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Herb Donaldson

Founder of Wakulla's Palaver Tree Theater reflects on his career

By **LINDA ANN McDONALD**
Correspondent

Herb Donaldson is a trailblazer aimed at providing theatrics, literacy, music, art, comedy, cinema, history, folklore – anything artistic and educational – Herb is bringing it to life and center stage in Wakulla County.

To blaze a trail is to create a path where none existed and, in a figurative sense, to be the first to do something, allowing others to follow in that "path."

Donaldson was inspired by Joseph Papp, the pioneer who founded the New York Shakespeare Festival (now called Shakespeare in the Park) in 1954 with the aim of making Shakespeare's works accessible to the public. In 1957 Papp was granted the use of Central Park for free productions of Shakespeare's plays.



PHOTO BY LINDA ANN McDONALD

Herb Donaldson of Palaver Tree Theater.


Turn to Page 7

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**HIS-
TORY**
July 1925
-The Monkey Trial.
A 24-year-old high school teacher in Tennessee, John T. Scopes was accused of violating Tennessee's Butler Act, which prohibited the teaching of evolution in public schools, according to the Free Speech Center at Middle Tennessee State University. Scopes was found guilty and fined \$100.

-The Boeing Airplane Company test flew its first passenger aircraft, the Boeing Model 40 on July 7, 1925.

-The Houdina Radio Control Company, owned by Francis P. Houdina, gave the first demonstration of a remote controlled automobile. Houdina equipped the driverless American Wonder, a 1926 Chandler car, with a radio antenna and a receiver and, with transmission from another car immediately behind, guided it in New York City up Broadway, after a turn, back down 5th Avenue. The car narrowly missed several other vehicles before crashing into a sedan.
- In July 1925, the price of a 24-ounce loaf of bread was expected to rise from 10 cents to 12 cents due to increasing flour costs.

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- Aristotle

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Bla

*When you don’t know
HOW you know... BUT you
know you know... and you know
you knew... and that’s all you
needed to know!
Is it natural intuition,
a gut feeling,
animal instinct ???
What ?*

HANDY TIPS

- 1.Freeze grapes for chilling your wine instead of ice cubes.
- 2.Control your climbing plants with zip ties. Not too tight!
- 3.Use a coffee filter in the bottom of your planter when filling so the dirt doesnt come out of the drain hole.
- 4.Lubricate your glue caps with vaseline for easy opening next time.
5. Put a few drops of cooking oil in candle container before dropping in the candle, wax will be easy to remove after burning the candle.

SPORTS-
What year did
Lou Gehrig make his first Grand Slam?

1925, July 23rd

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MISS INFORMATION FUN PAGE *By Lynda Kinszy*

Content contributors William Diekman

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½ cup sugar -3 tbsp orange juice
-12 ounces frozen raspberries & 1 tbsp Chambord, Framboise or Grand Marnier liqueur.
Combine sugar an juice over medium heat to dissolve - stir.
Combine hot mixture and raspberries in blender - puree.
Pour puree through fine mesh set over a medium bowl. Stir and push on the solids with the back of a rubber spatula until all of the liquid has been extracted. This will take several minutes as the mixture will be thick.
Discard the seeds. Add the liqueur.
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ORCHIDS

They grow in the tropical rain forest on the side of trees as epiphytes. So, when mine are not blooming, in the summer I like to set them on a table on my porch where they do not get direct sunlight, but get the humidity they crave.
Orchids need watering once a week, but this can vary depending on the season & environmental conditions. Water thoroughly with lukewarm / room temperature water, saturating the roots, then allowing excess water to drain away.

Trivia

WAKULLA

- #1. How many marinas does Wakulla have?
#2. How many public boat ramps in Wakulla?
#3.What is Wakulla known for? #4, How many square miles of Wakulla are National Forest, wildlife preserve and state park?#5. How long is the Wakulla River?
#6. How many gallons of water flows from Wakulla Springs per minute?

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#2. Lucky 13
#3. Abundant natural beauty, springs, rivers, wildlife... and our school system. #4. 376.101 Square miles
#5. 11 miles
#6. Up to 860,000 gallons

What was the famous quote from the movie STEEL MAGNOLIAS?

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Before traffic lights, traffic police controlled the flow. One example of an early traffic signal was in Toledo, Ohio in 1908. The words “Stop” and “Go” were in white on a green background and the lights had red and green lenses illuminated by kerosene lamps for night travellers and the arms were 8 feet above ground. It was controlled by a traffic officer who would blow a whistle before changing the commands on this signal to let travelers know of the change.

In 1912, the first electric traffic light was developed by Lester Wire, a policeman in Salt Lake City, Utah. It was installed by the American Traffic Signal Company n Cleveland, Ohio.

On August 5, 1914, the first electric traffic light was installed in Cleveland, Ohio.

Does anyone know when the first traffic light was installed in Wakulla???

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PHOTO ADOBE STOCK

Taking the time to identify and plug spending leaks can help reduce stress and improve overall financial health.

Plugging spending leaks



By SAMANTHA KENNEDY
Extension Office

When it comes to managing money, most people focus on the big-ticket items: rent or mortgage, car payments, or student loans. But it is often the small, unnoticed expenses – known as spending leaks – that can really make a big impact on overall financial health.

These leaks may seem harmless on their own, but over time, they can add up to hundreds or even thousands of dollars lost each year.

WHAT ARE SPENDING LEAKS?

Spending leaks are recurring or impulsive purchases that do not add significant value to your life but slowly drain your budget. Think of them as the financial equivalent of a dripping faucet – barely noticeable at first, but potentially becoming a flood over time. Common

culprits include daily coffee runs, unused subscriptions (magazines, streaming services, etc.), frequent takeout, ATM fees, and impulse buys.

COSTLY COFFEE

One of the most cited examples of a spending leak is the daily coffee habit. Spending \$6-8 a day on specialty drinks may not seem like much, but over a year, that could add up to nearly \$3,000.

Brewing coffee at home or switching to a more affordable option can plug this leak without sacrificing your morning ritual.

SURPLUS SUBSCRIPTIONS

Streaming services, fitness apps, cloud storage, and digital magazines: many people are subscribed to more services than they actually use.

According to a survey by Variety magazine, Americans spend an average of \$69 a month on subscriptions, and many of those subscribers often lose track of all they are paying for.

The same thing goes for magazine subscriptions. It is so easy to let those build up. Reviewing

subscriptions quarterly and canceling unused ones can free up significant cash.

EXPENSIVE EATS

Grabbing lunch at work or ordering dinner a few times a week might feel like a convenience, but it is a major leak. Preparing meals at home – even just a few more times a week than you currently do – can save hundreds of dollars a month.

Even with the higher cost of groceries, meal prepping and planning ahead can make home cooking more manageable and cost-effective. Frequent use of meal delivery apps is also an easy way to spend more than necessary on meals.

CONVENIENCE COSTS

Using out-of-network ATMs or paying for convenience fees when paying bills online can seem minor, but they add up. Opt for fee-free banking options whenever possible, and plan ahead to avoid unnecessary charges.

Even small fees of \$2-\$5 per transaction can total over \$100 annually. Overspending can also lead to expensive late fees, over-

limit fees, and overdraft fees.

BARGAIN BUYS

Retailers are masters at encouraging unnecessary purchases – whether it is a tempting display at checkout or a flash sale online.

One way to combat this is by implementing a 24-hour rule: wait a day before making any non-essential purchase. This simple habit can help you avoid buyer's remorse and keep your budget intact.

Even if something seems like a bargain, it is still a waste of money if it is something you do not need.

Spending leaks are sneaky, but they are also fixable. By identifying and addressing these small, recurring expenses, you can take control of your finances without making drastic lifestyle changes. A few mindful adjustments can lead to big savings—and a healthier financial future.

For more information about this and other budgeting topics, please call Samantha Kennedy, Family & Consumer Sciences agent, at (850) 926-3931.

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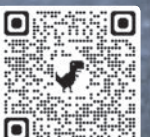


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Real Life opposites



By GREG GAST

Whether it's the Bible in Genesis' Garden of Eden or Budha – the world was created with opposites. Everything has an opposite right or wrong, up or down, good and bad, ad nauseum. Opposites are the

work of life to create balance. You won't know what beauty is without knowing what ugly is. You're not happy if you are not sad or emotional without thinking. How could we process information if opposites weren't created? How could we see a person if good and bad are the same? It is a concept which is so simple yet incredibly intricate, easy and tough to understand and comprehend. Whether we are doing well or find ourselves in a time marked by setbacks, we should al-

ways be aware that ups and downs go hand in hand. All knowledge begins with not seeing the ups and downs separately. Unfortunately, we fear the downside of life. They represent to us the strange and threatening unknown. We resist change in life, blinded by the fact that change is life. If we realize that ups and downs, good and bad are part of life, we will experience a much higher degree of relaxation when things don't go as well as we would like in life. Through the negatives in life, we learn

valuable lessons – that is what suffering is for: it's to learn from. Ancient Western thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle focused on the question of being and the nature of reality in life. Whereas the Far Eastern philosophy, particularly Buddhism and Daoism, also look for the essential core of things emphasizing changeability, emptiness as their fundamental principles. Both traditions teach that changes and opposites are not threats, but essential parts of the natural order of life.

The challenge is to see the world not in rigid terms, but in a dynamic, constantly flowing state. Both empathize the importance of balance, the acceptance of change and the realization that true wisdom lies in the harmony of opposites. All of this is important for us to know so we face life in a full and complete way. This way of being makes it clear that we need certain things that we perceive as rather bad and want to avoid as the only way for the counterpart to gain any meaning at all. Viktor Frankl's

concept called "paradoxical intention" in which one is asked to engage with a thought one wants to get rid of and thus learning new ways to manage it differently. He believed that humans are driven to search for meaning. He says that while we can't avoid suffering, we can learn to find meaning in it and through meaning, we learn to cope with it. Let me know what you think....

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Herb Donaldson

From Front Page

Donaldson literally “set the stage” for the community of Wakulla to enjoy numerous, different genres of art under one roof when he founded Crawfordville’s Palaver Tree Theater.

Palaver Theater actually began in 2006 in New York as a group of 30 or so artists to break free from the antiquated and, at times, racist practices of mainstream American theater.

Donaldson moved the company to Wakulla in 2010, when he returned to be with his then-ill grandmother.

Palaver Tree is a premier independent theater company, the region’s only black box, and a home for the cultural and artistic community at large. Begun over 10 years ago and existing through roaming performances, the company moved into a permanent home in 2018, retrofitting and modernizing a storage unit facility donated to Donaldson.

Black box theater is a performance space, typically a square or rectangular room, with black walls and a black, flat floor. The simplicity of the space allows it to be used to create a variety of configurations of stage and audience interaction. The black box is a relatively recent innovation in theatre.

A palaver tree is a tree in African cultures and history under which the community gathers to share stories and pass on oral traditions.

Donaldson first graced the stage when he was 7 or 8 at the Crawfordville Elementary School’s holiday choir. He shared he was “Born on a fishing trip to Carrabelle.” His parents are from Sopchoppy and were very active in their community.

He graduated Wakulla High School at 17 and moved to Tallahassee, where he joined a religious cult that identified as a non-denominational church. “I was in a play at Tallahassee Community College’s Center for Performing Arts called ‘The Dutchman’ by Amiri Baraka, then known as LeRoi Jones. I realized I was being mind-washed and it made me learn to be more watchful and look

deeply at developing character as I write, I process people, and I look deeply.

“While at the TCC show someone in the audience chatted with me and invited me to go for coffee – and asked about me in a larger light – it was then I decided I wanted to leave the church.”

Through this adverse chapter in his life, Donaldson says, “I found a means of expression from theater, and it saved me from this cult and helped feed my passion.”

Donaldson moved to Atlanta and attended acting classes after work. He saw an ad for an audition for the American Academy of Dramatic Arts in New York City, and was accepted.

Donaldson’s father shared the message with Herb’s grandmother who was close friends with Anita Townsend, who was then Wakulla’s Public Health Nurse and a prominent figure in the Wakulla community at the time.

Call it luck ,call it fate, or call it Wakulla’s tight-knit community, it just so happens that Townsend’s grandson, David, who lived in Maine at the time, was moving to New York City as well, to attend the same acting academy as Donaldson. The two moved into an apartment together.

He got a job ushering for Shakespeare in The Park, and it was there he met Donna Walker-Kuhne, who was in community affairs and outreach for the theater, and she put a bug in his ear of a job opening for a marketing assistant position at

the theater. He got the job and worked with the graphics team and launched Joe’s Pub, an additional public theater in the public theater system in NYC.

Later, Donaldson was promoted to Marketing Director.

It was around this time in 1996 when Donaldson wrote a book titled “Southern Shock Americana: The Life and Execution of John Mills Jr.” The book is based on a true story about Donaldson’s uncle, who he contends was wrongfully executed.

“I wrote a letter to my uncle while he was in prison and he responded to me, but I received it the day after he was executed, I received the letter from him and his prayer cap.”

Playwriting is also an artistic ability of Donaldson. “I had my plays put out in the Cherry Lane Theater in NYC and the Down Town Urban Theater Festival, I wrote a play called ‘Brighter Burn.’”

Donaldson has written other plays including “A Matter of Seconds” and produced along with filmmaker ka’ramuu kush “Nobody Knows Our Name,” a symposium focused on the evolution of American black artistry at the turn of the millennium.

He also performed in the cast of Thulani Davis’ “Everybody’s Ruby” with Phylicia Rashad and Viola Davis.

After a time, he started to get homesick. “I have to go home, my grandmother, Annie, is ill and the leaves are falling off the tree.”

Another influence for Donaldson is Mary Katherine Westmark and Donaldson recalled her wakulla.com web-

site that kept citizens in the know about the events and happenings in Wakulla.

“I admired her work,” Donaldson says. “And when she shut down her page, I was saddened. We needed this information. We needed to know that what we did here – in this one small county – mattered. She was the one who helped me realize that. And when she closed down her source, I picked it up. I wanted to continue

her work of keeping citizens in the know.”

Donaldson’s most recent theatrical appearance was a religious character he played in “Tate” a movie based on the true story of Tate’s Hell produced by Stacy Brown and Jason Badia. The film was shown at Palaver Tree as well as the Imax Theater in Tallahassee.

“MORE of this in my life; MORE of this in our community,” Donaldson says of the film.

To keep Wakulla County informed of local events and talent, you can visit www.palavertreetheater.org. Here, you will find Wakulla Creatives-where Donaldson highlights local talent.

“Through the years Palaver Tree has also hosted events such as read-In events, storytelling, music, book fairs, history lectures and health fairs.

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tobe7encouraged faith column

Is Following God Convenient?

Greetings Wakulla Citizens, thank you for allowing us to encourage you in drawing closer to our Father, Savior and Holy Spirit! The topic today is, “Is Following God Convenient?!” As our journey, my Husband and I, becomes stronger and more evident in and with God, MAN it is tough! Let’s dive in shall we? Yes, thank you: The word “convenient” in the dictionary reads, “1) Suited or favorable to one’s comfort, purpose, or needs. 2) Easy to reach; accessible. 3) Close at hand; near.” Then “inconvenient” in the dictionary reads, “ 1) Not convenient, especially. 2) Not accessible; hard to reach. 3) Not suited to one’s comfort, purpose, or needs.” The latter is how the journey seems to be a lot of the time!

As we become more aware of God and our spirit that He gave us in His Image, it is our Carnal Nature that can cause our journey to become a tough journey if we do not keep a watchful eye for the deceiver! Thanks a lot Adam and Eve!! Scripture mentions in **Romans** (I absolutely LOVE this book!!) **8:6-8 “For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7) because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; 8) and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”** Scripture mentions in **1 Peter 5:8 “ Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”** How you are able to know if you are in the flesh is to search your heart and mind and you’ll discover who your body is trying to be like. Our hearts can be good towards God and our carnal nature, our soul, our mind, will, and emotions will want to be self-serving, unkind. The #1 reason is not CHOOSING to spend time with God in the beginning of our day.

We are learning each and every day that when we choose to do what He requires us to do, I believe for myself the more difficult the “choice” I make, the more He is on my heart and mind. This is because I could not or would not make that

particular choice had He not chosen me in the first place. Back to the point I am attempting to make, one of them anyway, is that through our obedience to His requirements will cause doors to open for us that He wants for us to pay attention to for growth in Him!!! A Scripture I am keeping close to my mouth and my heart is **Proverbs 3:3 (the entire chapter 3, FULL of wisdom and blessings!) “Do not let kindness and truth leave you; Bind them around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.”** I am now constantly in check with what my mind is saying to do, I ask myself is this how God wants me to behave and treat people? No? I do the opposite. This is now a habit for me. My carnal nature hates it and this makes me very happy once I realize God got me through!! This is where the entire chapter of **Proverbs 3** and **Proverbs 4** comes in!

We are currently in a series of teachings in church on “being deceived”. This past Sunday was about “doubt”, in Scripture this is considered “unbelief”. We started in **Matthew 17:14-17**, speaking about the Disciples not being able to heal the man’s son. **Verse 16** mentions “**they could not cure him**”, notice in :20 mentions “ And He said to them, “ **Because of the littleness of your faith; for truly I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Move from here to there, and it shall move; and nothing shall be impossible to you.** In :21 mentions that” **this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”** In **Mark 2:19** Jesus mentions that as long as **He is still physically on this earth, they are not to fast.”** In **Matthew 21:21 “And Jesus answered and said to them, “Truly I say to you, if you have faith, and do not doubt, you shall not only do what was done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ it shall happen. :22 “ And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.”** We now know Jesus equipped His Disciples, His Disciples were definitely able to cure that man’s son, they were deceived with their eyes in what they saw

and with their ears in what they heard in the situation, and doubted, therefore Jesus cured the boy.

Moving the “mountain” is figurative, this “mountain” represents all obstacles that are blocking you from serving His purpose in your life! Is it convenient to speak the way the world does? For sure! Examples are EVERYWHERE! It is not convenient to speak His Spoken Word, our carnal nature is against us in doing so in every way possible! You see He requires us to seek Him out, search for Him as hidden treasures! Bible faith is in knowing the Words He has Spoken, we then speak His very same Words, no matter how our carnal nature is hating it and causing us to “feel” (soulish, our mind, will, emotions) ticked off and irritable! The more we choose to do everything His way, favor will overshadow us everywhere we go and people will notice and want in on Him!!

As I have grown to know my Father, my LORD and my Comforter, He has changed my heart and mind to His way, there is still a lot of changing to go, but I am soo different everyday! His Word does the changing because when our spirit hears His Word spoken out of our mouths our faith grows in Him doing what His Word says! Faith comes by hearing, **Romans 10:17 “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.”** His Word hears us speak His spoken Word! His Word goes forth first then our spirit hears and Holy Spirit confirms this to our spirit and our faith grows as we act on what we spoke! James speaks beautifully on this in **James 2:14-26, in :17 “Even so faith, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.”** The Word is first then the action, in **Genesis 1:3 God said “ let there be light” then “light was!”** This is not “mind over matter”! Or “confession is possession”!! Those are like when **Moses and Aaron went to see Pharaoh and Aaron threw down his staff before Pharaoh and it turned into a serpent, then Pharaoh called for his wise men and the sorcerers. They did the same thing with their magic and secret arts, they threw down their staff’s and**

they also turned into serpents, BUT!, then Aaron’s staff serpent ATE BOTH OF THEIR SERPENT STAFF’S!! BAM!! You see, the devil will ALWAYS try to do what the ONLY TRUE GOD can AND will do!! Then as always... FAIL!! That is in **Exodus 7:8-13.**

Be encouraged as you dive into His Word and begin to learn what your inheritance is in and through Him, you’ll change, you have to! You will get hungrier and hungrier for more of Him!

If you are not Born Again and want to be, confess this outloud “ **Dear Jesus, I am a sinner I know. Your Word says that I can call upon Your name and be saved, Romans 10:13 says for “EVERYONE WHO CALLS ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.”** I call on Your name now today to be saved Jesus! Take my life today and use it for Your purposes, for Your Kingdom! I confess today that by grace I am saved through faith knowing that You went to the Cross and willingly gave Your Life for my life, paid the debt I can not pay and by Your blood shed, Your death, burial and Resurrection on the 3rd day I am now saved, this is a gift from God I know! Thank You Jesus!!!

To complete your Salvation you must be water baptized, this is your burial of your dead self and your new life with power, the Holy Spirit. **1 Peter 3:21-22 “ And corresponding to that, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22) who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, after angels and authorities and powers had been subjected to Him.”** **Matthew 28:19 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20) teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the ages.”**

May this shine His Light on you and yours,
Deb Quackenbush
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On the Horizon

The calendar of events for July

Tuesday, July 1

- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Yoga Flow with Nellie at 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.

Wednesday, July 2

- 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.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Thursday, July 3

- The Rotary Club of Wakulla County meets at the TSC Wakulla Center at 8:30 a.m. on Thursdays.
- Coastal Optimist Club meets at noon at Myra Jean's on the first and third Thursdays.
- 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.
- Yin Yoga at 6 p.m. with Nellie every Thursday. Classes are \$12, at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

Friday, July 4

- INDEPENDENCE DAY – Banks, government offices and many businesses will be closed.
- Sopchoppy Fourth of July Celebration begins with a parade downtown at 10 a.m., music at the Myron Hodge City Park on the Sopchoppy River including headliner Jordan Miller at 7:30 p.m., and fireworks at dark.
- St. Marks Fourth of July Celebration will be held

from 4 to 10 p.m. and will feature local vendors, food trucks and fireworks after dark.

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

Saturday, July 5

- The Panacea Community Garden Farmer's Market will be held from 9 a.m. to 12 noon in Panacea.

Sunday, July 6

- Wakulla Giving Hands holds a food giveaway every Sunday from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at the facility, 2569 Coastal Highway. Enter from east driveway and form three lines beginning after 10 a.m.

Monday, July 7

- Grief support at Lake Ellen Baptist Church. No cost. Contact Stan Mitchell at 850-728-3454. Through July 14.
- 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 54 Ochlockonee St.
- Gentle Yoga and Stetching Class, every Monday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.
- Yoga 101 with Nellie at 6 p.m. Classes are \$12, packages available at New Posh on 3079 Crawfordville Hwy. RSVP to newposh3079@gmail.com or text/call at (850) 528-5838.
- Line Dancing Class is held at Wakulla Dance Academy every Monday from 7 to 9 p.m. \$5 per person. Wear dance shoes or tennis shoes.

Thursday, July 10

- St. Marks City Commission meets at the St. Marks Yacht Club at 6 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, July 12

- Wakulla County Preparedness Expo will be held at Hudson Park from 9 a.m. to noon. Learn how to be prepared when disaster strikes.
- Hand-me-down Getdown, a swap event, will be held at Palaver Tree Theater beginning at 2 p.m.
- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at the Wakulla County Public Library at 10 a.m. every second Saturday of the month.

Monday, July 14

- County commission meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- The Sopchoppy City Commission meets at 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.
- VFW Post 4538 and Auxiliary hold monthly meetings on the second Monday of the month with fellowship at 6 p.m., meetings at 7 p.m.
- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group meets at Lake Ellen Baptist Church at 9:30 a.m every second Monday of the month.
- Crawfordville Woman's Club monthly meeting is the second Monday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 64

Wednesday, July 16

- A groundbreaking ceremony for the new Emergency Operations Center will be held in the sheriff's office parking lot, 4 Oak St., beginning at 9 a.m.

Saturday, July 19

- Be a Hero to Our Heroes annual Backpack giveaway with school supplies will hold a drive-thru distribution at COAST Charter School in St. Marks from 9 a.m. to noon.

Monday, July 21

- School board meets at the district office at 5:45 p.m.

Friday, July 25

- Christmas in July, a fundraiser for the Wakulla Senior Citizens Center, will be held at the Wakulla Springs Lodge beginning at 6 p.m. A table is \$1,200, a half-table is \$600, individual tickets are \$150..

Saturday, July 26

- Be a Hero to Our Heroes annual Backpack giveaway with school supplies will

hold a drive-thru distribution at Panacea Plaza from 9 a.m. to noon.

- Sopchoppy Opry's 25th anniversary show will feature Billy Dean at the historic Sopchoppy Auditorium beginning at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 each and are available at the door.
- Wakulla Giving Hands Bingo Game Night will be held at the Wakulla Shrine Club, doors open at 11:30 a.m., quarters at noon; 14 round at 4:30 p.m.
- Twin Towers, a concert of jazz, funk and R&B, will be held at Palaver Tree Theater beginning at 8 p.m. Tickets are \$15 at the door.

Sunday, July 27

- Miss Wakulla pageant winners will host a lemonade stand fundraiser at Blue Water Realty from 1 to 3:30 p.m. Funds raised will go to Angel Closet, the student personal supply center at schools.

Tuesday, July 29

- Town Hall meeting with county commissioner Fred Nichols will be held at the Panacea Community Center, 115 Otter Lake Road, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Thursday, July 31

- Are you an adult who supports or mentors students ages 10-19? Join us for a fun, interactive presentation on "The Seven Habits of Highly Effective Teens," Thursday, July 31, form 6-7 PM at the Wakulla County Library. Presented by the Compass Program at the Wakulla County Department of Health, this one-hour presentation will share practical strategies to help teens thrive. All adults who care about youth are welcome, and yes you can bring your teen! Adults receive a copy of "7 Habits for Highly Effective Teens" for attending (a \$20 value). For additional information Contact: Margaret.Waldbauer@FLhealth.gov



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Let’s keep parking safe and smart



By **JARED MILLER**
Wakulla Sheriff

A message from Sheriff Jared F. Miller:

If you’ve lived in Wakulla County – or even just spent some time here –you know what a treasure our waterways, beaches, and boat ramps are. From the winding beauty of the Wakulla and St. Marks rivers to the peaceful coastline at Shell Point and Mashas Sands, our county offers outdoor experiences that are second to none in the region.

Wakulla County has invested a great deal of effort over the years to improve public access and enhance the amenities at our parks and recreation areas. These improvements have made our natural spaces more accessible and enjoyable, and as a result, more and more people – both locals and visitors – are taking advantage of what Wakulla has to offer.

As summer arrives and school lets out, our boat ramps, beaches, and scenic spots become busier than ever, with families looking to fish, swim, paddle, or simply relax by the water.

With that increase in activity, however, comes a challenge we face year after year: parking issues at our public recreation areas. When visiting a beach, boat ramp, or park, it’s important for everyone to park only in designated, clearly marked areas. One of the most frequent complaints the Sheriff’s Office receives during the summer involves vehicles parked improperly – whether that’s on the shoulder of the road, along bike paths, or on private property adjacent to public spaces.

Parking on road shoulders or near bike paths is more than just a nuisance; it’s illegal and creates real safety hazards. It can obstruct emergency access, limit visibility, endanger cyclists and pedestrians, and disrupt the flow of traffic.

Violators risk being ticketed or having their vehicles towed at their own expense. In addition, many of our public access points are located right next to private residences.

In areas such as Shell Point and Mashas Sands, for example, parking on someone’s private property without permission not only disrespects that homeowner’s space but could also lead to your vehicle being towed.

We understand that it can be disappointing to arrive at your favorite beach or ramp only to find that the parking lot is full. Still, the right decision in those moments is to try another location or return at a different time. While this might be a bit inconvenient, it’s a small price to pay compared to the stress of fines or the cost of retrieving a towed vehicle.

At the Wakulla County Sheriff’s Office, our role is to help everyone enjoy the outdoors in a way that’s safe, respectful, and responsible. Our goal is not to dampen anyone’s good time – but we do have a responsibility to ensure that public access areas remain safe for all, that emergency vehicles can move freely, and that local residents aren’t burdened by blocked driveways or overcrowded roads. We all benefit when everyone does their part to follow the rules.

Fortunately, Wakulla County is rich in opportunities. There are 10 public boat ramps throughout the county, offering access to rivers, bays, and the Gulf.

In addition to our coastal beaches, we’re also home to two beautiful state parks with designated swimming areas, scenic trails, and picnic spots. If one site is full, there’s often another nearby worth exploring.

If you have ques-

tions or need help, don’t hesitate to reach out. We’re here to assist. And if you notice illegal activity or anything that seems out of place, please report it right away by calling our non-emergency line at 850-745-7100, or 911 in the case of an emergency.

Thank you for helping to keep Wakulla County the safe, welcoming, and beautiful place that it is.

Your courtesy, respect, and good judgment go a long way. Let’s work together to make this summer one to enjoy and remember – for all the right reasons.

Your Sheriff,
Jared F. Miller

Jared Miller is Wakulla County Sheriff.

SilverSneakers 101



By **BRIAN ENGLISH**

Once you turn 65, the world of Medicare opens to you, and you also gain access to its offshoot supplemental programs.

You likely know about Part A, Part B, Medicare Advantage, and other sections, but you may not know about the senior fitness offering “SilverSneakers.”

SilverSneakers is a versatile and free fitness plan for Medicare recipients. Not every insurance company that has Medicare Advantage or other Medicare Supplement Insurance plans has SilverSneakers as a choice. But it’s definitely worth asking about whenever you add or change your coverage.

SilverSneakers grants free access

to over 15,000 fitness locations across America. Call ahead to find out if your local gym participates.

You might also inquire if their location offers special SilverSneakers classes. These fitness sessions are designed for Medicare-aged students.1

Not all SilverSneakers’ benefits are centered around the gym, however.

For those who prefer different types of exercise, FLEX, a feature within SilverSneakers, holds meetups at community centers, public parks, and places of worship. They provide fitness opportunities that might not be available at your gym, such as hiking groups, yoga, and swimming.1

SilverSneakers also offers health seminars, wellness events, and other

community-building options for their members. The emphasis is on getting engaged and getting moving.

Remember, though, that not all plans offer SilverSneakers.

Communicate carefully when doing your research and make a selection that covers your needed treatments and prescriptions first. Any extras should be secondary. It’s also important to remember that SilverSneakers’ availability may vary from year to year and even be canceled to make room for other features. Make your decisions with that knowledge and your overall health needs in mind.1

1. SilverSneakers.com, 2024

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

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