

# Foley Newsletter

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John E. Koniar

**COUNCIL**

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Foley's new Sports Tourism Complex

We are approaching the height of hurricane season and now is a good time to review your plans should we have an event head our way. I recommend the following website: [www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepared/ready.pnp](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/prepared/ready.pnp).

This site provides an excellent checklist of what to do both before and after a storm. It has been a number of years since Foley has experienced a direct hit and complacency is one of our biggest enemies. Hope we can “dodge another bullet” this season, but please take the time to be sure your family is prepared.

We now have another retail opportunity in Foley. Ross Dress for Less recently opened in a new 22,000-square-foot facility next to Academy Sports. The Burton development continues to grow, with new announcements of additional stores coming soon.

Panda Express in front of Walmart on Highway 59 should be opening soon. There are several other restaurants looking at our area also, so your dining options will continue to grow.

The pedestrian bridge across Highway 59 is making good progress. We anticipate the bridge will be set in place in early August, and we hope to have it operational by September. Once the bridge is completed, the parking area next to the Foley Art Center will be paved, giving us additional parking options downtown to help revitalize this area.

We are moving along very well with the nearly 30 miles of walking, biking and multi-use paths being installed throughout our community. Be sure to take advantage of the opportunities they bring you and your family.

The youth sports tourism ball fields are nearing completion. We had a couple of “soft



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opening” events in June, one soccer and one lacrosse tournament. We learned a lot from these two events and are making adjustments to these facilities to ensure our visitors have the best possible experience when they visit Foley.

We will be bidding the construction of our 90,000-square-foot multi-use event center this month. This facility will be focused on youth sports, or can seat 7,000 for an entertainment venue.

Another big positive for the community is it will allow us to have our high school senior prom in Foley. Previous Foley High School classes had to hold their proms in locations outside of Foley because we did not have a large enough facility to handle the event.

The first of two hotels associated with the event center will also start construction. We anticipate both the hotel and the event center will be open next summer (2017). It is anticipated the first hotel will be a Marriott Townplace Suites property. This will provide a very family-friendly environment for youth sports visitors.

The neighbors of our sports facilities, the Poarch Creek Tribe, are anticipating announcing the name of their Foley facility soon. They have placed the order for their amusement park package, some 20 rides, with the Zamperla group out of Italy. They are hoping to be open by Memorial Day 2017. Their 13-acre lake project, featuring dining, retail and entertainment venues, will begin construction soon.

I hope many of you were able to see the Foley PD canine unit perform before one of the Music and a Movie events earlier this summer, displaying very impressive work by both the dogs and their handlers. Foley will be hosting a

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## Foley Sports Tourism moves into high gear

The City of Foley's Sports Tourism department, led by Don Staley, executive director, is pushing recruiting efforts to bring sports teams to Foley into high gear. Foley's Sports Tourism Complex, a state-of-the-art outdoor facility featuring 16 multi-purpose fields designed for soccer, lacrosse and other competitive field sports has scored national exposure in the sports world.

Since January, Foley Sports Tourism has hosted more than 17 events, generating more than 10,000 sports-related visitors who came to compete, dine, shop and stay in Foley. Events have ranged from national archery competitions to high school bowling tournaments to club league soccer and lacrosse events.

"The Foley community has truly embraced this wave of sports visitors, many of whom are visiting our area for the

first time. The businesses and citizens of Foley have really helped us showcase our area's charm and incredible hospitality," said Staley. As a result of these efforts, Foley Sports Tourism has been extremely successful in not only delivering first-class events, but also impressing event organizers on a national level.

Major tournaments scheduled later this year in Foley include the Sunbelt Conference's National Women's Soccer Tournament, the Alabama State Cup Soccer Tournament, and the National Intramural-Recreational Soccer Association's collegiate-level soccer championship. These three events alone are expected to generate an additional 10,000 visitors within a three-week period in November of 2016.

Foley Sports Tourism will host a ribbon cutting for the new facility on Sept.

6 at 9 a.m. (weather permitting). The community is invited to attend.

Get the latest sports tourism news at [FoleySportsTourism.com](http://FoleySportsTourism.com) or connect with Foley Sports Tourism Complex on Facebook. ■



## Economic growth continues in Foley

During the past three months Foley has continued to experience growth on several major fronts, including industry, retail and restaurants.

In May 2016, UTC Aerospace Systems, Foley's largest employer, announced a major expansion that is estimated to bring 260 new jobs to the city. UTC is constructing an 80,000-square-foot building to house the assembly of nacelle components and propulsion system integration to support the Airbus A320 that is built in Mobile, Alabama.

Marc Duvall, president of UTC Aerospace Systems Aerostructures, said the company chose Foley because of its proven track record of performance, a desire to be near a key customer, and tremendous cooperation from the state, county and city. Construction of the new

facility is expected to take about a year. Employment will ramp up as customer requirements grow, according to UTC.

Burton Development, owner of Foley Square that contains Academy Sports and Ross Dress for Less, recently committed to Phase II, which will bring an additional 100,000 square feet of retail development, according to Jeff Rouzie, Foley's economic development director. Phase II, located south of the original development at Pride Drive and Hwy. 59, represents an additional \$15 million investment, with estimates of an additional 200 to 250 jobs for the city.

Almost half of Phase II has commitments for occupancy by national chains, and there is strong interest from national chain restaurants for the adjacent outparcels, according to Rouzie.

"Foley continues to be the retail hub for south Baldwin County. The growth of both retail and restaurants provides not only jobs for our citizens, but expanded shopping and dining opportunities for our community and visitors as well. This growth reflects the confidence that the business community has in Foley and the positive business-friendly environment we have created," said Foley Mayor John Koniar.

At the nearby Tanger Outlet Center, H&M Fashions and Bath & Body Works are slated to open this fall, according to Debra Brown, mall manager. Additional stores that opened there recently include Rock n Roll Sushi and Beef Jerky Outlet.

In downtown Foley, two new restaurants, Grumpy's Eats and Sweets and Catch Seafood, recently opened. ■

## Prescription drug drop-off box available at the Foley Police Department

Residents who have unused prescription medications can properly dispose of them by putting them in a drug drop-off box placed inside the Foley Police Department located at 200 East Section Ave. in Foley.

Prescription drugs that are flushed or poured down the drain can end up polluting local waters, impacting aquat-

ic species and contaminating food and water supplies. Most medicines are not removed by wastewater treatment plants or septic systems. Using the drug drop-off box is a simple, sensible way to reduce the amount of medicines entering the environment.

The box is intended for prescription medication only. No vitamins, supple-

ments, syringes, creams or ointments, please.

The Foley Police Department participates in Drug Take-Back programs and works with other drug enforcement agencies to properly dispose of unused prescription medications. ■



## Graham Creek Interpretive Center nears completion

Foley's Graham Creek Nature Preserve will soon include an impressive addition with a new 10,000-square-foot interpretive center scheduled to open in August. The center will serve as a welcome and educational center for the almost 500-acre Graham Creek Nature Preserve, as well as provide headquarters for the city's environmental department. The Interpretive Center will be open to the public free of charge Monday through Saturday, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm.

The Interpretive Center is decorated with wildlife and nature based displays, including several species of reptiles native to the region and the Graham Creek Preserve, according to Leslie Gahagan, environmental director. Visitors can get close to otherwise elusive animals found there, including the American alligator, box turtles, snapping turtles and a few nonvenomous snakes. A children's area will feature seating for enjoying nature-themed books and an arts and crafts corner.

The center makes a convenient trailhead for already established walking trails and future boardwalk trails. These allow visitors to hike through ecosystems found in the preserve, and a glimpse of the endangered pitcher plant.

With a 2,500-square-foot conference room that can comfortably accommodate 250 guests, there is plenty of room for large groups. The center can be reserved for field trips, workshops, seminars or weddings. ■

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national competition for police canine units this fall. We will share the details once they are finalized.

We are blessed to live in such a wonderful community with employees who truly care about you. Please give them a "thank you" whenever you get the opportunity. ■

**SHOP FOLEY FIRST!**

Best regards,

Mayor John Koniar

## Facts for Foley Municipal Election

The general municipal election for Foley will be held on Aug. 23, 2016, at the Foley Civic Center. Each resident who lives in the corporate limits of Foley will have the opportunity to vote for mayor and the council person who represents their district. The mayor is elected at large, which means registered voters living within the city's corporate limits can vote for the mayor. Council representatives are elected by district, so residents in each district vote for only the council person who will represent their district.

Some Foley residents vote at other locations for county and general elections, but will vote at Foley's Civic Center for the municipal election. It is the only polling place for Foley's municipal election.

District maps are redrawn for each municipal election to insure that each of Foley's five districts include about the same number of residents. As the city grows, sometimes neighborhoods are moved into another district in order to keep the districts balanced. Foley's districts were redrawn and approved in December of 2015.

A map showing the new districts is available online at [www.cityoffoley.org](http://www.cityoffoley.org), under the city and area maps menu. Also, 2016 Voting District Maps are displayed at Foley City Hall, the Foley Public Library, the Foley Community Development Department and the Foley Welcome Center.

Polls for this election will be open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. on Aug. 23, 2016. A run-off election, if necessary, will be held on Oct. 4, 2016.

The last day to register to vote is Aug. 8, 2016. Voters are required to present a valid identification before being permitted to vote. Electronic tabulators will be used. The last day to apply for a regular absentee ballot is Aug. 18, 2016. ■

### CITY OF FOLEY online

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



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# Call for historical photographs of Foley

## Looking to borrow historical photos

The Community Development Department is working to create a mapping program that will allow city website visitors to view historical photos on a map near the place where they were originally

taken. The department would love to borrow old photos of downtown Foley, scan them and give them back within a short period of time. Any information such as date/year taken, the occasion, names of persons and any other details would be helpful.

This program will not only be interesting, but will also help the city histori-

cal commission when making decisions in the Local Downtown Historic District and the National Register Historic District. The project will provide a visual timeline of Foley.

Photographs can be brought to the Community Development Department at 200 North Alston Street. 251-952-4011. ■

## Upcoming Events

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### **Aug 4–6 19th Annual Professional Rodeo**

Cowboy up! The 19th Annual Professional Rodeo to benefit the Jennifer Claire Moore Foundation rides at the Foley Horse Arena, 113 E. Rosetta Ave. Foley, AL 36535. [www.jennifermoorefoundation.com/events/rodeo](http://www.jennifermoorefoundation.com/events/rodeo)

### **Aug 5–7 2016 Back-to-School Sales Tax Holiday**

The 11th annual sales tax holiday gives shoppers the opportunity to purchase school supplies, computers, and clothing free of state sales or use tax.

### **Sept 17 Alabama Coastal Cleanup**

8 am - 12 noon. Choose a zone and participate in the states largest volunteer cleanup to get the trash out of the splash. [www.alabamacoastalcleanup.com](http://www.alabamacoastalcleanup.com)

### **Oct 8 5th Annual Alabama Festival of Flavor 2016**

Showcasing the many flavors of local and regional foods, wine and craft beer. Historic Downtown Foley. [www.alabamafestivalofflavor.com](http://www.alabamafestivalofflavor.com) and [www.facebook.com/AlabamaFestivalOfflavor](https://www.facebook.com/AlabamaFestivalOfflavor)

### **Oct 27 Uptown Halloween**

5:30 – 8 pm. Join us in the streets of downtown Foley for a spooky good time, compliments of the downtown merchants, city businesses and the city of Foley. Costume contest, jumpy houses, hay ride and many booths to win treats and prizes. Free Admission [www.visitfoley.org](http://www.visitfoley.org)

### **Nov 2–6 Sun Belt Conference Women's Soccer Championship**

10113 Foley Beach Expressway, Foley, AL 36535. [www.foleysportstourism.com/events](http://www.foleysportstourism.com/events)

### **Nov 5–13 ASA Alabama Cup Soccer Tournament**

The Alabama Cup is the first level of competition in the US Youth Soccer National Championship series. Foley Sports Tourism Complex, 10113 Foley Beach Expressway, Foley, AL 36535. [www.foleysportstourism.com/events](http://www.foleysportstourism.com/events)