

After spending the spring and summer of 2023 playing smaller venues in the markets where he launched his enviable touring career, including two memorable sold out shows in Orange Beach, Kenny Chesney is going back to stadiums in the summer of 2024.

The Messina Touring Group-promoted "Sun Goes Down 2024 Tour" begins April 20 at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa and then crisscrosses the country, hitting 18 cities before the traditional tour-closer at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, Massachusetts, where Chesney will play his astounding 22nd show - a venue record. Zac Brown Band, Megan Moroney and Uncle Kracker (Chesney's duet partner on the hit that lent its name to the tour) will support.

"I wanted a name that suggested - obviously - when all the good stuff starts to happen. The one thing I've

learned about No Shoes Nation and these stadium shows is they start the good times early and they just keep it going," Chesney said in a statement. "But we all know, when the sun goes down, that's when people really get loose and enjoy themselves.

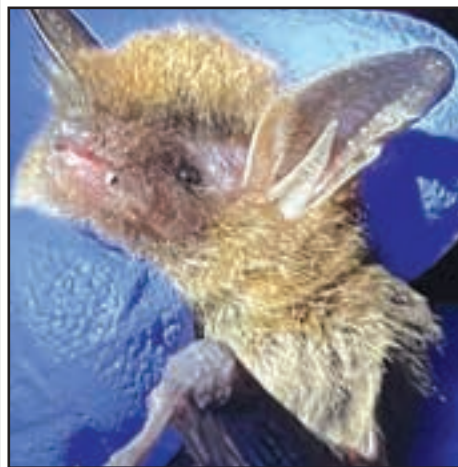
"That was the thing about Kracker and my song. It captured a vibe and a moment so perfectly. No matter how much fun you're having all day long, 'everything gets hotter when the sun goes down...' I know from years of experience that's true.

"So, I can't wait to get back out there, stadium-sized 'cause there's nothing like 60,000 members of No Shoes Nation singing these songs. It's gonna be awesome."

Chesney's 2022 stadium run placed him No. 5 on Pollstar's year-end charts, grossing a hefty \$135,259,115 on 41 shows across 38 cities, selling nearly 1.3 million tickets.

### Sun Goes Down 2024 Tour Dates:

April 20, Tampa, Raymond James Stadium; April 27, Charlotte, Bank of America Stadium; May 4, Minneapolis, U.S. Bank Stadium; May 11, Arlington, AT&T Stadium; May 18, Atlanta, Mercedes-Benz Stadium; May 25, Landover, FedExField; June 1, Pittsburgh, Acrisure Stadium; June 8, Philadelphia, Lincoln Financial Field; June 15, Chicago, Soldier Field; June 22, Milwaukee, American Family Field; July 6, Kansas City, Arrowhead Stadium; July 13, Seattle, Lumen Field; July 20, Los Angeles, SoFi Stadium; July 27, Denver, Mile High Stadium; Aug. 3, Nashville, Nissan Stadium; Aug. 10, Detroit, Ford Field; Aug. 17, East Rutherford, MetLife Stadium; Aug. 23, Foxborough, Gillette Stadium.



## Endangered Long-Eared Bats discovered in Coastal Alabama

Biologists have discovered a breeding population of endangered northern long-eared bats in coastal Alabama.

The bats were discovered during the ABWG's annual Bat Blitz - an event held in a different location of the state each year to inventory local bat populations - in Baldwin and Mobile counties in May 2023.

On the last day of the event, one male and two pregnant female northern long-eared bats were captured and released on a Forever Wild Land Trust tract within the Perdido River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Baldwin County. Prior to the 2023 Bat Blitz, the species had not been documented in southwest Alabama.

"We focused our efforts in coastal Alabama after the discovery of northern long-eared bats in coastal North Carolina and South Carolina," said Nick Sharp, WFF Bat Biologist for Alabama. "This discovery is significant as there are no caves in these locations and the bats apparently do not hibernate. Rather, they are active year-round and therefore not exposed to white-nose syndrome."

Northern long-eared bats were once one of the most common bats in eastern North America but the species has been decimated by WNS - a deadly fungal disease that affects hibernating bats. According to the USFWS, WNS has caused declines of 97 to 100 percent in affected northern long-eared bat populations. Due to extreme population declines, the northern long-eared bat was federally listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in 2022.

"The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources has been intentional about acquiring land along the Perdido River corridor to add to the land that currently encompasses the Perdido WMA," said Chris Blankenship, ADCNR Commissioner and Chairman of the Forever Wild Land Trust Board of Trustees. "The discovery of this endangered species in the area we are working to protect is further evidence of the importance of this land in eastern Baldwin County."

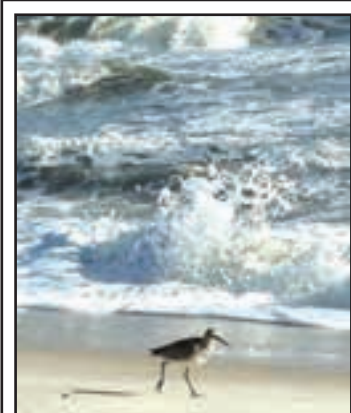
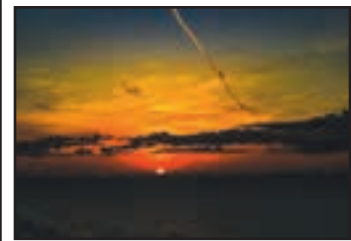
In June 2023, a second effort was made to catch additional northern long-eared bats at the Perdido River WMA with the goal of locating a maternity colony. This attempt resulted in the capture of another male and a lactating female, indicating the female had given birth in the area.



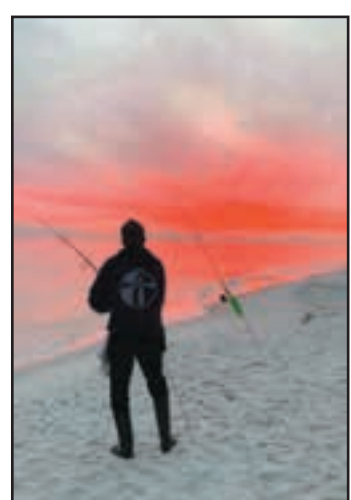
## Email your shots to [mulletwrapper@gulftel.com](mailto:mulletwrapper@gulftel.com) **PICTURES OF THE WEEK**



"Sandpipers racing around on the beach and a beautiful sunset from Gary Derifield of Waverly, Iowa."



From Mary Haines of McHenry, IL.



"I don't care what the groundhog says," writes Patrick Debel.



A Gulf Shores sunset from a Little Lagoon canal from Melanie Chamberlain.



A sunset from Turquoise Place from Ed Watkins.



Caryn Lee sent this picture of sweethearts at the beach.



"My granddaughter Maddison Ryan enjoyed her first parade," writes Buddy Eades. "She said that these people sure do like my beads and moon cakes."



"We walked out on our balcony last night and were surprised at this stunning sunset," writes Gary Lipely.



From Deb Burkland.



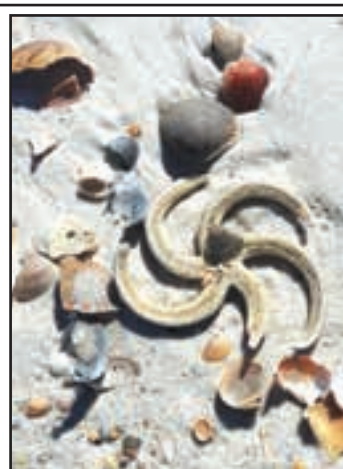
From Ken Groezinger: Bluebird & banded starfish.



Melissa Rosengarten found this gator sunning at Gulf State Park.



Submitted by Kathy Fosterling



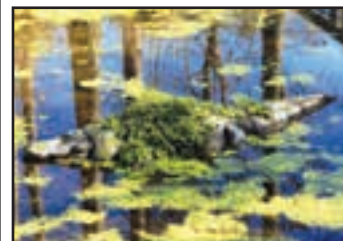
Beach treasures from Ann Lown.



"I think there's a reason it's called Orange Beach," writes Mike Yeager.



From Rich Loan



"Osprey keeping a close eye on the nest by Rick Boes.



From Ben Pelt: Orange Beach Fire Rescue A-Shift responded to a fully involved boat fire this week. Engineer Z. Cook (third from left) did what he does best! Quick response and supplied water several hundred feet down the dock.



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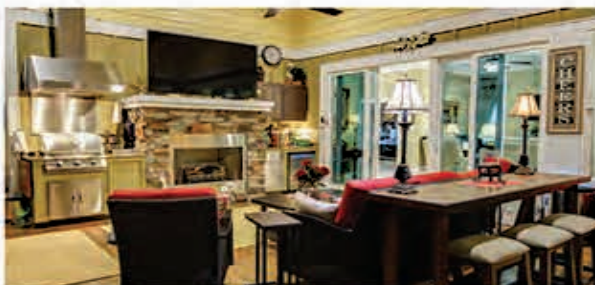
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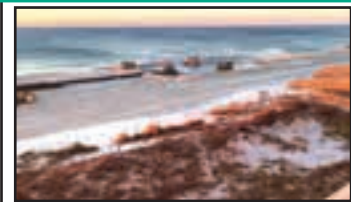
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Beach restoration in Orange Beach from Gary Cherpes.



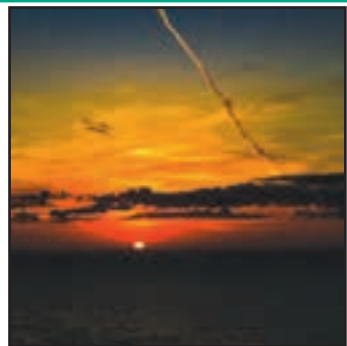
Diane Folio shares a pic of her grandcat.



"Johnson Beach residents," writes Snoop Roth.



Sunset Ft Morgan, Shar Eckard Okoboji, IA



"After the storm," writes Arlene Garrison.



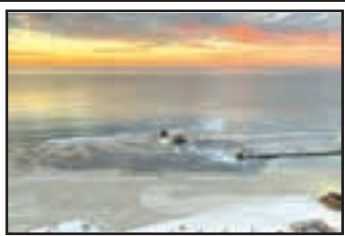
A beautiful morning courtesy of Margarita Lannon.



"Birds at sunset," writes Bob Schraufnagel from Wisconsin.



Armadillo in the Gulf State Park By Peggy Brown.



A beautiful sunrise is the backdrop for this beach renourishment project pic from Mike Meyer.



"Cheeseburger or mushroom?" asks Ann Lown.



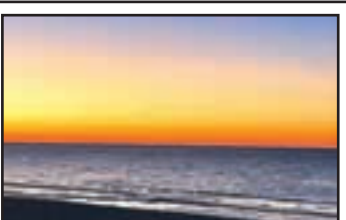
"A pelican just enjoying the beautiful day," writes Kathy Fosterling.



From Karen Royal-Peroz.



"So worth getting up early for a beautiful sunrise," writes Margie Miller.



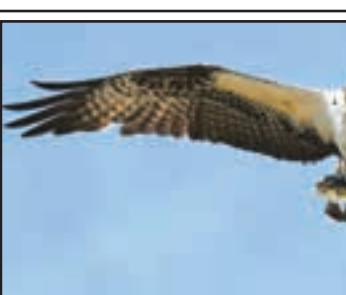
From Dana Bussewitz.



Gulf State Park pic from Simon Temperton.



"I like it. Hope you do too," writes Alan Thacker.



"An osprey with lunch," writes Ken Groezinger.



From Wisconsin snowbird Molly Erickson.



"Brown Pelicans catching breakfast/culvert at Marsh Trail at Gulf State Park," writes Dora Z Davis of Spokane.



"Impressive Sunset in Orange Beach," writes Ed Watkins.



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# Funny Bones

By Ron "Bones" Jones



Just to see what would happen, a father loaded his pessimist son's room with every imaginable toy and game and his optimist son's room with horse manure.

That night the father passed by the pessimist's room and found him sitting amid his new gifts crying bitterly.

"Why are you crying?" the father asked.

"Because my friends will be

jealous, I'll have to read all these instructions before I can do anything with this stuff, I'll constantly need batteries, and my toys will eventually get broken," he answered.

Passing the optimist twin's room, the father found him dancing for joy in the pile of manure. "What are you so happy about?" he asked.

"There's got to be a pony in here somewhere," he answered.

- Why does the sea roar? You'd roar too if you had crabs on your bottom.
- Why couldn't the steam train sit down? It had a tender behind.
- I just received in the mail a book on the history of clocks which I ordered three months ago. It's about time
- When is a pie in the oven like a poet? When it's Browning.

A boy went into a hardware shop and said my dad wants a piece of 4x2. The salesman said how long does he want it?

The boy said, "Uummmmm, I think he wants to keep it."

A man went into a bank to make a withdrawal.

The cashier asked if he could

identify himself?

He pulled a mirror out of his pocket, looked into it and said, "yes, it's definitely me."

One night a husband and wife were sleeping and suddenly the wife woke up.

"Honey, wake up! I think there's a burglar downstairs, and it sounds like they're eating the cake I made!" said the wife.

Half asleep, the husband answers, "So should I call the police or the ambulance?"

Did you hear about the old man whose birthday one year lasted only one minute?

It was his sixty-second birthday.

George Washington was such a great president.

He never blamed any of the country's problems on the previous administration.

A man entered a pet shop, wanting to buy a parrot. The shop owner pointed out three identical parrots on a perch and said, "The parrot to the left costs 500 dollars."

"Why does that parrot cost so much?" the man wondered.

The owner replied, "Well, it knows how to use a computer."

The man asked about the next parrot on the perch.

"That one costs 1,000 dollars because it can do everything the other parrot can do, plus it knows how to use write computer code."

Naturally, the startled customer asked about the third parrot.

"That one costs 2,000 dollars."

"And what does that one do?" the man asked.

The owner replied, "To be honest, I've never seen him do a thing, but the other two call him boss!"

Mom: "Well, what did you learn today?"

Child: "Not enough. They want me to come back tomorrow."

I was raised as an only child. That got on my brother's nerves.

Sally: "I'm thinking of starting an OCD support group at my house."

Rhonda: "Really? I didn't know you had an Obsessive Compulsive Disorder."

Sally: "I don't, I just want to get my house cleaned."

Deputy: "License and registration, please."

Lawyer: "What for?"

Deputy: "You didn't come to a complete stop at the stop sign."

Lawyer: "I slowed down, and no one was coming."

Deputy: "You still didn't come to a complete stop. License and registration, please."

Lawyer: "What's the difference?"

Deputy: "The difference is you must come to a complete stop, that's the law. License and registration, please."

Lawyer: "If you can show me the legal difference between slow down and stop, I'll give you my license and registration; and you give me the ticket. If not, you let me go and don't give me the ticket."

At this point, the deputy takes out his nightstick and starts using it on the lawyer.

Deputy: "Do you want me to stop, or just slow down?"

- Velcro - what a rip off!
- Don't worry about old age; it doesn't last.
- How was Rome split in two? With a pair of Ceasars.

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<b>Coconut Shrimp</b> - dipped in beer batter, rolled in coconut flake and flash fried	20.99
<b>**Grilled Skewer Shrimp</b> - basted w/garlic butter & served on Caribbean yellow rice	20.99
<b>Shrimp Creole</b> - Stewed tomato, sweet peppers, celery, onion and flavored w/ sausage over Caribbean yellow rice. Served with one side dish	20.99
<b>Crawfish Etouffee</b> - Served with one side dish	20.99
White onions, sweet bell peppers, and celery simmered in a spicy Cajun roux over Caribbean yellow rice.	
<b>Crab Cake Dinner</b> - 3 Southern style lump crab cakes sprinkled with parmesan cheese	21.99

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<b>Blackened Catfish</b> - dusted w/Creole spices & lightly seared	11.50
<b>Fried Catfish</b> - corn meal battered	11.50
<b>Broiled Flounder</b> - broiled in butter & topped with roasted almonds	11.50
<b>Fried Flounder</b> - lightly battered and fried golden brown	11.50
<b>Grilled Chicken</b> - with a light touch of Greek seasonings	11.50
<b>Chicken Creole</b> - smothered in a spicy tomato & vegetable sauce. Served on yellow rice	11.50
<b>Fried Chicken Tenders</b> - batter-dipped tenders, deep-fried. Served w/ honey mustard	11.50
<b>Country Fried Steak</b> - served w/ cream gravy	11.50
<b>Hamburger Steak</b> - (5 oz) char-grilled & served w/brown gravy	11.50
<b>Pork Chops</b> - two tender chops grilled or fried	11.50
<b>Country Ham</b> - char-grilled	11.50
<b>Vegetable Plate</b> - your choice of four (4) side dishes	10.50

### Senior's Menu

(Reserved for 55 & over)

Served with your choice of two side dishes & Iced tea  
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Served 3:00 pm to 9:00 pm October 15 to March 1

Served 3:00 pm to 5:30 pm March 2 to October 14

<b>Coconut Shrimp</b> with spicy orange marmalade	16.99
<b>Stuffed Shrimp</b> - bacon wrapped, stuffed with crabmeat dressing & monterey jack cheese	16.99
<b>Fried Shrimp</b> tail-less	12.99
<b>Grilled Shrimp</b> over yellow rice	14.99
<b>Fried Oysters</b> with cocktail sauce	market
<b>Fried Seafood Platter</b> shrimp, oysters, flounder, crab claws	19.99
<b>Broiled Seafood Platter</b> shrimp, scallops, flounder almondine	18.99
<b>Fried Chicken Tenders</b> with honey-mustard	11.99
<b>Grilled Chicken Breast</b> with a light touch of lemon-herb oil	12.99
<b>Yellow-Fin Tuna</b> grilled or blackened	15.99
<b>Trigger</b> grilled, fried, blackened or broiled almondine	15.99
<b>Flounder</b> fried or broiled almondine	12.99
<b>Grouper</b> grilled, blackened, broiled almondine or fried	15.99

### Side Dishes

Sweet Potato Casserole	Cole Slaw	Baked Potato
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Fried Green Tomatoes	Hush Puppies	
Substitute House or Caesar Salad for a Side Dish - Add \$2.75		

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**Friday:** Fried Parmesan encrusted Flounder-Topped with tarragon aioli and parmesan cheese

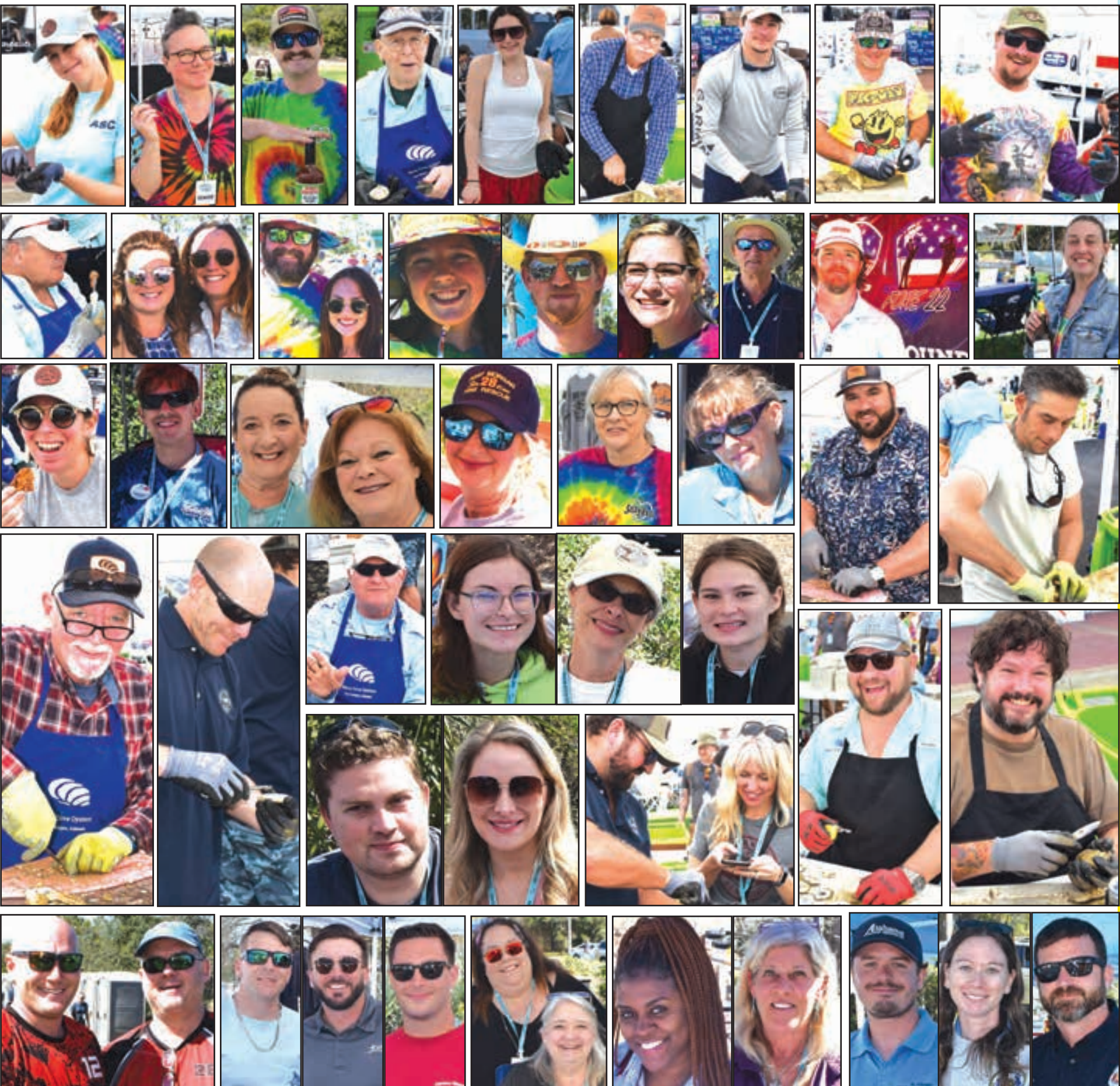
**Sunday:** Baked Parmesan encrusted Flounder-Topped with tarragon aioli and parmesan cheese

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Macaroni & Cheese | Collard Greens | Cole Slaw | Fried Okra

**TUESDAY**

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Potato Salad | Baked Beans | Cole Slaw

Macaroni & Cheese | French Fries | Fried Okra

**WEDNESDAY**

Fried Fish • Fried Or Grilled Porkchops • Fried Chicken

Black-Eyed Peas Turnip Greens Macaroni & Cheese

Cole Slaw | Corn Nuggets | Fried Okra

**THURSDAY**

Fried Fish • Baked Chicken • Fried Chicken

Dressing | Green Beans | Cole Slaw

Macaroni & Cheese Fried Okra

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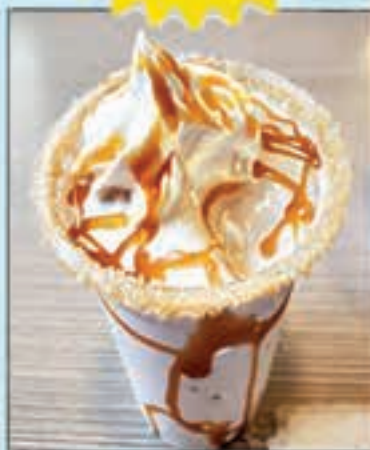
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Macaroni & Cheese | Collard Greens | Cole Slaw | Fried Okra

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Potato Salad | Baked Beans | Cole Slaw

Macaroni & Cheese | French Fries | Fried Okra

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Fried Fish • Fried Or Grilled Porkchops • Fried Chicken

Black-Eyed Peas Turnip Greens Macaroni & Cheese

Cole Slaw | Corn Nuggets | Fried Okra

**THURSDAY**

Fried Fish • Baked Chicken • Fried Chicken

Dressing | Green Beans | Cole Slaw

Macaroni & Cheese Fried Okra

**FRIDAY**

Fried Fish • Fried Chicken

French Fries | Cole Slaw | Fried Okra | Macaroni & Cheese

Or

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# The late Dr. Bob Shipp left a lasting legacy on Alabama's marine fisheries

By David Rainer  
Al. Dept. of Natural Resources

When I reflect on my 30-plus years of covering the outdoors in Alabama, several people who influenced and contributed to my writing come to mind. No one on that list is more prominent than Dr. Bob Shipp, who died in January at age 81.

"It's going to take a while to get used to not being able to pick up the phone to ask Bob a question or send him a fish to identify," said Dr. Sean Powers, Director of the Stokes School of Marine and Environmental Sciences at the University of South Alabama (USA). "It is rare that a day goes by when someone doesn't come up to me and ask about Dr. Bob and relay a story of the impact of a class they took from him, his role as a mentor, a conversation they had with him about fish or another accolade. His impact on students, colleagues and the community is truly inspiring."

Like Powers, I've always looked to Dr. Bob as my source for information to simplify the complex fisheries management issues in Alabama waters and the Gulf of Mexico, both during my time as the Outdoors Editor at the Mobile Press-Register newspaper and currently as the outdoor writer with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR).

Shipp hailed from New Orleans and received a Ph.D. in biology from Florida State University before joining the Department of Biology at South Alabama in 1972. He spent 40 years at USA and received Professor Emeritus status soon after he retired in 2013 as chair of the Department of Marine Sciences, which he helped found. Shipp also served 27 years on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, five years on the Alabama Conservation Advisory Board and taught at Dauphin Island Sea Lab, where he was part of numerous research projects.

"Bob built the Marine Sciences program from scratch," Powers said. "Obviously he had help from a lot of talented people, but Bob built Marine Sciences at South Alabama. For an awful long time, South Alabama was known for its medical school and Marine Sciences. I would still say those are the two prominent features we're known for. That all traces back to Bob's vision of focusing on marine sciences in 1992. He convinced then President (Fred) Whiddon that we should have a Ph.D. program."

"That has paid tremendous dividends. We have moved from a department to a school of marine and environmental sciences. A lot of that was the legacy I inherited from Bob."

Powers said those contributions by Shipp were on the USA side, and his contributions on fisheries science and management were just as impactful. He said ADCNR Commissioner Chris Blankenship summed it up best.

"Dr. Shipp was dedicated to fisheries science and how that science could best be used for fisheries management," said Commissioner Blankenship, who also served as the Alabama Marine Resources Division Director during Shipp's tenure. "His almost three decades of service on the Gulf Council was legendary. His common-sense approach to complex management issues set the standard we use today to manage our marine fishery resources."

Powers added, "Bob would get into a meet-

ing with federal scientists, and they would be throwing all these complicated models at you. Bob was able to say, 'Well, that just doesn't make sense. I don't care what the math says. I don't care what the models say, that just doesn't make sense.' That moved on to management actions. They would propose these crazy management actions. Bob, again, would say, 'That makes no sense. Why are you choosing such a complicated route when you can do something much simpler?'"

USA President Jo Bonner said Shipp had the ability to explain complex questions in a way that everyone could understand.

"Dr. Bob literally wrote the book on introducing the importance of marine and environmental science to the people who are fortunate enough to call the Gulf Coast their home," said President Bonner, who represented Alabama in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2003-2013. "He was highly respected as a scholarly man who could explain his work to members of Congress, the media and the general public in a way that made everyone feel like he was talking to them, not lecturing at them."

"He also commanded universal respect from his students and colleagues, as well as scientists and peers throughout the country and around the world. He certainly put the University of South Alabama on the map in this important field of study."

Powers said Shipp's extensive research of Alabama's iconic fish species, red snapper, still contributes to the health of the snapper population in Alabama's coastal waters and the nation's largest artificial reef system.

"There are some things with red snapper specifically that Bob figured out before anybody else," Powers said. "He had been telling the feds for a long time that the red snapper stock assessments are wrong, that there are a lot of big red snapper deep that are not being sampled. It's something we call cryptic biomass. They dismissed Bob out of hand and said it was a fairytale. Fast forward 20 years with \$10 million and the Great Red Snapper Count and guess what? The reason we have more red snapper is because of cryptic biomass in deep waters. They are never sampled and never targeted by fishermen. That means we have this incredible buffer in the population."

"I tried to harp on it, but I don't think Bob gets enough credit for that. Bob had all these anecdotal reports from fishermen, and his contention that stocks would rebuild quickly was absolutely correct. That was just one example of how Bob used a lot of observation and a lot of talk with fishermen. None of the scientists actually talked to the fishermen. Now, it's second nature. We all do that now. As the models got more complex, Bob's message was always to keep it simple because if fishermen didn't understand it, they weren't going to buy into the regulations. I don't think that is a message the National Marine Fisheries Service has gotten yet. To expect fishermen to be compliant, you've got to be able to give them simple explanations."

Shipp also served as head judge of the Ala-

bama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo (ADSFRR) on Dauphin Island for more than 35 years. Powers, who assumed the role of the rodeo's head judge after Shipp's retirement, said Dr. Bob's interaction with the anglers at the rodeo and the Roy Martin Young Anglers Tournament was something to behold.

"Bob's other legacy is that he really enjoyed speaking with fishermen," Powers said. "That was the best thing about the rodeo, seeing Bob interact with the fishermen. People even wanted to get their kids' picture taken with Bob. That might be the first fish the kid had ever caught, and to get a picture with Dr. Bob made it more special. Bob never turned down a request. He would always make time. And not only would he identify a fish, he would also sometimes tell you the whole life history of the species. It just shows his knowledge and really unique personality."

"The other thing about Bob is that he had no ego, none whatsoever, at least what I saw. It was never about Bob. He had all these accolades, and he shared everything at the university. People don't understand how rare that is, especially in academics."

Powers said every picture taken of Shipp at the ADSFRR or young anglers' tournament is the same.

"He's always smiling and always enjoying himself," he said. "As much as the rodeo has done for the university, Bob brought a level of recognition to the rodeo and his idea of partnership in science. That's Bob's legacy too. He brought people (scientists and researchers) to the rodeo from all over the world. We have specimens from the rodeo in the London Natural History Museum and the Smithsonian Natural History Museum. That was all Bob introducing people to the opportunity to sample fish species at the rodeo."

"What was so important for us as scientists at the rodeo is we aren't able to get on the water enough to sample these really big specimens of a wide variety of fish species."

Bob connected that with the rodeo."

Powers said Shipp's knowledge of the fish of the Gulf of Mexico was mind-boggling, especially with the species rarely seen at a fishing tournament.

"Even at this past year's rodeo, we had three fish we had to send to Bob for identification just to make sure," he said. "We can ID most everything but sometimes we have to look through our books. Bob just looked at it. All these graduate students would try to find a fish ID that Bob got wrong. Nope. He never got it wrong."

Shipp even wrote "Dr. Bob Shipp's Guide to the Fishes of the Gulf of Mexico" to help people identify the myriad fish species in the Gulf. Powers said the book wasn't written with the scientific community in mind; it was written for anglers and the general public to use. CCA Alabama (www.ccaalabama.org/) has several of Shipp's books available.

"It is really written for fishermen," Powers said. "It's the go-to book for fishermen to identify a fish. It also has recipes and all kinds of information. Bob wrote it for fishermen to learn more about the fish. And unlike a scientific guide, people sit down and read through Bob's guide as a book."

Although Shipp was recognized for his pioneering work with red snapper, a different species that inhabits the Alabama surf was special to him.

"Bob liked to sit in his lawn chair and fish for his pompano," Powers said. "On the snapper research trips, Bob rarely picked up a pole offshore. He wanted everybody else to experience it, but I think he just loved his pompano fishing."

Dr. Bob has received many tributes since his death, including one from Alabama Marine Resources Director Scott Bannon.

"I had the privilege of working with Dr. Shipp – he preferred to be called Bob – on the Gulf Council and as a member of the Saltwater State Record Fish Committee," Bannon said. "I always appreciated his humble and direct guidance. He was a blessing to the State of Alabama and to the Gulf Coast."

Powers agreed, "Bob was a tremendous man and deserves all the recognition he can get."

**Pictured:** (David Rainer) Dr. Bob Shipp was a fixture at the Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo for more than 30 years. Shipp weighs in another of Alabama's signature fish species, a red snapper, at the rodeo.







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