

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



April 2018

[Cycling Fatality on Perdido Key](#)

A 29 year old bicyclist was struck and killed by a vehicle along Perdido Key Drive near Gongora Drive late Wednesday, March 14, 2018. An investigation of the accident is ongoing. See the March 15, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article "29 year old bicyclist killed in Perdido Key crash" for more on the accident at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/03/15/29-year-old-bicyclist-killed-perdido-key-drive-crash/427269002/>.

[National Park Ferry Service Soon](#)

The National Park Service expects to begin ferry service from downtown Pensacola to Pensacola Beach and Ft. Pickens on May 18, 2018. Gulf Coast Maritime Services, Inc., has been selected to operate the "Turtle Runner" and "Pelican Perch," the two 150 passenger ferries that will provide at least three loops of service each day. Pricing and scheduling are yet to be announced. See the March 20, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article "National Park Service picks ferry operator, hopes to start service May 18" for more on the issue at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/03/29/national-park-service-picks-ferry-operator-hopes-start-service-may-18/470136002/>.

[Florida Legislature Approves Year Round Daylight Saving Time](#)

The "Sunshine Protection Act" to shift Florida to Daylight Saving Time year round instead of only a portion of the year has passed the Florida legislature and now awaits Governor Rick Scott's approval or veto. A shift to year round Daylight Saving time will require a change in federal law to be implemented. See the March 8, 2018 *USA Today* article "Florida Senate OKs bill for year-round Daylight Savings Time" for more on the

issue at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/03/08/florida-senate-oks-bill-year-round-daylight-saving-time/406315002/>.

Tourism Works Campaign

Visit Pensacola, our region's DMO (Destination Marketing Organization) has launched a "Tourism Works" campaign to publicize the positive effects of tourism on the area. Among other benefits, Visit Pensacola officials point out that 41% of all taxes and 46% of all property taxes collected in Escambia County can be attributed to tourism. Visitors are expected to spend over \$1 billion in the area by 2022 or 2023. The campaign comes at a time when County Commissioners are debating how to spend tourism tax revenue. Steve Hayes, president of Visit Pensacola, was the featured speaker at the PKA Annual Membership Meeting in February 2018. See the March 22, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Visit Pensacola launches new 'Tourism Works' campaign to tout the industry's impact on economy" by Jason Nicholson for more on the issue at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/03/21/visit-pensacola-launches-new-tourism-works-campaign-tout-industrys-impact-economy/445685002/>.

Tall Ships in Pensacola

For the first time, the Tall Ships Challenge of races and port festivals is coming to Pensacola, the only Florida Gulf port on the 2018 schedule – the other ports to be visited on the Gulf Coast are Galveston, Texas and New Orleans, Louisiana. The event will feature ship visits, sailing cruises, entertainment, and races between several of the ships expected at the event. The visit is co-sponsored by Visit Pensacola and will run from April 12-15, 2018. For more information on the event, including tickets, go to <https://www.visitpensacola.com/tall-ships/>.

Fishing Getting Easier

The administration of President Trump is taking actions that increase recreational fishing access, including extending the season for red snapper in federal waters and possible revision to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to expand access to recovering fish stocks. Environmental advocates fear the changes will "undermine the use of science-based actions to end and prevent overfishing." See the March 21, 2018 *USA Today* article "Go Fish: Under President Trump, changing political tide opens waters for anglers" by Ledyard King for more on the issue at <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2018/03/21/go-fish-under-president-trump-changing-political-tide-opens-water-anglers/384747002/>.

Candidates for Congress

Chris Dosev obtained over 5,000 signatures to get on the ballot to challenge Matt Gaetz in the upcoming Republican primary election. Congressman Gaetz is the current Florida District 1 representative to the US House of Representatives. Had Mr. Dosev not

obtained the signatures by early April, he would have had to pay \$10,440 to get on the ballot. See the March 27, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Chris Dosev gets enough signatures to challenge Matt Gaetz in Republican primary” by Jim Little for more on this issue at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/politics/2018/03/27/cris-dosev-gets-enough-signatures-challenge-matt-gaetz-republican-primary/463814002/>.

Notes on the Environment

Beach Vitex on Perdido Key – Beach Vitex is an invasive species that can crowd out native plants. It has been a particular concern in beach areas of the Carolinas and is now working its way into Florida. For the first time, as far as PKA is aware, it has been found on Perdido Key. The plant provides ground cover and has woody runners and purple flowers. If detected, please contact the Escambia County Sea Grant Representative Rick O’Connor at roc1@ufl.edu for assistance in identification and removal. See the March 2, 2017 University of Florida *IFAS Extension* article “Trying to Stay Ahead of Beach Vitex” by Rick O’Connor for more information at <http://nwdistrict.ifas.ufl.edu/nat/2017/03/02/nisaw-2017-trying-to-stay-ahead-of-beach-vitex/>.

Navy Point Oyster Reefs – Escambia County personnel and volunteers are close to finishing the construction of a number of small reefs made from bagged oyster shells off Navy Point in Bayou Grande. According to County officials, the reefs will help minimize shore erosion and improve water quality, particularly if live oysters begin to take residence on the reefs. Some nearby residents have concerns about the project from possible dangers to children swimming in the area from the oyster shells and harmful bacteria in the water. See the March 21, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Navy Point ‘living shore’ oyster project causes concern among some residents” by Kevin Robinson for more on the issue at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/03/30/navy-point-living-shore-oyster-project-causes-concern-among-some-residents/466894002/>.

More on Plastic Waste in the Ocean – Additional research and published articles have expressed increased concerns about plastic waste in the oceans. One article discusses the rapid buildup of plastic in the “Great Pacific Garbage Patch” between California and Hawaii while the other predicts that the amount of plastic in the oceans will treble within a decade. For more on these issues, see the March 22, 2018 article “Plastic patch in Pacific Ocean growing rapidly, study shows” by Helen Briggs at <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-43490235> and the March 21, 2018 article “Ocean plastic could treble in decade” by Roger Harrabin at <http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-43477233>, both published by the *BBC*.

Report Pelicans with Blue or Green Bands – Clemson University has banded and released 850 pelicans over the past several years to determine their migratory habits. If spotted, you can report the pelican’s location on the Project Pelican website at projectpelicanj.weebly.com. See the March 25, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Clemson University’s Project Pelican tracks banded birds on Gulf Coast” by Anne Delaney for more on this issue at

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/2018/03/22/clemson-universitys-project-pelican-tracks-banded-birds-along-gulf-coast/446009002/>.

Butterfly House to Open for the Season then Close for Renovations – The Panhandle Butterfly House near the Navarre Bridge on Santa Rosa Sound opens its doors for its 21st season on May 5, 2018, but will close for remodeling until 2022 after the season is over. When the facility reopens, it will feature “a bigger, taller vivarium and new museum-quality exhibits that are expected to be a year-round eco-tourism attraction.” The nonprofit organization is operated by volunteers and seeks to increase public awareness of the importance of butterflies to the environment. See the March 21, 2018 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Help out at Butterfly House” by Rebecca Carlson for more on this issue at <https://www.pnj.com/story/life/2018/03/21/panhandle-butterfly-house-navarre-promotes-passion-pollinators/430249002/>.

Volunteers Needed – Volunteers are needed to help monitor the status of seagrass and the presence of the diamondback terrapins in our area. In addition, surveys of the Big Lagoon bay scallop population will be conducted in June and August 2018. If interested in participating in these activities, contact the Escambia County Sea Grant representative Rick O’Connor at roc1@ufl.edu.

April Calendar

Apr 1, 5-7: Santa Rosa County Fair and Youth Livestock Shows in Milton
Apr 5: Federal Reserve Luncheon at the Perdido Beach Resort on Perdido Key
Apr 5: Alabama, the Southeast and Beyond archeological lecture in Mobile
Apr 7: Camellia Classic Car Show at Bellingrath Gardens
Apr 7: Regional Roundup to discard old electronics, Bailey Middle School, Bauer Rd
Apr 7-8: Northwest Florida Quarter Horse Show at Escambia County Equestrian Center
Apr 11-15, 21-25: Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoo Stadium in Pensacola
Apr 12-15: Tall Ships Festival at Plaza de Luna in downtown Pensacola
Apr 12-15: Cirque Italia at Cordova Mall in Pensacola
Apr 13-14: Pensacola Beach Firefighters Challenge on Pensacola Beach
Apr 14: Waterway Village Zydeco and Crawfish Festival in Gulf Shores
Apr 14-15: Emerald Coast Grand Prix (jet skis) at the Flora-Bama
Apr 21: Earth Day Open House at EPA Gulf Ecology Division on Pensacola Beach
Apr 22: Earth Day celebration at Big Lagoon State Park
Apr 27-29: Interstate Mullet Toss and Beach Party at the Flora-Bama
Apr 29: Pensacola Triathlon at Maritime Park in downtown Pensacola

Blue Angels practice on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, NAS Pensacola
Bands on the Beach Tuesdays at the Gulfside Pavilion, Pensacola Beach
Spring Bird Migration viewing at Dauphin Island

The following websites provide additional information about events taking place in our great Gulf Coast region:

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>
<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>
<http://www.visitperdido.com/>
<http://mulletwrapper.net/>
<https://myescambia.com/>
<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com//>
<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>
<http://www.cityofmobile.org/calendar/>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors