

Foley Newsletter

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Ralph G. Hellmich

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Hello, everyone. I hope that your spring is going well. A lot of activity is going on in Foley. Sometimes it is even hard for me to keep up. We've recently had several successful festivals: BBQ & Blues, Mudbugs & Margaritas, and an antique car show at OWA, just to mention a few. They reflect Foley's commitment to quality-of-life events in each season. Heritage Park Marketplace and Music and a Movie events are underway on Fridays at Heritage Park. Bring a blanket and a chair and enjoy. We hope you enjoyed the five Midday Melodies events this spring that featured a different artist every Wednesday in Heritage Park. These events add variety to ongoing programs and attractions, like our award-winning library, the senior center, the model train exhibit and the Holmes Medical Museum. And don't forget the Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermens Market.

That's the tip of the iceberg. Foley has year-round recreational sports for youth and, of course, Sports Tourism events just about every weekend, which are open to the public.

You may recall that our city partnered with the U.S. Army National Guard to swap property so a new modern armory could be constructed for the National Guard units in the area. The city council and I recently toured the new armory, located at the city's Baron Field site. Upon completion this summer and after the Guard moves into the new facility, the City will take ownership of the old armory on N. Cypress St. We are excited about the possible uses of the facility and its central proximity to our government complex.

ALDI opened April 14, providing even more choices for grocery shopping in Foley.



Mayor's Notes

Two new restaurants, Mugshots Grill & Bar and Chipotle Mexican Grill, will soon begin construction between Honey Baked Ham and Moyer Ford. There are quite a few other commercial projects that will be announced soon. These will give our residents more choices in Foley and, of course, create jobs for the local economy.

Our Foley Main Street program is currently in the middle of a strategic planning process called Envisioning the Future. They are seeking public participation for ideas and direction to make our historic Downtown Foley area even better.

Another project I would like to mention is our new Sister Cities program. Foley has joined the Sister Cities International. We are now paired with Henef, a similar city in Germany. Our goal is to pursue educational, cultural and governmental exchanges with our new sister city. Foley's public schools are participating to allow local students opportunities both in and out of the classroom.

Several projects around the city are about to begin: the Juniper Street extension, extending Juniper south across Mifflin Road, then turning west to connect with Hwy. 59; turn lanes on County Road 12; the repaving of a number of downtown streets; and a TAP Grant sidewalk project along 9th Avenue and Hickory Street near the new school. Please be patient with our progress.

That sums it up for this edition. I hope you enjoy our beautiful spring season.

Mayor Ralph G. Hellmich

City hires Executive Director of Infrastructure and Development

Wayne Dyess was recently hired as the city's executive director of infrastructure and development. This position is one of three created this year to streamline services and interaction within city departments. Dyess will oversee four departments: planning and inspections, engineering, environment and public works.

Dyess previously served as the administrator for Baldwin County, and also has extensive experience in municipal and county planning. Dyess grew up in Foley. ■



Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermen Market awarded

The Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermen Market (CAFFM) recently received national attention for being named one of USA Today's 10 Best Farmers Markets in the country for the second year in a row.

This type of national recognition in consecutive years reflects the heart and soul of the market's local vendors, which make it a success. CAFFM has recently been reorganized. No longer a private non-profit, it is now a part of the city in the Leisure Services Department. The current CAFFM venue structure and leadership will remain the same. The only change will be increased support and resources from the city to help grow the market to greater heights.

What won't change is CAFFM's local farmer and fishermen vendors and the relationships they form with their customers. CAFFM operates 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Saturday. Residents are encouraged to come out and see what makes it one of our great nation's best markets. ■

Foley Sports Tourism to host gymnastics championships

Foley Sports Tourism will make state sports history May 6–8 as the first Alabama city to ever host the USA Gymnastics Region 8 Xcel Championships. The competition will bring the best from Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee to the Foley Event Center. Previously the competition has been held in Atlanta, GA; Myrtle Beach, SC; and Daytona Beach, FL, putting Foley in some prestigious company. Residents can expect an estimated 1,500 gymnasts and their families.

The FST Fields will also be hosting more than 150 soccer teams from around the region the same weekend for the Big Wave Classic, drawing an estimated 8,500 visitors to Foley. The economic impact from these two events will wrap up a busy spring and set the tone for a successful summer. ■

Foley Public Library has a full summer of reading programs

The Foley Public Library has a full summer of reading programs planned from June to August in 2022. It's an "Ocean of Possibilities!"

Every Thursday in June the library will host a summer reading program at the Foley Civic Center at 10 a.m. These will include an onstage book read along with an entertainer. The June 2 entertainment will be Frank and Tammy's Magic Show/Variety Show and will include some kick-off specials. On June 9, the entertainer is Wink, a unicyclist and juggler who has performed on the David Letterman show. The June 16 performer is Bruce Walstad, president of the Gulf Coast Magicians Guild. On June 23, Bright Children's Theater will perform "The Little Mermaid," a fun take on Hans Christian Anderson's classic fairy tale. The month will wrap up with fun, food and rewards on June 30 with ambassadors from the Freedom Ranch Wildlife Center. Summer Reading Programs don't end here, though!

Every Thursday in July will also feature special programs. July 7 will bring a presentation by the Pensacola

& Perdido Bays Estuary. This program will include water-related storytime reads as well as a touch/observation tank filled with critters found in our local waters. On July 14, a unique Real Men Read will be happening at the Civic Center with several prominent community men demonstrating the fun of reading. Then on July 21, the library will host a "Slide into Summer Fun" event with EEASY Inflatables, food trucks, snow cones and prizes. This program will be from 9 a.m.–noon at a soon-to-be-disclosed location. On July 28, come to the Civic Center again at 10 a.m. for an exciting play performance directed by Logan Lane.

The last day of the summer program will be Aug. 4, 9–11 a.m., with another fun "Be a Library Explorer!" event. This will happen inside the Foley Public Library. Join your friends for prizes, book characters and a unique exploration event. Last summer's



final gathering was so popular that the same format will be used to mark the close of this season's programs.

Foley Public Library is opening more than books, it is opening an ocean of possibilities this summer. Call 251-943-7665 or check out the library's website for more information. ■

Chief Darby recognized by Gov. Kay Ivey



Foley Fire Chief Joey Darby was surprised with a commendation from Alabama Gov. Kay Ivey and the attendance of many fire chiefs from across the state at the March 7, 2022 city council meeting. Chief Darby was recognized for his service on the Alabama Fire College and Personnel Standards and Education Commission as the representative for the Alabama Association of Fire Chiefs for eight years, from February 2014 until February 2022. In 2020, Chief Darby was also recognized as the Alabama Fire Chief of the Year. Darby fulfilled these duties in addition to his daily responsibilities as Foley Fire Chief. ■



City of Foley Extra Mile Award

Angie Eckman with the Environmental Department received the 2022 Extra Mile Award, presented by the city each year to a deserving employee. Working at the Graham Creek Nature Preserve, Angie was nominated for her excellence in interactions with the public to gain compliance in environmental issues. She also made a impact on students that she taught through the city's educational programs. Congratulations, Angie! ■

City calls for volunteers

Foley is a city in motion. One of the ways the city accomplishes so much is through the help of volunteers. Volunteers serve on committees, such as the beautification committee, assist with sports tourism tournaments, help at Graham Creek Nature Preserve, donate their time at the library and city museums, or operate model trains and drive the event train to give free rides around the park.

If you enjoy living in Foley and would like to be a part of any of these activities, please call 251-943-1200. ■

Centennial Plaza bricks make great gifts

Centennial Plaza bricks make the perfect gift for Mother's or Father's Day! Purchase an engraved brick to be installed in Foley's Centennial Plaza. The purchase price includes a certificate that can be presented as a gift.

Bricks (4x8 \$50 and 8x8 \$125) may be purchased at the Welcome Center. Installation takes about six months. ■



Why move the flag?

One of the iconic scenes in Foley has been the waving of the large American flag that seemed to float over the city from its perch in a parking area near the intersection of Hwys. 59 and 98. The flag has recently been moved because the city does not own the parking lot where it was located.



A new 90-ft. flagpole has been erected in a nearby city-owned parking area on the east side of Hwy. 59. The Beautification Committee has ordered a new, larger flag and plans additional improvements that include lighting, flowers and resurfacing the parking area. ■

Foley Fire Dept. announcements

The Foley Fire Department reminds you that the annual Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) Burn Ban for Baldwin County goes into effect May 1 in an effort to improve air quality. Open burning of debris is prohibited until Nov. 1 with only a few exceptions (recreational/ceremonial/cooking fires; agricultural/silvicultural burns). These exceptions may also be restricted by the fire chief via a local burn ban when drought or weather conditions make it necessary.

As we enter the summer months, we remind you to prepare for hurricane season and other severe weather events. Having a severe weather plan for your family, along with a fire escape plan, is critical to your safety. Please download a reliable weather app for your mobile devices or purchase a weather radio with local alerts. We also remind you to keep your smoke alarms in good working order and replace them after 10 years. Contact our office at 251-943-1266 for more information on these items. ■

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

October 2021–March 2022

- 300 Single-family Permits
—\$67,569,176 Valuation
- 18 Duplex/Multi-family Permits (92 Units)
—\$16,444,623 Valuation
- 11 New Commercial Permits (South Oak Apt. Office & Maintenance)
—\$5,025,540 Valuation
- 28 Commercial Addition/Remodel Permits
—\$22,026,610 Valuation
- 1,941 Total Permits
—\$135,436,815 Valuation

Visit cityoffoley.org/Community-Development or call 251-952-4011 for more information. ■



407 E. Laurel Ave.
P.O. Box 1750
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Art in the Park is celebrating its 50th year!

Make sure you stop by John B. Foley Park May 7 or 8 and see all that the event has to offer.

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

Foley Public Library

New hours: 9 a.m.–7 p.m. Mon.–Thurs.; 9 a.m.–5 p.m. Fri.–Sat. Monthly programs, Makersaurus Time, adult arts and crafts, family bingo night, lunch and learns and other clubs.

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 Sat. 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
20733 Mifflin Rd.
CoastalAlabamaMarket.com

Observe and Explore Days

First Wednesday and third Saturday each month, 10 a.m.–noon. Free activities for children 10 and under. Graham Creek Nature Preserve. 23460 Wolf Bay Dr.
GrahamCreekPreserve.org

Foley Senior Center

6 p.m. Adults (50+) invited every 1st and 3rd Saturday evening for live entertainment and dancing. Band begins at 6:30. \$7 per person. Bring refreshments of your choice.

May 6 & 13 Education in Motion

9 a.m.–4 p.m. Registration required. Any school-aged student is welcome. Learn the science behind the rides at The Park at OWA. VisitOWA.com

May 7–8 50th Annual Art in the Park

Over 100 artists showcase hand-crafted art and gift items. John B. Foley Park.

May 12–15 Gulf Coast Hot Air Balloon Festival

A family-friendly event with tethered balloon rides, balloon glows, balloons in flight, artisan and food vendors and live music! Downtown OWA.

May 20 & 27, June 3 & 10 Heritage Park Marketplace

Fridays. 4 p.m.–7 p.m.
Offers a variety of arts and crafts, handmade items, plants and much more. Heritage Park.
www.VisitFoley.com

May 20 & 27, June 3 & 10 Music and a Movie

Fridays. Music: 6 p.m., Movie: Dusk. Bring a blanket or lawn chairs and enjoy a movie, music and entertainment under the stars. Free to the public. Concessions are available for purchase. Heritage Park.
www.VisitFoley.com

May 21, June 18 & July 16 Trail Trot at the Preserve

9 a.m. Walk Graham Creek Nature Preserve with our staff.
GrahamCreekPreserve.org

May 28 Memorial Day Fireworks at OWA

8:45 p.m. Downtown OWA.
VisitOWA.com

June 18 Dash to the Cash

10 a.m.–4 p.m. Be the swiftest on the Gravity Island Aqua Play course. \$550 in cash up for grabs. See website for details.
VisitOWA.com

June 25 International Mud Day

10 a.m. Come play in the mud.
GrahamCreekPreserve.org

July 2 4th of July Celebration and Fireworks

Celebrate Independence Day with family-friendly activities and live entertainment in Downtown OWA, followed by an epic fireworks show at 8:45 p.m.
VisitOWA.com

Aug. 4–6 Jennifer Claire Moore Foundation Annual Rodeo

Foley Horse Arena
113 East Rosetta Avenue
www.jennifermoorefoundation.com

