

# 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

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District 5

## CITY

**ADMINISTRATOR**  
Michael L. Thompson

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



Looking back over 2019, Foley continued to enjoy a very healthy economy with sales, lodging, rental, property and utility tax revenues rising 7.6 percent.

The city was honored to receive five top slots in Gulf Coast Media's Best in Baldwin contest:

- Best Fire Department
- Best Library
- Best Police Officer – Chief David Wilson
- Best Dog Park
- Best Museum – Railroad Museum

Other positive recognitions include Foley's ranking the fourth safest city to live in Alabama by BackgroundChecks.org and the No. 6 city to live in Alabama by the Chamber of Commerce in their Best Cities to Live in America rankings.

New businesses continue to open in Foley. At OWA, new businesses include Legends in Concert live tribute shows, Paula Deen's Family Kitchen and Lucy's Retired Surfers Bar. Last year, OWA announced plans to build a \$100 million indoor water park, a 200-room hotel and a themed RV park.

Lodging-wise, a Hilton Home 2 Suites opened in June of 2019.

The Foley Main Street Program continues to work on revitalizing downtown Foley. Since the program began in June of 2018, Main Street reports a total of 22 new or relocating businesses in downtown, creating 51 net new jobs.

Foley Sports Tourism brought many visitors to our community in 2019. We held 40 indoor events bringing 6,000 volleyball players, 2,500 basketball players and 500 pickleball players from around the U.S. Outdoor events brought 14,000 soccer players, over 6,000 baseball/softball players and 2,600 archers. 2020 is shaping up to be even larger with close to 80 events already scheduled.

Graham Creek Nature Preserve continues

to be a popular destination. The Miles' Play Garden, a special play area for toddlers, was added last year. The preserve hosted 15 volunteer support days, and 76 educational programs were conducted involving more than 4,500 students.

The Foley Police Department started a new TNR (Trap, Neuter and Release) program for cats in Foley. This humane project to control the cat population was endorsed by both the police department and the city council, which donated \$4,000 for startup efforts.

The year marked the fourth year in a row that the Foley Library has been designated a Star Library by Library Journal, receiving five of five stars in our category along with only nine other libraries in the United States. This ranking also contributed to the State of Alabama's ranking as one of the top ten U.S. states with the most number of Star Libraries in various categories. The library also received a Gold Standard Award from the Alabama Library Association, making it one of the top libraries in the state.

The Foley Senior Center continues to flourish with 720 members.

Our fire department responded to 1,650 incidents and made 9,249 community contacts and 3,428 Fire/Life Safety Inspections in FY19. A custom, half-million-dollar fire pumper is on order and expected to arrive later this year.

We are blessed to live in a wonderful community.

Please remember to shop Foley first!



**Mayor's  
Notes**

Mayor John Koniar

# Foley Counts! Census 2020

State, county and city officials are working together to encourage maximum participation among Alabamians in the upcoming census count. The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners and others use to provide daily services, products, and support for communities. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data. Census results also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives, and they are used to draw

congressional and state legislative districts.

The 2020 Census will begin March 12 when each household address receives a notification in the mail that it is time to complete the census. The form is 10 easy questions and will take about six minutes to complete. Alabamians may complete the form online, by phone or by mail.

Foley plans a census celebration on March 28 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. in Heritage Park. Everyone is invited to the event featuring free food, bounce houses and an animal petting zoo for children, and a meet and greet with entertainers from

Legends at OWA.

Census data is confidential. Answers can only be used to produce statistics. By law, information cannot be shared with immigration enforcement agencies, law enforcement agencies or be used to determine eligibility for government benefits. ■



## Practice Fire Safety

While the Foley Fire Department continues to see increased emergency call activity with the growth of our city, our Keep the Wreath Green campaign for the month of December was a great success. We finished the month without a residential fire loss in our jurisdiction, and we are thankful for everyone practicing fire safety, especially during this time. With cold weather season still upon us, we encourage everyone to continue the good work and properly use their heating equipment. Also, be sure to properly maintain or replace aging smoke alarms. As spring approaches, we remind everyone to practice fire safety with outdoor burning and make sure that they contact our office (943-1266) before burning debris in the city limits. Remember to #Turn Your Attention to Fire Prevention. ■



▲ Foley is one of 30 Alabama towns on display each Saturday morning in April as part of the Alabama Tourism Department's April Walking Tours. Local leaders will guide the free, one-hour tours that cover about six blocks of Foley's historic downtown area. Meet in front of the Foley Welcome Center at 10 a.m.

# Foley Police Dept. offers services

The Foley Police Department has 97 employees, which includes 66 officers. The department is committed to serving the community and provides the following services.

**Neighborhood Watch:** The Community Services Unit trains volunteers to recognize and report suspicious activity in their community. Active involvement of residents helps reduce burglaries and other property crimes, and fosters strong relationships between citizens and police. Contact Officer Labron Williams, [llwilliams@foleypolice.org](mailto:llwilliams@foleypolice.org) or Lt. Otis Miller, [omiller@foleypolice.org](mailto:omiller@foleypolice.org).

**Explorer Program:** Foley Police Department Explorer Post 77 is the oldest Explorer program in the state. The program is designed to give high school students a chance to see what a career in law enforcement would be like. Explorers are allowed to ride with patrol officers and assist with traffic control at various functions such as parades, festivals, football games and the local rodeo. Contact Sgt. Matt Cuellar, [mcuellar@foleypolice.org](mailto:mcuellar@foleypolice.org).

**Child Safety Seats:** Foley police officers certified in the installation of various car seats are available to properly instruct new parents and grandparents on the safe installation of car seats.

Call 952-4010 to make an appointment.

**Citizens Police Academy:** One of our most popular community oriented policing programs, the 12-week program provides 16-20 residents at a time the opportunity to experience law enforcement from the "other side." Two sessions are held each year. Contact Officer Labron Williams, [llwilliams@foleypolice.org](mailto:llwilliams@foleypolice.org) or Lt. Otis Miller, [omiller@foleypolice.org](mailto:omiller@foleypolice.org).

**House Checks:** Recognizing that anyone gone from home for an extended period of time appreciates someone checking on their residence in their absence, the police department offers this service. Come to the front window at the Foley Police Department in person with an ID that includes the address to be checked. Complete one form to have a policeman check your residence while you are gone. Contact Joe Wiseman, [jwiseman@foleypolice.org](mailto:jwiseman@foleypolice.org).

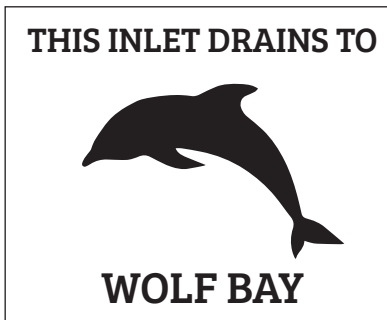
For a complete listing of all services offered by the department, stop by the Justice Center at 200 E. Section Avenue, or online at [cityoffoley.org/police-department](http://cityoffoley.org/police-department). It is our pleasure to serve the citizens of Foley, Alabama! ■



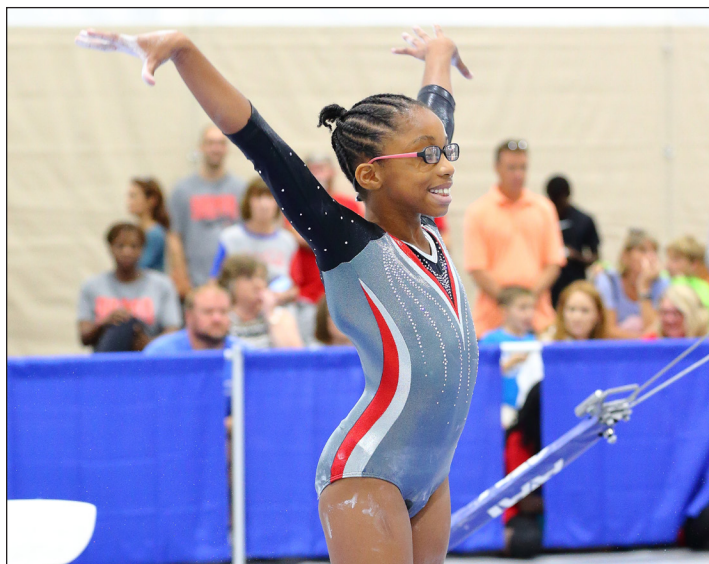
# City receives grant for stormwater education

Foley's Environmental Department received a \$2,800 grant for the 2020 fiscal year from the Gulf Coast Resource Conservation and Development Council (GCRC&D) for a stormwater education project. The staff is collaborating with city Public Works and Marketing departments to create a bilingual brochure defining stormwater and highlighting its effects on natural water bodies. These printed brochures are distributed on active construction sites throughout Foley and digitally. Custom storm drain stencils have been designed and will be painted onto streets at storm drain inlets. These stenciled messages will notify community members that stormwater and any pollutants that enter those drains will be carried to Wolf Bay, Bon Secour River, or Magnolia River.

There are ways to reduce some stormwater runoff and the Environmental Department will host a free community workshop with the support of the GCRC&D grant. On April 25th, community members can attend the workshop to learn to install rain barrels, see a demonstration of how stormwater moves through local watersheds, and participate in a Q&A session on how to mitigate the impacts. Our staff will demonstrate, through monthly and storm event water monitoring, that this educational outreach project will have positive results for local natural water bodies and reduce the amount of pollutants being carried in stormwater runoff over the course of two years. ■



Stencil design for drains leading to Wolf Bay



▲ Foley Sports Tourism will be hosting two major gymnastics events this spring, drawing more than 2,500 competitors and their families from nine states. The Optional/Xcel State Meet will take place March 27 - 29. The Region 8 Xcel Regionals will take place May 8 -10.

# Foley's preemptive traffic signals benefit emergency vehicles

A year ago, the Foley Fire Department began phase one of a traffic signal preemptive system, which is equipment installed on emergency vehicles and select traffic signals. This equipment allows emergency vehicles to communicate with the traffic signal to change the light so the vehicle can get through the intersection. The system shortens response time.

Phase one included five signals and five vehicles, while phase two will add equipment for two more signals and the fire department's new pumper truck. Recently, Fire Chief Joey Darby was contacted by the city of Orange Beach about their interest in helping install two additional signals that will benefit their emergency responders.

"Orange Beach is in the transport business for EMS; they have their own ambulances and are actively transporting patients," said Darby. "Their best route to get to South Baldwin Regional Medical Center is up the Beach Express, and our Fern Avenue Extension will be their preferred route to get to the hospital."

"Orange Beach would buy the equipment, which is a little over \$3,000 per intersection for hardware, and then we would pay to add it to our system," Darby said. "There will be a little additional cost there, but it will cover our priorities down Highway 59, plus we'll be getting two more intersections. I think it's a win/win for us; it gives them better and safer routes to travel to South Baldwin Regional Medical Center; and it keeps them off Highway 59."

During the initial installation of the system, Foley coordinated with Gulf Shores and Orange Beach and determined to purchase the same system, which have been configured to work with each other. Darby said future priorities will be lights closer to Tanger Outlets, which is a difficult spot for emergency responders. Additionally, Foley Fire Department has worked closely with city engineers to preemptively install these signals in the future each time a new signal is added. This way the system will be installed when the light goes into use. ■

## Completed intersections:

Hwy 59 / US 98  
Hwy 59 / Azalea Ave.  
Hwy 59 / Michigan Ave.  
Hwy 59 / County Rd. 20  
Foley Beach Express / County Rd. 20

## Coming soon:

Hwy 59 / Riviera Blvd.  
Hwy 59 / Tanger Blvd.  
Foley Beach Express / US 98  
Hwy 59 / Fern Ave.

*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!*



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## Upcoming Events

**Foley Events Updated Daily** VisitFoley.com

**Foley Public Library** FoleyLibrary.org

**Foley Senior Center** CityofFoley.org

**Foley Sports Tourism** FoleySportsTourism.com

**Graham Creek Preserve** GrahamCreekPreserve.org

### Downtown OWA

Live shows: Brandon Styles, magician/  
comedian and Legends in Concert.  
For info and times VisitOWA.com

### Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market

Local produce, fresh seafood, homemade  
goods and more. Open Tues. 10 a.m.–3 p.m.  
and Sat. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.  
20733 Mifflin Rd.

### Observe and Explore Days

First Wednesday and third Saturday each  
month, 10 a.m.–noon. Children's activities.  
Graham Creek Nature Preserve, 23460 Wolf  
Bay Dr., Foley. grahamcreekpreserve.org

### Feb. 28–March 1 Foley Geocaching Weekend

Check out the events listed at [www.geocaching.com](http://www.geocaching.com) for the weekend or call  
251-943-1031.  
FoleyLibrary.org

### Feb. 29 City of Foley 39th Annual Arbor Day

1 p.m. Coastal Alabama Farmers and  
Fishermens Market.  
20733 Mifflin Rd.  
VisitFoley.com

### March 6 The Roaring Twenties Annual Winter Ball

6 p.m. Foley Senior Center.  
Music, dancing and hors d'oeuvres. Tickets  
must be purchased by March 1st.  
[CityofFoley.org/senior-center](http://CityofFoley.org/senior-center)

### March 14 BBQ & Blues Cook-off

11 a.m.–5 p.m. Heritage Park. Enjoy  
delicious BBQ concoctions. Live music,  
arts and crafts, and children's activities.  
Awards at 4:30 p.m.  
[SouthBaldwinChamber.com](http://SouthBaldwinChamber.com) for tickets.  
251-943-3291

### March 14 St. Pawtly's Day Celebration

1 p.m. Downtown OWA.  
Enjoy furry fun including trick shows, pet  
parade, and dog adoptions.  
[VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)



### March 21 41st Annual Regional Gulf Coast Mustang & Mega Car Show

8 a.m.–5 p.m. Downtown OWA.  
Classic Mustangs to mega cars.  
[VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)

### March 21 and May 2 Line Dancing at the Alabama Gulf Coast Music Hall

5–10 p.m. Alabama Gulf Coast Music Hall.  
Line dancing fun, door prizes and delicious  
southern-style BBQ. Tickets \$8 advance  
and \$10 at the door. 12615A Foley Beach  
Express.

### March 28 Census Day Celebration

10 a.m.–2 p.m. Heritage Park.  
Everyone is invited to enjoy free food,  
bounce houses and an animal petting zoo.  
Meet entertainers from Legends in Concert.  
[VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com)

### April 4 4th Annual Forward City Con

10 a.m.–5 p.m. Foley Public Library.  
Foley's mini comic/anime/gaming  
convention. [FoleyLibrary.com](http://FoleyLibrary.com)

### April 4, 11, 18 and 25 Historic Downtown Walking Tours

10 a.m. Meet at the Foley Welcome Center.  
Walking tours feature historic points of  
interest, cover six blocks and last  
approximately one hour.  
251-943-1200

### April 11 3rd Annual Spring Fling Celebration

Downtown OWA.  
Egg hunts, meet-and-greets with Mr. and  
Mrs. Bunny, and maybe a few magical  
surprise guests along the way!  
[VisitOWA.com](http://VisitOWA.com)

### Mid-April Peak Bloom for the Wilbourne Antique Rose Trail

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. Parking  
available at Heritage Park.

### April 21 Shred It Day

3–5 p.m. behind City Hall. [VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com)

### April 24 Music and Movie/Heritage Park Marketplace

Details at [VisitFoley.com](http://VisitFoley.com) or call 251-943-1200.

### April 30–May 2 Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival

[GulfCoastBalloonFestival.com](http://GulfCoastBalloonFestival.com)

### May 9–10 Art in the Park

[FoleyArtCenter.org](http://FoleyArtCenter.org)