

# Foley Newsletter

## MAYOR

John E. Koniar

## COUNCIL

J. Wayne Trawick  
Council President  
District 1

Vera J. Quaites  
District 2

Ralph G. Hellmich  
Council Vice President  
District 3

C. Rick Blackwell  
District 4

Charlie J. Ebert III  
District 5

## CITY

**ADMINISTRATOR**  
Michael L. Thompson

407 E. Laurel Ave.  
P.O. Box 1750  
Foley, AL 36536

(251) 943-1545  
(251) 952-4014- fax

[www.cityoffoley.org](http://www.cityoffoley.org)



Your city had a great 100th year. Foley kicked off 2015 with the centennial bell tower dedication in January. We were fortunate to have numerous events throughout the year celebrating our heritage and successes over these past 100 years. Thank you again to everyone who made the celebration such a great success.

We continue to expand bike paths, shared paths and sidewalks throughout the city. These will provide safe routes for citizens and children to enjoy our community on foot and on bikes, and also link city parks with schools. When construction is complete, we will have over 26 new miles to explore.

The Foley Dog Park will be opening in March and is looking really good. It includes a small dog area and a large dog area so all our four-legged friends have a safe place to enjoy. We also incorporated additional parking that will further improve downtown accessibility.

Work has begun on the long-awaited pedestrian bridge over Highway 59. This will enhance pedestrian safety and provide a "user friendly" connection for our downtown community. We anticipate this project will be completed by late summer or early fall.

The sports tourism complex near County Road 20 is well under way, with four of the sixteen fields sodded and more being completed each week. We had a visit from the National Intramural Recreation Sports Association in early January and were awarded their National Soccer Championship for Nov. 17 - 19 of this year. This event is expected to have a \$2.5 to \$2.8 million economic impact for our area. Great job Don Staley!

More sports opportunities for area youth



## Mayor's Notes

will be available when the second five-plex on Highway 98 opens for spring and summer sports. This facility, in addition to the two new soccer fields located there, will give us increased scheduling flexibility.

The new fire station in the GlenLakes community is now open. This station has decreased response times to not only GlenLakes, but to the entire southeast quadrant of the city.

Congratulations to Chief Darby and his entire department.

Foley's Police Department continues to bring in top talent. Our own Officer Sheldon Richardson recently graduated from the Montgomery Police Academy and received an award for academic excellence. Congratulations to Officer Richardson for his hard work and dedication.

Spring brings a number of outdoor opportunities to enjoy in our community. The Chamber's BBQ and Blues, set for March 19, is always a crowd favorite.

Mothers' Day Weekend in May will offer two great outdoor festivals, with the Foley Art Center's 44th Art-in-the Park and the 12th Annual Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival taking place. There will be something for everyone!

**Support our local businesses and  
SHOP FOLEY FIRST!**

Best regards,

Mayor John Koniar



# Foley Dog Park to open March 12



Area dogs and their people will soon be able to play in the Foley Dog Park, located adjacent to the Rose Trail and south of the US Post Office on US 98. Opening day is set for 10 a.m. on March 12, weather permitting, which means if

the weather permits the grass to grow in. Watch the city Facebook page at Visit Foley Alabama for updates.

The park includes a fenced area divided into sections for big and small dogs. Thirty trees have been planted

within the fenced area that will grow into a shaded canopy to border the open play spaces. The park includes water troughs for now, and a water feature is planned for the future. Two bronze statues welcome visitors to the park. Small canopies provide shade for benches and picnic tables. Park hours are from dawn until dusk.

A significant amount of the work was completed by city departments, which allowed the city to save approximate \$138,000 on the project.

Although completing the park has taken longer than anticipated, Foley's mayor and council believe the finished project is one residents will enjoy, and it provides another reason to bring people into the downtown area.

The Foley Dog Park was designed by architect Chad Watkins of Watkins Acy Strunk Design. The site also includes a 61-space parking area. ■



## Foley Sportsplex on Hwy. 98 grows to 10 fields

Foley is expanding its facilities for youth baseball and softball programs with a \$4 million five-field complex located next to the current five-plex on Cater Lee Way. Grand opening for the new facility is scheduled for March 19, 2016, which is opening day for the baseball/softball season. The additional fields will also increase sports tourism opportunities and support over 16 events scheduled through the remainder of this year. ■



## Graham Creek Park Interpretive Center to open this summer

Work is currently underway on a 5,500 square foot interpretive center at Graham Creek Nature Preserve, which is expected to open this summer. The building will include a nature center that will display local reptiles, amphibians, mammals and birds. It will also provide classroom space to expand environmental education programs. The center will be available for receptions, meetings, educational groups, reunions and events. The back patio and covered porches will provide preserve visitors a place to take a rest, enjoy a sunset or watch for wildlife. ■



# New in Foley



Residents will enjoy almost 30 miles of new paths for walking and biking that are currently under construction thanks to federal grant money from the U.S. Department of Transportation's TIGER grant program. This grant is also enabling the city to build a pedestrian bridge over Highway 59. The crossover is under construction and is estimated to be completed in 180 days.



Foley will soon have another shopping venue with Ross Dress for Less expected to open this spring. The store is located just south of Academy Sports off Pride Drive. ■

## Foley Officers' Awarded



Chief David Wilson of the Foley Police Department is pleased to announce that Officer Mike Powers have been selected as Foley PD's 2015 Police Officer of the Year and Chief Communication Officer Shirley Mosley has been selected as 2015 Public Servant of the Year. Both Power's and Mosley's selection displays their professionalism, performance and dedication to the Foley Police Department and to the citizens of Foley. ■

## Foley saves an estimated \$3.2 million over seven years on employee health care costs

In 2008, Foley officials made the decision to fully self-insure city employee healthcare costs, which has created significant savings for the city. The self-insured plan was described by city Human Resources Director Sandra Pate. In practical terms, self-insured employers pay for each out-of-pocket claim as they are incurred instead of paying fixed premiums to an insurance carrier. Under this plan, instead of paying insurance premiums for each employee and covered dependent, the city pays 100% of the medical costs including doctor visits, medical tests, hospitalizations, etc. – all costs otherwise paid by the insurance carrier.

The city carries the self-insured health plan through Blue Cross Blue Shield who administers the plan. The city also purchases stop loss insurance which provides financial protection against catastrophic claims.

Even including these costs, the city has realized an estimated \$3.2 million in savings since the self-insured plan began in 2008. The savings are calculated annually by comparing actual medical claims expenses measured against anticipated insurance premium costs if the city had not self-insured, according to Pate.

Another health benefit for city employees that has reduced healthcare costs for the city was the opening of an employee clinic in November of 2013.

"The clinic has been very successful in helping save money on healthcare, and has also been instrumental in encouraging employees to make changes that help them to be healthier," said Foley Mayor John Koniar.

The city has realized an estimated savings of \$280,000 since the clinic opened, when comparing the average cost of a doctor's office visit to the cost of a visit to the clinic, according to Pate. ■

**Check us out online:**

**CITY OF FOLEY**

[www.CityofFoley.org](http://www.CityofFoley.org) [www.VisitFoley.org](http://www.VisitFoley.org)

[www.CoastalAlabamaMarket.com](http://www.CoastalAlabamaMarket.com)

[www.FoleyLibrary.org](http://www.FoleyLibrary.org) [www.FoleyRecreation.com](http://www.FoleyRecreation.com)

[www.GrahamCreekPreserve.org](http://www.GrahamCreekPreserve.org)



407 E. Laurel Ave.  
P.O. Box 1750  
Foley, AL 36536

## Upcoming Events

---

### **WEEKLY Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market**

Tuesdays and Saturdays. 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Baldwin County 20 between Ala. 59 and the Foley Beach Express.  
Local produce, fresh seafood, homemade dishes, honey, eggs, jams, jellies and plants.

### **Feb. 25-28 Alabama Coastal Chorale presents "Songs from the Silver Screen"**

Thurs. - Sat. 7 - 9 p.m. and Sat. - Sun. 3 - 5 p.m.  
Foley Civic Center.  
For tickets and info [coastalchoraletickets@yahoo.com](mailto:coastalchoraletickets@yahoo.com)  
Or purchase tickets at First Bank of Baldwin County.

### **Feb. 25-28 ASA McKenzie Archery – Hoyt Alabama Archery Pro/Am**

Graham Creek Nature Preserve. Archery tournament.

### **Feb. 26-28 Foley Geocaching Weekend**

Feb 26 Meet-n-Greet 6 p.m. Upstairs meeting room of the library.  
Feb 27 "Leapfrog/Bead It" 1 p.m. Graham Creek Nature Preserve  
Feb 28 "Cache In/Trash Out" 10 a.m. Heritage Park  
For more info see [geocaching.com](http://geocaching.com)

### **Feb. 27 Arbor Day**

10 a.m. Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market.  
Program followed by tree give-away. This year the city will give away trees in three-gallon-containers, one per person.

### **March 12 Opening of Foley Dog Park**

10 a.m. 200 East Orange Avenue

### **March 12 - 13 3rd Annual Model Train Show**

Saturday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
and Sunday 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Foley Civic Center.  
Model trains, layouts and train gear in many sizes on display and for sale.



### **March 19 BBQ & Blues Cook Off**

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Heritage Park. Enjoy delicious, finger-licking, grilled concoctions from BBQ teams competing in multiple categories. Live music, arts and crafts and children's activities.

### **Each Saturday in April Historic Downtown Walking Tours**

10 a.m. each Saturday in April. Foley Welcome Center  
Walking tours featuring historical points of interest in downtown Foley. Tours cover six blocks and last approximately one hour.  
943-1200

### **Mid-April**

### **Peak Bloom for the Wilbourne Antique Rose Trail**

Open dawn to dusk. April is the best time of year to visit Foley's rose trail. Hundreds of roses bloom along a walking trail in the heart of town. Located one block east of Highway 59, runs north of US 98 to Section Ave., and south to Myrtle Ave. Parking available at Heritage Park.



### **April 22-23 Foley Library Military Show**

10 a.m. – 4 p.m. See exhibits of trucks, jeeps and artillery pieces in the south parking lot. Other exhibits displayed inside the library.

### **May 6-7 Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival**

[www.gulfcoastballoonfestival.com](http://www.gulfcoastballoonfestival.com)

### **May 7-8 Art in the Park**

[www.foleyartcenter.org](http://www.foleyartcenter.org)

**Keep up with local events and news from Foley right in your inbox. Every other month, we will send you the local news you can use in our E-Newsletter. All you have to do is go to [www.visitfoley.com](http://www.visitfoley.com) and sign up. It's that simple!**