

THE WEWA NEWS^{©TM}



APRIL 2021»SPECIAL EDITION»

Vol. 3 No. 002

A FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER-Take One!



THE TUPELO HONEY FESTIVAL IS ON!!

By Tom Wynn

According to City Officials the annual **“WEWA family reunion”** is on this year. The **Tupelo Honey Festival** to me has always been a day of “Family Reunion” of sorts, as well as, The Annual Tupelo Festival, when you can get the best of the best honey. With everyone hugging and kissing and “glad handing,” it is a full force family reunion in my eyes. **15 May 2021 Saturday**, should be a great day for all Honey Lovers!

I just love to see the joy in my friends and family members when we run into each other. I look forward to it each year.

I was sad when the sweetest Little City in Florida had to CX the festival last season. But! not this time.

Please come and enjoy the food, fun and music-join in with us Old Men, who love to “Chew the Fat” and tell tall stories as we drink our sweet tea and eat whatever we fancy **under the Ole’ Oak Trees**. Bring a friend and show them a “good ole’ time.” **All is Welcome!** Time to stock up on some sweet honey. Check out my documentary I did with **Mr. James E. Rish** and a few other local Beekeepers

back in 2003 called **“Tupelo Honey & The Amazing World of Bee Keeping”** You can find it on Youtube. I will write more about it in the The Wewa News, May Issue, So Stay Tuned!

The New Burger King

According to the owner during a short interview in Port St. Joe with Tom Wynn, the new store in Wewa is not finalized nor its location-see March City Meeting too! So Stand by Folks!

THE SIX MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION?

PART 2

BP Money Granted By Consortium

Back in 2018 Issued- \$80 Million Dollars!

By Tom Wynn

City Hall says we have not seen any of that money yet.

\$300M in banked BP Deepwater Horizon funds back in 2018. With \$300 million dollars in the bank account and another \$1.5 billion guaranteed in annual payments of \$80 million through 2033, a board created by our then Governor **Rick Scott** (today he is one of our U.S. Senators) to administer funds obtained by the Great State of Florida in major lawsuits as a result of the worst oil spill in history back in 2010, called “The Deepwater Horizon oil spill.” The first \$80 million dollar in grants in two allocations was given out.

All the grant agreements associated with the spill and the funds all have this agreement called, “Claw Backs” that would authorize the State of Florida proper to reclaim the grant money back if Project Projections and other requirements were not made by individuals, public and private sponsors of the proposals did not honor their agreements to complete or do as agreed.

Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. which was created in 2013 as an Advisory Board or Panel was incorporated into a Non Profit Organization back in 2017 to administer the distribution of 75 percent of the \$1.5 billion dollars of the 2 billion dollars the State of Florida obtained from the Lawsuits in the BP Oil Spill Settlement. In accordance to the Gulf Consortium 511 Page Document, The Wewa News obtained, The Fair City of Wewahitchka projects should have started back in 2018. According to the City Manager, **Mr. Michael Gortman**, the City of Wewa is not aware of any projects started in the city concerning this BP Grant money to date. All the grant agreements feature a common component — “**claw backs**” that would allow the state to reclaim the grant money if job projections and other commitments made by “private and public sponsors of the proposals” are not “created and sustained.” **Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc.**, created in 2013 as an advisory panel, was incorporated as a non profit in 2017 to administer distribution of 75 percent – \$1.5 billion – of the \$2 billion the state received in its BP settlement.” **Source: Board issues first grants from \$300M in banked Deepwater Horizon money By John Haughey | Source: Watchdog.org July 24,, 2018** The money must be used for recovery projects in the eight northwest Florida counties most affected by the spill. **The Triumph board’s seven members are appointed**

(Story continues on Page 2)

PAGE 2 (Six Million Dollar Question continued from front page)
by the governor, attorney general, chief financial officer and legislative leaders. All must come from northwest Florida and two must come from the four least-populated of the region's eight counties.

Under the terms of Florida's Deepwater Horizon settlement, BP has already deposited \$300 million with Triumph Gulf Coast, Inc. BP will pay the state approximately \$80 million a year from 2019 through 2033, amounting to \$1.5 billion.

The board issued its first grant in June when it unanimously approved a \$10 million request by the Port of Panama City to expand its East Terminal. The Port maintains the project will create 140 direct high-wage jobs and more than 250 additional port-dependent manufacturing and distribution jobs.

On July 18, the board approved more than \$70 million in grants, including \$64.5 million designed to expand the region's aerospace and aviation operations and industry. The lion's share is a \$56 million grant to the Pensacola Aviation Authority following the opening of Pensacola International Airport's (PIA) first MRO (maintenance, repair, overhaul) hangar. PIA protects its \$335 million MRO Aviation Campus's four MRO hangers, administrative building, warehouse and shop space will create more than 1,725 jobs that will pay an average \$44,461, plus benefits, per employee. Triumph's \$64.5 million contribution comes to 17 percent of the project cost but is contingent upon the Pensacola Aviation Authority obtaining more than \$75 million from city, county, state and federal sources and \$59 million in commitments from private companies. Back in June the 5th of 2020 Gulf County was granted \$200,000 award to support engineering and design efforts for the St. Joseph Peninsula Coastal Erosion Control Project. The purpose of the project is to increase the level of protection to the south end of the St. Joseph Peninsula from chronic shoreline erosion and the adverse issues associated with these conditions, also back in December 2020, I saw no money spent for the City of Wewa. **On March 18** a virtual meeting was held by the Board.

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FEBRUARY WEWA CITY MEETING

Mr. Ralph Fisher Mayor Pro Ten/with 3 other Commissioners present -Tom Wynn Reporting

Several Citizens were present as well as the County Sheriff Mike Harrison; City Workers, Clerks as well as others giving reports on the new Fire Station construction project (**Mr. Jack Husband** gave updates as well).

Smoke test for the local sewage system will be conducted again looking for open sewer lines. If you have torn down a building or a house, check to make sure the sewage lines are closed up. The smoke test will have an odor like last time, a hint of gasoline (due to the machine that makes the smoke, no need to be alarmed, it is normal, it goes away soon after the test). If your line is open to rain and flood waters, the water can get into the system and overload it, it cost the city money (your tax dollars). The city is talking about **finest for those that will not take care of their sewage line that is exposed to rain and flood waters.** So check your open lines ASAP.

Citizens and local business operators/owners are highly encouraged to come to the city meetings and listen to what is happening in our little city, give input to discussions and feel part of the process. All citizens have an opportunity to speak whatever they want to bring up. So use this time to get answers or let them know about issues you see in the city that need attention. They are your fellow Wewahitchians and they are there to help keep our city healthy and safe. **Take part!** The City practices safe distancing seating, for Covid 19 issues.

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"BUSY AS A WEWA BEE..."

BOOK REVIEW "FROM WHERE I SIT"

By a Local Author Mr. Stephen Brown Published 2021

If you want to laugh and truly feel the spirit of WEWA, the "Southern Lifestyle" mixed in with a lot of Wewa history, you have come to the right book. Stephen did a great job storytelling. He has the gift for sure of the **ON THE FRONT PORCH STORY TELLING**. Please find your way to The

local **Ace Hardware store** and pick up a copy while the supplies last. If there is no copies left on the book stand, just ask **Dawn Lister**, the store manager to get you a couple, because you are going to want to share a copy, 'WELL DONE BROTHER!'

He tells you so much about the **Ole' Timers** that once lived and worked here, what a joy to see their names again and hear the amazing and funny things that we all take for granted in "The Sweetest Little City in Florida." Stephen hit that sweet spot for sure with this book, straight from the heart. PLEASE, Stephen tell us more! Enjoyed the read, looking forward to the next edition.



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NUMISMATIST JAMES BROCK

Of Coins and Bullion Reserves on Highway 98 Panama City.

Article on Gold and Silver

"May You Live in Interesting Times" is often attributed as a "Chinese Curse". 2020 and now 2021 certainly seem to fit the description of "interesting times". The past fourteen months or so have been times of stress and change in almost every aspect of our daily lives. From the Covid pandemic to political turmoil; from soaring markets to rampant job losses; from exploding government debt, the past year have seemed like an obstacle course of an uncertain duration.

The uncertainty of the times has been strongly reflected 50 to 85 percent from their prior five year averages. "Premiums", or the amount above spot price you pay for physical bullion (Silver or Gold) have also been very volatile this year in response to the market demand.

During "normal" times, gold and silver bullion are great "alternative savings" and hold up well against inflation. For example, a silver quarter has nearly always been worth a gallon of gas since the mid 1960's (no matter the price of gas in "dollars"). And since the late 1800's one ounce of gold is almost always equivalent to a good hunting rifle. Turbulent times can temporarily alter gold and silver's relative value to these standards.

During times of crisis, gold and silver tend to increase even more than inflation and can provide good short term returns. Even with the increases, gold and silver are far from their inflation adjusted "all-time" highs and are being purchased in near-record amounts even causing some shortages of physical bullion.

Adjusted for inflation, the prices of gold and silver in 2011 (the end-part of the housing crisis/bubble) were \$2201.00 for gold and \$55.81 for silver in today's dollars.

No one can truly predict what will happen in the future. Any financial decision comes with some level of risk. However, if you are concerned about inflation and the future of our economy you should speak with your financial advisor or your friendly neighborhood Numismatist.

Finally, the opening quote is a good one, but has unknown origin in the Chinese language and probably comes from speeches and correspondence of **Joseph Chamberlain**, a late 19th Century British Ambassador to China.

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**REMINDER! WEWAHITCHKA FLORIDA TUPELO
HONEY FESTIVAL MAY 15, 2021 Lake Alice Park-
Be There or Be Square!**

Page 4 GATOR NEWS!

By Katie Bryant

YOUR WEWA GATORS!!!! 2021 DISTRICT WEIGHT LIFTING CHAMPIONSHIPS.....will be hosted by the WEWA GATORS this Thursday, April 1st in the WHS gym!!! Lifting begins at 11:30 am and there will be 6 teams competing for the District Championship...one is come join us as we host the **2021 FHSAA Boys Weight lifting District Championships** Thursday, April 1st at 11:30am!!!



Fair Housing

The City of Wewahitchka promotes Fair Housing for all persons. For additional questions on fair housing, please contact City Hall at the number or address below. RECORDS CUSTODIAN is **Ms. Rachel Jackson**. All public records in the City's office may be obtained by directing a public records request to the following custodian: **Rachel Jackson**

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A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT By Grandpa Tom

"When you are in the Eye of the Storm, It is a moment of peace. Take a breath and prepare yourself for the next event horizon. It is a time to hug a lot and be thankful it is almost over. You have come through thus far, now you have experience for the rest of the storm, you can do it."



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GFWC WEWAHITCHKA WOMAN'S CLUB

~HISTORY~

By Tom Wynn

The GFWC stands for: "**General Federation Woman's Club**" (GFWC.org) locally established in 1932, just in time for the 1933 crash of the United States economy and soon after, the entire worlds economy.

The Woman's Club is a volunteer service organization that does wonderful work in their communities and in our nation since the late 1800's.

Their history goes back as far as their roots back to 1868 when **Jane Cunningham Croly, a professional journalist**, attempted to attend a dinner at an "all-male" press club honoring The British novelist **Charles Dickens**.

Jane Croly was denied admittance to their meeting totally based on her gender alone, sad but true (think of the mind set of the public back then). Because of this treatment she formed a woman's club of her own, and today we know the rest of the story. They became a very powerful influence in this nation and the world since.

Jane Croly invited woman's clubs throughout the United States to pursue the cause of their federation by attending a convention in New York City, New York.

On April 24, 1890, 63 clubs officially formed the General Federation of Women's Clubs by ratifying the GFWC constitution. Since 1890, The Woman's Club works and influence has been felt throughout communities across the Unites States and the globe community as well. Presently the Woman's Club has close to 80,000 active members in every state and Washington DC as well as more than a dozen countries have active clubs too.

They work hard in their own communities lift up their local locations with support in the arts, preserve natural resources, advance education, promote healthy lifestyles for families, encourage civic involvement and look to upgrade where possible in their cites and towns. They continue to work hard to promote world peace and communication between one another. If you think you might want to join the Wewa Woman's Club and help our community please, contact **Patty Fisher at: 850-832-9436**. The President of the local Club is **Laura Baxley**. Help them, help Wewa be a better place to live and work.

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Fishing tackle furnished guests, except reels
get that out of your own bottle.

Don't worry about your bill, this motel is
supported by its foundations.

This will save a lot of explaining for the busy
fisherman when he goes back home:-
Dear Wifie, I am not doing a thing but catching
FISH! Signed: Your Devoted Hubby.

Compliments of Mr. Daniel Eugene Hanlon of Wewa FL.

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cember of 1995.** Many locals have requested that I pro-
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decided to write The Wewa News again, giving the mod-
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News can be contacted at: thewewanews2021@gmail.com

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Experian (TRW) = 888-397-3742.
TransUnion = 800-680-7289.
Social Security = 800-269-0271.



MYSTERY DEBRIS-Dumped on Iola Road.
City Hall Bricks?? Submitted by a Concerned Citizen.

GULF COAST ELECTRIC CO-OP

Report by Tom Wynn

I went to digging into the Rebuild Cost of our Electric Grid and the aftermath of Hurricane Michael...Here is the answers the Co-op so gracefully gave me: Ms. Kristin Douglas and Justin Barnes were interviewed on separate days...

Hi Mr. Wynn –“It was nice talking to you over the telephone on Friday. I appreciate your interest in the cooperative. I wanted to touch on two subjects that you were interested in receiving more information on” Storm Cost Recovery Rate Rider” Although it has been nearly **two-and-a-half years since Hurricane Michael left its devastation**, the aftermath of the storm continues to affect our area. The **Category 5 storm** caused catastrophic damage to Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative’s electric distribution system. After the storm passed, **not one meter was turning.**

“DAMAGE WAS SO SEVERE!!!!”

“After the storm passed, we realized that this was going to be more than a ‘restoration’ effort,” GCEC Chief Operating Officer **Francis Hinson said.** “**The damage was so severe that we were looking at a rebuild.**” “It took more than 75 years to build this system,” Hinson said. “It was destroyed in a few hours, rebuilt in three weeks and will take several years to completely fix.” The cooperative serves electricity to parts of **Bay, Calhoun, Gulf, Jackson, Walton and Washington counties.** **At the time of the hurricane, GCEC had 16,517 members, 20,924 active meters and approximately 75 employees. That number grew to approximately 1,600 when contract crews and mutual aid crews from electric cooperatives across the country rallied together in the non stop power restoration and rebuild effort that took place during the weeks following Hurricane Michael.**

The huge challenge of replacing 349 miles of line began. Additionally, 3,500 poles and 2,095 transformers were replaced. Hurricane Michael caused more than \$25 billion in damages. Gulf Coast Electric’s share equates to more than \$90 million. In order to cover these hurricane-related expenses, the cooperative had to **acquire an emergency line of credit in the amount of \$75 million from the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation.** GCEC is a non-profit cooperative. As such, it relies on FEMA (Federal Emergency Management) and FDEM (Florida Department of Emergency Management) for reimbursement for large portions of its recovery costs and to reduce the impact of these costs being passed on to GCEC members. “

(Pay close attention to this next statement) **“As we have awaited reimbursement, the interest charges on the emergency line of credit have accrued. Like other utilities impacted by significant storms, Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative had to find an appropriate solution for adjusting rates to cover non-reimbursed expenses. “Because co-ops are member-owned, we have a board of directors, elected by and from the membership, to represent our service territory,” GCEC CEO/General Manager John Bartley said. “The territory is divided into nine areas, with one trustee elected from each area to ensure that all members are equally represented.”“After presenting all of this information to the board (Our 9 Reps voted in by us each year), they had to make the difficult decision to adjust our rates in order to recover a portion of the Hurricane Michael restoration costs,” Bartley said.**

“Our rates had not been adjusted since 2012; however, the tremendous expense associated with this storm made a rate adjustment unavoidable.”

Beginning June 28, 2019, the Storm Cost Recovery rate rider **began appearing on member bills.** The revenue collected through this rate rider is **only be used for storm restoration costs** and will be in effect for a maximum of **five years.** The average member has seen an increase of less than **\$9.00 per month.**

The rate rider schedule is as follows:

<u>Rate Schedule</u>	<u>Dollars/kWh</u>
Residential	\$0.0110
General Service Non-Demand	\$0.0092
General Service Demand	\$0.0098
Large Power	\$0.0078

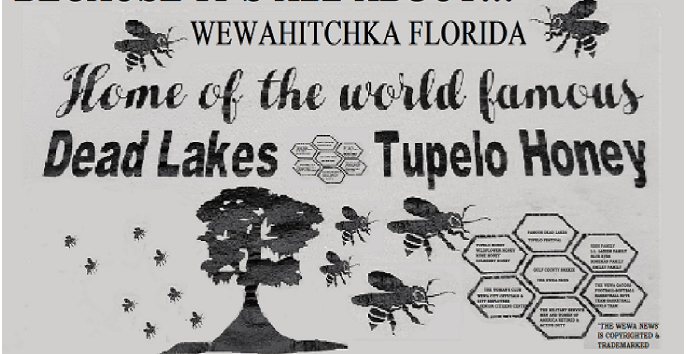
“There is a careful balance between **keeping the cooperative financially sound while at the same time impacting our members’ power bills as little as possible,**” Bartley said. “Members who have questions about how to reduce their bills may contact us for energy conservation tips. We greatly appreciate everyone’s patience and understanding as we continue to recover from this storm.” In an ever-changing world, it is crucial we protect our most valuable asset, our employees. Again, I appreciate your interest in the cooperative. If you have any other questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely, **Kristin Douglas**
Vice President of Marketing and Communications
Gulf Coast Electric Cooperative

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What's in A 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 Bee-keeping**". We filmed it in 2002/2003 in Gulf County during the Honey Season. Featuring our Local Beekeeper **James E. "Jim" Rish** and including other local Beekeepers as well. Look for it on Youtube, Enjoy!

IN THE NEWS-WEWA

By Tom Wynn

Mr. Nathan Rish and his father **James Rish** attended the January City meeting to seek the City's approval for a new adventure on their property. Nathan Rish explained that he is working on a project involving the cultivation of hemp. Mr. Rish said the nursery would be located at 429 and 417 Old Transfer Rd. He also stated that **County Property Appraiser** had approved the designation change to a portion of the property from residential to agricultural, he has all required state and federal permitting in order to proceed with the hemp nursery.

Nathan Rish requested a letter of support from the City that he can provide to USDA for a hemp cultivation nursery. The board stated that **they have no problem with the hemp nursery**, however **Mayor Gaskins** asked that City Manager **Michael Gortman** and City Attorney **Ms. Michelle Jordan** to research the City ordinances and regulations, to be sure that there are no restrictions regarding **hemp cultivation** within the City limits, and present the information at the next meeting. Additionally, City Clerk **Rachel Jackson** gave an Email address to Nathan Rish for him to provide copies of his licenses/permits for review. **Mr. James Rish** also requested support from the board regarding Nathan Rish's hemp cultivation and nursery plans. **UP-DATE:** The City Commission in the **March City Meeting** asked the County **Sheriff Mike Harrison**, if he had any issues with Mr. Nathan Rish's Business with **HEMP Production**. He said, that the Process is very strict in The **State of Florida** and the **Federal Government** as well, so **he had no problems** with it. Mr. Nathan Rish should receive a Letter from the City to that effect soon.

Justin Jackson "But you can call me, "JJ"

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O'REILLY AUTO PARTS OPENS IN WEWAHITCHKA- APRIL 3rd

Article By Tom Wynn



The history of **O'REILLY Auto Parts**, from its founding in 1957 as a single store in the State of Missouri to a business consisting of **5,594** stores in **47** U.S. states and **22** in Mexico and more than **76,000** team members.

O'REILLY Automotive intends to provide the local area with whatever they can to help Wewa not only having to travel so far for auto & truck parts, but will be a "**one stop location**" for all your other automobile care supplies and whatnots. By offering their retail customers, professional installers, and shade tree mechanics the best combination of price and quality provided with the highest possible service level, according to their spokesmen **Mr. Timothy Green**. They also recognize the U.S. Military Active duty and retired Military Veterans service by giving them 10 Percent discount at the time of purchase, just show your military I.D., he stated in an interview. **They are right next door to the Chinese Restaurant on Highway 71 North**. The Manager of the New store is **Mr. Albert Turner**. He said he was looking forward to serving the Wewa area with auto parts and such.

Give Honor Where Honor is Due!

If you see a **Military Veteran**, tell him or her, "**Thank you for Your Service to our Country**". If you see a **Sheriff Deputy** or the Sheriff himself, thank them for their Service as well. **City and County Officials too**. All these people, love you and cherish their work to support and defend our Nations Interest and your very lives. Trust me when I say this. They have given more of their share of Blood, Sweat and Tears to this country, this land and to "**We The People**."

Be kind and show some respect to the **Elders** you see in the store or on the streets, the old and tired, they had a time getting to their **Golden Age**, not all of it was glorious, but hard work and much suffering as the aches and pains torment them daily, from their labors in life.

Love one another, for some will not be here next year. I miss many who have departed this life already. Give your self a break and take the time you need to care for your own self as well. It is okay to love yourself, it is okay to forgive, it is okay to be forgiven and move on in life. Learn daily, Forgive often, and for heaven's sake, thank **The Lord** you live in "**God's Country!**"

The Land and Water is good and Loving.

"**We are a peaceful people and a place of many waters**

I statue You!"

Tom Wynn

"HEAVEN SENT"



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Clossians 3-17

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A BIT OF WEWA HISTORY

OBEY THESE SIMPLE RULES-THEY COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE or YOUR CHILD- How Ceil Donaldson became our Chief of Police.

By Tom Wynn

One of Wewa's favorite Police Chief was a man named **Ceil Donaldson**. He was hired to be our Chief of Police by our Mayor at the time, **Gene Hanlon** (Daniel Eugene Hanlon) in the early 90's, replacing **Pete Rhames**. As the story was relayed to me by Gene is when he read a story in a magazine of the **Lynn Conley** case which Donaldson was Chief Investigator caused him to hire Ceil. His investigation team immediately began the search the missing 10 year old blond girl name Lynn Conley in The Fort Walton , Okaloosa County area. **Sheriff Ray Wilson** was the County Sheriff at the time.

Chief Investigator Donaldson was on the case and relentlessly investigated the case. He was determined to find the little girl, one way or another! Unfortunately the Little girl was found dead, having been molested and killed by a man named **Eugene Ball**, who was convicted for second degree murder and sentenced to life in prison. This story lead Mayor Hanlon to hire Ceil Donaldson as our New Chief of Police, replacing Pete Rhames.

Donaldson was a fine man and a very good Policeman. I had the pleasure of talking to him many times and met his disabled daughter and his very talented wife Betty. She had an Art Studio in Lands Landing at the time. After Retirement as Chief of Police they soon moved away to enjoy their retirement years. His Policing duty was then contracted to the Gulf County Sheriff's Office by the City of Wewa until this very day .

In the Magazine article there is a list of Rules Children and Parents should consider about Child Molestation and its prevention. It was written by Sheriff Wilson at the time. I thought it to be important to share these rules with my readers. 55 years ago at the age of 10 and 11 they saved me twice, thanks to listening to my parents about such things. A man in an old car asked me for directions on a map, the other a man in a car wanting me to see his puppy. **NO THANK YOU!** I never got near the cars. Never let your children play in the front yard, without an adult watching.

SHERIFF WILSON'S RULES FOR PARENTS

1. Know where your children are at all times.
2. Know the character and background of your babysitters or anyone in whose care you place your children.
3. Teach your children the rules of safety, courtesy and fair play.
4. Teach your children to respect law and order. Make them understand that the police officer is a friend, not a foe.

RULES EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW

1. Never get in a car with a stranger, even if the stranger says, "Your mother sent for you." Don't go near the car.
2. If you see one of your playmates or friends get into a stranger's car, write down the auto license scratch the license number in the dirt.
3. Never go near a car when asked for directions. Stand several feet from the car.
4. Never accept money or a gift from a stranger.
5. Never permit a stranger to get his hands on you or touch your clothing.
6. Never play alone in parks or empty buildings.
7. When you go to a theater or public place, tell the manager or usher if any person acts too friendly by putting his hands on you to go with him for a walk or a ride.



"THE WEWA NEWS" CONTEST!

HELP NAME MY LITTLE BEES in,
"THE WEWA NEWS"

Email your entry to: thewewanews2021@gmail.com
Two chances to win, provide one male and one female name, that would go with the theme of Honey Bees. A prize will be given to the winner or winners of the contest. The Winners will be announced and the names will appear in the next issue of the Wewa News. Bee Creative!



Boy name

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MARCH WEWA CITY MEETING

Mayor Phillip Gaskin Present/ Three Commissioners/City Lawyer/City Manager & City Clerks/ Sheriff's Office Represented- Several Citizens. Tom Wynn Reporting

1. Tupelo Honey Festival **date May 15th**. Vender locations **\$50.00** each spot. Food Vender locations **\$150.00** each spot. Folks/Organizations giving away free things, get **FREE** spots. **Lake Alice Park** will be filled with joyful folks because last years Festival was **CX** due to Covid -19.
2. Discussion about **Burger King** getting a "**Tax Abatement**" from the **City of Wewa and Gulf County (Mr. Jim McKnight, one of Wewa's own, Of the Economic Development Coalition Office)** came to the City meeting to talk about the request and what the City thought about it. **The Public present and the City Commission** all agreed not to give **BK** the Abatement as all the other businesses in Wewa had to start their beginnings with no tax breaks, and they are all small companies, **Burger King** can afford to pay their taxes to the City as we all do, Residents and Businesses alike. Thumbs down on that one, by both the Public and Commission agreed.
3. City workers will be **firmly encouraged** to pass their tests for The Sewage and Water treatment plant by Mayor Gaskins and the rest of the Commission, as well as the City Manager **Michael Gortman**. Presently there is only two individuals qualified to do the testing for Wewahitchka (Michael Gortman and Chipper Wade).
4. **Jack Husband** will do a Grant Package for the City by the October 1 Deadline (grant for 200,000 Dollars). He said it looks good for the City to get the Grant. It will help with **T.L. JAMES** Park repairs and upgrades.

A BIT OF HISTORY-WEWA IN FILM

By Tom Wynn

In 1997 Wewa was featured in a movie about a Beekeeper. **The Wewa News** reported on it during the filming.

The movie featured a famous movie star named **Peter Fonda** (who has since passed away). The 1997 movie called, "**Ulee's Gold**", tells the story of a veteran who is a Beekeeper and his issues with his family.

For more then 140 years the people of Iola and Wewahitchka have worked Bees to harvest the world-famous **Tupelo Honey and Wild-flower Honey** in the everlasting swamps of the **Apalachicola River Basin**, with its **Famous Dead Lakes** and soft flowing rivers, lakes and streams. It is a non stop process until the Festival in late May each year, no rest for the weary.

The educational film called "**Tupelo Honey & The Amazing World of Beekeeping**" which was filmed by me, Tom Wynn, featuring local Beekeeper **Mr. James E. Rish** and his father, as well as, other local Beekeepers. Filmed in 2002/03 showing the process of taking **Tupelo Honey** in the woods and along the rivers to the day of **The Tupelo Honey Festival**, the complete process on film. It was filmed before digital Cams were available to me (we were able to get it Digitized by **Mr. Michael Lister** later on).

The entire process was filmed and recorded with interviews to record for history of how Tupelo Honey is produced and the Wewa and Iola history with it, according to Jim Rish, Mr. Whitfield and Chief Alonzo and others. Jim lived it, worked it and did the research for the video, the history of Iola and Wewa as he learned it from his family and local historians. **See our video for free** on Youtube by typing the video name in the **youtube search engine**. It is 60 minutes long, but is broken up into sections on Youtube, I no longer sell copies, it is free to see today.

EMILEE STRANGE & SHANNON WEEKS OPEN's UP SHOP IN WEWA!

By Tom Wynn

Emilee and Shannon opened on Presidents Day 2021 for the first time at home in sunny Wewa. They did a great job decorating the shop, Oh! I mean to say, "The Salon."

It is well done, my favorite colors too. A couple of us old men went for a test haircut the other day, Shannon had us laughing and made us feel right at home in just a few minutes. So I was compelled to share our experience with the city here.

They made it very inviting to both men and women. The shop is very easy to move around in for those in wheel chairs or walkers. Just to name a few services they provide are: **Waxing-Coloring-Haircuts for both Men and Women, and much more.** They offer Military discounts to Veterans as well. So if you are even thinking about traveling to PC or Port St. Joseph for a Haircut, don't! These young ladies need our support. Save the gas and spend your money locally. You will not be disappointed. I saw an amazing thing as I waited for my turn in the chair. Emilee got down on the floor and gently washed the feet of an elderly woman. As she was so kind and loving to this woman I saw the biggest smile come across her face. Her beautiful eyes lit up as Emilee took good care of her feet. It reminded me of the Bible story when Jesus washed the feet of his Disciples.

Please call for an appointment as soon as you need your hair cut, they will be just as kind to you as they were to us. And it only took us a few minutes to get back home to our lovely wives for inspection. We thank the Lord we still have hair to get cut at our age. There is parking in the back and on the street, but be very careful crossing the highway and who is coming out of the gas station next door.



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IT IS TUPELO HONEY SEASON FOLKS!

Get ready, the Tupelo Honey Festival is next month 15 May 2021. Hope to see you there. Bring the whole Family. Spread the Word, the Festival is on according to City Hall. Contact The City if you are interested in a Booth to sell Honey or other products or Food. If you are an organization looking to give things or paper-work away, the spots are **FREE**. WEWA City Hall: 318 S. 7th St. PO Box 966 Wewahitchka, FL 32465 (850) 639-2605 for additional information.



THE DEAD LAKES/

Apalachicola River Basin Fishing Map and Street Map of Wewa (1995-96 era). It has Ads I sold to local business, many does not exist today!

U.S. VETERANS NEWS & INFORMATION CENTER

Location and Hours of Operation:

Monday-Thursday 7:00-5:30 (EST)

County Administration Building

Room 311 (PLEASE CALL FOR AN APPOINTMENT)

Contact Mr. Joe Paul or Lynn Lanier

Veterans' Service Officers for Gulf County Florida

(850) 229-6125 (850) 229-7180 FAX If no answer, leave a message. Email: vetservices@gulfcountry-fl.gov

Other links: Veterans' Affairs <http://www.va.gov>

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs

<http://www.floridavets.org>

Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs Regional Office

<http://www.benefits.va.gov/stpetersburg/>

Note: IF You are 50 to 100 percent Disabled Military Veteran, you may qualify for Property Tax Reduction each Year. Contact "Ms. Karen" at the Gulf County Property Appraisers Office in the Gulf County Court House. Enjoy your Benefits! You Earned Them Brothers and Sisters. Semper Paratus!

O'REILLY's Auto Parts Store

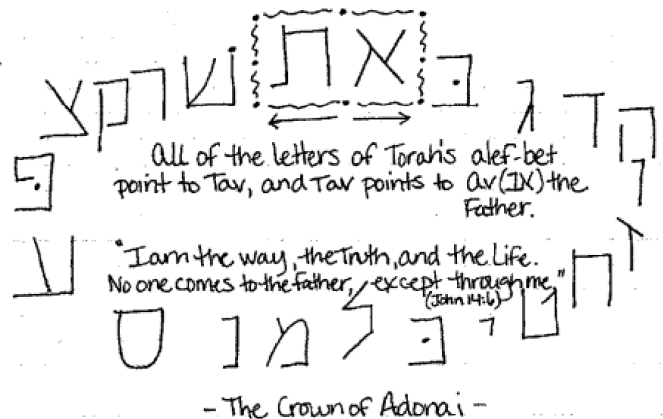
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ENJOY!

The Early History of Wewahitchka

By Tom Wynn

Since it's founding in 1875, Wewahitchka has not developed into a thriving metropolis, but it has from its very beginning been "A City With A Heart." Folks described Wewa as being a "Warm, friendly City," and suggested that should ever the name be changed, it should be called "Friendship City." It is true that Wewahitchkians generally are more than just friendly. In them we find something of that "Old Southern Hospitality" that distinguished the South in earlier days. Wewahitchka was the first permanent settlement in what is now called "Gulf County."

Gulf County broke away from Calhoun County in 1925, making Wewahitchka the County Seat. Later on it was voted to move the County Seat to Port St. Joseph. That is yet another story.

This charming city was called "Double Ponds" by the early white settlers and "Water Eyes" by the local native Indians, because of its location on the "Twin" or "Spectacle" Lakes, later named Lake Julia and Alice after the twin daughters of

Dr. John W. Keyes, one of the very early settlers.

The town was named by the grandfather of **Miss Amanda Richards**, a member of one of the oldest and most prominent families. As the story goes in our area is that after the **Reverend John W. Richards** preached the first sermon in the little log house which had been built to serve as both church and school, he was asked to name the town and he wrote above the door of the building, "**Wewahitchka**"--the Indian interpretation for Water Eyes (the true literal meaning of Wewahitchka in The Creek Indian Language is, "**Place of many waters**") according to Local Clan Chief **Alonzo** of the Bay Clan in an interview with Mr. Jim Rish a Local Beekeeper, a U.S. Marine Vet. as well as Senior Chief Tom Wynn USCG Ret. during the filming of, "Tupelo Honey & The Amazing World of Beekeeping" 2002-2003, produced and directed by me.

History has it that the earliest settlers of Wewahitchka proper came shortly after the War Between the States, some of them Confederate veterans seeking a new life on the Florida frontier. Most of them were from Georgia, Tennessee, and Alabama, and some of them from older nearby settlements of an earlier day. "Iola" and "Fort Place", both only a few miles from the present City of Wewahitchka.

According to "Miss Amanda," now long deceased, there were about ten white families in the area when her father, Norman came from the City of Chipley in 1874 and in 1875 and 1876 there were twenty-five or thirty more families. Besides Richards and Keyes, Weeks and other names we must include: Mitchell, Maddox, Donaldson, Stone, Strange, McDaniel, Bell, Alderman, Spencer, Rivers, Smith, Redd, Burgess, and a little later, Linton, Hunter, Gaskin, Higgins, Griffin, Pridgeon, Whitfield, Rish. Again later on The Family lines of Glenn, Williams, Lister, Bozeman, Carter, Wynn and others. Descendants of most of these people are still in this area, and have continued in prominence through the years.

Quoting Charles Smith of Port St. Joe, descendant of the early orange growing Captain Smith of Wewahitchka: "These hardy and industrious settlers cleared the land, planted citrus groves which were in a decade laden with fruit, began to build up apiaries for the production of honey,

raised stock, and furnished timber for the small saw mills in the area. The bulk of the timber, however, was rafted down the river to large mills located in Apalachicola. Many of the early Wewahitchkians were "riverboat men" on the steamboats flying down the Apalachicola, Chattahoochee, and Flint River systems from Columbus, Georgia to Apalachicola. During the 100-year span of steam boating on these rivers, no less than 150 different steamers plied their waters. The steamboats were the mode of transporting to market the many barrels of honey and hundreds of boxes of oranges produced annually in our local area.

The first church of Wewahitchka was Methodist, although it served many denominations. The Reverend Richards preached one Sunday in each month (without pay) for a period of two years. According to 'Miss Amanda,' he was the same John Richards who had lived for several years in St. Joseph and had served as the first postmaster before coming to the Wewahitchka area. The first church stewards were Norman Richards, Thomas Spencer, Sidney S. Alderman and W. J. Rivers, who was the first postmaster. The first school was also in this little log house and the first teacher was Dr. W. G. Mitchell. The school term was for three months and the parents paid the cost of the school according to their ability (like we do today, called Property Taxes).

In 1880 a second church was built, a frame building, which served the Methodists and Baptists. The two ministers, the Rev. Daily & Langley, used the building alternately.

Early Wewahitchka boasted a newspaper, "THE CALHOUN TIMES", which was published once each month for \$1.00 per year. It was advertised as the official paper of the county. And as early as 1883 Sam Spence of Lafayette, Alabama came to teach "Pic" Higgins telegraphy. A line was cut into Apalachicola, and both Marianna and Wewahitchka had telegraph service. In the early days the only traffic was by river, passengers as well as freight. There was no mail delivery at that time. Settlers brought mail from Marianna when they picked up their supplies, and steamers stopped at Alderman and Magnolia Landings to pick up the passengers and to let them off again.

With many of the families living miles apart, life was lonely for some people in those days. T. H. (Terrell Higdon) Stone, in an interview several years ago told of a Mrs. Selden Williams, who, previous to 1874, had not seen another woman in twelve years.

Written By AECS Tom Wynn Jr. USCG (Ret.) using information provided by the Wewahitchka Library and other sources in the Wewa area, including men and women of the community. To help in the development of a Gulf County Chamber of Commerce Website in the 1990's.

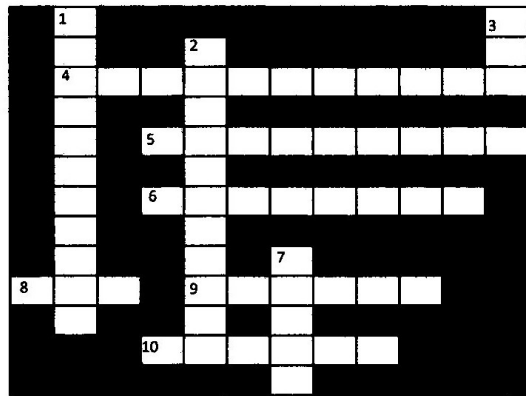
This is the first of a series of articles of the History of The Wewa and Iola area, so watch for future Editions to the Story.

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OUR TOWN



ACROSS

- 4 Our golden liquid
5 Festival held here
6 One of our founding families
8 Small people educated here (Initials)
9 A beloved breed of dog
10 Old family bee keeper name

DOWN

- 1 Find the Café here
2 Our Town
3 Festival month
7 Alice's sister

Answers in next months issue.

Semper paratus

Semper paratus is a Latin phrase, meaning "Always Ready". Sometimes shortened to Semper P. It is used as the official motto of some organizations, such as the **United States Coast Guard**. A 1928 song of the same name is also used as the U.S. Coast Guard's official march, and appears on the organization's flag. (Its means The USCG is always Ready to Save Lives For A Living).

"NOW PUT THE READY HELO ON THE LINE!"

Learn new words daily-Etymology Of Words

By Tom Wynn

This word is Latin/Greek and means to study the root and history as well as the meaning of a word or name.

Study and learn the real meaning of words, you will be surprised what you will find out. Today we can instantly discover amazing things about our own names as well as words we use daily, so take advantage of our modern tech and dig into history of words and names. It is fun! Logy means "to Study" but in truth it means to study THE WORD. Become an **Ety-mologist** today. Start with your own name.

Etymon means "origin of a word" in Latin, and comes from the Greek word etymon, meaning "literal meaning of a word according to its origin." Greek etymon in turn comes from etymos, which means "true." Enjoy!

NOTICES

...SKYBORN TECHNOLOGY...

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GFWC WEWAHITCHKA WOMAN'S CLUB

GFWC is selling Bricks for The Veteran's Park at Lake Alice. Price is \$56 for each Veteran brick and that includes the name of the Veteran, rank and service emblem they serviced in. Mail all information and check to P.O. Box 94 Wewahitchka, Florida 32465. Make check payable to: GRWC Wewahitchka Woman's Club. Local Meetings are on the 2nd

Tuesday of each month. Contact Ms. Patty fisher @ 850-832-9436

Laura Baxley is President of the Club.

Ms. Peggy Causey is selling a 1875 commemorative plate with most of the City of Wewa's old land marks on it. It is a great piece of history. The cost is \$20 and is a fund raiser for the Woman's Club. Check it out at Fisher's Building Supply.

THE GULF COAST ELECTRIC CO-OP MEETING

This year will be "Virtual" due to the Covid 19 policies.

The date is set for **May 1@ 10 am CT** call 850-420-0339 Prizes and such will still be given out including 5 bucks for those members that take part in the Virtual Meeting. Contact the CO-OP for any further info. Find out more about Elections Visit Elected Officials at: www.vote-gulf.com

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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 Year Books, 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 read.

To View the "THE WEWA NEWS" archive of 25 years ago & Last Months Edition ago go to: www.wewa.news on-line.

Thank You Wewa Businesses and Individuals for your Love and Support. It is overwhelming how we can come together again after all that we have come through. We are "WEWA STRONG"

Have a Good Day!

