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# Petra Shuff

She's been a volunteer in the community since 1983

By **LINDA ANN McDONALD**  
Correspondent

When you volunteer, you're contributing to a greater cause; your efforts create meaningful and lasting impact.

No matter where or how you choose to volunteer, the time and dedication make a real difference – for those you serve and for you.

Petra Shuff is the face of Wakulla County when it comes to volunteerism. With a servant's heart that knows no limits, Petra has volunteered for the Wakulla County community since 1983. Petra cares for the animals of Wakulla just as much as the people.

"My first involvement with volunteering in the community started with reading an add in the local newspaper that the animal shelter



PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE SUN

Turn to Page 7

Petra Shuff



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HIS-

TORY

- OCTOBER 1925 -  
- Oct. 2nd, La Revue Nègre, an all-Black cabaret production starring African-American dancer and actress Josephine Baker, premiered in Paris at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. It made Baker popular worldwide. After two months in Paris, Baker and the troupe of dancers went on to tour in Brussels and Berlin.

-Oct. 2nd The first television transmission was made by Scottish inventor John Logie Baird at his laboratory at 22 Frith Street in London. Baird's camera captured the 32-line vertically greyscale scanned image of the head of a ventriloquist's dummy, which he had nicknamed "Stooky Bill." An office worker in the same building, 20-year-old William Edward Taynton, appeared before Baird's camera the same day and became the first person to have his image on television.

Oct. 23rd. Johnny Carson, American comedian and television host known for The Tonight Show from 1962 to 1992, born in Corning, Iowa.

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- Abraham Lincoln

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## Bla..Bla... BLAH...Blah!

During World War II, he served as an Army Air Corps pilot, flying over 20 combat missions in B-24 "Liberator" bombers during deep raids over Germany and eventually rising to command a B-24 group. This gentleman later became an American film actor. His film career spanned 80 films from 1935 to 1991. With strong morality, he portrayed both on and off the screen, he epitomized the "American ideal" in the mid-20th Century. In 1999, the American Film Institute (AFI) ranked him third on its list of the greatest American male actors He received numerous honors including the AFI Life Achievement Award in 1980, the Kennedy Center Honor in 1983, as well as the Academy Honorary Award and Presidential Medal of Freedom, both in 1985. His family owned and operated the local hardware store where they had hoped he would continue in their footsteps. He was not a gifted student and received average to low grades, not from a lack of intelligence, but due to being creative and having a tendency to daydream

**James Maitland Stewart**  
(May 20, 1908 – July 2, 1997)  
My favorites: "It's a Wonderful Life"  
& "Harvey"

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## MISS INFORMATION FUN PAGE

By Lynda Kinszy

Content contributor William Diekman

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What would you tell your younger self?  
You are only in competition with yourself.  
- Heather Bryan

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### -Trivia- WAKULLA

- 1.The British divided Florida into East & West. What was the border?
2. 1839-1843 - What fort was on the Wakulla River, about 9 miles from St. Marks?
3. 1839 - What fort was near Sopchoppy?
4. 1841-1842 - Where was Fort Many located?
5. How many on National Register of Historic Places Wakulla?
6. How many square miles in Wakulla County?

**Answers:** 1. The Apalachicola River 2. Fort Stansbury  
3. Fort Number Five 4. Near Wakulla Springs  
5. Eleven  
6. 736 sq.miles, with approx. 606 sq. miles of land & 129 sq miles of water.

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### Random Information

1800's - The town of Port Leon was once busy shipping cotton. A railroad from Tallahassee brought over 50,000 tons of cotton each year. This cotton was put on ships, usually going straight to Europe. Port Leon was Florida's sixth-largest town, with 1,500 people. But a hurricane and a huge storm surge completely destroyed the town. A new town, New Port (now Newport, Florida), was built 2 miles upriver. However, it never became as successful as Port Leon.

In 1528, Pánfilo de Narváez found his way to what would be Wakulla County, camping at the confluence of the Wakulla and St. Marks rivers.

North of Wakulla Beach, there's a special place called Bird Hammock. It's recognized as a U.S. National Historic Landmark.

Bird Hammock was once home to Native Americans. They lived there a very long time ago, during the first thousand years after the year 0 AD. It gives us a peek into the ancient history of the area.



Quincee Messersmith and some family at the Wakulla War Eagle football game.

### SPORTS-

Who won the first NFL game in history, defeating the Columbus Panhandles 14-0 on October 3, 1920?

Dayton T'riangles

You Asked, I answered...  
October really is my favorite month!  
Happy Birthday Mason Cole Brown!  
Mama loves you so! Don't blink, they grow up too fast  
XO, Quincee







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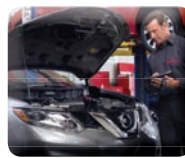
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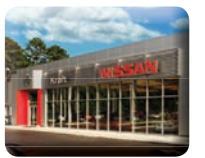
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# Benefit screening of ‘Tate’ set

By ANDREA CARTER

Ready for a scare this Fall season with roots in local history? Join the Wakulla County Historical Society for a night of “TATE.”

If you know the Panhandle, then you know Tate’s Hell as the stretch of swampy woods near the coast along Highway 98. But do you know the whole story?

The 38-minute film “TATE” chronicles (with fictional elements) the real life story of Cebe Tate and the hard times he faced in our area. Written and produced by Wakulla County filmmaker Stacy Brown and Joseph Badia of Humanzee Productions, the film premiered at the IMAX Theater in



Some cast members at the movie premiere in Tallahassee.

Tallahassee last May to a sold-out crowd.

Saturday evening October 18, the Wakulla County Historical Society brings the film to the historic Sopchoppy school auditorium, for a seriously scary show. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. with food and refreshments available, and a musical prelude by Sopchoppy folk musician

Frank Lindamood to begin at 7:30. Featuring local and regional actors, “TATE” was filmed on site at Heritage Village, a property owned by the historical society and slated to become a historical park, which features three historic Wakulla buildings.

In a generous partnership with Humanzee Productions, all

proceeds from this viewing will benefit the Wakulla County Historical Society.

Purchase tickets for \$10 at the door or online at Wakulla history.org. To learn more about this event and explore more Wakulla County history, visit the Historical Society Museum at 24 High Drive in Crawfordville, across from the historic courthouse. Museum hours are Thursday-Friday 10a.m. to 4 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Contact the historical society at (850) 926-1110.

We look forward to “seeing you at the [Sopchoppy] movies!”

Andrea Carter is president of the Wakulla County Historical Society.



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*The* **Wakulla Sun**



# Petra Shuff

## From Front Page

needed dog walkers and volunteers and next I got involved with CHAT (Citizens for Humane Animal Treatment, which later became Paws of Wakulla in April 2015). A year later, CHAT asked me to be on the Board.”

Shuff said, “I love animals, I make sure they go to a good home, I give them a good start to be happy and healthy. I used to work shelter adoption events and went to Petco a few times; I loved it.”

“I worked with PAWS dog wash for about 15 years now. It occurs two times a year and half the proceeds buy vaccinations and other medicines the shelter needs. We help with TNR which is Trap-Neuter-Release, and we provide food for pets at the Senior Center. The Seniors need the animals, sometimes it’s the only companion they have.”

Volunteering connects people to their community, and it gives them a sense of fulfillment and makes the community better in so many ways.

“I started working

for Wakulla’s Chamber of Commerce about this time and when anyone needed help, I would help. I especially like the ribbon cutting events; I love to see the new businesses start and with the growth in Wakulla, it brings the opportunity to have well paying jobs and it keeps our tax dollars here instead of Tallahassee.”

Petra has a long list of volunteer groups she as participated in. “I worked with JoAnn Palmer of the Coastal Clean Up event; I would get up a crew and cook for and feed the workers of the event. I worked Operation Wakulla for a couple of years and now I am at Wakulla Giving Hands.”

“I feel rewarded, especially so with the animals because they can’t give back, I don’t want a thanks from them because I do it from my heart.”

Petra shared, “Volunteering for the community, it’s rewarding to help people that can’t help themselves or fallen on hard times, even if it’s just temporary.”

“It is special to work for Wakulla Giving

Hands for the Seniors who are stuck at home without a ride. Because we are putting the bags together for them, we don’t get to deliver and actually see them, but we make sure they get what they need and that it is healthy. I enjoy participating in the Senior Center’s Christmas After Dark events to benefit Wakulla’s seniors.”

Petra was born in a small town in Germany and then lived in St. Petersburg, Fla. before finally moving to Crawfordville.

“It was a huge culture shock for me, I am used to seeing pink, green and yellow houses from St. Pete. I guess it took me a little time to really fit in in Wakulla. The 16 years I worked at the Chamber, I met all the great people here. It was Ms. Sharol Brown who really welcomed me here; she was like my second mother. I was shy working at the Chamber, but after getting to know everyone, I became outgoing. It was the warm hellos and the front line welcomes and I needed to be informative and know what’s going on in the community. I made a lot of friends.”

Married to her husband John, and has a son Shane House, Petra likes to cook, bake sourdough bread, knit and crochet scarves and hats.

Shuff’s latest volunteer event was in September with a Jam Pop-up Sale at Posey’s to benefit Wakulla Giving Hands.

“We are making jams and cowboy candy out of whatever fruit we can find, and we keep adding stuff. It’s good stuff; I want to thank Sherrie Posey for letting us set up.”

Event after retirement, Petra is still active volunteering in the community.

“Now that I am retired, it gives me the opportunity to volunteer more during the week as it was restricted to evenings and weekends while I was working,” she says.

“I like to think I have a true servant’s heart. I believe it’s important to volunteer more, so the better this place will be.”

## Request for Proposals---Island Manager Contract Dog Island Conservation District (DICD)



### Brief description of contractual responsibilities:

Maintain roadways, airstrip, and DICD equipment; provide trash removal to mainland and transport equipment to and from Dog Island utilizing DICD vessel and equipment. Details provided in the RFP packet.

For more details and/or to submit a proposal, request an RFP proposal packet from the DICD Chairman, William Stone, at [williamstone1048@gmail.com](mailto:williamstone1048@gmail.com)

**Submissions in response to the RFP must be received by November 15th, 2025**



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# Recipe for change



By GREG GAST

nonacceptance of what is. It carries an unconscious negative charge.

When you complain, you make yourself a victim. Though, when you speak out, you are in your power. So change the situation by taking action or by speaking out if necessary or possible; leave the

situation or accept it. All else is madness.

2. We unconsciously when stressed create resistances to change. It creates the defense mechanism of denial. This denial is a way to resist the here and now.

Are you resisting the here and now? Most people when stressed would rather be somewhere else. Their “here” is never good enough.

3. Through self-observation, examine yourself; see if you are in denial or playing the victim. If you find you’re “here and now” intolerable and it makes you unhappy you have three options: remove yourself from the situation, change it, or accept it. If you want to take responsibility for your life, you must choose one of these options and you must choose now.

4. When you accept consequences of your choice you must do it: No excuses, no negativity, no

psychic pollutions. If you take any action – leaving or changing your situation – drop the negativity first. Any action is better than no action, especially if you have been stuck in an unhappy situation for a long time. If you remain stuck you learn nothing. If it is fear remember all fear stands for is “Future Events that Appear Real.” Doing cuts the link between fear and your thinking.

5. If there is truly nothing you can do to change your situation and you are forced to accept it: then it is time to SURRENDER. Surrender is not weakness there is great power in it. The false, unhappy self that loves feeling miserable, resentful, or sorry for itself can no longer survive. Through surrender you will be free internally of the situation.

6. If there is something that you “should” be doing but not doing: Get up and do it NOW! Alternately, completely accept your inactivity, laziness, or passivity at that moment if that is your choice.



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## For Such a Time as This

The beautiful Old Testament story of Esther remains one of the most compelling demonstrations of how God sometimes uses the most unlikely people to bring about the fulfillment of His will on this earth. The young and lovely Esther has only recently been made queen, when the king - unaware that Esther is Jewish - allows a proclamation to be sent throughout the kingdom saying that all Jewish people will be killed on a particular day. Mordecai, Esther’s foster father, realizes that she may be able to save her people.

He sends word to her to go before the king and plead with him to spare the Jews. It is a difficult task for Esther. She is queen, but she doesn’t have the right to go in to the king unless he calls for her. If she goes to him, and he refuses to acknowledge her, she will be put to death. Yet, she is probably the only person in a position to help. It’s a moment of great decision for young Queen Esther.

She is being asked to risk her own life for her people. Mordecai helps her look beyond her own

peril and see the opportunity she is being given. He explains, “Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?” (Esther 4:14) In this great demonstration of courage found in the Old Testament, Esther goes to the king, he receives her, and she successfully persuades him to spare her people from being executed.

Esther is the right person in the right place at the right time. Her courageous action preserves the people of Israel - the people from whom the Messiah will descend - and thus she makes an impact upon the eternal destiny of mankind. None of us will ever have the opportunity to plead before a king and save a race of people, and few of us will be required to put our lives on the line to save even one family member.

All of us, however, can respond “greatly” when faced with an unexpected challenge. Great crises will continue to arise in our lives from time to time - pivotal crises. If we don’t make the right response to the crisis, we will be pointed in

the wrong direction and God’s plan for us will be hindered. My prayer is that God will bless us with the courage Esther possessed; the kind that will causes us to forget about self and do what is in the best interest of the many. You may not be able to see the far-reaching and long-lasting consequences of such wisdom and courage right now, and you may feel as though you are the most unlikely person in the world to make a great contribution to the fulfillment of God’s plan.

In reality, you may have come into the kingdom for just such a time as this.

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**Finally Remember:** Stress is caused by being “here” and wanting to be “there,” or being in the present and wanting to be in the future. It’s a split that tears you apart inside.

To create and live with such an inner split is insane. The fact that everyone else is doing it doesn’t make it less insane.

Remember the past is to learn from; the future has not been written; it is only in the present that we can make changes in our lives. The here and now.

Got a question? Send it to Greg Gast c/o Real Life Counseling, 3295 Crawfordville Hwy., suite #4, Crawfordville FL 32327. Your name when the answer to your question is printed in an upcoming issue of the Wakulla Sun





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# On the Horizon

## The calendar of events for October

**Wednesday, Oct. 1**

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, Oct. 2**

- 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.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Thursday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

**Friday, Oct. 3**

- The Wakulla War Eagles travel to Fort Walton Beach to take on the Vikings at 7 p.m. CT.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at noon and 8 p.m. every Friday at 54 Ochlockonee St.

**Saturday, Oct. 4**

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

**Monday, Oct. 6**

- County commission meets at 5 p.m. in the commission chambers.
- 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 Stretching Class, every Monday, 11 a.m. Wakulla Community Center. Bring a mat. Come early to sign in. Chair Yoga participants welcome. \$2 per class.
- 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

**Tuesday, Oct. 7**

- Sopchoppy community dinner is held every week at the Towles House at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m.
- Alcoholics Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. at 54 Ochlockonee St.

**Wednesday, Oct. 8**

- Wakulla Garden Club meets at the public library from noon to 2 p.m. Speaker will be Ameh El, owner of Compost Com-

munity.

**Thursday, Oct. 9**

- 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.

**Friday, Oct. 10**

- The Wakulla War Eagles travel to Tallahassee to take on district rival Godby Cougars at Gene Cox Stadium at 7 p.m.

**Saturday, Oct. 11**

- Breast Cancer Awareness Walk will be held at Azalea Park from 10 to 11 a.m. Food vendors, free shirts, DJ, raffles and more.
- The Wakulla Caregiver Support Group will meet at the Wakulla County Public Library at 10 a.m. every second Saturday of the month.

**Monday, Oct. 13**

- No school for Wakulla Public School students.

**Friday, Oct. 17**

- The Wakulla War Eagles travel to Santa Rosa Beach to take on the South Walton Seahawks at 7 p.m. CT.

**Saturday, Oct. 18**

- 4-H Teen Summit will be held at the extension office from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., with supervision available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Schedule includes a welcome session with a keynote speaker, four blocks of concurrent workshops, lunch and snacks provided. \$15. To register, go to <https://4H-FLOWLeadership.4hon-line.com>.
- Planning commission meets at 6 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 Ochlockonee St., in Crawfordville. Call (850) 566-5727 for more information.

**Monday, Oct. 20**

- County commission meets at 5 p.m. in the commission boardroom.
- Wakulla County School Board meets in the district office at 5:45 p.m.

**Tuesday, Oct. 21**

- Sarracenia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society meets at the public library at 6:30 p.m. Speaker will be Tyler Macmillan of Tall Timbers, sharing his favorite hidden gems in the North Florida forests.
- Farm Bureau Annual Meeting will be held at the Wakulla Community

Center beginning at 7 p.m.

**Friday, Oct. 24**

- Murder Mystery at Wakulla Springs Lodge at 5 p.m. Theme is "I Love the 80s to Death."
- The Wakulla War Eagles host the district rival Baker County Wildcats at J.D. Jones Stadium at 7 p.m.
- Prior to the football game, the annual Wakulla Navy JROTC fish fry will be held.

**Saturday, Oct. 25**

- St. Marks Brewfest will be held from noon to 4 p.m. in St. Marks.
- Trick or Treat Storywalk will be held at Azalea and Hudson parks from 5 to 8 p.m. The event is hosted by the Wakulla County Public Library and sponsored by Friends of the Library.

**Monday, Oct. 27**

- Sopchoppy Lions Club meets at Sopchoppy School at 6:30 p.m.

**Friday, Oct. 31**

- HALLOWEEN
- The Wakulla War Eagles close out the regular season hosting the Gadsden Jaguars at J.D. Jones Stadium at 7 p.m.



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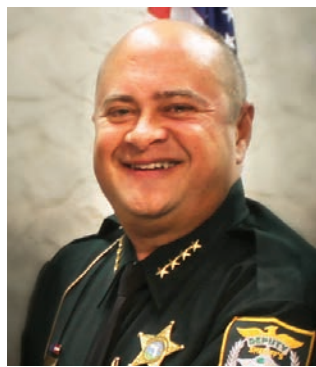


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# WCSO Reserve Unit is an all-volunteer division



By **JARED MILLER**  
Wakulla Sheriff

From the Desk of Sheriff Jared F. Miller:

If you asked members of our community what the Sheriff's Office does, you would likely hear a wide range of answers. Many people would mention our Road Patrol Deputies who respond to calls for service, patrol neighborhoods, and keep our streets safe.

Others might point to our Detectives, who investigate crimes and work tirelessly to bring justice for vic-

tims. Some would mention our Detention Deputies, who maintain order, safety, and security inside our detention facility.

Still others may think of our School Resource Officers, who protect our schools while building strong relationships with students, staff, and families, or our Communications Officers, who answer 911 calls and coordinate emergency responses as the lifeline between citizens and first responders.

Each of these roles is vital to keeping Wakulla County safe.

Yet, one of the most valuable parts of our team is often overlooked: the WCSO Reserve Unit.

The Reserve Unit is an all-volunteer division of the Wakulla County Sheriff's Of-

fice, made up of both sworn Reserve Deputies and non-sworn Sheriff's Safety Officers (SSOs).

These dedicated men and women step forward to serve our county with no expectation of pay, donating their time and talents simply out of pride for their community. They support nearly every aspect of our operations—all while working full-time jobs and raising families of their own.

Reserve Deputies frequently assist Road Patrol by adding extra manpower during busy times or staffing shortages. They support our Civil and Warrants Division with serving court documents, and they are an invaluable resource during hurricanes, major storms, and other county emergencies—often standing shoulder

to shoulder with our full-time deputies to keep residents safe in the most difficult moments.

Perhaps the most visible service the Reserve Unit provides is their work at community events. From parades to festivals, almost every large gathering in Wakulla County requires some level of security or traffic control. More often than not, it's our Reserve Unit members volunteering their time to ensure these events are safe and successful. When you see a uniformed deputy directing traffic at a festival or helping keep order at a parade, chances are they are serving as a volunteer—at no cost to our community.

Collectively, Reserve Unit members donate thousands of hours of service each year. Their work

saves the taxpayers of Wakulla County significant resources, while providing a level of support that ensures our agency can continue meeting the needs of a growing community. This is truly a labor of love, and our county would not be the same without them.

We are always looking for new members who share a passion for service. For former sworn law enforcement officers, joining as a Reserve Deputy is a great way to maintain your standards, keep your training current, and remain connected to the profession. For community members without prior law enforcement experience, volunteering as a Sheriff's Safety Officer provides a meaningful opportunity to learn new skills, gain insight

into public safety, and make a real difference right here at home.

If you or someone you know may be interested in joining the WCSO Reserve Unit, please contact Captain Brett Surace at (850) 745-7186 or [bsurace@wcso.org](mailto:bsurace@wcso.org) for more information.

On behalf of the entire Wakulla County Sheriff's Office, I want to personally thank all of our Reserve Deputies and Sheriff's Safety Officers for the countless hours you dedicate to protecting and serving our community. You are a vital part of our mission, and your commitment is noticed and deeply appreciated.

Your Sheriff,  
Jared F. Miller

*Jared Miller is Wakulla County Sheriff.*

# Yours, mine, and ours: estate strategies for second marriage



By **BRIAN ENGLISH**

If you are one of the many Americans who are in a second marriage, you may need to revisit your estate strategy.<sup>1</sup>

Unlike a typical first marriage, second marriages often require special consideration in order

to address children from a prior marriage and the disposition of assets accumulated prior to the second marriage.

## SECOND MARRIAGES

Here are some ideas you may want to think about when updating your estate strategy:

- You may want to ensure that your children from your first marriage are set up to receive assets from your estate, even as you provide your second spouse with adequate resources to live

should you die first.

- Consider titling of assets. Assets that are jointly owned in your name and your second spouse's name are set up to pass to your second spouse, often regardless of any instructions in your will.

- If you are designating your second spouse as beneficiary on retirement accounts, remember that once you die, the surviving spouse can name any beneficiary of their choice, despite any promises to name your children from a previous marriage

as successor beneficiaries.

- Consider any prenuptial and postnuptial agreements with a professional who has legal expertise in the area of estate management.

- If your new spouse is closer in age to your children than to you, your children may worry that they may never receive an inheritance. Consider passing them assets upon your death. This may be accomplished through the purchase of life insurance.<sup>2</sup>

- Consider approaches to help protect against the drain that extended care may have on assets designed to support your spouse or pass to your children.

1. The information in this material is not intended as tax or legal advice. It may not be used for the purpose of avoiding any federal tax penalties. Please consult legal or tax professionals for specific information regarding your individual situation.

2. Several factors will affect the cost and availability of life insurance, including age, health and the type and amount of insurance purchased. Life insurance policies have expenses, including mortality and other charges. If a policy is surrendered prematurely, the policyholder also may pay surrender charges and have income tax implications. You should consider de-

termining whether you are insurable before implementing a strategy involving life insurance. Any guarantees associated with a policy are dependent on the ability of the issuing insurance company to continue making claim payments.

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

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# The Old Magnolia cemetery

By Elizabeth Smith, originally published in the October 1963 issue of The Magnolia Monthly

The old Magnolia Cemetery near Newport is a true historical curiosity. As cemeteries go it may not be old in time, but for a locality in which artifacts vanish in less than a century because of the climate, it is ancient indeed. The Magnolia cemetery is just such a victim. It was used by the citizens of Magnolia, 5 miles up the river from St. Marks. The town of Magnolia, which was founded in 1826 and flourished for 20 years, had a larger population during its prime than any town now in existence in Wakulla County. It had a bank, a newspaper, two hotels, and a long wharf on the St. Marks River fronted by warehouses to which schooners and packets came from the whole Atlantic coast to exchange kettles, whiskey, barrels, textiles, and gunpowder for cotton, hides, tallow and beef cattle from the interior of north Florida and Georgia. It was the heyday of the riverport and the sailing ship. Today, there is no evidence among the indifferent palmettos and stark pine trees that Magnolia ever existed, none but the cemetery. Only the death of the citizens of Magnolia record the fact that it ever lived.

It is not easy to find the cemetery, even when one can give the directions. Most of the Oldtimers in Wakulla County know that it is there, but even



A drawing of the town of Magnolia from 1842.

if they tell you where it is, it can hardly be seen unless you step on it accidentally, which occasionally a hunter will do. This is how Joyce and Tommy Tucker of Woodville discovered the old burying ground and who showed the historian's curiosity by taking down the names of all the recorded burials in the plot. Since the few limestone monuments are only a remnant of those buried at old Magnolia, and they have moulded into illegibility, the Tuckers hunched into awkward positions among the briars to place paper over the headstones and run pencil over it to raise the letters that piece together a little more history of the county.

But first, if you are still curious, the graveyard is located this way: turn at the last road to the left before approaching the bridge over the St. Marks River at Newport. Drive several miles to the Newport swimming pool. Six-tenths of a mile past the pool is a dirt road to the right. Drive down this road a quarter of a mile to a pine tree broken off halfway to the top, on the left side of the road. Opposite the pine to the right is a dim path. Follow this path on foot a quarter of a mile. The land is pine and scrub palmetto which hides everything, including snakes until you notice around you tumbled ground, scattered bricks and small

triangular wooden markers of cypress wood that tell of ancient burials but have no marks of identity. Then you will quite suddenly come to a rusting iron fence enclosing only a small plot. This fence is decorated with grape leaves and bunches of grapes, an elaborate pretension of its time. Inside the enclosure a pine tree has grown thru the crypt, for the remains of anyone buried there have long since crumbled into the sand.

This pattern is the same throughout the cemetery. All crypts were lined with handmade brick. Into these a coffin, usually pine or oak, was lowered. To judge from the number of names

added to the headstone, later coffins were put on top. In any case, nothing any longer remains of the boxes or their contents. Eventually even the brick lined crypts collapsed into the sand and only the few headstones remain, and the rusting fences. But the ridges of sand around the remaining gravestones testify to the large number of people at one time buried here. The last identifiable burial was made in 1869, almost a century ago, and since then the sand and the palmetto scrub have, as in the poem "Grass," covered the dreams, the memories, and the heartaches.

The first of the four enclosures, the one decorated with grape leaves, is that of the Hungerford family. One has only to read the dates to know the tragedy of this family. The two children died young, as did most of the children buried there. They were William M. Hungerford, died May 17, 1845, age 2 years, 8 months and John C Hungerford, died September 28, 1853. The parents were John P. Hungerford, died August 12, 1853 (only a month before his younger son) and Margarette A. Hungerford, died January 6, 1866, age 47 years. There are no other records of the Hungerford family. The mother may have died without husband or sons, but if other children survived, they

moved elsewhere. However, the family had some money to judge from the elaborate trimming on the fence, unlike any other in the county. It is possible the father was a merchant, for they were the affluent class of his time.

Near this plot is another fenced-in crypt with this inscription:

"In Memory of Mrs. A. J. Rowell, Who departed this life Dec. 18, 1866 at here. The last identifiable burial was made in 1869, almost a century ago, and since then the sand and the palmetto scrub have, as in the poem "Grass," covered the dreams, the memories, and the heartaches.

Nothing more is known of this woman.

The next enclosure is much larger and the family was known through other historical documents. It is the Skipper family plot and the father was a druggist in Magnolia. His name is also mentioned in some bills of sale listed in the courthouse records for 1843, the year Wakulla County was established. Some of the tombstones have been knocked over. Like the Hungerfords, the Skippers lost both their children, tho the younger died shortly after the death of his mother. The daughter, Mary C. Skipper, born in Newport on March 7, 1855, died January 10, 1856. Her epitaph reads:

"Sweet bud of promise rare, Too bright for Earth She blooms is heaven"

Catherine A. Skipper, born in New Brunswick, N. J., June 18, 1836, and wife of James, died March

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**THE Barber Shoppe at ROSE ALLEY**



Joni Jeanne Brenda Misty Gerald



# The Old Magnolia Cemetery

From Previous Page

12, 1857. Her epitaph has an enigmatic last sentence:

“Farewell dear husband My life is past My love for you Thru life did last/Now after me no sorrow take But love my mother for my sake”

A few months later her remaining child, only 14 months old, followed her. This was James Levi, born May 27, 1856, died July 23, 1857. On his headstone are engraved:

“Dearest son, thou has left me Here thy loss I deeply feel/But tis God that hath bereft me He can all my sorrow heal/Yet again I hope to meet thee When the day of life is fled/Then in Heaven I hope to greet thee Where no farewell tear is shed”

The father, James W. Skipper, was the last person to be buried in the cemetery. He was born March 31, 1822, and died November 12, 1869. Though his wife died 12 years previously, his epitaph reads as follows (it is believable that a second wife was responsible for these words, tho he is bur-

ied alongside his first wife):

“Dearest Husband Thou has left me And thy loss I deeply feel/ But it’s God that has bereft me He can all my sorrows heal”

The inscription is the same as that for the son, James Levi, tho shortened, and may have been chosen not by a wife but by an uninspired stone cutter who only imagined that the wife would have this said of her husband. But history is full of guesses.

The fourth and largest plot behind the other three is that of the Ladd family, about whom much had been recorded in Newport’s history. Ladd descendants still live there. Daniel Ladd, the pre-Civil War merchant and shipper was probably the richest man Wakulla County ever produced, tho his fortune, like many others in the south, was dissipated with the battle.

The first stone inside this fenced plot is that of Missie C. Scott, whose relationship to the Ladds is not known. She died June 27, 1859, age 15.

In a far corner of the

plot is the grave of Ella Ladd, died May 29, 1856, age 15 months. A slab over her crypt has a broken corner. When it is raised it reveals a pit of white sand and some scurrying mice. And beneath her name:

“Rest dearest one from earthly ills, Thine early doom thy Father wills,

This He who will forever say Come, Ella dear, I am the way”

In the opposite corner from Ella’s grave are two other headstones close together and nearly buried in the debris. They are hard to read because they face a fence less than 2 feet away and their inscriptions are felt rather than seen. One is that of Joseph Ladd of Augusta, Maine, who died Aug. 19, 1835, at the age of 49. According to a book on the Hamlin family owned by Fred Ladd of Newport, this man died of yellow fever. An inscription at the top of his headstone could not be deciphered and my have been only a decoration. Beneath was this poem:

“But man, weak



A photo taken in 2008 of one of the headstones at Magnolia Cemetery, worn smooth by age.

man, is born to die, Made up of guilt and vanity/Thy dreadful sentence, Lord, was just, Return ye sinners to your dust”

The gloom of this epitaph was not mitigated by the hard work it took to feel out the words or to rub paper and pencil over them to bring out this doleful message. But the fact that the sinners were returned to dust can be verified anywhere in the cemetery.

The tombstone so close to this one and leaning badly is that of another Ladd, possibly the son, Joseph E. Ladd, also of Augusta, Maine, who died Au-

gust 21, 1856 (or ’59, since the number was hard to decipher).

This leaves only one other tombstone, the last in the Ladd plot and possibly the oldest intact headstone in Wakulla County. It was that of Weld Hamlen (or Hamlin), one of the five sons of Theophilos Hamlin of Augusta, who first shipped to New Orleans in 1816, and from there came to Florida when the territory opened up in 1821. Altho all the brothers did not come to Newport, they were the founders of Magnolia about 1826, for they bought land along the west bank

of the St. Mark’s River and settled the site, even tho speculators in St. Marks hoped to entice these Yankee merchants to buy inflated property around the fort. Weld’s grave is the only recorded Hamlin tomb and the red sandstone with his name was probably brought down from the New England states on one of the schooners owned by his brothers.

It was the sister of these boys, Sarah Hamlin, who married Joseph Ladd, only the first of many intermarriages throughout both families that brought the Ladds to Florida.

What does this old plot tell us of the people other than what the headstones say? Not one of the people lived even to the age of 50. Only one of the children, Missie Scott, lived beyond the age of 5. Why did they die at an early age? Malaria? Yellow fever? (Only are we sure Josehp Ladd died this way). No medical facilities?

From the first to the last of the recorded burials, the cemetery was used for 40 years, from 1829 to 1869. But in a few more years even the rusted fences and mildewed stones will disappear, for they are retreating further and further into the mould, the dead leaves, and the briar.

# CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT



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## Trick or Treat STORYWALK

### At Azalea & Hudson Parks

OCTOBER 25TH

SATURDAY

5 - 8 PM

AT AZALEA & HUDSON PARKS

5PM - 8PM

NEED DINNER?

READING IS FUN!

AND FOR DESSERT

**Free Event**

Costumes encouraged, but not required. Candy handed out at booths starting at 5pm.

**Food Trucks**

Food will be available for purchase around the Hudson walking path.

**StoryWalk**

Read a specially picked story located in the displays around the Azalea walking path.

**Candy**

All booths around Azalea park are community partners, and ready to hand out candy to our little trick or treaters.

For kids of all ages with an adult caregiver

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DISCOVERY

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

DAYS

FSU Health Expo: Bridging Community, Health & Research

Saturday, October 18, 2025

Time: 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Location: Wakulla Community Center  
Crawfordville Room & Gymnasium  
318 Shadeville Rd., Crawfordville, FL 32327

FSU Health is excited to host a health expo aimed at providing valuable wellness resources to the local community. Visit with exhibitors, learn from presenters, and take advantage of free health screenings!

discoverydays.fsu.edu

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ANNUAL ENROLLMENT  
PERIOD (AEP)

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Show Starts at 7:30 pm

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Prelude featuring Sopchoppy's folk music maestro Frank Lindamood

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9:30 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Hudson Park, Crawfordville

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- Aromatherapy Bubble Bath
- Le Flea & Tick Spray All Natural Ingredients
- Towel Drying
- PAWdecure

\$20 suggested donation!

Other options:

- \$15\* Bath only
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# CROSSWORD

### CLUES ACROSS

1. Separate with an instrument
5. State clearly
11. One-time MLB speedster Gordon
14. Broad in scope
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Caps
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Checked
25. One-sided
27. Having an extreme greed for wealth
31. Potted plants
34. We all have one
35. Lake north of the Kalahari
38. Unidentified flying object
39. Aging persons
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus

44. Ornamental waist box
45. Officials
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. Extensive, treeless plains
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Consumer advocate Ralph
60. Notable Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. One’s responsiveness
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Unhappy
68. Gradually disappeared
69. Able to think clearly
- CLUES DOWN
1. Brushed
2. Water sprite

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14					15							16		
17				18								19		
20						21						22		
23					24				25		26			
			27			28	29	30						
31	32	33			34							35		36 37
38					39					40			41	
42			43			44						45		
		46			47						48			
49	50								51			52	53	54
55					56		57	58	59		60			
61					62						63			
64					65							66		
67					68							69		

## DIVE RIGHT IN WORD SEARCH

W	E	G	R	H	P	K	R	C	E	D	N	K	N	N	L	W	T	W	T
M	F	U	F	U	P	E	Z	Z	D	O	V	Z	V	I	B	I	D	P	F
U	T	D	M	K	N	G	R	E	T	U	K	M	B	C	N	M	V	O	L
L	D	P	W	I	W	E	O	Z	I	N	G	R	O	U	N	D	D	O	O
N	E	L	L	V	M	D	A	D	P	Y	I	O	L	B	O	P	Y	L	W
H	P	A	R	M	L	A	L	I	P	L	K	S	E	I	B	K	T	B	R
E	T	S	I	Z	D	N	U	O	R	G	E	V	O	B	A	D	S	E	Z
D	H	K	U	O	P	D	K	V	I	L	G	K	D	S	C	D	Z	A	B
I	S	O	F	B	K	C	H	B	U	E	T	M	Z	I	C	I	W	L	K
M	F	D	Z	W	O	L	F	K	C	A	B	N	F	L	L	G	K	N	M
O	L	I	S	H	N	Z	S	U	F	P	F	R	E	I	G	C	R	F	U
R	O	B	S	H	T	Z	B	W	B	V	A	A	B	Z	C	A	H	B	I
B	C	U	C	A	E	B	F	A	N	B	N	A	E	C	H	C	H	T	C
Z	C	T	T	E	O	K	C	C	Z	E	T	O	K	A	L	O	S	S	L
R	U	N	V	E	A	K	G	Z	R	S	H	K	R	F	O	V	Y	U	A
D	L	Z	I	M	Y	G	A	D	L	H	E	E	I	E	R	E	O	E	C
D	A	W	E	A	L	G	L	V	F	L	Z	Z	A	T	I	R	S	M	V
R	N	E	R	S	R	V	A	A	A	L	T	N	V	T	N	Z	N	S	B
N	T	D	B	D	E	D	Z	C	P	K	C	G	H	K	E	P	E	M	H
Z	S	E	V	L	A	V	S	C	C	R	F	G	F	I	L	R	R	I	V

Find the words hidden vertically, horizontally, diagonally, and backwards.

### WORDS

- ABOVE GROUND
- ALGAE
- BACKFLOW
- BACKYARD
- BROMIDE
- CALCIUM
- CHLORINE
- CLEANER
- COVER
- DEPTH
- DRAIN
- FLOCCULANT
- FLOW
- HEATER
- IN-GROUND
- LINER
- POOL
- PUMP
- SCALE
- SHOCK
- SKIMMER
- STABILIZER
- VALVES

3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. We all have one
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who institutes a legal proceeding
8. Outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Uncomfortable feelings
11. Cross to form an X
12. Remove
13. Some pages are dog-\_\_
18. Capital of Ukraine
24. A citizen of Denmark
26. Eighth month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Acids structurally related to amino acids
30. Rider of Rohan in Tolkien
31. Wet dirt
32. Russian city
33. Observed
36. Irrate
37. Travelers need them

39. Musical composition
40. Auction
43. Form of “to be”
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Think Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The lead dance

- er: \_\_ ballerina
53. Protein involved in motion
54. Rosalind Franklin biographer
57. Popular 1920s style art \_\_
58. \_\_ Blyton, children’s author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to rest

		9		8				
3			5	7				
		4					5	6
	3		4		9	1	7	
7			3				4	
	8	1		6	5	9		
8	1	6				5		
			1		6			9
9	5					2		

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!  
**Here's How It Works:** Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

A	I	R	R	I	T	F	G	F	R	C	J	S	A	V	T	A	E	S	Z
H	W	E	d	Z	N	L	X	H	A	N	Z	L	V	A	V	L	O	B	E
B	S	N	S	Z	N	L	X	H	A	N	Z	L	V	A	V	L	O	B	E
A	W	S	S	I	I	L	V	Z	Z	H	T	Q	V	A	V	L	O	B	E
C	U	S	A	L	O	J	R	K	H	S	R	Z	Q	V	A	V	L	O	B
V	N	S	O	T	V	W	O	L	V	W	O	L	V	W	O	L	V	W	O
C	I	H	O	H	C	Z	B	V	A	B	M	B	S	Z	N	H	S	I	R
I	U	H	V	C	Z	B	V	A	B	M	B	S	Z	N	H	S	I	R	
R	K	G	T	I	E	N	B	C	K	F	I	C	N	B	C	K	F	I	C
W	M	K	G	T	I	E	N	B	C	K	F	I	C	N	B	C	K	F	I
K	T	M	I	C	S	O	K	G	T	I	A	L	K	S	O	K	G	T	I
B	V	Z	E	S	O	D	K	G	T	I	A	L	K	S	O	D	K	G	T
Z	E	S	O	D	K	G	T	I	A	L	K	S	O	D	K	G	T	I	A
R	K	G	T	I	E	N	B	C	K	F	I	C	N	B	C	K	F	I	C
H	R	L	K	B	I	E	S	X	T	I	V	T	W	L	V	A	V	L	O
O	L	A	V	D	O	B	T	O	I	A	D	O	B	T	O	I	A	D	O
I	O	D	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O	N	O
P	I	O	A	H	N	C	B	H	A	N	I	Z	Z	E	R	P	E	M	H
I	M	L	M	T	N	N	K	N	D	E	C	C	R	F	G	F	I	L	R

S	A	N	V	E	S	A	N	V	E	S	A	N	V	E	S	A	N	V	E	S
R	I	E	T	I	O	E	R	O	E	R	O	E	R	O	E	R	O	E	R	O
V	A	C	O	V	A	C	O	V	A	C	O	V	A	C	O	V	A	C	O	V
S	V	A	P	M	A	V	A	P	M	A	V	A	P	M	A	V	A	P	M	A
S	D	E	F	O	B	N	T	E	F	O	B	N	T	E	F	O	B	N	T	E
D	V	A	S	O	I	N	E	S	O	I	N	E	S	O	I	N	E	S	O	I
I	M	V	G	N	E	M	A	V	N	E	M	A	V	N	E	M	A	V	N	E
S	U	O	I	C	I	R	V	A	V	I	C	I	R	V	A	V	I	C	I	R
D	E	S	I	A	B	I	O	R	E	D	S	I	A	B	I	O	R	E	D	S
E	U	S	E	S	W	O	R	P	E	I	E	T	L	I	P	E	I	E	T	L
R	H	A	N	O	T	E	L	E	T	K	S	O	X	E	R	H	A	N	O	T
E	A	R	E	H	C	O	U	G	A	V	E	I	E	M	I	E	A	R	E	H
D	E	R	T	E	S	S	A	V	S	A	V	S	A	V	S	A	V	S	A	V

1	9	2	3	4	8	7	5	6
6	8	7	9	5	1	3	4	2
4	3	5	7	6	2	9	1	8
3	2	6	5	9	7	1	8	4
5	4	9	8	1	3	2	6	7
8	7	1	6	2	4	5	3	9
9	5	8	2	3	6	4	7	1
2	6	4	1	7	5	8	9	3
7	1	3	4	8	9	6	2	5





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