

# Foley Newsletter

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I hope this newsletter finds all of you doing well.

We are particularly busy in Foley with new businesses breaking ground and making considerable investments in our community. Hobby Lobby and Big Lots are underway just south of Lowes. Nearby, Whataburger is now framed up, and Foolsackly's has just opened. Popeye's and Dollar General have also broken ground just south of C-Spire on Ala. 59.

Blue Collar has started mass grading on part of their property. This represents about a \$3 million dollar investment on their part. Once the grading is complete, ALDOT will be going to bid on the ATRIP Pride Drive extension, which will create a major boulevard connecting Ala. 59 and Baldwin County 20.

Part of the site, approximately 84 acres, will be the future home of the Foley Sports Tourism Complex. It will include 12 multi-use fields, plus a championship field, and a 104,000 square foot multi-use event center.

Separate from the city's investment, Blue Collar has committed to build two hotels associated with the event center. The first will be a 150-room Hilton Garden Inn. A second hotel, yet to be named, will be built within 12 months. Plans are to have all these facilities open by next summer.

We recently hired Don Staley, the former executive director of the City of Tuscaloosa's Sports Tourism, to head up our efforts to bring various youth sporting events to Foley. We are excited to have Don join us and are confident that he will be able to "jump start" our recruitment of tournaments to Foley.

These projects will have a very positive impact on Foley and all of south Baldwin County.



**Mayor's  
Notes**

Bids were recently received on Foley's Centennial Bell Tower project, and construction should begin very soon. Many thanks to Dave Vosloh and his committee for their efforts to make this happen.

The council has recently approved the design and location for the pedestrian bridge across Ala. 59. The bridge will cross just north of the fountain in John B. Foley Park and the west side landing

will be on the recently acquired Snook property just north of the hotel.

Work is also underway at the U.S. 98 sports complex for two additional soccer fields.

Spring hours have begun for the Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market. The hours are Tuesdays and Fridays, 2 pm - 6 pm, and Saturdays 9 am - 2 pm. Come out and enjoy Baldwin County's local produce and seafood!

Upcoming events include Art-in-the-Park on Mother's Day weekend, May 10 - 11. Come out and shop for that special lady and remember "if Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy!"

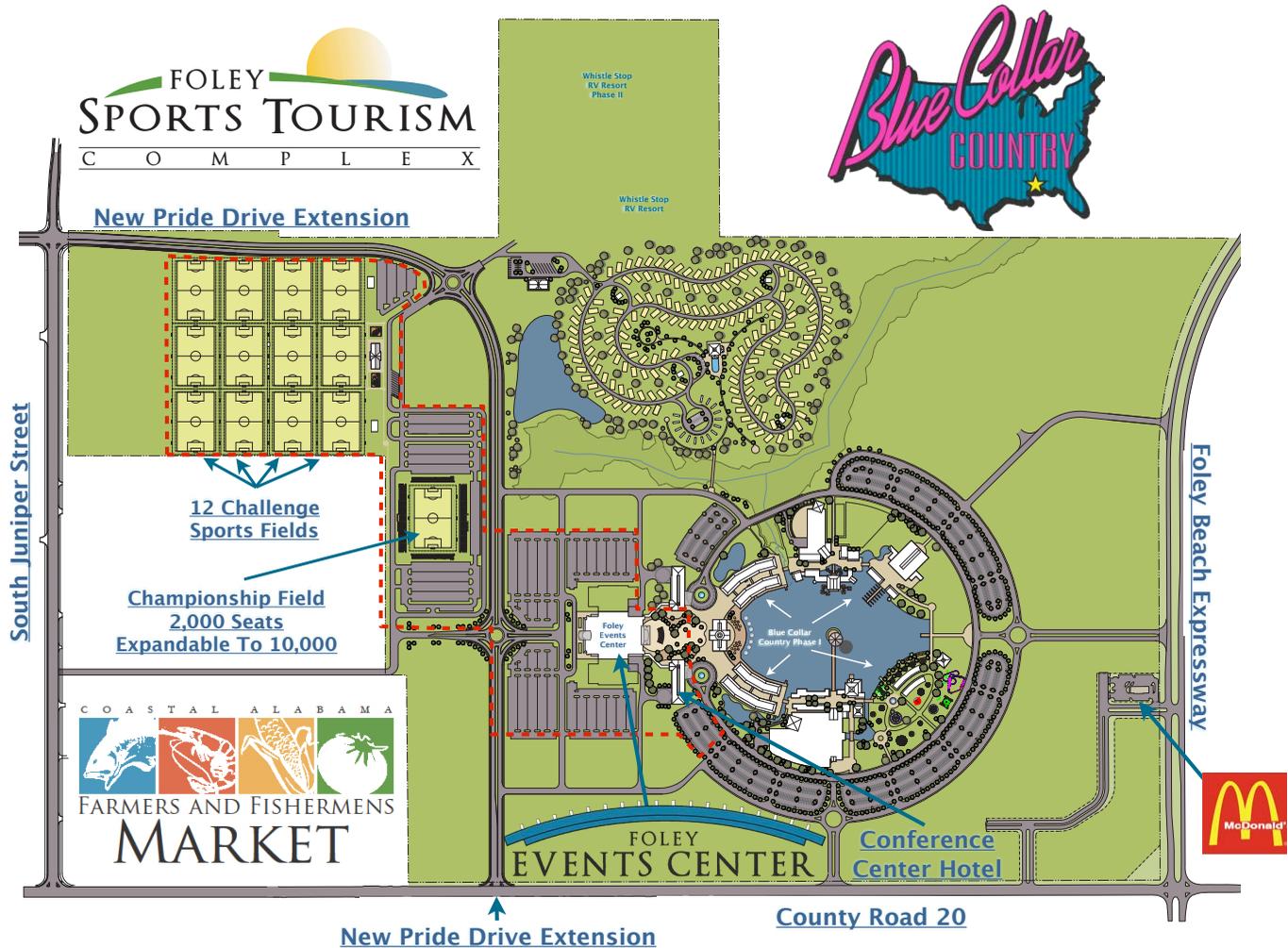
Father's Day weekend, June 13-14 is the Balloon Fest. This event is always a crowd pleaser, with lots of arts and crafts, along with many food vendors.

Enjoy this beautiful spring weather, and as always, "Shop Foley First!"

Best regards,

Mayor John Koniar

# Foley plans sports destination with events center and conference center hotel



Foley is close to beginning construction on a multi-use, state-of-the-art sports complex, complete with multiple outdoor playing fields and an indoor sports center that will provide the city with the capacity to host large indoor and outdoor sports tournaments. A 150-room hotel with conference capability will also be built adjacent to the complex, creating a one-stop venue where sports teams can spend the night and walk to their tournaments.

Construction of the \$27 million sports complex could begin as early as June, according to Foley Mayor John Koniar, with completion expected by mid-2015. The adjacent conference center hotel, which will include 17,000-square-feet of conference space, is expected to be built at the same time.

“We envision a sports destination where families can drive in, park their cars and have everything they need within walking distance,” said Foley Mayor John Koniar. “We are excited about the positive impact it will have not only for Foley, but for the entire south Baldwin region.

Don Staley has been hired by Foley as the executive director of sports, to recruit tournaments to use the new sports facility. Staley is the former executive director of sports for the Tuscaloosa Tourism and Sports Commission.

The anticipated economic impact of the sports complex, which includes the outdoor fields and the indoor sports and

events center, is estimated at \$38 million annually, based on an economic impact study commissioned by the city.

The outdoor section of the Foley Sports Tourism Complex will consist of 13 outdoor fields designed to accommodate soccer, football and lacrosse. One will be a championship field that will include seating for 2,000, plus a press box and lighting to accommodate television broadcasts.

The 100,000-square-foot multi-purpose Foley Events Center, built alongside the outdoor fields for hosting indoor sporting events, can be configured to provide enough room for 12 volleyball courts or 6 basketball courts. An indoor/outdoor stage will be located on the east end of the events center that can accommodate indoor concerts for up to 7,000, or for a large audience in an outdoor plaza.

Overall plans for the complex include field houses, onsite food and beverage pavilions with full service capabilities, playgrounds and parking for up to 800 vehicles and 20 buses.

A multi-lane entrance into the new facility will be created off Alabama 59 with the extension of Pride Drive, as part of a \$12 million federal transportation grant which Foley received last year. The new roadway, which will extend Pride Drive east past Juniper Street, will lead directly into the new sports complex and ultimately connect to Baldwin County 20. ■

# FOLEY NAMED ONE OF TOP BUSINESS FRIENDLY CITIES IN ALABAMA

Foley ranks number three in the state on a list of business friendly cities, according to a new list compiled by the Alabama Policy Institute.

The list is based on scores in four key areas: economic vitality, a low business tax burden, community allure and transportation infrastructure. These broad categories cover areas including recent job growth, population growth, crime rates, per capita income, student performance and cost of living.

“This recognition reflects the hard work of all our city staff and the council to create a business friendly environment. It’s been a great team effort,” said Mayor John Koniar.

Foley received an overall score of 74.91 out of 100 possible points. Foley is experiencing an upswing of new businesses slated to open during the coming year. During the first months of 2014, businesses that began construction on new locations in Foley include Hobby Lobby, Big Lots, Whataburger, HCP Pumps and Popeye’s Louisiana Kitchen. Gulf Coast Distributing, a grocery supplier, is remodeling an existing building. Foosackly’s Chicken Fingers and Aspen Dental opened in Foley in mid-April.

Millbrook placed first in the state, followed by Prattville. Two other Baldwin County cities also fared well in the study, with Daphne and Fairhope following Foley in the rankings, at number four and number nine, respectively. ■

## Building Safety Month May 2014

The City of Foley is a participating member of the International Code Council and supports Building Safety Month – May 2014. Building Safety Month is a public awareness campaign offered each year to help everyone understand what it takes to create and sustain safe structures. The campaign reinforces the need for adoption of modern building codes, a strong system of code enforcement and a professional workforce to maintain the system.

This year’s theme is BUILDING SAFETY: Maximizing Resilience, Minimizing Risks. Each week of Building Safety Month spotlights a specific area of building safety including: Keeping Fire in its Place; Helping Homeowners Weather the Storm; Surround Your Building with Safety; and, Building a Brighter, More Efficient Tomorrow. The campaign helps to improve public safety by increasing awareness.

The City of Foley Community Development Department provides brochures and our staff will be glad to answer any specific questions or locate guidelines for specific topics. The Community Development Department is located at 200 North Alston Street or can be reached at 952-4011. ■

# OUTDOOR CLASSROOM OPENS AT Graham Creek Nature Preserve

Area children have a new outdoor place designed specifically for them to play and learn about nature at Foley’s Graham Creek Nature Preserve, located off Baldwin County 12 near Wolf Bay. The Nature Explore Outdoor Classroom, built as a joint project by the City of Foley and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division, Coastal Section, opened on April 18.

The park is created for elementary education, according to Leslie Gahagan, Foley’s environmental manager.

The outdoor classroom includes learning stations geared toward using nature to provide science lessons. Explore and Observe play days will be offered for children 9 and under us-



ing a seasonal theme with a story, activity, art project and play in each area. Play days will begin in June and be held on the first Wednesday and third Saturday from 10:00 am until 12:00 pm. The play days are free, but donations will be accepted. ■



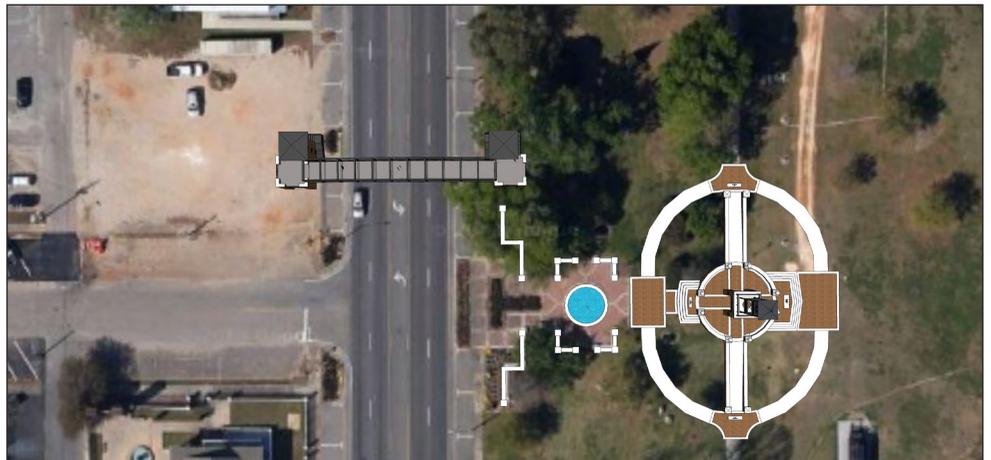
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# Several changes coming to downtown Foley

Several new additions that include a new pedestrian bridge over Alabama 59, a five-story clock tower in Heritage Park to mark Foley's Centennial and a dog park along the Wilbourne Rose Trail, will soon change the look of downtown Foley.

Foley's city council voted recently to place the pedestrian bridge slightly north of Jessamine Avenue, located north of U.S. 98. The bridge, part of an overall project to make Foley a more walkable community, is funded through a federal Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery grant, and expected to be completed by 2016.

Construction will begin this month on Centennial Plaza, which includes a five-story clock tower featuring a 32-brass-bell carillon, located in Heritage Park. The project, which includes a landscaped plaza, will celebrate Foley's first 100 years of incorporation. Planners say that engraved bricks are still available to anyone who would like to have their name and message included for posterity, but must be purchased by May



31 to be included in the initial opening. The project is slated to be completed by December. The official anniversary date is Jan. 8, 2015. Call 943-1545 for information about buying a brick or paver.

Plans are underway for Foley's first dog park, to be located south of the post office, adjacent to the Wilbourne Rose Trail. The dog park and a parking lot will be built on property bordered by Orange Avenue on the north and Myrtle Avenue on the south. The project is slated for completion by October of 2014. ■