

THE TUPELO COUNTY NEWS™

THE WEWA NEWS™



“The Good News Newspaper”

AUGUST 2023 >> No. 08-02<< A FREE LOCAL NEWSPAPER Take One!

JACK HUSBAND APPOINTED THE NEW GULF COUNTY COMMISSIONER FOR DISTRICT 2

by Tom Wynn

Did you see that Wewa finally got a New County Commissioner for District 2
Congrats “Jack” Husband the 3rd.

We Bee proud of you!

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. —Governor Ron DeSantis announced the appointment of Lloyd “Jack” Husband III to the Gulf County Board of County Commissioners on July 28th, 2023, in a news release the Staff of Governor Ron DeSantis broke the news that **Lloyd “Jack” Husband III**, of Wewahitchka, is the new County Commissioner for District 2. He is presently President of Southeastern Consulting Engineers, Inc. located in Wewa downtown proper.

He currently serves on the Gulf County Economic Development Administration and is a previous member of the Gulf County Chamber of Commerce. Husband earned his associate degree from Gulf Coast State College and his bachelor’s degree in civil engineering from Florida State University.

Mr. Billy Traylor of Wewahitchka was voted into office in the 2022 November 8th Election for District 2, but soon after passed away and never took office. District 2 has no Representative since the election, until now. **TW**

WEWA CITY MEETING COMMISSION GETS AUDITED COMES ON TOP!

by Tom Wynn

Auditor Mr. Kalob Perla presented to the City Commission his firm’s Audit findings in the July meeting. Good News! Wewa has assets of over 9 million and as for our bottom line, Wewa is on the plus side with over 2 million dollars. See Wewa City Clerks for details.

LOCAL PASTORS PRAY OVER CITY COMMISSION BEFORE CITY MEETING

by Tom Wynn

Just minutes before the Wewahitchka monthly meeting started 4 of our local pastors asked to come up and pray over the City Commission. All agreed and so the public also took part in the prayer. They prayed for their wellbeing and for the city of Wewa. They thanked the Commission for their labors and for keeping Wewa safe and in good health as a city. It does the heart good to see how well our community works together to keep our city out of debt and in good running order. Our City Council has been in office for several years and has done a wonderful job running the city and keeping us out of debt and on the plus side financially on its daily operations.

The city workers are all devoted to keeping the costs down and at the same time, providing quality work as they maintain all the equipment and machinery that we need to have a peaceful and healthy environment to live in. **THANK YOU ALL!**

THE WEWA FIRE HOUSE NEWS!

by Tom Wynn

The City Attorney, Ms. Michelle Jordan notified the city commission during the July city meeting that the Commission needed to meet with the City Lawyers the following morning to discuss the pending court cases concerning the Fire House situation. Nothing was stated except the time to meet at the Wewa Library. The meeting will not be open to the public. The bonding company will meet with the city lawyers in late August. The bonding company and the original contractor Winterfell Construction, Inc. is in a long-lasting lawsuit with the City of Wewahitchka for poor quality construction of the new firehouse and Contract issues with Winterfell Construction.

Mr. Kaden Jackson ready to fly off!



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TAUNTON FAMILY CHILDREN'S HOME

by Tom Wynn



The Taunton Family Home: A Heartwarming Haven for Children. Nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of Honeyville, Florida, stands the Taunton Family House, a place where love, care, and compassion weave together to create a haven for children in need. For decades, this home has been a sanctuary for young souls, providing them with a safe and nurturing environment. Let's delve into the heartwarming history of the Taunton Family House and the incredible people behind its mission.

The History of the Home for Children

The roots of the Taunton Family House can be traced back to the early 1950's when Abby and David Taunton, a loving couple with hearts full of kindness, felt the call to make a difference in the lives of vulnerable children. Moved by the plight of orphaned and neglected youngsters, they took it upon themselves to provide a loving home for those who had none. They founded the Taunton Family Home.

The Taunton Family, a Pillar of Love

Abby and David Taunton were the heart and soul of the home they built together. They became parents to countless children who walked through their doors, showering them with love and guidance. The Taunton's' devotion to each child's well-being and development knew no bounds, as

they nurtured them with love and affection, filling their lives with hope and joy. Though David has since passed away, their legacy continues through the wonderful caretakers who now oversee the Taunton Family Home, including children that have grown up and are helping out as well. Comprising a dedicated team of individuals who share the same passion and commitment, these caretakers uphold the values and vision set forth by the Taunton family.

The Stories of Love and Transformation

The Taunton Family Household has witnessed over 400 stories of love, resilience, and transformation. One such story is that of Sara, a timid 8-year-old girl who arrived at the home after enduring a challenging upbringing. Through the love and care she received, Sara blossomed into a confident, spirited young woman, ready to embrace the world with newfound hope.

Then there is a 12-year-old boy who had lost both his parents tragically. The Taunton Family Household became a place where he found a sense of belonging and support. With the guidance of the caring team, he discovered his passion for music, and his talent began to shine through. Today, he dreams of becoming a musician, and The Taunton Family House continues to support him in every step of his journey. Many have grown up to be productive members of our little city and county. Some of them are Adam and James who my own sons went to school with. They have become fine men and successful businessmen.

A Beacon of Hope

The Taunton Family Household stands as a beacon of hope for children who have faced adversity in their young lives. It is a place where broken hearts find healing, where dreams are nurtured, and where the power of love can transform the lives of these precious children. Every child who finds refuge at The Taunton Family Home is offered not just a home but also a family that cares deeply for their well-being.

A Continuing Legacy

The legacy of Abby and David Taunton lives on through The Taunton Family Home, where love and compassion are at the core of every action. The home's dedication to supplying a nurturing environment for children in need is still unwavering, and its impact continues to be felt by generations of young souls who have found solace within its walls. Many have grown up and now have children of their own. They are also a joy to be around and bring a smile to my face every time I see them around town.

In the heart of Honeyville, Florida, The Taunton Family Home stands as a testament to the power of love and the profound difference a few caring individuals can make in the lives of vulnerable children. Through the efforts of the wonderful caretakers and the indelible spirit of Abby and David Taunton. Even though Judge David Taunton has gone

to be with the Lord, his home for children will continue to be a haven of warmth and kindness for years to come, with momma Abby, now Grandma Abby for many grandchildren she enjoys today.

It brings me great joy to see all those young boys and girls grow up and become fine and loving people, thanks to the Taunton household. Thank you, Abby and David, as well as those that give so much to help, just one more child. Love U!

If you are willing to help support the Taunton Family Home's efforts, please contact **Diana Taunton Miller** at:
850-819-0451.



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THE WEVA LIBRARY

by Joyelle Linton

It is with great excitement that I share the news of a \$12,000 early literacy grant received by both Gulf County Public Libraries from the Early Learning Coalition of Northwest Florida. This grant will be shared equally between the Wewahitchka and Port St. Joe libraries. A large part of the grant will be used to purchase award-winning children's books. Another portion of the funds will be used to purchase giveaway books for outreach events. The remaining funds will be used to enhance Storytime programs. In Wewahitchka, these items will focus on alphabet and numerical STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math) materials along with story board activities.

On Tuesday, August 22 at 10:00 a.m. CT Budding Bookworms will resume for toddlers and preschoolers. This season's emphasis will be on getting children ready for kindergarten. Each session will include an alphabet letter, a number, a color and a shape. Join us for stories, rhymes, songs, and crafts to instill a love of reading!

Are you getting ready for Fall planting? I know many of you have been awaiting our next seed delivery. It has arrived! With more surely to come. There are a variety of vegetables, fruits, herbs, and wildflowers to choose from. With a Free library card, pick out five packs of seed packets each month. We will gladly accept seed donations.

For more information or questions, please contact us at (850) 639-2419. Our normal business hours are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 9:00-5:00 CT.

Our community website: www.nwrls.com. JL

John1:14

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THE NEW EMERGENCY RADIO ASSOCIATION IS ADDING MEMBERS AS IT CONTINUES TO GROW

by Tom Wynn

The group is adding members from up and down Gulf County. We have had two meetings thus far. Several members have installed outside antenna and purchased handheld radios. A logo design was fashioned, and a new name was chosen by the group. The latest news is that the small group is gathering more individuals and families who are working to have comms with one another in case of a loss of communication in the Gulf County area, being that we are rural and can easily lose power and comms with the outside world.

The local HAM Radio Operators have agreed to aid the new group with the project. 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. New members have sprung up in Howard Creek and Overstreet areas as well.

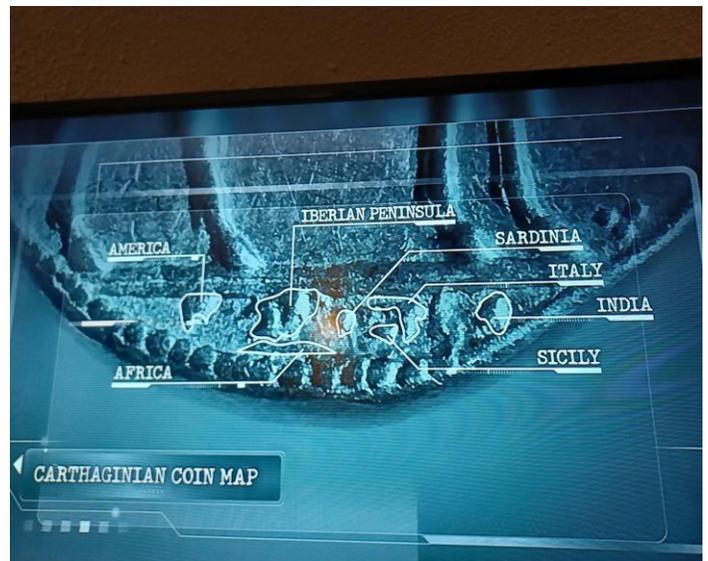
The group has decided on a name, **"The Tupelo Radio Group."** They are making progress in mapping out the GMRS Radio network, where the repeaters are to be located. We have started doing regular testing on Sunday afternoons at 4pm to track our progress. We are looking for some Ham Operators in the Wewa 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)

HOMELESS FOLKS STILL TRASHING THE PUBLIC RESTROOMS IN OUR PARKS

by Tom Wynn

In the July city meeting the trashing of the park restrooms was reported again by city employees to the city council. Those of you that use Lake Alice Park and our Ball Parks please clean up after yourself. The city does its best to keep the parks clean, but some people trash it and walk off. It costs money to keep the park and the bathrooms clean folks. Please help and enjoy the parks in Wewa. Thank you!



PROOF POSITIVE COLUMBUS WAS NOT THE FIRST!

by Tom Wynn

The photo above it the backside and bottom edge, the reverse side of a coin minted in 350 B.C. Coined or minted in a Carthaginian Mint for the Phoenician Empire. It clearly shows the United States and the Gulf of Mexico and Florida in the far-left corner.

There is lot of evidence of the Phoenicians (Israelites that lived along the Mediterranean Sea near Lebanon and Israel today. They were Israelites that became BAAL Worshippers later in history. The Phoenicians were able to travel across the seas because of their ability to navigate at night. This coin is proof positive that they made it across to North America as they did other places around the world.

In 1996, McMenamin proposed that Phoenician sailors discovered the New World, c. 350 BC. Carthage minted gold staters in 350 BC bearing a pattern in the reverse exergue of the coins, which McMenamin interpreted as a map of the Mediterranean with the Americas shown to the west across the Atlantic. **TW**

John 3:16



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AMERICAN BOY SCOUTS SEEK TO HAVE A NEW TROOP IN WEWAHITCHKA AREA

by Tom Wynn

Scout Master Tom Reynolds has contacted the Editor of The Wewa News about the idea of starting up a new Boy Scout Troop in the Wewa area. The Boy Scouts have been reading historical articles in The Wewa News from all over the Panhandle. They can explore the forests and lakes of North Gulf County, by boats and by hiking the area, as well as camping in our wilderness. If anyone is interested in helping to develop a new Boy Scout Troop in the north end of Gulf County, please contact Scout Master Tom Reynolds at: 850-774-8335. The new Scout Master will be a local man Mr. Geoffrey Helms who is an Eagle Scout himself. TW

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Rebecca Kite

1d · 88

I'm raising \$2,000 until 08/22/2023 to help me in my volunteer work with BINGO with Seniors. Can you help? The money will be used for prizes, more BINGO cards, and hopefully a new board to use with the 75 inch TV that was donated. This is not a request for any center, this is a request from me, for me, for help to get more needed items as listed above.

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John 14:3



MS. JENNIFER WRIGHT CELEBRATES ONE YEAR OF SERVICE TO THE CITY
 By Tom Wynn



After some training by her co-workers Jennifer hit the road running! She took to her new job quickly for the benefit of the city and her co-workers. She has been on the job for one full year and got a raise for her excellent performance, approved by the City Commission 4 to 0 vote. Jennifer has been a polite and trustworthy employee over the past year working in our temporary tiny City Hall.

Job well done Jennifer, Thank you for your service to our community. Photo of the Staff at City Hall, (From left to Right:-Michael Gortman, Jennifer Wright, Rachel Jackson, Britney Proctor and Misty Robbins). These folks handle over 9 million dollars in city assets and the running of all the services that the small city provides to those that live on the land we call Wewahitchka(Wewa!).

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TINY HOUSE LIVING IN WEWA **by Ms. Savannah Gibson**

Tiny home living is a movement that has become quite popular over the last few years. There are several different types of tiny homes, but a couple of examples are those built on trailers so that they can be portable and classified as RVs, converted storage containers and sheds, and stick-built.

I first learned about the tiny house movement as a young teenager, and I knew that it's what I wanted to do. I started working at the age of fourteen and was great at saving my money. I understood the concept of cash, saving, and I also knew the struggle that many American families faced with poverty and lack of housing.

I had seen my own family struggle to pay their mortgage when the most uncertainty struck, and jobs were suddenly lost. You think things won't happen to you until they do. I remember thinking back then, "If there is a way to be free of financial burden, I want to achieve that for my adulthood!" With that said, I spent a few years researching tiny houses, and I started to make my dream into a reality.

In 2016, I bought a wooden 400 square foot shed and converted it into a home over time. I knew what price range to expect with the conversion, but I had NO idea just what all I was in for. The problem I faced was getting the city to allow my home. I had bought a lot in city limits; never really thinking about the fact that my home would be seen as something so out of bounds.

This caused an uproar in the town, people started talking - a lot of good, and some bad. Some people were thinking it would be the new local cafe, others believed it was an extension of the school. Some loved it, some hated it. It wasn't until I built my tiny home that I realized just how much people love to squash the hopes and dreams of others. This would have been the first tiny home in our area.

For years, folks have come up to my front door and asked about my "cute little cottage". Many of those

have asked to buy my home right then and there! Since this was a new idea in the way of housing/building, there were new specific codes from the county that I would have to follow in order to get my home passed as "legal".

Of course, every newly built home has building codes to follow to get a permit, but there were things that would be different with my tiny home, as it would be the first permitted one in our area.

For example: the stud spacing in the walls are narrower, there are over twenty steel anchors going throughout the perimeter floor, one awning window in the bedroom, and the panel box inside cannot be next to the window.

These are just a short list of specific modifications that had to be made in order to pass code. That is the part that was most challenging. Several mistakes were made along the way and work that had already been paid for had to be redone and paid for again. That meant I spent double the amount of money!

I have had many positive and negative reactions to my home, as it was something new and shiny. Controversy followed the build. Though I did not attend and did not know about it until later, there was a meeting held about allowing my tiny home into our city.

There were folks in Gulf County that stood up for me and exercised their First Amendment Right by using their voices and expressing their opinions on the matter. I won't name names, but you know who you are, and I would like to thank you! Everything that I did in my building journey was legal and safe. There is no reason for tiny homes to be outlawed.

I finished my home at the age of nineteen years old in 2017. I had no mortgage, no debts, and I was financially free with a beautiful place to call my own. As I write this article, I am twenty-five years old, a Florida REALTOR®, Phlebotomist, and Mortuary assistant. I still live in my tiny home and LOVE it just as much as day one!

I aspire to help other folks find their individuality and start their path to freedom with tiny home living! There were a lot of hoops to jump through, but I did it, and so can you! If you have a dream, chase it. You can do anything that you put your mind to!

Tiny home living is freeing in so many ways. Minimalistic living is not just for finances, it is also

eliminating clutter and things that we do not really need. This lifestyle has shown me what is most important in life, and it keeps me wanting to do more outside of four walls like spending time with others, gardening, and being in nature. Maybe you have a four-bedroom home and only use one of the rooms.

Why do you need that much space? Maybe you collect junk and wish that you could downsize and learn to live simplistically. Tiny home living may be for you if so! I could write chapters about the pros of this lifestyle, but for now I will leave you with one last one, and that is the affordability of living with the low cost of utilities and more. My advice to anyone wanting to build one is to RESEARCH. Pick your design and size, figure out where your property will be, and take that information to your local building department to see what you will be required to do in order to get your permit.

If you ever have any questions at all about tiny home living or questions for me on my journey, I would love to chat with you! Feel free to email me at: savanthewriter@gmail.com

**CITY OF WEWAHITCHKA COMMISSION
APPROVED LAND CHANGE!**

by Tom Wynn

In the July meeting the city Commissioners had the final reading of the Wewa planning board approval of Ms. Carol Luevano of South Highway 71 to use a lot at 792 1st street (located approximately behind the Emerald Coast Credit Union Building area). The vote was 4 to 0 approving the change. Our understanding is, there will be a snow cone truck placed there for the public to enjoy! One of the local schools is very near this location. It is a easy place to find as well for the public. **TW**



**THE MAJESTIC BRIDGE AND RAILROAD
CROSSING OF OLD IOLA**

by Tom Wynn

Long ago, in the heart of northwest Florida, nestled amidst the picturesque landscapes of Wewahitchka, lay

a hidden gem known as the Famous Dead Lakes. Its mysterious beauty captured the imagination of settlers and pioneers who ventured to this quaint area in the early 1800s, seeking a new beginning and a place to call home.

Amidst the lush greenery and the calming waters of the Dead Lakes area, a marvel stood tall—a magnificent bridge that would forever alter the destiny of the region. The St. Joseph and Iola Railroad train system (started operations in May of 1839), laden with people and supplies, crossed this very location pictured for the trains and the bridge for people and wagons, connecting the settlers to the outside world.

The bridge became a lifeline, a symbol of progress and possibility in the untamed wilderness of north old Florida. The pioneers' names from history echoed through the ages, forever etched in the annals of Iola's past, a present-day ghost town; The Clarks, the Williamsons, and the Johnsons. Mr. James Hudson, who was the postmaster in October the 16th of 1838 in Iola. Later Mr. Frank Rish would become a postmaster as well (James Ernest Rish's grandfather) they were among the first to lay their roots in the fertile land surrounding the Dead Lakes. Mr. Rish had a large Hotel that held 600 people on its second-floor dance hall.

With determination and fortitude, they built businesses and homes, weaving a tight-knit community that flourished with each passing day. Later came The Stone family and other families arrived seeking adventure and a livelihood from the vast riches in the waters, the land and the amazing tree lines. Lest we forget the animals and the honeybees, various honey including the famous Tupelo honey from the Tupelo trees (of the gum tree family) that line up for harvest by the local beekeepers for about 50 miles up and down the Apalachicola River and the Chipola Rivers. Nectar soon became honey from all the wonderful flora available to local farmers and beekeepers. Thus, the local bee businesses were born.

The Armstrong family, according to a Creek Chieftain was the one of the first Indian families to be in the bee business. We know today that the Spaniards brought the honeybees to Florida back in the 1500's from Europe.

Hebrews 12:1-2

The bustling settlement that sprouted around the old bridge soon became a hub of commerce and camaraderie. General stores, sawmills, and taverns sprung up, serving the needs of the settlers and welcoming weary travelers who crossed the bridge in search of adventure. The bridge brought growth and prosperity to the region, turning a once remote area into a thriving center of activity.

The pioneers knew the significance of the bridge, not just as a means of transportation but as a symbol of their unity and resilience. The bridge fostered bonds among the settlers, creating a sense of belonging that would endure for generations to come, even to this day. As the years rolled by, the old bridge became a silent witness to the changing tides of time.

The St. Joseph Iola Railroad train no longer rumbled across its iron tracks, but the bridge support posts remain, its architectural grandeur standing strong against the passage of time. It continued to be a link between the past and the present, reminding the locals of the indomitable spirit of their forefathers.

Today, the old bridge's magic view beckons travelers from far and wide (upgraded in 1959). Standing on the bridge, one can feel the whispers of history, the echoes of pioneers, and the stories of those who have crossed its expanse. On one side, the serene waters of the Dead Lakes glisten, reflecting the beauty of the surrounding nature. On the other, the lush green landscape stretches as far as the eye can see, inviting wanderers to explore the wonders of Iola and Wewahitchka Florida, with its breathtaking views.

Local folklore speaks of the bridge's mystical charm, with tales of ethereal sightings and unexplained phenomena. Some say they have glimpsed shadows dancing on the water's surface, while others believe the bridge itself holds the secrets of a bygone era.

Today, as travelers venture to the old bridge, they marvel at its beauty and majestic view. The bridge is still a cherished landmark, a testament to the resilience of the pioneers and a bridge of memories that connects the past to the present. Many locals remember fishing off the bridge next to the place where the old trains crossed directly over the water, catching large and small fish, the post peep out of the water demanding you photograph them before nature takes them away from our view.

Romans 3:23

As the sun sets over the Dead Lakes, casting a warm glow on the old bridge, one cannot help but feel a sense of wonder and gratitude. The bridge crossing the famous Dead Lakes in Iola, Florida, stands not just as a relic of the past, but as a reminder of the enduring spirit of a community that embraced change and carved its legacy amidst the whispers of the Famous Dead Lakes.

When I am feeling down and overwhelmed, I like to drive down to the bridge, and just stand there and wave at the fishermen, and watch the water birds fly overlooking the waters for their next meal. At times the water is so still that the trees and their leaves appear to be a living reflection in a mirror. A peaceful place to enjoy nature at its finest. TW



Preserving History: Domino Demunck Restored Ford 8N Tractor at Stone Mill Creek

by Tom Wynn

In a heartwarming tribute to the rich history of American agriculture, Mr. Domino Demunck, a passionate Paint and Body man, took an old vintage tractor and has lovingly given it a restored look to its former glory in appearance.

A Ford 8N 1950's vintage tractor today is situated at the edge of his property at Stone Mill Creek, just after the bridge crossing. This beautifully refurbished tractor serves as a captivating sight for all passersby to admire and cherish.

Preserving Heritage at Stone Mill Creek:

Stone Mill Creek, nestled in the picturesque countryside, supplies the perfect backdrop for this cherished piece of history. Domino carefully positioned the restored Ford 8N at the edge of his property, where its vibrant red and gray colors stand out against the tranquil surroundings. The tractor's presence adds a touch of nostalgia and a glimpse into

the past, serving as a reminder of the area's rich agricultural heritage.

Inviting the Community:

Domino welcomes visitors to come drive by and see his Ford 8N in its semi-restored glory. As they pass by to his Auto Restoration Paint Shop down the way on Michael Street. Whether you are an avid vintage tractor enthusiast or simply appreciate the beauty of history, a visit to Stone Mill Creek is a must. As you cross the bridge and view the powerful old machine at the corner near the fence line of Domino's property you will be greeted by the sight of this magnificent vintage tractor, showcasing the art of preservation and the spirit of American farming.

A Tribute to Hardworking Farmers:

Beyond its aesthetic appeal, the semi-restored Ford 8N at Stone Mill Creek is a tribute to the hardworking farmers who depended on these tractors to cultivate the land and sustain their families. In an age of modern machinery and technology, the sight of this vintage gem serves as a humbling reminder of the dedication and resilience of the agricultural community. This tractor was the tech of its day.

Visit Stone Mill Creek:

As you take in the sight of this classic tractor, let it transport you to a simpler time, where farming was more than just a livelihood; it was a way of life.

In a world where progress moves swiftly, Domino's Ford 8N stands as a steadfast reminder of the past, preserving the memory of an era that shaped the nation's agricultural roots. Don't miss the opportunity to take a trip down memory lane and bask in the nostalgia of the Ford 8N at Stone Mill Creek, take the family on a Sunday ride, and see this work of a man's labor and a generation of hardworking souls of yesterday. TW



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Mrs. Joellen Campell and Mr. Tommie Anderson

They had a birthday this week on the same day, a Celebration was had at the Senior Citizens Center last Friday. You will receive a FREE GIFT CARD from SUBWAY Next time I see you. Please enjoy a Sub on me. Brother Tom 😊



The New Wetappo Creek Bridge on Highway 22 Enhances Connectivity and Safety in the Region

By Tom Wynn

In a significant milestone for the residents of the Wetappo Creek area and Wewahitchka, the long-awaited replacement of the Wetappo Creek bridge has finally been completed. The newly constructed bridge promises improved connectivity and enhanced safety for the community, marking a momentous occasion for the region's transportation infrastructure.

A Vital Link Restored

The Wetappo Creek bridge serves as a vital link, connecting two sides of the community that had been torn-up for months due to the earlier bridge's deterioration (and it was so narrow!). The old structure, which had been in service for over five decades, had progressively shown signs of wear and tear, raising concerns about its safety. Community members and local authorities, in recognition of the bridge's importance, collaborated tirelessly to secure funding for its replacement.

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Engineers and construction crews worked diligently to ensure the bridge's resilience against flooding and natural disasters, minimizing the risk of future closures and disruptions to the community's daily life (not to mention, a new fishing hole for some of the locals).

The wider lanes and improved guardrails offer added safety for pedestrians and motorists alike, alleviating worries about accidents and ensuring a smoother flow of traffic. It was a scary moment to cross bridge at the same time as 18-wheeler filled with tree trunks flobbing around. I am sure that the local law enforcement praised the enhanced safety measures, emphasizing the positive impact on public safety in the region on highway 22, a major path back and forth to Wewa and the rest of the world's favorite fishing and boating spots.

Community Celebration

As the new bridge opened to the public, the community celebrated with a nice ride over it, checking out the new black asphalt the Construction teams did a great job! So far everyone I know is happy for the project's successful completion.

History of the Wetappo Creek Area

The Wetappo Creek area holds a rich history dating back to the early Native American tribes that once inhabited the region. The creek itself played a significant role in the lives of these tribes, supplying a source of water and an abundance of natural resources.

European settlers later arrived in the area, setting up farms and homes along the creek's banks.

The Wetappo Creek bridge was constructed in the mid-20th century to ease transportation and connect the two sides of the community, spurring further growth and development in the region, it was not just a dip in the road, a long time ago, it wasn't a creek, but large enough for ships and boats to travel on it (I read this in a book in the PC public library, to my amazement).

Over the years, the Wetappo Creek area became a close-knit community, known for its strong sense of camaraderie and commitment to preserving its natural beauty. The creek itself became a popular spot for recreational activities such as fishing, kayaking, and birdwatching, and for building a fancy fish camp or homesteading.

As the region rejoices in the successful completion of the Wetappo Creek bridge project, it stands as a testament to the power of collaboration, determination, and the belief in the potential of a united community. The Old-Timers would be proud! **TW**

Welcome to the Cozy Haven: The Guest House Inn, Abbeville, Alabama

by Tom Wynn

As we traveled to East Tennessee to see a Tiny House village and manufacturing company for an article on Tiny



House villages, we came across this Motel on the way, and so we had to stay there on the way back as well, why? Because it was just right in cost and cleanliness.

Our journey along scenic HWY 431 heading north we made our first nightly stop in Abbeville, Alabama, a gem of a resting place awaits. If you ever get the opportunity to stop and rest there, consider The Guest House Inn" in Abbeville. We have bedded down in several motels and hotels since Covid-19 started up and noticed the prices went up and the quality went down!

Upon arriving at the Guest House Inn, one of the first things that strikes guests is the pristine cleanliness and overall tidiness of the property. The owners, The Patel's and their employees pride themselves on keeping a clean house, take great pride in keeping their motel to the highest standards. The buildings are meticulously cared for, with fresh coats of paint adorning the exterior, giving the place a cheerful and welcoming vibe.



Milap and Trisha Patel are not just owners and general managers; they are also gracious hosts who go above and beyond to ensure their guests feel welcomed and valued.

A Refreshing Oasis

After a long day of travel, the Guest House Inn's swimming pool supplies a refreshing cooling off for weary travelers. The pool area is meticulously kept and inviting, enticing guests to take a dip and unwind, after a hot day on the road. The clear blue waters of the pool are a sight for sore eyes, and guests can't help but feel rejuvenated after a relaxing swim. Stepping into the rooms at the Guest House Inn, guests are met with a sense of comfort and cleanliness. The beds are cozy and inviting, promising a restful night's sleep.

So, if you find yourself on HWY 431 heading north to or through Abbeville, Alabama, be sure to make a stop at the Guest House Inn. Embrace the warm hospitality, bask in the relaxing pool, and enjoy the tranquility of this charming oasis. Milap and Trisha Patel's Guest House Inn promise a stay that will leave you with cherished memories. **TW**

Romans 5:12

Romans 6:23

DREAM COMES TRUE FOR A LOCAL MAN!

by Tom Wynn



Bob Sutton, the owner of the Wewa RV Park & Trading Post, just 5 miles north of Wewa, is now driving a car that he only dreamed about at the young age of 10 years old. He fell in love with putting car models together with glue as most boys back before computers, flat TV screens and video games did.

His favorite was The California Hot Rod! His dream car. He always wanted one of these special cars. A modified car made for speed and just for the joy of flying down the highway in a homemade/modified customized car. The more customized the better!

On this day Bob took me on a ride around the Wewahitchka area in his dream car he bought for himself. What a blast from the past that ride turned out to be for him and for me.

His car has AC, a modern radio system and other things you would not expect to have. This dream car is a 4 door 1938 Chevy Sedan coming directly from a California owner.

Bob promises to take it to Car Shows in the local area and bring it to Lake Alice Park when Wewa has festivals, for all to see. His dream car is now finally driving down the road with Bob at the wheel. TW

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By Land, Sea & Air: UF/IFAS Extension Gulf County Hosts Two 4-H Youth Day Camps

by Ray Bodrey

Gulf county is home to a rich history and tradition of Tupelo honey production. It's important to keep this tradition strong by fostering a new generation of beekeepers. A **4-H Young Day** camp can help do just that.

On July 12th, our Honey Bee Camp was held, and how sweet it was! Ten Gulf County youth participated in this one-day camp experience. Pam Palmer of Blue Eyed Girl Honey taught the youth some of the basics of beekeeping.

4-H member Emily Flowers presented a demonstration on beeswax wraps, a natural alternative to plastic wrap. Supplies for this demonstration were graciously provided by a Joann Fabrics Grant. The fun didn't stop there, as 4-H Youth Development Extension Agent Anitra Mayhann, educated the group on how to create a charcuterie board paired with Tupelo honey, which the group enjoyed for lunch. 4-H beekeeping camps offer learning experiences that provide youth with hands-on, as well as scientific knowledge, all while adding the element of an investment in the future for this important historical agricultural commodity. The learning and fun didn't stop there!



On July 20th, the Youth Naturalist Day Camp at St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve was held, as eleven youths took part in this awesome outdoor event. Ray Bodrey, Gulf County Extension Director, gave a presentation on bay scallops with a live demonstration,

as well as a discussion on the importance of sea grass in scallop habitat. Eric Lovstrand, Franklin County Extension Director gave a live demonstration on reptiles & amphibians of the Panhandle.



Kendra Jacoby & Sharon Gross from the Forgotten

Coast Sea Turtles Center gave a talk and demonstration on sea turtles and tortoises, as well as the great work the volunteer group does for conservation efforts. This was followed by an early afternoon tour in the maritime forest and then a paddle trip on the bay.



Sandra Chaffin from the Buffer Preserve gave an informative guided tour of the pine flatwoods. Winding up the day, Gulf County Extension Director, Ray Bodrey gave a kayak safety and boating basics talk followed

by a short kayak tour on the bay.

A 4-H naturalist experience such as this can help youth find new interests and strengths and grow in ways traditional education cannot offer. A big thank you to our 4-H Volunteers, The St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve, Junior Service League of Port St. Joe and the Battelle Organization for the funding support. **RB**

FRIENDS OF THE WEWAHITCHKA LIBRARY

by Carol Childress

Friends of the Library volunteers completed a second year of service as part of the United Way sponsored VITA program that provides free income tax preparation. Some statistics:

16 volunteers provided 962 volunteer hours.

- Total number of citizen visits = 662
- 252 federal income tax returns + 20 state income tax returns filed.
- Total income of \$9.1 million with refunds of \$167,222

We are very grateful to the Port St. Joe and Wewahitchka Libraries for allowing us to use their buildings and their staff. Friends of the Library will meet in the Wewahitchka Public Library on Thursday, August 10th at 9:30 am. We are a 501c3 non-profit organization that assists our local library with purchasing books, crafts, supplies and equipment that is not included in their budget.

Come join us! CC

EVER WONDER WHAT IS THE OLDEST SURNAME IN THE WORLD?

by Tom Wynn

As old Gomer Pyle would say, "Surprise Surprise!" As he rocked his head back and forth with a big smile on his face.

In doing a little research I found the answer: The oldest known surname is, **KATZ!** (it is the initials of the two words-"**Kohen Tsedek**"). Every Katz is a priest, descending in an unbroken line from Aaron, the brother of Moses. This has been since the mid 1400 B.C. My source for this information is none other than, Ripley's Believe it or not" BUT! Don't you just love "But!", there is always someone in the left field that has their hand in the air.

Kushim, a Babylonian accountant is said to have the oldest known Surname according to thednatests.com So his name is considered the oldest recorded surname on record. Historians estimate that Kushim lived sometime between 3400-3000 BC. And worked as an accountant for the city of Uruk during the time period above. He was not famous or notable during his lifetime, but his surname is today, considered one of the oldest names in recorded history.

Now all this time, I thought the oldest Surname was "**ADAM**" for the oldest surname recorded in History of mankind, So Mr. Adam and Mrs. Eve Adam, should be the oldest names in my Book. Adam means, Red Dirt! Or "He who blushes" in the Hebraic text. So in the beginning was Dirt! TW

YOU GOT A GOOD STORY TO TELL-SEND IT IN!
Send it to: thewewanews2021@gmail.com for consideration



The USCG was established in 1790 by Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton
HAPPY BIRTHDAY U.S. COAST GUARD
1790 4th of August

THE DAY THE U.S. COAST GUARD SAVED MY LIFE

BY AECS Tom Wynn Jr. USCG (Ret.)

A Boy's Story of his Rescue: It was a bright and sunny afternoon, a perfect day for fun and swimming. My father was an Aviation Electronic Technician stationed at U.S. Coast Guard Air Station located in St. Petersburg Florida.

This day was a very special day for the station and its crew. It was the annual Coast Guard Day Picnic (August the 4th 1964), "Coast Guard Day" Picnics' are always fun. A day off for the crew and their families, time for a family picnic and celebrating the Coast Guard's birthday. I was nine years old at the time.

All met on Treasure Island in Clearwater Florida for a fun day at the beach. It was Saturday just before Coast Guard Day officially, which landed on Tuesday that year.

I was excited to be there. The first thing we did, to my delight, was my father took me in the water and played with me. He was swimming around me and just having a good time. He soon found out that I could not swim... nothing! Notta! He was shocked to find this out.

He told me he could swim since he was 5 years old (he grew up in Florida since his own father was a Depot Agent for the Railroad during the Great Depression and WWII and so ran Depots all over Florida).

First things first, how to dog paddle was first up. After just a few minutes I could do it. I felt empowered. I could swim, wow! I started dog paddling around him. So, after all the rules and practice, we headed back to the pavilion where my mom and all the rest were setting up for lunch.

Dad told me a major rule, "**never swim alone.**" But soon after all got busy preparing for lunch, I sneaked back out to the beach. After looking around I saw no one around, I walked into the water, and started to dog paddle, I was all alone.

You see I was very excited and knew I could not go out deep and I had to just try out my new skills (disobeying my

father's warnings). This turns out to be a very dangerous idea, I was about to lose my life!

As I approached the water, I spread out to begin to dog paddle, out about 10 or so feet from the shoreline. I was able to kick a few strokes and my thigh hit a submerged log. Just on the other side of the log the water had washed out the sand and the water depth drop a foot or so deeper than I could stand up. As I hit my thigh on the log, it hurt badly, and so I lost my ability to dog paddle. I immediately stood up! Sinking to the bottom quickly.

I could not stand in the deeper water; I was in the hole behind the log. All I could do was bounce off the sandy bottom until I could get my body back up to dog paddle again. It was not happening! I was just bouncing up and down taking air in with each bounce. It soon wore me out, as I was trying to yell for help, but there was no time to do that, I could not stay up longer than to take the next breath of air. I put my arm straight up hoping someone could see it, But no one was around, no one.

As I was about to drown, going down for the last time. My body would have been found to the horror of my family when all came down to swim after their lunch. My parents would have been looking for me for lunch, but it would have been too late. Just as I went down for what I thought was my last bounce, I saw a man running from my left side toward me. He saw me and was running at a high speed.

I noticed he was a very handsome man; his body was well muscled, not too much, just perfect in appearance. He was sandy blonde with a touch of red in his hair and on his chest. He was barefooted, and had no clothes on, except an Official U.S. Coast Guard swimsuit that was issued to boots in Boot Camp. I knew this because my father was issued one of these swimsuits. Now, I live because a Coastie would come and save me from certain death, a watery grave, all alone, my body possibly floating out to sea.

This man came running into the water and swam toward me as fast as he could swim. As I saw him coming on the beach, I knew he could save me if he could get to me before I went under for the last time. I made one more bounce with all the energy I could muster. I took my last breath and went back down to the bottom, with my arm in the air. I felt his hand grasp my arm firmly. He lifted me up directly out of the water. I took a large gasp of air, and he walked me to the shore. He stood next to me, with his arm around me, as I gathered my breath. He asked me if I was okay. I assured him I was and thanked him.

Now, as we began to walk, we came around the bushes and trees along the beach to the clearing where we could see the Pavilion up the small hill. He turned me toward him and warned me to never again swim alone and pointed to my

father and said, "Your dad is up there, go tell him what happened." He was so gentle and kind to me. Even his admonishment was kind. I was in amazement and knew I nearly lost my life, just a few moments ago. I was seconds from drowning at the young age of 9 years old. But I had no one to blame. I did not listen; I did not think of the dangers of swimming alone. A lesson for life, well learned.

After he pointed me to my father, he started running in the opposite direction from the Pavilion...he quickly ran out of sight, he was just Gone! He just disappeared! I immediately thought this was strange, "why didn't he follow me to the Pavilion?" I thought to myself.

I went to my father under the pavilion near the picnic tables. As I approached him, he was smiling and asked me where I had been, thinking I had been playing with the other kids. I told him what happened and about the Coastie that saved me from drowning. He stopped in his tracks (putting food and drinks on the picnic table from a cooler)! He asked me what his name was, I told him I didn't know, he then asked me what he looked like, I described him to the tee as it is burned in my memory to this very day. With a strange look on his face, he said, "There is no Coastie that looks like that at the Air Station." I insisted that he was in fact a Coastie, and so I described his bathing suit to him. I remember seeing the Coast Guard patch on his swimsuit and it was dark blue, the one that is issued to the Coast Guardsmen in Boot Camp (the same one was issued to me in Boot Camp as well). He was totally shocked. He was bewildered as to who it could have been. It was a small unit at the time, and he knew everyone on base. Who could it have been? Only the Lord knows.

Thanks to this Coast Guardsmen, who remains an Unknown Hero, I was able to live on, and at the age of 17 joined the U.S. Coast Guard in the summer of 1972. I have been retired now for 31 years, after serving in the Coast Guard for over 20.

In turn, he gave me life! There is no doubt about that. So I literally owed my own life to the Coast Guard and my Heavenly Father who sent this stranger to my aid. We are a three-generation Coast Guard family because one of my sons served a couple of years too. I have saved many lives in my flying career as my father did as well. He did 20 years and passed over the bar, in 2007.

The Unknown Coast Guardsmen who saved my life, If not for him, I would never have had the opportunity to save many lives myself. THANK YOU! U.S. Coast Guard for your love and respect for the stranger. You saved thousands of times the lost at Sea, the cold and lonely, the broken, the hurt, and those that nearly drowned. Thank you for your acts of loving-kindness. You are all indeed, true Heroes!

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Romans 10:1-10

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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 7th 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 2nd 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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“May God Bless you and your family!” TW

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