

# THE TUPELO COUNTY NEWS™

## THE WEWA NEWS™



*“The Good News Newspaper”*

OCTOBER 2023 >> No. 10-04<< A FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER Take One!



### **Wewahitchka Firehouse Will Continue To Be Finished Where It Stands Today!**

by Tom Wynn

In a recent conversation with City Commissioner Mr. Ralph Fisher, who seemed very happy and upbeat that the city would get a new contractor to remove the damaged concrete and other items that need replacing, including all the wood structures inside the building. He also said that the one million dollars grant from the State would assist in the completion of the building and provide additional funds for the fire department.

Mayor Phillip Gaskin had announced in the past monthly city meeting, significant progress had been made in the Firehouse Lawsuit, bringing hope for a positive resolution to a long-standing issue. The city Lawyer, Ms. Jordan has worked very hard to get this mess cleaned up and back on track. According to Mayor Gaskin, a tentative agreement has been reached between the Bonding Company and Tommy Hamm's Construction Company, with the City of Wewa.

### **FALL FESTIVAL AT LAKE ALICE PARK October 7<sup>th</sup>**

It takes place at Lake Alice Park in downtown Wewahitchka Florida. The fun starts at 9am until 4pm. So, bring your family and friends for a head start on a great day in the park. Food and drink will be had by all, and much more. Enjoy Wewa as the weather is fine and the beauty of the park will take your breath away.



### **GULF COUNTY SHERIFF SEEKS REELECTION**

by Tom Wynn

Gulf County Sheriff, Mike Harrison put his hat in the ring for reelection in late September. Harrison is presently 55 years of age. He was elected in 2012 and reelected in 2016 and 2020 in landslide victories winning all precincts. “It has been an honor to serve the great people of Gulf County and I look forward to serving them in the future,” stated Sheriff Harrison. (See Sheriff, page 2 )



### **THE WEWAHITCHKA WOMAN'S CLUB HOSTED A FISH FRY AT LAKE ALICE PARK**

by Tom Wynn

On Saturday afternoon, the 30<sup>th</sup> of September at 11am, the Wewahitchka Woman's Club and the Ministerial Association sponsored a free fish dinner (requested Can Goods donations) to whomever came to Lake Alice Park. This fundraiser, according to Mrs. Patty Fisher, happens all over the world on that day.

They were very happy with the turnout, she said. The President of the Club, Mrs. Terry Norris was on hand busy collecting the cans as I rode up on my trusty white Stead, Golf Cart.

The cans will be donated to the local church pantry that helps those in need of food in the Wewa area. It was a great time to see and visit with other locals, which made it even better.

(Harrison from Page 1) Since taking office in 2013, Sheriff Harrison's focus has been on fighting drugs, fighting crime and keeping our children safe. In addition to assigning a deputy to each public school, he has also assigned a narcotics K-9 to the school district. GCSO Deputies have been dedicated to getting drugs off the streets and out of the hands of our youth. GCSO Narcotics Investigators continue to assist with a Drug Task Force that fights illegal narcotics here and throughout our region.

Harrison worked to get state funding to increase deputies' salaries in fiscally constrained counties like Gulf County. This year, he lobbied the Florida legislature to create a bill that now allows bed tax dollars to be used to fund law enforcement services in Gulf County. The community's collective hope is that our Sheriff and other elected officials will lead to a brighter future and a safer environment for all in Gulf County. TW

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JOHN 14:16

## **Paddle Boats: Navigating the Apalachicola River in the 19th and 20th Centuries**

by Tom Wynn

### **The Era of Paddle Boats**

In the 19th century, before highways and railways dominated transportation, rivers were the highways of commerce. The Apalachicola River, with its connections to the Gulf of Mexico, became a vital artery for trade in the region. Paddle boats, also known as steamboats, revolutionized this water-based transportation system. Though it was a dangerous job to do, it was a successful one for this part of America.

### **The Mighty Vessels and Their Dedicated Captains**

Paddle boats were impressive feats of engineering for their time. With their large, revolving wheels at the stern, these vessels used steam power to propel themselves upstream against the river's flow. The wheels churned the water, propelling the boat forward with remarkable force. Each one took a mighty crew to navigate the river system, "all hands-on deck!" as we use to say in the U.S. Coast Guard, when I was a young seaman, but in my case, the ship was made of steel and aluminum.

Names like "Mary," "Callahan," "Iola," and "W.C. Bradley" and of course The Wewahitchka (better known as the "Wewahitchkie," by my Great Grandfather Robert "Bob" Wynn and my grandfather Erastus aka Ralph Wynn, he hated that name because they nicknamed him "Rat". He dealt with the Paddle boats and the railroad customers because he was depot Agent his whole life, until retirement, in Florida and Alabama and a bit in Georgia) were synonymous with the river's bustling activity. Captains like Poley Ford McDaniel, John Callahan, and Captain Richards were true legends of the river. They navigated the river's twists and turns with unparalleled ability, ensuring the safe passage of both cargo and passengers.

Poley Ford McDaniel, a resident of Wewahitchka, holds a special place in the annals of paddle boat history. In his retirement years, he devoted his time and skill to crafting four intricate mini versions of the very paddle boats that once plied the Apalachicola River. The John W. Callahan I and II; The Mary; The W.C. Bradely and one other. These meticulously carved wooden models serve as tangible reminders of the region's rich maritime heritage. Poley's father was a riverboat Capt. as well, his name was Omri J. McDaniel of Liberty County Florida.

### **Cargo and Trade: More than Timber and Cotton**

The cargo carried by these paddle boats was as diverse as the communities they served. Timber, cotton, barrels of cut nails and turpentine were among the primary goods transported up and down the river. Massive cypress and cut pine boards from the local sawmills from Wewahitchka's dense forests were loaded onto the boats, destined for downstream ships headed to world ports. Fruits like oranges and vegetables such as tomatoes and beans were also important cargo. These shipments were vital for providing fresh produce to communities along the river and elsewhere.

Turpentine, derived from pine resin, was a crucial ingredient in various industries, from paint to medicine. Barrels of this valuable substance were carefully loaded onto the boats, contributing to the region's economic prosperity as well.

### Community Connections: Wewahitchka and Iola *The Iola in 1885*

Paddle boats and other boats weren't just about business. They were also a vital means of connecting communities along the river. Wewahitchka and Iola, situated along the banks, were bustling hubs of activity. The boats served as floating meeting places, where residents could exchange news, conduct business, and even attend social events. The boats were a hub of social activity, bringing people together in ways that were otherwise impossible.

### Challenges of the River: Navigating Nature's Obstacles

Navigating the Apalachicola River was no easy feat. Shifting sandbars, submerged logs, and changing water levels posed constant challenges to captains. It required skill, experience, and a deep knowledge of the river's ever-changing nature. Captains would often rely on local guides who knew the river intimately to navigate safely.

### The End of an Era: Transition to Roads and Railways



As the 20th century progressed, the role of paddle boats began to diminish. Railways and roads gradually took over as the dominant modes of transportation. The once-thriving paddle boat industry began to dwindle, eventually becoming a nostalgic memory of a bygone era.

### Legacy of the Paddle Boats *W.C. Bradley Steamboat.*

Today, the legacy of the paddle boats lives on in the history and folklore of the Apalachicola River. The captains and their vessels are remembered as pioneers who transformed the region through their dedication and skill. The cargo they carried, the communities they connected, and the challenges they overcame all contribute to the rich tapestry of Florida's past.



In the quiet waters of the Apalachicola River, the echoes of paddle boat engines have long since faded away. But their legacy endures, reminding us of an era when these mighty vessels were the heartbeat of a thriving, interconnected community.

*As we look back at this chapter in history, we're reminded of the ingenuity and determination that drove the paddle boat era. The captains who steered these vessels, the bustling trade they facilitated, and the communities they brought together all contribute to the rich tapestry of Florida's past, and the communities that loved them and those that worked hard to bring life to this area of our Country. TW*

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Grandpa Tom's Insights on Being a True

Gentleman: Lessons for Young Men To Consider

by Tom Wynn

Well, gather round, fellas. I reckon it's high time we had a heart-to-heart about what it means to be a real man. You see, in this world, there's all sorts of ideas about what makes a man, but let me tell you, it's not about fitting into some mold or trying to impress others. It's about living with integrity, kindness, and a sense of responsibility. So, let me share a few thoughts and ideas with you, gathered from a lifetime of lessons and experiences. Maybe they'll help you navigate this journey toward becoming a genuine gentleman.

### Part 1: Integrity and Character

#### 1. The Backbone of a Real Man

Now, listen up, young fellas. One thing I've learned is that a man's word is his bond. Honesty and honor, they're the bedrock of true masculinity. It's easy to do the right thing when everyone's watching, but it's those moments when you're all alone that really define who you are. We all make mistakes, but a real man, will

stop and go the other way, and then move on, to a better plan or lifestyle.

### 2. Respecting Others, Respecting Yourself

Respect, it's a mighty important thing. Treat every soul you meet with kindness and dignity, no matter their station. But don't forget, respecting yourself is just as crucial. You've got to know your own worth and carry yourself with a sense of who you are, a man after God's own heart! What can I do to be a better man, father, son, brother or even friend, than yesterday?

### Part 2: Kindness and Compassion

#### 1. Strength in Gentleness

Now, don't ever let anybody tell you that true strength comes from being tough or overbearing. No, sir. The real power lies in being kind. It's a gentle strength that lifts folks up, rather than tearing them down. Always look for the good in people, and focus on that, not their issues that you cannot fix or correct, that is up to them personally, just love people as they come and show them, they are important to you, even a stranger in need. Don't give them money to buy more drugs and booze, maybe buy them some food, or gas to help them on their way. Think before you act!

#### 2. Compassion in Action

Kindness isn't just a warm feeling, it's an action. A true man acts with compassion, lending a hand to those in need. It's about caring for others in a way that makes a real difference to them.

### Part 3: Responsibility and Accountability

#### 1. Owning Up to Mistakes

We all make mistakes, every one of us. But it takes a real man to own up to them. You gotta look at yourself in the mirror and admit when you've done wrong. It's a sign of growing up and taking charge of your life.

#### 2. Being a Steward of Others

Being a man means looking out for more than just yourself. It means taking care of your kin, your friends, your community. You've got a responsibility to be a positive force in their lives.

### Part 4: Leaving a Legacy of Love

#### 1. Cherishing Loved Ones

Family, that's the heart and soul of a man's life. You've got to cherish, support, and hold close them close. They're the true treasures in this world, when they are gone, you will cry inside, and you will regret not spending that quality time with them, I sure miss my parents and grandparents and those old USCG Coastie buddies that "Crossed the Bar".

## 2. Passing Down Wisdom

Now, as you grow, remember to share what you've learned. Pass down your wisdom to the next generation, just like I'm doing with you now. It's how we leave a legacy of love and strength.

So, there you have it, my fellow men. These thoughts and ideas come from a lifetime of learning and living. As you walk this road of life, remember these lessons. They'll guide you toward being the kind of man you'll be proud to be, when you look back on your life. TW



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## **THE WEWA LIBRARY**

by Joyelle Linton  
The Charles Whitehead Public  
Library

Are you looking for something to do? The Wewahitchka Public Library has several programs coming up for adults during October. The Friends of the Wewahitchka Library will be having their monthly meeting held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 9:30 a.m. Learn how this nonprofit group supports our local library and how you can help. Starting on Monday, September 25<sup>th</sup>, we at the library began hosting a monthly Tupelo Needle Works at 10:00 a.m. Bring your current crochet, quilt, knit or craft project to the library and enjoy this wonderful social time with likeminded people. For more information on this nonprofit organization, please visit their website: [www.nwrls.com](http://www.nwrls.com). JL

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Romans 8:28



## THE NEW EMERGENCY RADIO GROUP .

### “Tupelo Radio Group”

by Tom Wynn

The group continues to add new members to erect up a new fancy antenna base built by Wewa resident and group member Mr. Chuck Johnson these past few weeks. Installing a new 30-foot drop-down antenna at the **Rise N Shine Ranch** barn is now complete. The base is now designed to be hinged up or down at will. In case of a bad storm, it can easily be put down by two people. The 30-foot antenna on the outside of **Rise N Shine Ranch** barn will be a benefit to the small group when the time comes in the future of any other major storms that come our way.

A logo design was fashioned, and a new name was chosen by the group, antennas are going up at some locations between White City and Wewahitchka and beyond to the county line as well.

Yet another HAM Radio Operator has moved to Wewa, **Mr. Cal Zethmayr**, his knowledge and experience, will be valuable to the group. From the Gulf County Sheriff's office to about 45 miles north of Wewa up Hwy 71 North is their goal of contact. Folks as far as I-10, north of Wewa to White City area are interested in having communication with one another in case a need arises.

**In case you didn't know: “The Tupelo Radio Group”** is making a GMRS Radio network; where the repeaters are to be located, has yet to be determined. We have started doing regular testing on Sunday afternoons at 4pm to track our progress. We are looking for some Ham Operators in the Wewa area to join us. If anyone is interested in joining the group, please contact: **Mr. Dudley Balmer** at: 317-379-1644. (Radioddity email address: [www.radioddity.com](http://www.radioddity.com))

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## CWO3 THOMAS L. SEMMES U.S. VETERAN OF THE MONTH



In the north end of Gulf County, Florida, lies the quaint town of Wewahitchka. Known for its proud tradition of producing dedicated military members, it boasts a rare gem among its ranks. A distinguished individual who not only served in the esteemed halls of the U.S. Army but also had the honor of standing within the hallowed halls of the White House. This remarkable figure is a testament to the extraordinary potential that can be found within the heart of a small town, where dreams of service and duty take root and flourish in an exceptional legacy.

This is the story of Chief Warrant Officer 3 Thomas L. Semmes, a man whose journey embodies the spirit of Wewahitchka and the resilient soul of Gulf County Florida.

(Continued on page 8)

Tom Semmes' odyssey began in the small town of Enterprise, Alabama. However, destiny had charted a different course for him. At the tender age of six, young Tom and his family came to the small community of Wewahitchka. His father would later be the Principal of the High School and his mother a schoolteacher who was much loved by her students. Tom embarked on a journey that would take him literally all over the world in his responsibilities of military service and White House Comms officer. Soon they would return to the community they loved and grew up in, the community of Wewa.

Tom's path led him through the halls of Wewahitchka High School, where he walked with purpose, driven by dreams of a future intertwined with service and duty. Upon graduating in 1966, he sought knowledge at Chipola Junior College and later Gulf Coast Community, nurturing the flame of ambition that flickered within him.

In 1969, the call of duty summoned Tom, leading him into the embrace of the U.S. Army. Basic training at Ft. Jackson, SC was a journey that forged him into a soldier, earning him the rank of E-4. Stationed at Ft. Rucker, AL, he honed his skills as a gunner on a Huey helicopter, a testament to his unwavering commitment to duty.

A new chapter unfolded with the arrival of wife Dianne and their precious 7-week-old daughter, Allison. Their journey led them to Ft. Hood, TX, where the Semmes family laid roots for a moment. Yet, duty beckoned once more, and in November 1970, Tom embarked on a tour in Vietnam, leaving behind the tender embrace of his loved ones.

Through trials and tribulations, he rose to the rank of E5, a testament to his mettle in the face of adversity. September 1971 saw his return, a hero welcomed home, but destiny had more in store. Ft. Hood, TX awaited, and with it, an opportunity for new beginnings. Determined to widen his horizons, Tom ventured into the realm of communications, a choice that would shape his future. Ft. Monmouth, NJ became his haven, where he delved into the intricacies of this vital field. A blossoming career led to the role of an instructor, a mentor guiding the next generation into their future in Communications as well.

March of 1975 brought forth new orders, this time to the enchanting lands of Stuttgart, Germany. There, amidst historic landscapes, Tom assumed command of a communications unit. A world away, his beloved Wewa awaited his return, cradling the news of a new addition to the Semmes family, baby Amy.

For 3.5 years, Germany became their home, weaving its magic into their tapestry of life. September 1978 heralded a new chapter as orders pointed towards Ft.

Gordon, GA. Here, amidst the tranquil surroundings, Tom seized the opportunity to become a warrant officer. In 1980, with a well-earned commission as Warrant Officer 1, a title of honor and distinction, Ft. Campbell, KY, beckoned, and there, Tom took command of the communications unit, guiding it with a steady hand.

In March of 1983 Tom received orders to the White House Communications Agency in Washington, DC. During his 6-year tour there he served under President Reagan and President George H. Bush as a lead communications officer. He traveled the world with both presidents and was in charge of all communications when traveling on trips overseas and in the United States. During his tour at the White House, he was promoted to Chief Warrant Officer Three.

In June of 1989 he retired from the U.S. Army. In 1996 Tom and Diane returned to Wewa for good. Tom is the proud Daddy to Allison and Amy, and Papa to Zach, Jacob and Nick. Yet, amidst the accolades and honors, his heart never strayed far from the famous Dead Lakes of Wewa, the place where his story began. He wore many hats, serving as the President of the Chamber of Commerce, a member of the local VFW, deacon and treasurer at Westside Baptist Church, treasurer of the Wewahitchka Historical Society, and treasurer of the Friends of the Library, as well. He even stepped into the political arena, running for County Commissioner, all in pursuit of a better government for his cherished community.

In the annals of Wewa and Gulf County, Tom L. Semmes stood tall, a hero not just in uniform, but in the quiet moments of dedication, in the love he showered upon his family, and in the unwavering devotion he poured into the very soul of his community. His legacy, a testament to the power of one man's heart, forever etched in the hearts of those he touched. He is a man of Service to his Country and his Hometown. We are proud of him. Thank you, Tom, for your service, brother! (Happy Birthday Old Man)TW

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**Matthew 19:4-5**

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## Wewahitchka's Journey After Hurricane Michael



### A typical view of Wewa after Hurricane Michael played the Devil with our homes and businesses

by Tom Wynn

On October 10th, 2018, Hurricane Michael, a formidable Category 5 storm, descended upon North Florida, leaving behind a trail of devastation that forever changed the lives of many. The impact was felt not only in Wewahitchka but also in nearby communities such as Mexico Beach, Port St. Joe, and the wider Panama City area. Bay, Gulf, Jackson and Calhoun counties bore the brunt of the storm, experiencing tragic loss of life and property, as well as a staggering economic toll.

The storm claimed lives, leaving behind heartache and sorrow for the affected families. Homes were reduced to rubble, businesses were shattered, and the landscape was scarred. The financial toll was immense, running into billions of dollars. The scars ran deep, not only on the physical landscape but also in the hearts and minds of those who endured the storm's wrath.

In the aftermath of Hurricane Michael, the region faced an unprecedented challenge. Power systems were left in disarray, leaving communities in the dark and unable to communicate. Roads were made impassable, isolating neighborhoods and hampering rescue and recovery efforts. Homes and businesses were reduced to shells of their former selves, leaving countless families displaced.

In the face of such adversity, the resilience of the Wewahitchka community shines brilliantly. City officials, standing as beacons of hope, worked tirelessly alongside organizations like FAMA (Florida Association of Managing Agents) to speed up the much-needed repairs. These officials, at times endangering their own lives, rallied to get the necessary resources in place, showing an unwavering dedication to their community's well-being.

Wewahitchka's city crews and workers emerged as true heroes, working tirelessly day and night, night and day. Their relentless efforts focused on restoring essential services: water, sewage, and opening roads. They moved with urgency and purpose, knowing that every moment counted in the race to rebuild. Their dedication became a shining example of the strength that lies within a united community.

As the days passed, it was clear that Wewahitchka was not alone in its struggle. An outpouring of support from near and far reached the community, a testament to the power of compassion. Many refused to leave, opting instead to stand by their beloved city and their fellow citizens. Together, they forged a path forward, proving that adversity, no matter how formidable, could be met with unwavering resolve.

Through the tireless efforts of all involved, Wewahitchka emerged from the shadows of Hurricane Michael. The curse that had befallen the community transformed into a blessing in the end. The city, known as "The place of many waters," once again lived up to its name, with water flowing freely and unburdened by the scars of the storm.

Today, we stand as a testament to the human spirit's indomitable will. We know now what we can achieve in times of trouble. The lessons learned in the wake of Hurricane Michael have strengthened our resolve and fortified our bonds. We pray that we never have to endure such a trial again, but if we do, we stand ready, armed with the knowledge that together, we can overcome any challenge that comes our way.

In our beloved Wewahitchka, the curse became a blessing. Praise be to the Most High for the love and kindness that carried us through. We emerge stronger, more united, and more prepared for whatever the future may hold.

The information that I have been able to gather for loss of life and damage costs, see below: Hurricane Michael, which struck in October 2018, was responsible for a tragic loss of life. The storm claimed the lives of at least 59 people in the United States. This number may have been updated since then, so I recommend consulting official sources or recent news reports for the most current information.

In terms of economic impact, the total cost of damages caused by Hurricane Michael in the United States was estimated to be around \$25 billion. This includes damage to infrastructure, homes, businesses, and the cost of emergency response efforts. **TW**

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**2 Timothy 1:7**



## Embracing All Abilities: The Remarkable Transformation of Rish State Park

by Tom Wynn

Along the sun-kissed shores of Cape San Blas, Florida, Rish State Park has long been a cherished retreat for nature enthusiasts. In recent times, this haven of tranquility has undergone a heartwarming transformation, welcoming visitors of all abilities with open arms. Let's embark on a journey to discover the remarkable upgrades that make this park a beacon of inclusivity.

### An Oasis of Comfortable Accommodation

- New cabins, thoughtfully designed for individuals with varying mobility needs, have been added to the park's repertoire. These cabins are equipped with accessible features, providing a cozy and inviting space for families to make lasting memories.



### Swimming Pool: Waves of Joy

- A sparkling swimming pool now graces the heart of the park, beckoning visitors to dip their toes into cool, refreshing waters. The pool area is thoughtfully designed to be fully accessible, allowing everyone to enjoy the water's embrace.

### Wheelchairs that Conquer Sand

- The soft, sandy beach is no longer an obstacle for those with mobility challenges. Specially designed wheelchairs, with wider tires built for sand traversal, are available for use, ensuring that the beach's beauty is accessible to all.



### The Heart and Soul: The Dedicated Workforce


Behind the scenes of Rish State Park's transformation is a team of passionate individuals, committed to making a positive impact on visitors' experiences. Some of the remarkable folks who have been instrumental in this evolution include:

1. Nothing but warm smiles and unwavering dedication have been pivotal in implementing the park's accessibility initiatives. The staff's tireless efforts have made Rish State Park a shining example of inclusivity.
2. Cabin Accessibility Specialist brings their ability to bear in ensuring that the newly constructed cabins are equipped with every feature needed for a comfortable and enjoyable stay. Their meticulous attention to detail is clear in the thoughtful design of each space.
3. Beach Accessibility Experts' passion for enabling beach access for all visitors is reflected in the specially designed wheelchairs that now grace the sandy shores. The innovative solutions have opened a world of beachside enjoyment.

### A Place of Warmth and Welcoming

As the sun sets over the tranquil expanse of Rish State Park, it's clear that this haven is more than just a destination; it's a testament to the power of inclusivity. Families, friends, and solo adventurers of all abilities can now come together to create cherished memories in an environment that embraces them wholeheartedly.

Rish State Park stands as a shining example of what can be achieved when passion and inclusivity come together. So come, experience the warmth, and let Rish State Park remind us all that nature's embrace knows no bounds. TW



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## **Tupelo County Notes of Faith**

(Written during the time of Hurricane Michael)

By Pastor Dudley Balmer

It is October. Days are getting shorter, and kids are already talking of fall break. The days are hot, but the oppressive humidity has lessened. Everything in the stores says Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Our favorite college football teams are well into their respective seasons. The local weather prognosticator warns of a system that could make its way to the gulf. Certainly Friday nights were made for high school football.

Upon a midweek visit to Gulf Coast Hospital, I am shocked at the extreme storm preparations. Upon speaking with a local county official, I learned this is going to be a major storm.

This thing could be a three and we are in its path. By the time I get home all the TV stations are recommending evacuation. Since this is not an option for us, we secure everything we can, check the operation of our local ham radio repeater and listen to the forecast one last time. It is certainly unnerving to find that they are now using the class four designation as a real possibility.

God has been our rock for seven decades and no reason to believe He will not be now. We go to bed and pray, remembering who oversees all things. Even this.

At seven next morning we emailed our families and our distant ministry partners. At eleven it is here. Hour after hour the house trembles, trees fall as the intensity lessens for a moment only to regain an even more destructive breath. Then it is over. Wind and rain continue but it is over.

We have just lived through a class five hurricane. As I push open the door, I meet my approaching neighbor and together we begin checking on the welfare of our neighbors. Never since 9-11 have people turned to each other in such numbers, and to God. A local eatery was feeding anyone who needed a meal while also feeding the linemen who were arriving in convoys. People from as far away as Tampa were preparing meals in Wewa park.

Samaritans Purse set up shop and Mike the pillow guy gave away ten thousand pillows. The Salvation Army drove through the community with hot meals along with help from the Red Cross. People, strangers, stopped and hugged and prayed for each other. Oh yes, the government. A FEMA office was set up for those who qualified. But, in those first days it was neighbors turning to each other and to God. When you remember the storm, remember the good as well. The willing, helping hands and the hand of God that lead us through those first weeks. God is good. All the time. **DB**

## **Unraveling the Mystery: How the Famous Dead Lakes Formed**

*by Tom Wynn*

In the heart of Appalachia, among the small hills and lush forests, lies a special place called the Famous Dead Lakes. These lakes have fascinated people for a long time because of how they came to be. Today, we're going to learn about the interesting story behind these renowned lakes.

### **Long Ago, Nature's Sculptures**

The story of the Famous Dead Lakes goes back hundreds or more of years, to a time when our world looked very different. Swamps became lakes, as water and land moved around. Animals like gators and fish work to help form the swamps and holes at the bottom of the lakes. Over time, these dents in the swamp filled up with water, giving us the Famous Dead Lakes.

### **A Home for Unique Life**

The Famous Dead Lakes are not empty at all. Even though they're called "dead," they're full of life! The water in these lakes is a bit salty, and that makes it a bit tough for some plants and animals to live there. But the ones that do, like certain types of fish, and water birds, have adapted well to this special environment.

### **Important for People Too**

Throughout history, the Famous Dead Lakes have been important to the people who lived near them. Native American tribes depended on the lakes for food, catching fish and other water animals. When European settlers came, they saw the value of the lakes and built communities for fishing around them.

### **A Strange, Beautiful Sight**

The Famous Dead Lakes got their name because of the eerie, ghostly look of the cypress trees that grow in the water. These old trees have twisted shapes, making them look a bit spooky. They've been standing there for a very long time, silently watching over the land.

### **Taking Care of Nature**

Today, many people work hard to take care of the Famous Dead Lakes. They want to make sure the special plants and animals that live there are safe. They also want to make sure the lakes stay clean and healthy for everyone to enjoy.

### **A Legacy for the Future**

Right now, the Famous Dead Lakes are still enchanting visitors with their natural beauty and rich history. They remind us of how powerful nature can be. They're like a living memory of the Earth's ancient past.

Learning about how the Famous Dead Lakes formed helps us appreciate the amazing ways that nature and history come together to create something truly special. As time goes on, the legend of the Famous Dead Lakes will keep growing, inspiring more and more people to explore, learn, and cherish this incredible natural wonder. **TW**



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**Note:** Thanks to all that aid in creating The Wewa News©™, from family, friends, David at Ramsey's Printing and my proofreaders, as well as those that sponsor this work. Praise the Lord for you, a true blessing to me, Wewa, and to our readership across the world.



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The Wewa News is a locally owned and operated local 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 efforts.

**Notice:** The Wewa News operates in the Private, freedom of speech and of the Press are fundamental to our effort of expression, as well as God given rights as men and women on the land called Florida. The publishing day is the 7<sup>th</sup> of the month, unless notified otherwise.

### Up Coming Events and Other: Mark Your Calendars

**The Local Bee Association** meets at 6pm in the Gulf County Extension Agents meeting room on the first Tuesday of each month at 6pm.

**The Friends of the Wewa Library's** meet at the Wewa Library on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month, 9:30 AM. Come early and meet and greet with us in the conference room.

**Wewahitchka Historical Society** meets every month on the Third Thursday at 6pm at the old Corner Café' building.

**City Hall Meetings:** The City meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month sharply at 6PM CT, unless posted otherwise.

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Created for you by Aaron Wynn