

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



September 2023

Help Cleanup Perdido Key Beaches Saturday September 16

Please join the Perdido Key Association, Friends of Pensacola State Parks and Florida State Park rangers for International Coastal Cleanup Day on Saturday, September 16, 2023 at the Perdido Key State Park West Use Area from 8 AM until Noon. Each year organizations across the world conduct beach cleanups on International Coastal Cleanup Day and gather thousands of pounds of plastic and other trash that might otherwise pollute our oceans and surrounding coastlines. We look forward to seeing you there!

Hurricane Season for Sure!

Hurricane Idalia missed the Pensacola area but struck Florida's Big Bend region with Category 3 winds and historic storm surge. Destruction continued across Georgia and the Carolinas. In preparation for hurricane season, Escambia County emergency management personnel recently gave a Perdido Key Area Chamber of Commerce Breakfast Brief on preparations for hurricane season and emphasized three issues: know your zone; know your home; and, know your plan. For local emergency information and guidance, go to *Escambia County's Emergency Management* web location at <https://myescambia.com/our-services/public-safety/beready>.

WKRG TV Perdido Key Special September 4

Baldwin County television station WKRG will broadcast a two hour show centered on Perdido Key on Friday, September 8, 2023, apparently associated with the Flora-Bama's annual "Bulls on the Beach" event. For a preview of likely local coverage, go to the following link provided by the Perdido Key Area Chamber of Commerce: <https://spotonalabama.com/al-gulf-coast/1048305/perdido-key-history-video.html>.

"We Are Perdido" Feasibility Study

At the August 21, 2023 "We Are Perdido" public meeting at Liberty Church, Mr. Joseph M. Mazurkiewicz, President of BJM Consulting, covered the results as of August 26, 2023 of his firm's feasibility study on incorporation of four Escambia County southwest voting districts into a municipality. The study does not conclude for or against the project but contains data from

BJM's research and comments from a personnel survey. Those living in the area of concern should read the study in detail, but here are three points of possible interest. First, during his presentation Mr. Mazurkiewicz stated that of the five incorporation initiatives his firm had taken on this year, "We Are Perdido" was the only one going forward. Second, the following paragraph from p. 56 of the study states: "The initial impacts on residents of Perdido would be very limited. There would be no new ad valorem taxes. Some businesses would be charged an additional annual Business Tax Receipt (BRT) or town license annually (Escambia County BRT is currently \$26.25 per business annually). These would be businesses who operate in both Perdido and Escambia County. The new local government of Perdido would gain total control of about \$6 million annually to do capital maintenance and new projects." And third from p. 8: "The majority on Perdido Key are not full-time residents (only about one in four) and consequently have no vote in local issue[s]." "We Are Perdido" leadership intends to forward the study along with other required documentation to the state of Florida by September 1, 2023. To access the feasibility study and other information about the incorporation initiative, go to the "We Are Perdido" website at <https://weareperdido.org/>.

Perdido Key Multi-Use Path Progress

Work of the Perdido Key Multi-Use Path is proceeding apace near the Theo Baars Bridge. Recent construction extends from River Road to Perdido Key Drive along the west side of the bridge and continues south along Perdido Key Drive. For those who have waited years for a completed Multi-Use Path, current progress is terrific to see!

River Road Landscape Improvement

The road easement green space between River Road pavement and the fenced area of the Lost Key Resort has been greatly improved in recent weeks by Escambia County and local correctional facility personnel. Long overgrown, many thorny and other weed-like plants have been cleared, the green space mowed and much of the litter removed.

Rescue Tube Station at Beach Access #4

At an August 26, 2023 event attended by District 1 Commissioner Jeff Bergosh, a "Rescue Tube" station was erected at Perdido Key's Beach Access #4. Funded by the Rotary Club of Perdido Key in conjunction with a grant from Rotary International District 6940, the Rescue Tube station is a post in the sand with instructional signage and a rescue tube mounted with a Velcro strap for use in a water emergency. Rescue Tube stations are installed at Navarre Beach and other locations nationwide. Recent drownings in Northwest Florida, such as the apparent drowning of two children, ages 6 and 7, and their mother at NAS Pensacola on August 2, 2023, have increased awareness of the potential dangers in local waters. For more on the event and Rescue Tube use, go to the August 28, 2024 *WEAR* newscast "Life-saving rescue tubes introduced to Perdido Key in response to multiple drownings" at <https://weartv.com/news/local/life-saving-rescue-tubes-introduced-to-perdido-key-in-response-to-multiple-drownings> and the Rotary Club of Navarre website entry "Navarre Beach Rescue Tube Project" at <https://navarrerotary.org/navarre-beach-rescue-tube-project/>; for a report on recent drownings, see the August 4, 2023 *Pensacola News Journal* article "One woman, two children ages 6 and 7 dead in apparent drownings at NAS Pensacola" by Benjamin Johnson at

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/2023/08/03/nas-pensacola-drowning-victims-determined-to-be-family-of-u-s-marine/70521601007/>.

New ECUA Trash/Recycling Options

The ECUA board has decided to give customers a choice between having one trash can and one recycling can or having two trash cans. Changes are being made because some subscribers are using recycling cans for normal waste and raising the cost to recycle. The board also voted to raise sanitation rates by 9.5% with average fees increasing \$2.86 to about \$33.03 a month. The city of Pensacola plans to end curbside recycling on October 1, 2023 and is investigating other means for people to recycle. For more on the issue, see the August 04, 2023 *Pensacola News Journal* article “ECUA customers may have to pay 9.5% more and choose between recycling or second trash can” by Jim Little at

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/escambia-county/2023/08/04/ecua-customers-may-see-rate-increase-for-sanitation-water-and-sewer/70496848007/#:~:text=Emerald%20Coast%20Utilities%20Authority%20customers,to%20a%20second%20trash%20can.>

Gulf of Mexico Fish Farm Presentation Rescheduled

An industrial-scale open water fish farm has been proposed for the Gulf of Mexico about 25 miles south of Perdido Key and Pensacola Beach. The twice postponed presentation by the owner of Manna Farms, the firm proposing the fish farm, to the Escambia County Marine Advisory Committee is now scheduled for Monday, September 11, 2023 at 5:30 pm at the Escambia County Central Office Complex, 3363 West Park Place, Pensacola – just north of Fairfield Drive.

Perdido Key Demonstration Garden Workdays

Escambia County will host three volunteer workdays at the Perdido Key Coastal Demonstration Garden at 15500 Perdido Key Dr (Perdido Key Visitors Center) from 9 AM to Noon on September 15, October 20 and November 17, 2023. County staff will provide all necessary tools and equipment. Volunteers of all ages are welcome, but those under 18 will need a parent or guardian onsite for the duration of the workday. For more information and to register, go to the *Escambia County News Article* “Escambia County to Host Volunteer Workdays at Perdido Key Garden” at <https://myescambia.com/news/news-article/2023/08/28/escambia-county-to-host-volunteer-workdays-at-perdido-key-garden>.

Heron Trot 5K at Big Lagoon on November 11

Help honor our veterans on Veterans Day by participating in the Heron Trot 5K road race on Saturday, November 11, 2023 at Big Lagoon State Park. Hosted by the Friends of Pensacola State Parks, sign-in will begin at 6 AM with the race at 7 AM. T-Shirts with a patriotic heron design will be available when pre-registered by October 25, 2023; based on availability, t-shirts may also be offered on race day. Pre-registration fee is \$40; day of the race is \$45. The Friends of Pensacola State Parks uses proceeds from events such as the Heron Trot to help support local State Parks. For more information, go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/heron-trot-5k-runwalk-tickets-698005141167>.

Estuary Program Position Available

The Pensacola and Perdido Bays Estuary Program (PPBEP) hopes to hire a Community Outreach Assistant to support “all aspects of the Program’s community engagement, including K-12 curriculum development, teacher workshops, field trips, public outreach and activities, event planning, volunteer coordination, meeting support, communications, content development, and providing administrative support for the Community Grant Program.” For more on PPBEP and the available position, go to

<https://files.constantcontact.com/97572221801/a7960d6c-543c-4295-8e83-15f5c5b054c7.pdf?rdr=true>.

Tourism in Escambia County

Visit Pensacola officials provided information on various aspects of the local tourist industry at the August 8, 2023 meeting of the Escambia County Tourist Development Council (TDC). Data included that, of the 2.5 million visitors to Escambia County in fiscal year 2022, 37.9% went to Pensacola Beach and 18.9% to Perdido Key; of the \$12.8 million in Tourist Development Taxes (TDT) collected thus far in 2023, Pensacola Beach collected 40.4% and Perdido Key 18.1%.

Flu Shots

According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, September and October are good times to get a flu vaccine. For more on this issue, see the August 28, 2023 *Naples Daily News* article “Flu activity is low but picking up in Florida as season kicks in soon” by Liz Freeman at <https://www.naplesnews.com/story/news/health/2023/08/23/flu-activity-is-low-in-florida-for-now-only-outbreak-is-in-lee-county/70657110007/>.

Federal Protection of Wetlands Weakened

The EPA is weakening its protection on millions of acres of wetlands after the Supreme Court “sharply limited the federal government’s jurisdiction over them.” The new rule “would require that wetlands be more clearly connected to other waters like oceans and rivers, a policy shift that departs from a half-century of federal rules governing the nation’s waterways.” For more on this issue, go to the August 29, 2023 *AP* article “After Supreme Court curtails federal power, Biden administration weakens clean water protections” by Michael Phillis, Matthew Daly and John Flesher at <https://apnews.com/article/clean-water-epa-biden-supreme-court-sackett-a2101597f96ca9f0dcc6917832906b1e>.

Lots of Alabama Sea Turtles

Alabama’s beaches have documented 141 sea turtle nests thus far this season with four Kemp’s Ridley, six Green and the rest Loggerheads. These include the first ever documented Green turtle nest on Dauphin Island. For more on this issue, see the August 22, 2023 *Mullet Wrapper* article “Amazing nesting season” for Alabama’s sea turtles” at <https://mulletwrapper.net/amazing-nesting-season-for-alabamas-sea-turtles-2/>.

International Whale Shark Day August 30

International Whale Shark Day on August 30, 2023 was meant to highlight whale sharks and actions that can protect them. They are “considered endangered” species and threatened by

vessel strikes, entanglement in ocean trash and other man-made hazards. Drawn from August 25, 2023 *Ocean Conservancy* e-mail by Dr. Anja Brandon.

September Calendar

Sept 01-03 – Labor Day Weekend Party at OWA
Sept 01-03,12-17,21,22 – Blue Wahoos at Blue Wahoo Stadium in downtown Pensacola
Sept 03 – Light up Labor Day at The Wharf
Sept 04 – Labor Day
Sept 07-09 – Flora-Bama’s Bulls on the Beach
Sept 09 – Five Flags Night of Champions #1 at Five Flags Speedway
Sept 09 – Coastal Alabama Farmers and Fishermans Market in Foley
Sept 09-10 – Turtle Fest at Gulf State Park Educational Pier
Sept 12 – Whiskey and War Stories at the Flora-Bama
Sept 15 – Gallery Night Pensacola – Fashion Week in downtown Pensacola
Sept 16 – Rock4Vets 5K Run & Walk in downtown Pensacola
Sept 16 – Vettes on the Beach at Pensacola Beach
Sept 23-24 – Pensacola Para Con at Pensacola Interstate Fair Grounds
Sept 29 – Pensacola Seafood Festival at Seville Square in downtown Pensacola
Sept 30 – Pensacola Dragon Boat Festival near Bayview Park in Pensacola
Sept 30 – Fall Pensacola Bay Music Fest at Community Maritime Park

Blue Angels practice at NAS Pensacola September 06,12,19

Bands on the Beach at Pensacola Beach every Tuesday, 7-9 PM April to October

The following websites provide additional information about events 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>

Perdido Key Association Board of Directors