

FEBRUARY 2022 >> Vol. 4 No. 02-02 <<

JANUARY CITY COUNCIL MEETING FIRE STATION CONSTRUCTION HALTED! by Tom Wynn

The City of Wewahitchka commissioners voted 5 to 0 giving the city Mayor Phillip Gaskin the go ahead to "terminate" Mr. Tommy Hamm, Winterfell Construction's contract to build the cities new, approximately 1.2-million-dollar firehouse.

Mr. Hamm's company did not complete the structure nor hand over the keys to the new firehouse on the 26th of December as agreed (this late date included many rain days extensions, as requested by Mr. Hamm).



The city lawyer was authorized to contact the bonding company of the contractor after the vote was counted. Before the vote, Mr. Hamm was given time to explain his reasons for the various concerns of the city council.

He gave reasons why there was cracks in the floor, brick issues and roofing issues that concerned the city council. He continued with placing the blame on the city of Wewahitchka and its council for his delays, materials not arriving on time, change orders not signed by the council during an earlier special meeting by the city as well as other issues, i.e., one of his contractors passed away, Wewa having more rain than any other place, he claimed which he added to his reasons for not completing his contractual obligations to the city.

Mayor Gaskins asked him point blank if he was blaming the City of Wewa for his woes in completing the building as agreed. (The city of Wewa has yet to place an 80,000-pound Fire truck on the concrete

A FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER Take One!

slab, yet it has a crack in it and a void under the concrete, as per Mr. Jack Husband, the Engineer in charge of the project for the city of Wewa). Husband did a test using smoke to see where the voids are and possible other cracks in the slab, smoking coming up from the crack means that there is a void under the slab, possible a wash out, according to Mr. Husband.

Due to the city complaints of noncompliance of the contract and other issues, and Mr. Hamm placing the blame squarely on the City Council (pointing a finger at Mr. Ralph Fisher personally, at the end of his presentation) as well as Mr. Jack Husband's Engineering crew, saying that poor design was the reason for the cracks in the slab. All this gave good reason for the mayor as well as the entire Wewahitchka City Council to agree that the quality of the fire house construction is subpar by Winterfell Construction. Thus, they voted to shut him down and barred him from the site, unless he had city employees with him to recover his tools etc.

The Council acted in total agreement to contact the bonding company concerning the fire station, via the city lawyer, to let them know that Mr. Hamm was "terminated" for breach of contract. With the city lawyer and Jack Husband's input, the council repeatedly, since last February, spoke of their concerns to Mr. Hamm. Also, the public during monthly and special meetings voiced their concerns on these issues with Mr. Hamm's construction company quality and lack of progress to the city council.

The work thus far, at the time of the meeting, was a month behind, and the completion date was nowhere near. Just before Mr. Hamm started his presentation to the city council, he handed me an email that showed a conversation between Jack Husband, Larry Horne (representative for Matador Engineered Metal Buildings) and himself, on the material requirements of using "Mastic sealant" on a roof of 3:12 pitch or greater, that it was not needed, yet the contract and blueprints required Mastic sealant as I heard the Mayor and Mr. Fisher say in other city meetings over the past year. The question is, should Mr. Hamm honor the contract as required, nonetheless, more waterproofing the better? (City Council Meeting cont. page 2)

(City Council meeting cont. from page 1)

After some questioning from the mayor about the various issues and Mr. Hamm's answers not being what the council wanted to hear from Mr. Hamm, they ended his contract. The Public was already upset with the loss of our beloved old city hall and its firehouse, and now this just adds salt to the wound, does it not?

The council voted 5 to 0 to allow the city manager and the city clerks to review the various Lift Station bids, which Mr. Husband and the city employees will review the packages and bring their input at the next city meeting. Sealed bids were opened by the mayor and then passed on to Michael Gortman, the city manager. The bids started from 1.4 million to nearly 1.9 million dollars for the project.

The County Sheriff, Mike Harrison was consulted on how to slow down the locals from speeding down 2nd street. Several folks that live on 2nd street complained to the city council on how dangerous the traffic has become.

Commissioner Ralph Fisher and the other council members acted in a very professional manner as each of the public voiced their concerns. The Sheriff said he could place an Electronic Cop on 2nd street to tell his office and the city council just how fast and how often this speeding happens along 2nd street. Some put forth the idea of 2 new stop signs along 2nd street to break up the traffic flow. At the last minute The Sheriff mentioned he needed 4 new Deputies and that the pay was \$41,000 plus benefits. **TW**

WEWAHITCHKA HISTORICAL GROUP NEWS by Diane Semmes January 20, 2022

Wewahitchka Historical Group News

Dennis Keith, a new resident in White City, addressed the group about building a website for the Wewahitchka Historical Group. He said that he

would like to help us and invited anyone who had questions to give him a call. He also offered to set up a Facebook page for us. Discussion about annual dues and membership among members. It was originally voted that we would change anyone over 90 would have a free membership, since that meeting, it was decided to extend this to anyone over 80 year old. Ann Johnson will be taking membership information around town to local businesses as well as residents.

President Ann Johnson discussed an upcoming event that the Friends of the Gulf County Libraries will hold

on February 3, 5:00 EST, at the Port St. Joe library. A speaker will be discussing old structures in Gulf County which are at least 50 years old.

Ann challenged members to ride around Wewahitchka and see how many old structures they could find. Ann Johnson will be going to the Wewahitchka High School, along with a few other members, to discuss our group with the students. She will be taking some of the pictures we have accrued and other artifacts.

Carol Wood from the Presbyterian Church thanked all the members that have been helping her clean the old bricks that came from under the church.

To date they have cleaned approximately 1100 bricks. Tom Godwin informed members that he has finished a sign that he carved, and which reads Iola Cemetery. Tom and members of the group will be going to Iola on Sunday, January 30, 2:00 PM, to erect the sign. The rain date is Sunday, February 6, 2:00 PM.

If anyone is interested in visiting or joining the Wewahitchka Historical Group, meetings are held every third Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM CST at the Corner Café. Our next meeting will be Thursday, February 17, 2022, 6:00 PM. **DS**



Kathe Jones

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1 John 3:21-22

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MAY OUR LORD BLESS THEM BOTH ON THEIR VERY SPECIAL DAY.

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THE WEWA NEWS! and the Wynn Family

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Mrs. Era Daniell c/o Vera Rozier P.O. Box 329 Wewahitchka FL 32465

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PASTOR CAROL WOOD NEEDS YOUR HELP! UPDATE

by Ann Johnson



We are making a lot of progress on the bricks but can still use your help if you can...Our next workday is Wednesday, Feb 2 from 9 cst til 2pm. After that will be doing the next Tuesdays, Feb 8th and 15th from 9 cst til 2... Come if you can or drop by for moral support! LOL...Ann Johnson 850-867-5970 AJ

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Hebrews 13:6

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LIFT UP WEWA!

And bring joy to someone today! Tell someone you love them, tell someone you care about them, tell someone you miss them. Lift our leaders up and pray for those that run our government. Be kind when others are not! Be joyful when you see your friends, for tomorrow they or you may be gone. Not to worry, He has your life in His hands. Remember who you are, LOOK UP in the night sky, say "Hello Father, I see you own everything!" Live at peace, all is according to His will. **TW**



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The Wewa News is a locally owned and operated newspaper, created solely for the enjoyment of the people who live in the Wewa area. Our purpose is to bring "Good News" and "Whatever" to our locals' attention. I hope to bring back some joy and fun into our lives again and bring us closer than ever before. Thank you to those that support our effort. **TW**

HIGHWAY 22 STORAGE SHEDS WAS BROKEN INTO

By Tom Wynn

The storage buildings located on Highway 22 were broken into in early January, twice. The Cleckley family has provided the community with storage that were lockable for several years now at that location.

The Cleckley's had installed a security camera system and recorded the robberies and turned the footage over to the Sheriff's Department for review. The Sheriff's deputy, Officer Derosier, arrested the individual as the result of viewing the videos. The price of the broken locks replacement was paid by the thief and resulted in no one presses charges. Mrs. Betty Cleckley said, "We are happy that our security camera system is working well and that our law enforcement officers can use this tool to help keep our neighborhoods safe. **TW**

CHAMBER OF COMM	ERCE EVENTS 2022	
Blues on Reid	March 26, 2022	
Wheels on Williams	Third Thursday	
April-May-June-July		
Scallop Festival	September 3-4, 2022	
PortOberfest	September 24, 2022	
Forgotten Music Festival		
(sponsored by The Gulf Co. Chamber)		
-	October 8-9, 2022	
Shop Gulf Saturday	November 26, 2022	

Read its entirety Psalm 73

The Keepers of the Old Ways Event was Fun and Educational

by Jessica Bracewell

The Keepers of the Old Ways Event is back and is bigger and better this time. It took place at The Panhandle Pioneer Settlement in Blountstown FL, Friday, January 28th, 11 a.m. - 4 p.m., and Saturday, January 29th, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. The event has grown into a two-day event with 20 different classes being offered each day. We combined the prepper world with the pioneer ways to help people better prepare for any kind of upheaval they may have to face in life, job loss, hurricane, lockdowns, etc. We are so excited to have Off Grid with Doug and Stacy and Hakim Isler from Naked and Afraid YouTubers to come down and teach classes both days, it was exciting to see them in person. Not only were there classes but vendors, demonstrators, and the cabins were opened to explore as There were classes on Backyard well Homesteading 101, Getting Started with Goats, Survival Skills and so much more, just a fun day for all. See our Facebook page- Keepers of the Old Ways. If you have any questions, please contact Jessica at jbracewell83@gmail.com JB

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John 14:16

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HURRICANE MICHAEL CURSES, THEN COMES THE BLESSINGS by Tom Wynn

On the 10th of October 2018, Hurricane Michael destroyed our homes and business, but it did not destroy our spirit of love and forgiveness toward one another, in fact it increased our awareness of how important we are to each other, that includes the entire Gulf County folks. Wewa at the top and Port St. Joe at the bottom. From top to bottom, left to right we are all here to love one another. Welcome newcomers and strangers showing them that we love more, give more and respect more. We are a foundational people.

We come from deep roots, from living mountains of strongwilled people who came here to start a new life. Some of old and some new, but just the same, they came here, this part of Florida to enjoy life.

Slow down and take in nature. See it, feel it and taste it. We are the future of and the past of, God's County. We are what many in the world want and look to find.

We found it, we love it, and we know it. So, relax, now comes the blessings. You made it here and now, enjoy the fruit of your labors getting back to the natural world, the way it should be.

Sorry we can never go back, but we can see the joy of life as it is today, if you will just look around you. See those over there? Say hi! If you know them, talk to them. Enjoy time with one another for tomorrow may not come for you. Do it now, while you still have breath. Hug each other, love one another, it is okay to say, "I love you". It just brought us closer together. Look for the blessings, don't forget who is in charge, folks! Love U! 850 Strong! **TW**

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THE WEWA NEWS & HARVELL'S RAGIN CAJUN DELCARES THE MONTH OF FEBRUARY "WEWAHITCHKA CITY EMPLOYEE APPRECATION MONTH!" By Tom Wynn

Senior Chief James Harvell US NAVY Retired and Senior Chief Tom Wynn Jr. USCG Retired has declared February Wewa Employee Appreciation month.

Our city employees work tirelessly to keep this sweet little city running. They work or are on standby 24/7/365 to keep us in city water, keeping our water system working, our sewage system moving along, keeping up our city parks, the city buildings, the roads and ditches, tree and yard clean up at your roadside, keep all our trucks and equipment running smoothjust to name a few jobs.

As for the ladies in the office they are installing us a new computer system for billing to make it easier for us to pay our water bills online.

They work very hard to record and type our city meetings, keep the books of the city, run the budget and keep up with all the legal documents and fillings that is requested and required by the state and county governments, and expected to do all this with the possibility of getting COVID from the public that they have contact with daily.

They are just very helpful, nice and respectful as our men out in the city are. They all have done maintenance on the city vehicles, keep up with regulations put out by the State of Florida and the Federal government for all kinds of things and machines. They write grants to get us free money from state and federal organizations. They are frankly just an amazing people. group of All our city government is a grand total of 12 workers and 5 men on the City Council, serving about 2000 folks, of all ages, flavors personalities. YES! 12 people do and everything, and 5 men kept up with all the decisions a city must make, including budgets, issues the public brings into the meetings and dealing with contractors and other things that takes a lot of their time and energy, all for about 100 dollars per month. They are all giving back to their community, that is YOU FOLKS!

Michael Gortman, our city manager, who served his country in the USCG for about 10 years, came home to now serve his beloved city of Wewahitchka.

He does a great job handling all kinds of fires that he has to deal with, from me, asking pointed questions, to gulf county officials, asking for various things and information from him, the public eye is on him all the time. He answers to everyone, and does a great job of doing so. I am very proud of him and his mighty crew of 12 caring and loving folks.

There is the mayor (**Phillip Rudy Gaskin**, one of the best mayors Wewa has ever had to date) who is highly dependent on Michael for this or that, as well as the ladies in the office. Between Chipper and Wayne, the mayor has his right and his left flank ready for anything that pops up! including broken water mains and alike.

The mayor watches over the city of Wewa budget continually to make sure no tax dollar is wasted. I am proud of that for sure! He is just the right guy for that job folks.

(City Employees story cont. Page 7)

Psalm 119:49-50, 52

(City Employees story cont.) Please pray for our Commissioners (Ralph Fisher, Charlie Pettis, Johnny Paul and Brian Cox) and the mayor, they seem to be rarely thanked for what they do for our little city, which is made of honey and bee spit, I mean Tree Sap!

They often need our prayers folks as they spend your money. They have the patience of Job! Michael Gortman and his crew manages the whole house of cards including future events like the Tupelo festivals, October Fest and The Christmas Events. He makes contacts with the public daily with a kind heart and a smile, even when he does not feel good.

Chipper Wade and Wayne Dickens have served this community since the Pope was neehigh to Jesus. Their devotion has always been there, their knowledge of the systems of the city is just amazing to say the least. We BEE PROUD of All of them. I could go on and on about the things they do, without complaint.

Rachel Jackson and her crew in the office keep just about everything that the fellow in the field don't do. They keep track of pay and hours worked, the phone calls, billing and anything that has paper attached to it or needs typing. I just wonder if we should find her a Super Woman outfit to wear to work? hmm.

We are very proud of our city workers as well as our City Commissioners. They work continually to keep Wewa running without wasting our tax dollars. They are always looking to save money here or there. We love our Mayor and his Commission, thank you ladies and fellows, for a job well done daily, year in and year out, you are the best and most efficient workforce for the among of work you have on your plate. We at THE WEWA NEWS and at HARVELL'S RAGIN CAJUN are very proud of our city workforce. So, it is time to thank them in a big way this month folks.

If you see one of our employees, wave at them, throw them a big Kiss! Thank them in person and tell them how much you are thankful for their service to our community of Wewa. Give them a THUMBS UP! as you see them doing their job. Write a letter to them, send a special card to them at City Hall. Send Flowers! Drop one off before you head home. Just let them know how much you care about them; I know for sure they love Wewa. **TW**

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Not my personal story but worthy of sharing. Submitted by B. Scott Bozeman



"My dad has bees. Today I went to his house, and he showed me all the honey he had gotten from the hives.

He took the lid off a 5-gallon bucket full of honey and on top of the honey there were 3 little bees, struggling. They were covered in sticky honey and drowning. I asked him if we could help them, and he said he was sure they wouldn't survive. Casualties of honey collection I suppose.

I asked him again if we could at least get them out and kill them quickly, after all he was the one who taught me to put a suffering animal (or bug) out of its misery. He finally conceded and scooped the bees out of the bucket. He put them in an empty Chobani yogurt container and put the plastic container outside.

Because he had disrupted the hive with the earlier honey collection, there were bees flying all over outside.

We put the 3 little bees in the container on a bench and left them to their fate. My dad called me out a little while later to show me what was happening. These three little bees were surrounded by all of their sisters (all of the bees are females) and they were cleaning the sticky nearly dead bees, helping them to get all of the honey off of their bodies. We came back a short time later and there was only one little bee left in the container. She was still being tended to by her sisters.

When it was time for me to leave, we checked one last time and all three of the bees had been cleaned off enough to fly away and the container was empty. Those three little bees lived because they were surrounded by family and friends who would not give up on them, family and friends who refused to let them drown in their own stickiness and resolved to help until the last little bee could be set free.

Bee Sisters. Bee Peers. Bee Teammates.

We could all learn a thing or two from these



Bee kind always."

THE CHARLES WHITEHEAD PUBLIC LIBRARY by Joyelle Linton – The Wewa Librarian



The Charles Whitehead Public Library in Wewahitchka is so excited to share with you! Since January 28th, VITA Tax Services was made available at the Wewahitchka Library on Fridays from 9:30-3:30 CT. Appointments are required. Visit

the library or register at Bit.ly/Real sense Taxes. Program in partnership with United Way. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) offers free tax filing help to residents who earn a moderate income, to people who are over 65, disabled, or do not speak English well. IRS certified volunteers provide basic income tax return prep with electronic filing to qualified individuals.

The library is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9-5 CT. Please contact us at (850) 639-2419 for more information. JL

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Matthew 5:4

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Alzheimer's PROJECT

Our Mission is to provide comfort, support, and assistance to persons with memory disorders and their caregivers across Gulf County. Email us for more information: ForOurCaregivers.com

LYN'S QUIZ Where do Bees go to the bathroom? Answer on page 11

Matthew 11:28

GRACELAND PORTABLE BUILDINGS OF WEWA See Jodi Rustin – Salesperson Hwy 71 South Call (850) 481-0855

The First Amendment of Your Constitution... Use it or lose it! Many died protecting it. "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." TW



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SAVE YOUR HISTORY! IF YOU WANT TO SAVE A HISTORICAL BUILDING OR ARTIFACT, THIS MAY HELP! LOOK TO NATIONAL & FLORIDA GRANTS

by Tom Wynn

In my research on saving some important buildings in Wewahitchka and our local area, I found the following grants via the U.S. Federal Government and the State of Florida as well. So, dig down deep and find some time to save something important to you and to your neighbors using these possible grants, Google these: **1**. "National Historic Preservation Act of 1966" **2**. "38 CFR Part 800-Protection of Historic Properties Incorporating amendments effective August 5, 2004" **3**. "Save America's Treasures Grants" see the National Historic Preservation Act 54 USC 300101 **4**. The Dept. Of Historical Resources (a part of the Dept of State (FL) Special Cat. Grant).

There is more, but this should get you started. Get HOT! Save our national and local treasures while we still can. True power is in "We the People."

Contact Ms. BJ Throne who is a Certified Grant Writer for help: email:chipolaLAW@gmail.com TW Thank you all who support *The Wewa News!* Please read and enjoy while we have the time. Live good and be of good cheer for the time may be short and our new era of government and society has come to a point of no return. So, make the best of it while we still have time to love one another, and do good things for each other as often as we are able. Tom Wynn – Publisher of the Wewa News. God Speed!

The Wewa News is a locally owned and operated newspaper, created solely for the enjoyment of the people who live in the Wewa area. Our purpose is to bring "Good News" and "Whatever" to our locals' attention. I hope to bring back some joy and fun into our lives again and bring us closer than ever before. Thank you to those that support our effort. **TW**

Wewahitchka, Its True Meaning

by Tom Wynn

The true Creek Indian name, English translation for "Wewahitchka" means, "Place of many waters" or "Water is here" according to the then-sitting Creek Indian Chief Alonso when we questioned him about the name during an interview in the documentary I filmed, produced, and directed called: **"Tupelo Honey & The Amazing World of Beekeeping."** We filmed it during the 2002 Tupelo honey season in Gulf County and it featured our local beekeeper James E. "Jim" Rish. The video has been published on YouTube by me. **TW**

THE PANHANDLE PIONEER SETTLEMENT A LIVING HISTORY MUSEUM BLOUNTSTOWN, FLORIDA PATTY STEPHENS AND WEYLAN BRASWELL A NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATION FOUNDED IN 1989 WE HAVE 18 HISTORIAL LOCAL BUILDINGS ON DISPLAY INCLUDING THE OLD RISH HONEY HOUSE, FROM IOLA, COME SEE! OVER 120 YEARS OLD. GIVE US A CALL TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT US AND WHAT WE DO FOR OUR COMMUNITY CALL: 850-674-2777

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- Follow-up care coordination ensuring families receive the services they need.
- Other community resources promoting health and wellness for the whole family.

Call **850-866-6425** to complete your child's developmental screening today! CALL 2-1-1 AND ASK FOR HELP ME GROW®



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Submitted by Tom Semmes

OLD, BUT APPRROPRIATE

The Gulf County Breeze C. F. Hanlon, Editor and Owner Thursday, April 30, 1953 5¢ Per copy

Here is some sound advice for Americans which was delivered more than 150 (now 220) years ago, but which is still appropriate: Undertake not what you cannot perform but be careful to keep your promise. Be not hasty to believe flying reports to the disparagement of any. Let your discourse with men of business be short and comprehensive. Show not yourself glad at the misfortune of another, though he were you enemy. Speak not evil of the absent, for it is unjust. Mock not, nor jest at anything of importance: make no jests that are sharpbiting, and if you deliver anything witty and pleasant, abstain from laughing at yourself.

Be not angry at table, whatever happens, and if you have reason to be so, show not it; put on a cheerful countenance, especially if there be strangers, for good humor makes one dish of meat a feast.

Detract not from others, neither be excessive in commending.

When another speaks, be attentive yourself, and disturb not the audience. If any hesitate in his words, help him not, nor prompt him without being desired, interrupt him not, nor answer him, till his speech be ended. Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, call conscience. (The man who delivered this advice was George Washington.) **TS** HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO EVERYONE BORN IN FEBRUARY! IF your birthday is February the 10th that was a special day in my household. My oldest child came into this world, a true blessing to me. Thank you, Lord for Tracy Lyn!



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We meet on the 3^{rd} Monday of each month at 6:00 pm. Potluck meal at 6:30 pm \cdot Meeting place: Jackson County Extension Office 2741 Penn Ave., Suite 3 Marianna, Florida North Side Entrance \cdot Contact us: (850) 482-9620

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2 Corinthians 1:3-4

2 Corinthians 4:17-18