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Judge Brian Miller

Wakulla's new county judge says 'It's the best job in the world'

By WILLIAM SNOWDEN
Editor

Wakulla County Judge Brian Miller remembers the first case he was assigned when he came on the bench: A couple suing over custody of a bird, a cockatoo named Wilbur Buford.

To anybody else in the world, that case might be of little concern. To the couple, though, the dispute meant a lot.

And Judge Miller recognizes the significance of otherwise small cases that come before him in county court – they aren't small to the people who's lives are affected by them. And the cockatoo case symbolizes that for him – so much so that his wife, Kelly, drew a picture



Wakulla County judge Brian Miller

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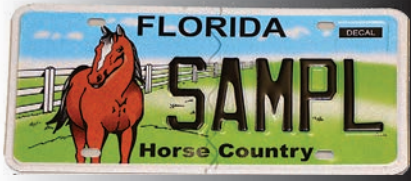
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WeatherSTEM forecast, Robyn Hurst remembered, Hertz, Looney to return for retrial, Charter review discusses spring protection

Auditions for Musical GREASE, Brad Harvey pleads to charges, St. Marks to raise sewer rates 75% on residents, Two drownings in separate incidents on July 4th

Chomp n Stomp held at Palaver Tree, Election suit over after 3 years, Fired Chiles coach may join War Eagle coaching staff

Brad Harvey pleads to charges

The former property appraiser is charged with embezzling money from the office; he will be sentenced in September

Brad Harvey, 49, pleaded guilty to embezzling money from the office of the Wakulla County Property Appraiser's Office. He was sentenced to 18 months in prison and a \$100,000 fine.

Election suit over after 3 years

Appeals court rules for Ed Brimner in lawsuit over 2020 property appraiser in which Coby Sparkman lost by 3 votes

The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in favor of Ed Brimner, the former Wakulla County property appraiser, in his lawsuit against Coby Sparkman.

Kevin Pettis, who was recently fired as head coach of the War Eagle football team, may join War Eagle coaching staff.

Two unrelated drownings were reported in Wakulla County on July 4th. A man died while scuba diving in a home pool, and another man died while swimming in a lake.

St. Marks to raise sewer rates 75% on residents

Wakulla County Board of Commissioners voted to raise sewer rates in St. Marks by 75%.

Charter review discusses spring protection

The Wakulla County Board of Commissioners is reviewing the county charter and discussing spring protection measures.

Nothing is sadder than returning an adopted pet

By JOANN SANDERS

In the world of animal rescue and adoption, there are few things as disappointing as witnessing a dog being returned to the shelter because it “wasn’t a good fit.”

What a heartbreaking scenario for both the dog, the dog’s adopter, and the shelter employees who worked so tirelessly on the pet’s behalf!

In order to prevent this from happening, it is crucially important for a potential adopter to do their research on dog breed require-



ments before committing to adoption.

In fact, aside from

getting your landlord’s approval, there is nothing more important

that you can do! For example, certain dog breeds are more suited to apartment living than others.

Don’t be fooled into thinking that size is your only consideration! Think about exercise requirements and personality as well.

You might be surprised to learn that some of the larger breeds make excellent companions for people in smaller apartments due to their low energy, and mellow personalities.

For instance, most bulldogs are quite comfortable sharing a bed

with their people, and are well known for being couch potatoes!

On the other hand, smaller dogs such as chihuahuas and terriers can be high energy, anxious, and very vocal.

This is not necessarily a good fit for an apartment dweller with extremely close neighbors. After all, not everyone appreciates a barking dog, no matter how cute he is!

And then there are the working dogs, such as hounds and retrievers. These dogs have a natural desire to work, and will do best

in a home with a large backyard and plenty of opportunities for exercise and mental stimulation.

With so many homeless pets waiting for a family of their very own, why not take the time to find a breed that would be a good fit for you, then drop by the shelter and save a life!

Wakulla Animal Services is located at 1 Oak Street in Crawfordville. They can be reached at 850-926-0902.

Joann Sanders is a volunteer for Wakulla Animal Services.

Social Security: The elephant in the room



By BRIAN ENGLISH

For most Americans, Social Security has represented nothing more than some unavoidable payroll deduction with the positively cryptic initials of “FICA” and “OASDI” (Federal Insurance Contributions Act and Old Age, Survivors and Disability Insurance). It hinted at a future that seemed both intangible and far away.

Yet, some Americans now sit on the cusp of drawing on the promise that was made with those payments.

As the growing wave of citizens approach retirement, questions and concerns abound. Is Social Security financially healthy? How much will my income benefit be? How do I maximize my benefits for my spouse and myself? When should I begin taking Social Security?

QUESTIONS & ELEPHANTS

Answering these questions may help you derive the most from your Social Security benefit and po-

tentially enhance your financial security in retirement. Before you can answer these questions, you have to acknowledge the elephant in the room.

The Social Security system has undergone periodic scares over the years that have inevitably led many people to wonder if Social Security will remain financially sound enough to pay the benefits they are owed.

REASONABLE CONCERN

Social Security was created in 1935 during Franklin D. Roosevelt’s first term. It was designed to provide income to older Americans who had little to no means of support. The country was mired in an economic downturn and the need for such support was acute.¹

Since its creation, there have been three basic developments that have led to the financial challenges Social Security faces today.

1. The number of workers paying into the system (which supports current benefit payments) has fallen from just over 8 workers for every retiree in 1955 to 2.8 in 2021. That ratio is expected to fall to 2.3 to 1 by 2038.^{2,3}

2. A program that began as a dedicated retirement benefit later morphed into income support for disabled workers and surviving

family members. These added obligations were not always matched with the necessary payroll deduction levels to financially support these additional objectives.

3. Retirees are living longer. As might be expected, the march of medical technology and our understanding of healthy behaviors have led to a longer retirement span, potentially placing a greater strain on resources.

Beginning in 2010, tax and other non-interest income no longer fully covered the program’s cost. According to the Social Security Trustees 2022 annual report, this pattern is expected to continue for the next 75 years; the report projects that the trust fund may be exhausted by 2034, absent any changes.⁴

Social Security’s financial troubles are real, but the prospect of its failure seems remote. There are a number of ways to stabilize the Social Security system, including, but not limited to:

- Increase Payroll Taxes: An increase in payroll taxes, depending on the size, could add years of life to the trust fund.

- Raise the Retirement Age: This has already been done in past reforms and would save money by paying benefits to future recipients at a later age.

- Tax Benefits of Higher Earners: By

taxing Social Security income for retirees in higher tax brackets, the tax revenue could be used to lengthen the life of the trust fund.

- Modify Inflation Adjustments: Rather than raise benefits in line with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), policymakers might elect to tie future benefit increases to the “chained CPI,” which assumes that individuals move to cheaper alternatives in the face of rising costs. Using the “chained CPI” may make cost of living adjustments less expensive.

Reform is expected to be difficult since it may involve tough choices. But with Social Security playing such a key role for so many retired Americans, lawmakers are expected to come together and find solutions.

1. SSA.gov, 2023
2. SSA.gov, 2023
3. SSA.gov, 2023
4. SSA.gov, 2023

Brian can be reached at (850) 926-7487.

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Scalloping? Look for sharks



By AL HARTMAN
The Old Pro

It is still very hot so if you don’t get there before daybreak you are gonna miss out in shallow water.

The redfish and trout are heading upriver for deeper cool water. So then go upstream and look for deep holes. Fish on the bottom with live shrimp or minnows. If you can’t get them use dead ones and bounce them on the bottom.

The bay scallops seem to be in decent numbers and the season runs until Sept. 24. A word of caution: With the water warming this year be on the look out for sharks. There are a lot of bull sharks this year, so be on your guard.

They are very aggressive and are the number one shark in most shark attacks. New Smyrna Beach, the shark bite capital of the U. S., had a bite the last week of July. The swimmer was

grabbed by the foot, but he shook it off and is healing. I understand it was the day before his wedding, but he hobbled down the aisle.

Spiny Lobster season opened Aug. 6 and will run until March 31st. You are allowed 6 per day with a a carapace of 3 inches. I’ve seen some monsters way offshore of Carrabelle of over 30 inches. The Bulldozer lobsters are more plentiful than people if you know how to look for them.

Greater Amberjack opened Aug 1 and will run until Aug. 25.

The first case of Chronic Wasting Disease in whitetailed deer was discovered in June of this year. Florida is working with other states to see what can be done to fix this problem. So far, though, no one has come up with any answers.

On another note. The FWC was going to hold another bear season this year but the public outcry was so strong they canceled the idea. They are going to look into what they can do to ease the negativity of Florida residents. Good luck with that!

Happy hunting and fishing!





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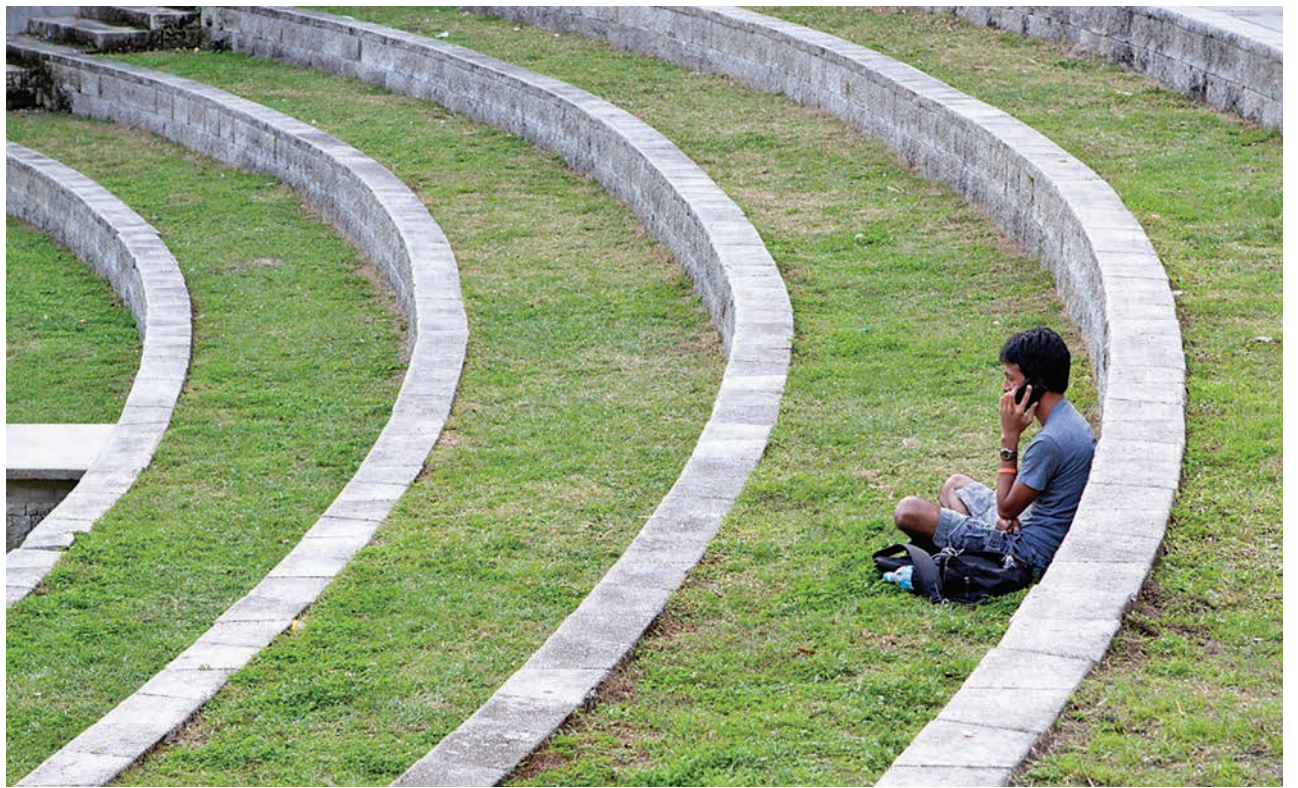


PHOTO BY MARISOL AMADOR, UF/IFAS

People experiencing mental health challenges can feel very isolated. Being open to conversation about mental health can help reduce the stigma and create a more welcoming space.

Reducing stigma of mental illness



By SAMANTHA KENNEDY

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, conversations about mental health have gained momentum, and the importance of addressing mental illnesses is finally being recognized. However, despite this progress, the stigma surrounding mental illness remains a formidable barrier to seeking help and support. In this article, we will explore the significance of reducing the stigma associated with mental health issues and how our collective efforts can pave the way for a more compassionate and understanding society.

Stigma, in the context of mental illness, refers to the negative attitudes, stereotypes, and discrimination that individuals with mental health conditions often face. This pervasive stigma affects people from all walks of life, preventing them from seeking treatment, sharing their

experiences, and living fulfilling lives. The fear of judgment and misconceptions about mental illness have perpetuated this stigma for far too long.

The consequences of mental health stigma are far-reaching and detrimental. People who experience mental health challenges may avoid seeking help due to the fear of being labeled as "weak" or "crazy." This hesitation to seek professional support can worsen their conditions, leading to prolonged suffering and potential crises.

Moreover, stigma affects relationships, communities, and workplaces. Individuals struggling with mental health issues may face isolation, discrimination, and reduced opportunities for personal and professional growth. This not only affects their well-being but also hinders the productivity and inclusivity of our society.

One of the most effective ways to combat mental health stigma is through education and awareness. Misinformation breeds fear, and fear perpetuates stigma. By providing accurate information about mental health conditions, their prevalence, and available treatments, we can dispel myths and pro-

mote empathy and understanding.

Schools and workplaces can play a pivotal role in fostering awareness by integrating mental health education into their curricula and employee wellness programs. Initiatives like mental health seminars, campaigns, and awareness events can encourage open discussions and create safe spaces for sharing experiences.

Personal narratives have the power to challenge misconceptions and humanize mental health issues. When public figures, celebrities, or even everyday individuals share their stories of coping with mental illnesses, it sends a powerful message of hope and resilience. These stories prove that mental health challenges are not insurmountable and that seeking help is a sign of strength.

Media outlets can also contribute significantly by responsibly portraying mental health in films, TV shows, books, and online. By avoiding sensationalism and accurately depicting mental health experiences, the media can break down stereotypes and contribute to a more compassionate portrayal of those affected.

Communities must come together to create

a supportive environment for individuals living with mental health conditions. This involves fostering empathy, compassion, and active listening. Support groups and helplines can provide vital assistance and reduce the isolation felt by those struggling with their mental health.

Furthermore, workplaces should adopt mental health-friendly policies that prioritize employee well-being. Encouraging open conversations about mental health at work and offering accessible resources like counseling services can make a significant difference.

The government and healthcare institutions also bear the responsibility of reducing stigma and improving mental health services. Adequate funding for mental health programs, increasing the availability of mental health professionals, and integrating mental health into primary care are crucial steps toward addressing the issue.

The Wakulla Extension Service offers training workshops in Mental Health First Aid. For more information about this opportunity, please contact Samantha Kennedy, County Extension Director, at (850) 926-3931.



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Judge Brian Miller

From Front Page

of a cockatoo that Miller has framed and keeps in his office.

On the drawing, she wrote: "Everyone is someone's Wilbur."

"That embodies county court," Judge Miller says. "It's the people's court, people with real cases."

He adds, speaking of his judicial philosophy, that "The main thing for me is I want anyone who comes before me to feel like they have been heard... I set cases in a way that nobody feels rushed. I want to make sure that people can tell me whatever they want me to know before I rule."

He sits at the desk on this morning studying court filings in small claims cases – one deals with the sale of a truck, another with the costs of repairs to a vehicle.

Again, he reiterates the cases may not be important to anyone outside of the parties, but it is extremely important to the people involved.

And again he adds how much he loves being county judge.

"I've got the best job in the world," he says.

Prior to coming on the bench in January, Miller was chief prosecutor for Wakulla County for six years, prosecuting homicides and other felonies.

Moving from the third floor office of the state attorney to the second floor office

of county judge, Miller acknowledges his role as judge leaves him more isolated to a certain extent. He's no longer interviewing law enforcement officers and witnesses, but is now limited to having everything he sees and hears about a case (other than the pleadings) in court with all the parties present.

"The most important case is the one I'm sitting in front of," he says.

In addition to misdemeanor court, small claims, and county civil court, Miller has also been given circuit court assignments for dependency court dealing with family issues and juvenile court cases dealing with delinquency.

Miller grew up in Tallahassee, but his family has been in Wakulla County for over 150 years. His mother is Janice Brown of Sopchoppy. His wife, formerly Kelly Lynn Langston, is from Smith Creek. Their daughter is the 7th generation to live in Wakulla County.

Miller graduated from the Florida State University College of Law, magna cum laude, and was elected to the Order of the Coif, an honor reserved for the top 10% of law school students. He was hired as a full-time prosecutor while still in law school in 2011, working a full caseload during the day and finishing his last semester of law



PHOTOS BY WILLIAM SNOWDEN

Wakulla Circuit Judge Layne Smith administers the oath of office to County Judge Brian Miller, above, at his investiture ceremony in February. Alongside Miller are his wife Kelly and daughter. The drawing of the cockatoo, below, inspired by the first case assigned to Judge Miller.



school at night. (Miller's first court appearance back when he was an intern was before Leon County Judge Nina Ashenafi Richardson – she is now his mentor as a judge.)

In his time as a prosecutor, Miller prosecuted thousands of cases and had trials in more than 100 cases, more

than 50 of which were felonies, ranging from murders and sexual offenses to drug and property crimes.

Of his last 15 trials in Wakulla County, verdicts included one death sentence, four life sentences, and six sentences in the Florida Department of Corrections ranging from 5 to 35 years. Three others

seen many new arrivals in the past few years, drawn here for our way of life. As the Wakulla County Judge, I can represent everyone, by having deep roots in our past, spending every day protecting our present, and serving you as our judge as we look to the future."

Miller took over the county judge position from Jill Walker, who retired after 32 years as Wakulla County Judge.

Judge Miller praised his judicial assistant, Brenda Villiard, who served for 20 years as Judge Walker's assistant (and served 5 years before that in the Clerk of Courts' office).

resulted in jail or probation sentences.

As Miller noted last year when he was running as a candidate for judge: "Wakulla County has

It Was All Nailed To The Cross

First and foremost thy kingdom I seek first,
And all of his righteousness, for my soul it doth thirst

To borrow troubles from the morrow,
Is like getting pennies on the dollar;
To trade a house on the rock; for a house on the sand
Will take the last penny from thy hand!

Even Solomon could not wear the lilies of the field;
Though the temple he did build,

Oh me, oh my! O' ye of little faith
What shall I eat? What shall I drink?
A cup of encouragement I think;
No man can serve two masters,
O' faith rise up! Defeat doubt!
This is a war! that's what it's about!

What should I wear? How should I dress?
Should I cover the scars of all my distress?
Or expose them, because of his healing I'm blessed;

Open wounds led me to a place;
Where now I wear his raiment of grace;

As the grass of the field will wither one day,
Remember me O 'Lord I pray!

O' Heavenly Father;
Thou knowest my needs of this time;
And considered my request,
For thy ear did incline;

O' Father; who art there in heaven;
Hallowed be thy name;
Thou heardest me, and left me not the same;

Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done!
Til every heart to Christ is won!

Give us this day, our daily bread;
For from thy hand; we are fed;

Forgive us our debt's;
As our debtor's are free,
Lead us not to temptation;
And send evil to flee!

And should I come to a place, where I fail;
May I remember the cross, and embrace the nail;
I fall short, But Jesus; you never fail!

And now I look; Not back at my loss;
For my future, Jesus said;
It Was All Nailed To The Cross.

Tony Duncan
-All Glory Given to Jesus



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By **JARED MILLER**
Wakulla Sheriff

From the desk of Sheriff Miller,

A growing issue not only in our county but nationwide, is mental health and access to mental health services.

Mental health issues span across all demographics and are not specific in who they target. Wakulla County is certainly not immune to these problems.

This month I'd like to talk about men-

tal health problems encountered by the Wakulla County Sheriff's Office and what I am doing to help combat them.

Our county is growing with new people and businesses moving here every day. Unfortunately one thing that our county is still lacking is easy access to mental healthcare.

This combination means that all too often those suffering from mental illness go without care. Unfortunately, this can often lead to individuals encountering law enforcement.

Often friends or family members see someone suffering or in crisis and call the Sheriff's Office for help. In Florida the major tool at the disposal of law enforcement officers dealing

with individuals in a mental health crisis is what is known as the Baker Act.

The Baker Act is a Florida law that allows deputies to take someone whom they believe to be an imminent danger to themselves or others for an involuntary evaluation with a mental health professional.

The Baker Act allows someone to be held in medical care for up to 72 hours if needed. This law is useful – however, it is important to remember it is only designed to be used for individuals who are in crisis.

As of writing this WCSO has utilized the Baker act approximately 80 times this year, which equates to multiple Baker Acts a week in Wakulla County.

This is obviously a

major burden not only on my department but also on the citizens impacted by these Baker Acts.

To improve the level of service WCSO provides to Wakulla County, I have expanded or implemented several programs. The first of which is continuing the effort to have as many WCSO deputies as possible go through Crisis Intervention Training or CIT.

CIT is a weeklong course offered to deputies which helps them to identify and understand individuals in crisis. This training helps deputies to better deal with individuals who are experiencing mental health issues and get them the help they need.

Under my administration we also began

the use of the MRT or Mobile Response Team. MRT allows deputies to connect individuals who are dealing with mental health issues with mental health professionals remotely. This often negates the need for them to be transported to a facility.

The MRT cuts down on the amount time deputies must devote to many of these service calls, as well as greatly reducing the stress to the individual.

Lastly and most recently I partnered with NWF Health Network to add a Substance Abuse and Mental Health Coordinator to WCSO. This position will help ensure that individuals who come through the Wakulla County Jail along with people WCSO encounters on certain calls

such as Baker Acts don't fall between the cracks and are able to access the services available to help them.

I want to ask everyone reading this to be vigilant. While mental health resources are not plentiful in Wakulla County, they are available. Places such as the Health Department and Apalachee Center have resources available in our county.

Please don't wait until a family member or loved one is in crisis to call, if you see someone dealing with a mental health issue reach out early.

As always, my office is always there to help in any way that we can 850-745-7100, 911 for Emergencies.x

Your Sheriff,
Jared F. Miller

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Real life intellectual humility



By GREG GAST

What is intellectual humility? It means recognizing that the things you believe could be wrong.

It is not about having a low view of your own importance or lack of confidence. It is a way of thinking. It is the ability to accept the possibility that what you think might be wrong. It is having the ability to learn from the opinions and experiences of others.

We are all inclined to believe we know and understand more than we know.

The Greek philosopher Socrates taught what we think we know is not really knowledge at all.

You might want to cling stubbornly to your beliefs and believe that you are more correct than others. But it is the people who practice intellectual humility that are the better listeners, learners, and are more self-aware.

Intellectual humility demands that you think about your own limits. It is one of the traits of the classical scientific method.

Why is this important? Because it will make you less defensive when challenged about your beliefs. It forces you to think about the possibility of blind spots, opening new lines of inquiry you may not have seen.

So how can one foster intellectual

humility? First foster a lack of overconfidence. Some of the major discoveries in behavioral science in the last 20 years have to do with our cognitive blind-spots and how big they are.

Wrong never feels wrong in the moment. Research has shown that we think we are right 82% of the time.

Unjustifiable confidence is not only widespread but can be dangerous.

No problem in judgment and decision-making is more potentially catastrophic than overconfidence.

Be curious. Our desire for certainty is understandable if not sometimes helpful especially if tempered by curiosity. Curious people ask a lot of questions. This is a superpower in a culture obsessed with answers.

Try to separate your ego from your intellect. You should know your strengths and weaknesses when it comes to your ego and your personality traits. Be able to recognize when you react personally to viewpoints that challenge yours. Knowing your emotional responses and feelings will help you

become more objective and open to listening.

Be willing to respect the viewpoints of others. Being intellectually humble requires us to listen more and talk less. It requires us to be empathetic to others and be less emotionally attached to our own viewpoints.

When we open our minds and hearts to what others have to offer, we can take the first steps to improving understanding and wisdom.

Let me know what you think.

Send your questions to Real Life Counseling, 3295 Crawfordville Hwy., suite #4, Crawfordville FL 32327 in care of Gregory E. Gast, MS, LMHC, NCC. Your name will be changed and the answer to your question will appear in an upcoming issue of The Wakulla Sun.

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 September 19
 10am-4pm

- 3115-B Crawfordville Hwy
- Hotdogs and hot boiled peanuts available from 11 am-2pm

PANACEA BLUE CRAB FESTIVAL
 September 30

Joe Morgan
 Wakulla County Supervisor of Elections

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Saturday September 16th, 2023
8:00 am Headquarters - Woolley Park
48 Mound Street, Panacea FL
Visit us on facebook or at kwcb.org to register

Lunch, entertainment by Rockulla, and prize drawings for volunteers at the park following the cleanup

Other Clean Up Site Locations (KWCB on site to assist you)

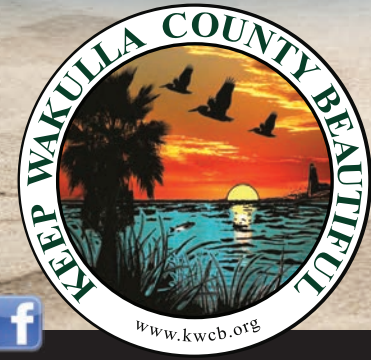
- Shell Point - At the Pavilion
- Bottoms Road - At the Boat Launch
- Mashes Sands - At the Beach
- St. Marks - San Marcos de Apalache
- Historic State Park - At the gate
- St. Marks Refuge- At the Lighthouse



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Artwork by Rachell Mathis

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What to bring to Household Hazardous Waste Day...

Bring your household cleaners - such as oven cleaners, wood/metal cleaner or polishes, toilet bowl cleaners, disinfectants, drain openers.
 Automotive products - such as additives, solvents, refrigerants, starter fluid, body putty, anti-freeze, gasoline, diesel, kerosene.
 Home Improvement Products - such as non-latex paints, paint thinner, paint stripper/remover, adhesives.
 Lawn & Garden Products - such as recyclable batteries (automotive batteries, lithium-ion batteries, button cell batteries, phone batteries, nickel batteries, battery packs, power tool batteries), herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, wood preserver.
 Miscellaneous Hazardous Items - such as nail polish remover, fluorescents, photo developing chemicals, pool chemicals, aerosols/compressed gas, reactive materials. Televisions will be accepted at this time, but **NO OLD TUBE TVs**.
 Wakulla County Sheriff's Office will be accepting prescriptions and ammunition. Please note that they will not be taking sharps.

- No Latex Paint * No Household Alkaline Batteries * No Oil * No Household Trash • Free disposal of oil at the landfill
- Paint will be limited to 5 gallons per resident (Latex can be dried and put in trash) • Small electronics can be donated to Goodwill or deposited in your trash.
- Household alkaline batteries need to be placed in a container and placed in your trash (i.e. milk jug, plastic bottle, etc.)

The Landfill will accept the following items on Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays 8-5 & Saturdays 8-3. • OIL - FREE DISPOSAL * E-scrap - FREE DISPOSAL * Recyclable Material - FREE DISPOSAL
 Tires - \$10 off rim, \$15 on rim (NO BIG TIRES) * TIRES WILL NOT BE TAKEN AT THIS AMNESTY DAY • Free Curbside Bulk Pickup on 1st and 3rd Saturdays. • Call 926-7010 to schedule ahead of time. (up to 2 cubic feet)

On the Horizon

The monthly calendar of events

Friday, September 1

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Saturday, September 2

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Saturday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- The Panacea Community Garden Farmer's Market will be August 5th from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. in Downtown Panacea.

Monday, September 4

- The Wakulla Respite Program is available for anyone with memory impairment at no cost from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Lake Ellen Baptist Church every Monday.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. every Monday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Tuesday, September 5

- The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers. An appeal of a planning issue is set at 3 p.m. A budget workshop begins at 4 p.m.
- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Flow Yoga at 6 p.m with Nellie, every Tuesday.

Wednesday, September 6

- Muffins with Moms Prenatal Support Group meets at 9 a.m., 9:30 a.m., and 10 a.m. at the Wakulla County Health Department. Contact Liz Neighbors at 850-888-6078 or elizabeth.neighbors@flhealth.gov for more information.
- A Line Dance class is held at 1 p.m. at the Wakulla Senior Center every Wednesday.
- Wakulla County Coalition for Youth meets at 12:30 p.m. at the public library.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Wednesday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.

Thursday, September 7

- The Sopchoppy Depot Committee meets at the Depot, 34 Railroad Avenue at 5 p.m.
- The VFW Auxiliary Bingo Night will be held at 7 p.m. at 475 Arran Road in Crawfordville, every Thursday. There are concessions and raffles.
- The Rotary Club of Wakulla County meets at the TCC

Wakulla Center at 8:30 a.m. every Thursday.

- Gentle Yoga at 9 a.m. and Yin Yoga at 6 p.m. with Zoe every Thursday. Classes are \$12, at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Music Bingo, first Thursday each Month, at 30 Palms in St. Marks. Proceeds benefit the Florida Wild Mammal Association.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at the American Legion, 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, September 8

- The Wakulla High War Eagles Football team plays Monroe at J.D. Jones Stadium at 7 p.m.

Saturday, September 9

- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at the Wakulla County Public Library at 10 a.m.
- The Sopchoppy Depot Days festival will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. in Sopchoppy depot park.

Monday, September 11

- The Wakulla County Planning Commission meets at 6 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- The Wakulla County School Board meets in the school administration building at 5:45 p.m.
- The Sopchoppy City Council meets at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- Gentle yoga at 9 a.m. and Restorative Yoga at 6 p.m with Zoe, every Monday at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

Thursday, September 14

- St. Marks City Commission meets at City Hall at 6 p.m.

Friday, September 15

- The Wakulla High War Eagles Football team plays Seminole County at J.D. Jones Stadium at 7:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 16

- Boots and Bingo, a Rotary fundraiser, will be held at 3Y Ranch from 5 to 11 p.m. SOLD OUT.
- The Wakulla County Coastal Cleanup will be held, starting at 8 a.m. with a celebration in Woolley Park at noon.

Monday, September 18

- The Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- The American Legion Post 114 will be meeting at the Wakulla County Public Library at 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday, September 19

- The Wakulla County Charter Review Commission meets at 6 p.m. in the St. Marks Room at the community center.

Thursday, September 21

- The Wakulla High War Eagles Football team plays an away game at Mosley Lynn Haven at 7 p.m.
- The Wakulla County Cancer Support Group meets in the Education Center of the Crawfordville United Methodist Church at 7 p.m. This group meeting is for men and women, regardless of the type of cancer. Spouses, caregivers, and friends are welcome. For more information, call 850-926-6050.

Saturday, September 23

- The St. Marks community market will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 815 Port Leon Drive

Monday, September 25

- The Sopchoppy Lions Club meets the 4th Monday at the Historic Sopchoppy School at 6:30 p.m.

Friday, September 29

- The Wakulla High War Eagles Football team plays

an away game at Rickards at 7 p.m.

Saturday, September 30

- The Blue Crab Festival in Panacea – the parade starts at 10 a.m. on Hwy. 98, and Woolley Park opens at 11 a.m.



Depot Park
34 Rose Street
Sopchoppy, FL

SOPCHOPPY DEPOT DAY FESTIVAL

Saturday, September 9th
9:00AM - 3:00PM

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Wakulla Senior Center update

By CHRIS RUSSELL

WOW! The Dog Days of Summer sure have had a mean bite this year, thank goodness the Wakulla Senior Center is a beacon of relief for many of our local seniors.

Between the lunches offered weekdays at the center and the multiple activities available throughout the week, hundreds of seniors have been able to beat the heat this summer at the Wakulla Senior Center.

In July alone, the team at the center happily served over 800 lunches to our local seniors, a monumental amount for a County the size of Wakulla County.

As we look forward to the changing of seasons and hopefully some cooler weather, the Wakulla Senior Center is also undergoing a change, the hiring of a new Executive Director.

Lara Edwards has joined the team as the new Executive Director. Lara brings a wealth of experience in budgeting, fund-

raising, grant administration, and overall executive leadership.

Many in the community will recognize Lara's name due to her being the Mayor of Sopchoppy, a position that has also helped prepare her for the task ahead.

Sandi McDaniel, the former Executive Director, has graciously agreed to stay on-board to ensure that there is a smooth transition. A huge welcome is due to Lara and a huge Thank You is due to Sandi for her time and work as the Executive Director.

The Wakulla Senior Center Staff and Board of Directors would like to say THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this year's Christmas After Dark fundraiser a success. The funds raised during this event will go towards helping to offset the \$40,000 budget deficit the Senior Center faces within the senior



New senior center director Lara Edwards with former director Sandi McDaniel at the Christmas After Dark fundraiser last month.

lunch program. As you may recall from a previous article, due to a change in the grant funding amount utilized to feed our local seniors, the Senior Center has a \$40,000 budget shortfall for this program.

In turn, the Senior

Center team instituted the "Sponsor A Senior Lunch Program," whereby individuals can sponsor the feeding of a local senior for as little as \$6 a day. Naturally, all donation levels are welcomed and appreciated. If you'd like to partici-

pate in this program, please contact the Senior Center at (850) 926-7145 or check out the website at www.wakullaseniorcenter.com. Remember, all donations are tax deductible!

Don't forget, the team at the Senior Center also operates Wakulla County Transportation, a service available to ALL residents of Wakulla County, not just seniors. This service is available to Seniors and Veterans for free, due to the gracious donations received helping to offset these costs.

Other residents may use the Trans-

portation Services as well for a very nominal fee. On average, over 150 clients are taken to doctor appointments each week via Wakulla County Transportation. As you can imagine, this is a very valuable service for all of our citizens here in Wakulla County. You can contact the Senior Center at the number above and/or via the website to inquire about utilizing this service.

Here's to wishing you and your family a very safe and enjoyable September (hopefully cooler weather is right around the corner).

Chris Russell is a Board Member of the Wakulla Senior Center.

Mary Wallace
Mortgage Consultant

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- How benefits affect taxes
- When should you apply

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- 5 factors to consider when deciding to apply for benefits
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The decisions you make today can have a tremendous bearing on the total amount of benefits you stand to receive over your lifetime.

Don't miss this valuable workshop designed especially for baby boomers. Seating is limited. Call today to reserve a spot for you and your friends.

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