

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



November 2019

PKA 2019 Holiday Party and 2020 Annual Membership Meeting

Please place the following dates on your calendars: PKA Holiday Party at the Seafarer Condominium on Friday evening, December 6, 2019 and PKA Annual Membership Meeting at the Eden Condominium on Saturday morning, February 29, 2020. More information will be provided as the events draw nearer. We hope you can attend!

Wanted: PKA Director Candidates

The Perdido Key Association's 2020 election cycle is approaching and the PKA Board will be creating a Nominating Committee to solicit Director Candidates. After candidates are determined, ballots will be sent to PKA members approximately 30 days prior to the PKA Annual Membership Meeting on February 29, 2020 when the voting will take place. If you are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee or becoming a PKA Director candidate, please contact any current PKA Director. New faces on the Board would be most welcome: of the seven current PKA Directors, five have already been PKA presidents!

RESTORE Funding Arriving

RESTORE is one of the programs established to distribute funds from damage caused by the 2010 BP oil spill. According to the October 7, 2019 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Escambia and Santa Rosa leaders say 'transformational' funding from BP spill coming soon" by Melissa Nelson Gabriel, the two counties are beginning to see some of the approximately \$70 million designated to Escambia County and \$30 million designated to Santa Rosa County. Two projects on Perdido Key were selected for partial RESTORE funding: Perdido Key Multi-Use Path and Perdido Key Gulf of Mexico Beach Access. To view the referenced article, go to

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/beaches/2019/10/07/bp-oil-spill-escambia-santa-rosa-leaders-say-funding-come-soon/3856916002/>.

Disputed Beach Access Moves Forward

The proposed Perdido Key public beach access on the 4-acre property just east of the Crab Trap Restaurant seems poised to move forward. According to Tim Day, Escambia County's natural resources management director, the "U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service largely signed off on it." The latest proposal calls for 37 parking spaces and a Mobi-Mat for dune walkover. A final draft plan is being developed and the "U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service still 'has concerns' regarding a restroom at the site." Project funding must be committed and the Seafarer Condominium's circuit court petition against the project resolved. For more on the issue, see the October 22, 2019 *Pensacola News Journal* article "Perdido Key beach access plan clears critical hurdle, cost and time line still unknown" by Jim Little at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2019/10/22/perdido-key-beach-access-plan-clears-hurdle-cost-and-timeline-unknown/4053872002/>.

Mobi Mats Removed from Navarre Beach

Mobi Mats are polyester mats placed over sand to allow people in wheelchairs or those with difficulty walking on sand to make their way to the shore. Three had been installed at Navarre Beach in 2018 but were recently removed because of "apparent environmental violations brought against Santa Rosa County by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection." Mobi Mats are installed at some Pensacola Beach access locations where, according to officials, correct procedures had been followed and are a consideration for Perdido Key beaches as well. For more on the issue, see the October 4, 2019 *MSN News* article "Beach removes unapproved Mobi Mats" by Annie Blanks available at <https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/navarre-beach-pulls-up-mobi-mats-due-to-fdep-violations/ar-AAIqBSz>.

Beach Mouse Car Magnets

Gulf Islands National Seashore is distributing car magnets with the image of the Perdido Key beach mouse as part of its "ongoing wildlife awareness campaign." According to Gulf Islands spokesman Brent Everitt, "this is the first year the park will highlight the endangered Perdido Key beach mouse with a magnet." He added that "the mice help to stabilize the dunes" and that "while small, the mouse has a big impact on the dune communities it calls home." The magnets can be picked up at the entry point of the Perdido Key Area of the Gulf Islands National Seashore. For more on the issue, see the October 2, 2019 *Pensacola News Journal* article "How to get a free Perdido Key beach mouse magnet from Gulf Islands National Seashore" by Melissa Nelson Gabriel at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/beaches/2019/10/02/perdido-key-beach-mouse-magnet-gulf-islands-national-seashore-offers/3844630002/>.

Underground Utility Legislation Considered

A proposal moving forward in the Florida legislature would encourage shifts from above ground to underground electrical utilities as part of efforts to reduce power outages after hurricanes and other storms. An apparent key part of the measure would be to finance projects with "upfront costs for consumers" instead of past practice where they have

“generally been financed through base electric rates...” A number of contentious issues remain as the legislation moves forward and, if law, for its implementation. Many hope that Perdido Key, which has above ground utilities on its main roads and elsewhere, will be able to convert to underground utilities at some point in the future. For more on this issue, see the October 3, 2019 *The News Service of Florida* article “Underground power lines measure takes another step” by Jim Saunders at

<https://www.gainesville.com/news/20191003/underground-power-lines-plan-moves-forward>.

Steve Hayes to leave Visit Pensacola

Steve Hayes will be leave as President of Visit Pensacola in December 2019 after accepting the position as CEO of Visit St. Pete/Clearwater in Pinellas County. Visit Pensacola has supported PKA through advertising events and grant funding of World Oceans Day activities. Mr. Hayes was also a much appreciated speaker at PKA’s 2018 Annual Membership Meeting. Jack Brown, former Escambia County Administrator, will be Visit Pensacola’s leader while the organization conducts a search for a new president. For more on the story, see the Visit Pensacola media release by Nicole Stacey “Visit Pensacola President Accepts CEO Position with Visit St. Pete/Clearwater” at <https://www.visitpensacola.com/industry/media-room/press-releases/visit-pensacola-president-accepts-ceo-position-with-visit-st-peteclearwater/> and the October 23, 2019 *Pensacola News Journal* article “Jack Brown chosen as Visit Pensacola interim president” at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2019/10/23/jack-brown-chosen-visit-pensacola-interim-president/4072200002/>.

Flesh-Eating Bacteria Victim from Big Lagoon

Bernie Stewart nearly lost his life from *vibrio vulnificus*, often referred to as “flesh-eating bacteria.” According to the *Pensacola News Journal* October 11, 2019 article “Pensacola man nearly dies after contracting flesh-eating bacteria while fishing in Big Lagoon” by Annie Blanks, symptoms appeared within two hours of a kayak fishing trip on Big Lagoon and by the next day had caused multiple organ failure. After emergency surgery and two and a half weeks of medically-induced coma at Sacred Heart Hospital, Mr. Stewart is on the way to recovery. According to John Lanza, Director and Health Officer for the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County, the bacteria is “much more commonly occurring than people think” and “can be found in Gulf and brackish waters” with “increases in concentration depending on the time of year and temperature.” There have been 22 confirmed cases of the bacteria in Florida in 2019 with three in Escambia County; one case in Hillsborough County resulted in death. To access the article, go to <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2019/10/11/pensacola-florida-man-contracts-flesh-eating-bacteria-big-lagoon/3934359002/>.

November Calendar

Nov 01 – Flora-Bama Halloween Party & Costume Contest

Nov 01-03 – Great Gulfcoast Arts Festival at Seville Square Park

Nov 01-03 – Pensacola Women’s Half Marathon Weekend in Pensacola
Nov 02-03 – Fall Festival at OWA
Nov 07-17 – Frank Brown Songwriter’s Festival at Gulf Coast venues
Nov 08-09 – Blue Angels Homecoming Show at National Naval Air Museum
Nov 09 – Fairhope Veterans Day Parade
Nov 09,16,17,27 – Pensacola Ice Flyers at Pensacola Bay Center
Nov 10 – Pensacola Beach Art and Wine Festival
Nov 11 – Mobile Veterans Day Celebration, Parade of Flags and Concert
Nov 14 – Science Hour on Artificial Reefs at Escambia County Central Office Complex
Nov 16 – Heron Trot Road Race at Big Lagoon State Park
Nov 23 – Perdido Area Community Craft & Vendor Fair/Flicks on the Field at Pensacola Greyhound Track
Nov 28 – Thanksgiving
Nov 29 – Elf Parade and First City Lights Festival in Downtown Pensacola

The following websites provide additional information about Gulf Coast events

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

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors