

THE WEWA NEWS[®]



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A FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER-Take One!

THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION?

By Tom Wynn

On April 20th of 2010 the BP Oil Spill (Offshore Oil Rig "Deepwater Horizon" exploded!) causing a natural disaster in our Beloved Gulf of Mexico effecting our waterways and beaches, harming 23 counties on the Gulf side of Florida. As a result it is considered the largest oil spill in U.S. history. BP was fined Billions of Dollars, which much of it came to The State of Florida in the form of penalties and fines.

The Administrations of those funds came in a form of an ACT, called "THE RESTORE ACT." A counsel was created made up of 1 or 2 individuals from each County affected and several handpicked people by the then, Governor of Florida, Rick Scott.

Now because of space I will not go into anymore of the details of the Oil Spill as most of us know of it, and lived through its aftermath, and saw the movie as well. I need to dig into the answer of my 6 million dollar question, so here is what I discovered:

I went to the Wewahitchka City meeting the evening of 28 January and asked the City Counsel what happened to the 6 Million Dollars from the BP Oil Spill, and the half that Wewa was suppose to receive?

The Mayor, Phillip Gaskins, and the City Commissioners wanted to know also, and said the County officials kept saying it is in "POT 3". No one seemed to know what that was. So I decided it was time to find out, thus my adventure way down South into the Depth of The Southern Parts of our Lovely County-I headed down a few days later.

MY first stop was the Gulf County Clerks Office to ask Ms. Becky Norris what she knew. To my surprise she remembered when the BP Oil Spill happened and told me she would look into it for me. She has always been a woman who keeps her word in the pass, sure enough, she found what I needed to know, only thing was I had to dig deep into a 511 page document that controls who and where and how the BP Oil Spill money was to be spent.

Next I headed over to the Gulf County Chief Admin. Office to ask to see Michael Hammin, but he was about to be in a planned meeting so I left my phone number with the front desk. The county is a very busy place nowadays. Ms. Becky Norris found what I needed to complete my research on my now 2 burning questions, "What happened to the 6 Million Dollars earmarked for Gulf County Area" and my new question, "What in the world is, "POT 3"?

I was emailed a document that is 511 pages long, and the answers would be in there. She was very kind and pointed out the parts I needed to know about, that covers Wewahitchka Florida, **THANK YOU MS. BECKY, you are a Saint!**

NOW, Finally we can all know what happened to the money and what in the world is, "POT 3"?
(The 6 Million Dollar Question? Continued on Page 2)

ARROWHEADS

By Eric Jackson

One of the most common Indian artifacts found in the United States is the arrowhead. An arrowhead is really a spear point in most cases, but there are some instances that spear points are used for knives. They each vary in size and shape as well as they have their own special purpose too. The smaller ones were used on the end of a spear to kill small animals such as birds, fish, rabbits and squirrels. The medium to large size spearheads used to kill larger animals such as deer, cattle and buffalo. Most arrowheads were made out of a material such as quartz, limestone and flint. They were individually chipped away from big pieces of stone.

When I was a small boy, my father would take me to find arrowheads. He would wait till spring time. He told me the reason to wait until spring-time was that was when the farmers plowed their fields to get ready for seed. This process brought the arrowheads to the top of the soil so they would be easier to find. We would come back with at least a bucket full. Now after many years I walk the fields and can not find them anymore. Because after so many season's of plowing the fields most whole arrow heads are broken into little pieces, and a person would not be able to tell what the pieces are. Finding an arrowhead now would be like finding treasure of gold. Now is the time to ask farmers in your area if you can walk their fields and maybe you will find a piece of Wewa History! Have fun enjoy your treasure.

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thewewanews2021@gmail.com

THE TRUE MEANING OF The Creek Indian Name- “WEWAHITCHKA” by Tom Wynn

The true Creek Indian name English Translation for “Wewahitchka” means, “Place of many waters” as per the then, sitting Creek Indian Chief Alonso when we questioned him about the name during an interview in the The Documentary I filmed, produced and directed called “Tupelo Honey & The Amazing World of Beekeeping” I filmed in 2002 in Gulf County during the Honey Season. Featuring our Local Beekeeper James E. “Jim” Rish and including other local Beekeepers. Look for it on Youtube, Enjoy!

NORTHWEST REGIONAL LIBRARY SYSTEM

Call our local Librarian Ms. Joyelle Linton, the Branch Manager for their hours of operation or her co-worker Ms. Katie, both are great to talk to and will show you all we have on the history of our lovely City. The Library is looking for donations of Wewa High School Years, check with Joyelle on the years needed. Library phone number is: 850-639-2419 Check it out! it is beautiful and a peaceful place to visit often.

A BOOK LOCATED IN OUR OWN PUBLIC LIBRARY THAT WOULD BE A FINE READ IS BY ONE OF OUR LOCAL HISTORIANS WHO HAS SINCE PASSED AWAY, MS. BEVERLY MOUNT. JUST ASK FOR HER BOOK IN THE WEWA LIBRARY. IT IS 128 PAGES, AND CONTAINS MANY PHOTOGRAPHS DONATED TO HER FOR THE BOOK BY LOCAL FOLKS WITH THEIR FAMILY STORIES. SHE WAS A WONDERFUL GENEALOGIST AND LOCAL HISTORIAN FOR GULF AND CALHOUN COUNTIES.

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Front Page Story Continues (The 6 Million Dollar Question?)

“POT 3” What is it? and who does it effect?

After reading many pages of the document Ms. Becky Norris sent me, I found the answers I was looking for. It was not easy I promise you, about 20 pages include The City of Wewahitchka in them, and I read every last one at least 6 or 7 times, to be able to dig the gold out!

So here goes:

“POT 3” is not a pot, but are Locations. The City of St. Joseph proper, The area of Beacon Hill, and of course, The City of Wewahitchka proper. Yes, folks we are in “POT 3”. Soooo...the money that is suppose to come to Wewa (Home of The World’s “Famous Dead Lakes” and Tupelo Honey, as well as “The WEWA GATORS!) is in “POT 3”, and is earmarked for these three locations.

As I read through these 20 pages or so I found answers to our many questions. How much money is coming our way, from the BP Oil Spill? Is it 6 million dollars, or 3 million dollars or what? What will it be used for? NOW that was a major question I had as well, as I began to dig in. I found answers in those 20 pages (out of the 511 pages) or so for all these questions, here is our answers:

1. Yes, we are in “POT 3”
 2. Yes, we will receive money from the BP Oil Spill.
 3. Yes, It will be more then 3 million dollars.
 4. Yes, It will be more then 6 million dollars.
 5. Yes, It is completely controlled by the Gulf County Head shed.
 6. Yes, it is much more then 6 million dollars, more like 15 million dollars plus, but! there is a 9 million dollar shortfall for the City of Cont. -
Wewahitchka projects.
 7. Yes, It started, back in 2018!
- This is not my personal point of view on this subject, but just the facts as I know them today, taken

Front Page Story Continues: "The 6 Million Dollar Question?"

from the very document that I have read through for my community's benefit. We needed to know the truth of the matter, and what in the world happened to those millions, and what the money is going to be used for.

The name of the Document and what does it cover?

The name of this very important document to Florida is referred to as, **"The Gulf Consortium."** It is a public entity created in October 2012 by inter-local Agreement among the several counties (23 of them in all) in Florida that were affected by the Spill. This Group of Counties were and are to meet the requirements of **"THE RESTORE**

ACT". The RESTORE ACT was passed by The U.S. Congress back in June of 2012 and was signed into law on the 6th of July of the same year.

In the Document they use the term, **"SEP"** which means, **"State Expenditure Plan"**. The law that gives the requirements for SEP is **33 U.S.C. Section 1321 (t)(1)(3)(B).**

What is the Project Description you may ask?

The Program involves: "Public acquisition and the construction and/or improvement of recreational amenities to enhance public access to the **Chipola River, Dead Lakes, St. Joseph Bay, and the Gulf of Mexico.**" Of course the Devil is in the Details, but for the most part, it means, new Boat Ramps, Repairs to existing ones, Parks and other "amenities" (Restrooms) for our area of Gulf County, to just name a few. Now this document has **"GOALS"** and **"OBJECTIVE"** which fills page after page, mostly dealing with water sports, parks and such.

They used the term, **"Milestones"**, which I figured out means, planned to be reached by a given year of completion. Some of these **"GOALS"** are to start in 2018-2029(Wewa), "2022 and end by 2033". Now I am only discussing The City of Wewa here folks. Remember this Document is 511 pages long! The best I can see, is that the only source of Money will come from the Gulf County **"Spill Impact Component Allocation"** for the City of Wewa, \$2,660,000 according to page 126, and that is for and in Locations in: **"POT 3"**. As well as additional grant money from other State Agencies.

What else is in this Plan for Wewahitchka, you may ask?

Wewa Septic tanks to The City Sewer system. The plan is to remove **850 septic systems located on small urban lots** to Public City Sewage System, and replace **27,300 linear feet of failing sewer infrastructure in the City of Wewahitchka** to the tune of an additional **260 small urban lots as well.** Also the plans are to add to the City of Wewa's Sewer coverage area as well, developing a larger customer base as a result. Believe me folks, this is the very short version, only the highlights of this overall plan for The Little City of Wewahitchka Florida here. Their **"GOALS"** are 3 fold, so here is what I found in the many pages of words, charts and numbers:

"Goal 2. Restore Water Quality and Quantity (primary).

Goal 1. Restore and Conserve Habitat.

Goal 3. Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources." ... and Yes in that order it is written in the document.

What is the bottom line?

And I quote: **"The program will also increase property values of parcels that will be provided sewer services...This will in turn grow Gulf County's tax base. "**

This "program" " started in 2018 and is to end in 2029 (12 years), in the City of

Wewahitchka, to be done in 3 projects and 4 phases each. The County of Gulf is the Sole source of issuing out the funds for these "Programs/Projects/Phases, according to the document. This was written in this order twice, so it was not an error.

"Total Committed Funding \$9,000,000" is committed to The City of Wewahitchka, with a "Budget shortfall of \$6,750,000." (the shortfall is suppose to come from Grants as needed, best I can figure out). **Note:** "Gulf County is committed to allocating **\$7,000,000** of its share of the Florida Spill Impact Component, as well as **\$2,000,000** of its Direct Component, to this program." **Now in this article, my only concern is the subject matter of The City of Wewahitchka and not the other "POT 3" Locations or The Beaches and Underwater Reef they plan on installing in the future.**

This Information is Available

You can locate this information for your selves, all 511 pages of it at: www.gulfconsortium.org I hope this helps everyone see the coming Construction/Repairs and Additions to our Parks, Boating Docks, New Construction of Docks, fishing locations, and etc. for the near future, as well as where the BP Oil Spill money is being spent as it concerns Wewahitchka.

According to the document, the purse strings are very well monitored and planned out. There is thousands of dollars planned for monitoring as well, before and after the projects are completed and monitoring their results up to 2 years after. So now I know where the BP money went and where it will go for Wewa and other locations around our County's Beaches, Lakes and Rivers as well as our Septic tank and Sewage system repairs and new installations. Have a Blessed Life in Wewahitchka Florida.

I HOPE THIS HELPS!

What's in a Name? HISTORY! "THE SIGN OF THE SHINER"

By Tom Wynn



The Old "Sign Of The Shiner" was a bait shop just south on the right of the West Arm Creek bridge. I loved to stop by and get me a very ice cold "Yoohoo" and chew the fat! "Those were the days my friend."

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WEWA IS GETTING A NEW BURGER KING!

At the corner of Highway 71 and Chipola Ave. A New Burger King will be built soon enough.. To double check on that Mr. Gene Hanlon and myself, Tom Wynn, briefly spoke to the Contractor at the Port St. Joseph Burger King site. When asked, he stated that he would know any day now, when to start work in Wewa. Hopefully it will provide many jobs and taxes to our City. Burger King only a few blocks away, WEEEEEWAAAAA!!

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**We should have a Copy of The Wewa
News available until the supply last,
come by and pick one up!**

WEWA GETS A FACELIFT

By Tom Wynn

As we drive around our Sweet Little City we can see changes coming. The old City Hall and Firehouse is gone, the old stores of NAPA and IGA is now gone as well, thanks to the present owner. We pray that the new buildings will be beautiful and add to our Cites' productive economy.



**WEWAHITCHKA
I'M PART OF IT!
I'M PROUD OF IT!**

