

## Friends of Fakahatchee Celebrate 25 Years

By Patty Huff

On Saturday, March 23, the Friends of Fakahatchee held an annual membership meeting and picnic to celebrate its 25th anniversary. Executive Director Francine Stevens presented the Mel Finn Award to long-time volunteer and board member John Kaiser. Mel Finn was a Miami attorney and orchid expert who fought to have the Fakahatchee preserved.

Past president Tom Maish and John Kaiser then recounted the history of the Friends group since its inception in 1998 to the present. So much has been accomplished by the FOF, a model volunteer group to one of our best seven surrounding parks/preserves.

Park Manager Joe Berger also gave an update of the Fakahatchee. One of the most important projects has been the Big Cypress Bend Boardwalk Expansion which dates back to 2010 and now includes a beautiful Interpretive Pavilion which will eventually

Long-time volunteer and board member John Kaiser receives the prestigious Mel Finn Award from Executive Director Francine Stevens.

have interactive kiosks. The boardwalk meanders around the Fakahatchee, offering views of the wide expanse of the swampy preserve with a variety of plants and wildlife and ending at beautiful Green Heron Lake known for nesting around the lake. Well worth a walk in the park!

If you are interested in volunteer opportunities with the FOF, please call (239) 695-1023. If you would like to learn more about this amazing preserve, check out the following YouTube documentary, funded by the Friends, by photographer Jay Staton; it explores the history of the Fakahatchee and showcases the accomplishments of the Friends of Fakahatchee including the new boardwalk site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rz32inxYb6Q>.



Photos by Phil McGuire



## Swamp News: Everglades' Funky Fresh Channel

By Denise Wauters

Have you seen the latest buzz around the Everglades? If not, you're missing out on a tidal wave of excitement! Picture this: a bunch of enthusiastic youngsters, a dash of community spirit, and a sprinkle of swampy charm, all rolled up into one captivating news channel. Welcome to the world of Swamp News, your go-to source for all things funky and fresh in the heart of the Everglades!

So, how did this gem of a channel come into existence? Well, it all started with a spark of creativity and a whole lot of love for the local scene. Tukey Oliver, director, along with his wife Jessica, writer, had a brilliant idea to shine a spotlight on the vibrant tapestry of events and businesses nestled within the Everglades. And thus, Swamp News was born!

See News, p10

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Our very own Sherry Geiger. p9



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# Local Event Calendar

## April 14, 2024 to May 25, 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>April 14</b>	15 Tax Day	16 P&Z p2	17 Wilderness Wed p9 Food Pantry p2	18 Ladies' Coffee HavAnnA Cafe 8:30a Third Thursday p9	19 Produce Stand p2	20  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Free Park Day p2</span>
21  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	22  Earth Day  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	23 ( <b>Full Moon</b>  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	24 Paint Along p2 Food Pantry p2  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	25 Ladies' Coffee Island Cafe 8:30a  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	26 Produce Stand p2  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	27- RAPPER Praise Night p2 Museum BDay p5  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>
28  <span style="background-color: #90EE90; padding: 2px;">Park Week p2</span>	29	30	<b>May 1</b> Food Pantry p2	2 Ladies' Coffee City Seafood 8:30a	3 Produce Stand p2	4
5	6	7 ● <b>New Moon</b> City Council p2	8 Food Pantry p2 Bio Blitz p2	9 Ladies' Coffee Everglades Cafe 8:30a	10 Produce Stand p2	11
12	13	14	15 Food Pantry p2	16 Ladies' Coffee HavAnnA Cafe 8:30a Third Thursday p9	17 Produce Stand p2 Museum Event p4	18
19	20	21 P&Z p2	22 Food Pantry p2	23 ( <b>Full Moon</b> Ladies' Coffee Island Cafe 8:30a	24 Produce Stand p2 Graduation p2	25 - RAPPER Praise Night p2

### Events

**April 20 - 28  
Annual National Park Week**

National Park Week is happening April 20 to April 28 this year. Entrance fees will be waived on April 20, 2024, to kick off the celebration and to encourage everyone to enjoy their national parks in person. National Park Service parks, programs, and partners will host events and activities all week! Big Cypress calendar of events includes Jr Ranger Day, Earth Day and Park Rx Day along with exhibits. Info: <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/npscelebrates/national-park-week.htm>

**April 24 | 3 pm - 5 pm  
Paint Along at HavAnnA Cafe**

Get ready for fun at Havana Cafe's super cool collab with Stroke of Serendipity – it's a Paint Along! Happening monthly on the last Wednesday of the month, from 3 pm to 5 pm. \$20 for adults (12 and up) and \$10 for kids (5-11). Let's make art, vibes, and memories together. RSVP to [lisagsosart@yahoo.com](mailto:lisagsosart@yahoo.com). Info: (239) 877-3998

**April 27 | 9 am - 2 pm  
Museum Birthday Celebration**

Celebrate with us at the Museum of the Everglades on April 27th from 9 am to 2 pm, as we commemorate the 76th Anniversary of the Completion of the Tamiami Trail and the "birthday" of our beloved museum. This celebration promises a festive blend of history and entertainment, featuring live music, complimentary hot dogs, and the only laundry cart races in the country! Arrive early for a free walking tour, register for races, enjoy classic cars,

or relax with music and birthday cake. 105 Broadway Ave W Everglades City. Info: <https://www.facebook.com/events/1425646205007642>

**May 8 | 8:30 am - 10:30 am  
Fakahatchee Strand Bio Blitz**

Help us understand wildlife trends. Volunteers record observations along Janes Scenic Drive from 8:30-10:30 AM. Meet at the Park Office at 7:45 AM. More Info: [Alex.gobel@floridadep.gov](mailto:Alex.gobel@floridadep.gov) or (239) 961-1925

**May 24 | 3 pm  
EVG Graduation**

Join us on May 24th at 3 pm at Everglades City School to celebrate the achievements of our graduating class. The ceremony will held in the Gymnasium.

### Save The Date

**June 29  
Spammy Jammy**

Put on your PJ's and join us the evening of June 29 at Little Bar, in Goodland. We will be celebrating at Spammy Jammy an eclectic bash celebrating the end of the season and the beginning of hurricane season. Don't miss the strange but cool Spam Mold competition. Who will be the 2024 winner this year? Learn the history of Spammy Jammy on Visit Everglades City.com. : (239) 394-5663

### Community

**Food Pantry  
Wednesdays | 9:30 am - Noon**

Food is distributed from the rear of

Everglades Community Church is located at 101 S. Copeland Ave., Everglades City. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Praise Night  
Last Saturday | 6:30 pm**

On the last Saturday of each month, First Baptist Church of Everglades City will have a *Praise Night* with a light supper at 6:30 pm, followed by praise music and fellowship.

**Ladies Coffee  
Thursdays | 8:30 am**

Ladies Coffee is a casual weekly gathering for women every Thursday at different local breakfast spots or homes. No rules or fees, just a welcoming space to connect and forge friendships in a relaxed atmosphere.

**Everglades Area Information  
Daily | 10 - 3:30 pm**

The Everglades Area Visitor Center

is located at 207 Broadway W., Everglades City. The Visitor Center is open daily 10 am to 3:30 pm.

**Planning & Zoning Meeting  
Third Tuesdays | 6 pm**

P&Z Board meetings are held monthly on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. City Council room, 2nd floor City Hall. Info: <https://www.cityofeverglades.org>

**City Council Meeting  
First Tuesdays | 7pm**

City Council meetings are held every 1st Tuesday of the month @ 7 pm in the City Council room, 2nd floor City Hall. The public is invited to attend. Info: <https://www.cityofeverglades.org>

**Produce Stand  
Fridays | 9 am - 12 pm**

Stop by the produce stand outside Kirks Fish Company at 417 Papaya St. in Goodland for fresh fruits and veggies. Available Fridays from 9 am to Noon.

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### Entertainment

**HavAnnA Cafe** (Chokoloskee) has Live Music 7 days a week. Happy Hour starts at 1 pm every day till close on Friday and Saturday night.

**Gator Hole Bar** (Everglades City) has live music on Fridays, Saturdays & Sundays!! Matrassa Lynn 7 - 10 pm.

**Joanie's Blue Crab Cafe** (Ochopee) has live music on weekends.

**Little Bar** (Goodland) has live music every night. Damond Fowler 27, 8 pm.

**Crabby Lady** (Goodland) has live music every weekend. ONE80 Band 28, 1 pm.

**Stans** (Goodland) has music Tues - Sundays. Shows start at 1 & 5. Mark your calendars for great entertainment like Gator Nate 16 & 23, Shane Duncan Band 21, Eric Barton Band 14, Randy McNeeley Band 28, Sideshow Bob 18 & 25, Eric Whiteener 18, Matty Jollie 25, Elliot West Band 19 & 26, Flora 19, Rock Republic 26, Dino's Trio 13, Hot Damn Duo 20, and Steinbeck Way 27.

Send Your Entertainment Schedule to [MulletRapper@gmail.com](mailto:MulletRapper@gmail.com)




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Sun. Worship	10:00AM
Sun. Kids Church	10:00AM
Sun. Renewal	6:00PM
Wed. Youth Renewal	7:00PM
Thurs. Bible Study	7:00PM




**The Minto US OPEN Pickleball Championships** is April 13 to April 20 at the Naples Pickleball Center. It's the ultimate pickleball event, attracting players of all ages from around the globe. With 59 courts and drawing over 40,000 attendees annually.

Kiwanis will charge \$5.00 per car per day for parking, supporting the *Christmas in July* program, or aiding Collier County students at risk of homelessness.

**Gulf Coast Site Closure**

Beginning April 1, Everglades National Park's Gulf Coast site in Everglades City will close to the public for construction of the new Marjory Stoneman Douglas Visitor Center. This includes the canoe and kayak launch, visitor contact station, and adjacent parking areas. Alternate launch sites are available at Rod and Gun Club, Outdoor Resorts of Chokoloskee, and Chokoloskee Island Park and Marina. While closures are expected until the end of the year, the park's Ten Thousand Islands area remains open, offering boat tours and paddling adventures.

More Info: [nps.gov/ever](https://nps.gov/ever)



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**2024 In Stand Dates**

- January 20
- February 3
- February 17
- March 2
- March 16
- March 30
- April 13
- April 27
- May 25
- June 22
- July 20
- August 17
- September 14
- October 12
- October 26
- November 9
- November 23
- December 7
- December 21

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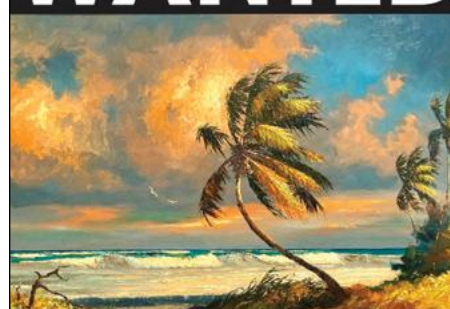
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We cover news and events for Everglades City, Chokoloskee, Plantation Island, Port of the Islands, Copeland, Jerome, Ochopee, Goodland, Lee Cypress, Big Cypress, and the 10,000 Islands. Our aim is accurate and diverse reporting. Opinions expressed may differ from those of the editors or publisher.

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*"The Everglades is a test. If we pass it, we may get to keep the planet."*  
~ Marjory Stoneman Douglas

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# EVG District All-Star | February

We're thrilled to share that one of our very own EVG School students has been selected as this month's CCPS District All-Star! Join us in celebrating their outstanding achievement as they shine among the best student-athletes in the Collier County Public Schools District.



Katie Collins is a senior team captain on the Everglades City School softball team. She is off to a great start so far this season, posting a .375 batting average with 3 RBI's. Katie is

stellar in the field as well showing off her glove with a 100% fielding percentage from her first-base position. Coaches say Katie's strongest attributes are her speed, strong bat, and overall knowledge of the game.

## Homeschool Day at Roberts Ranch on April 23

Round up any homeschooling friends for a pioneer's paradise at Roberts Ranch! The Collier County Museums will host our triannual Homeschool Day at the Immokalee Pioneer Museum at Roberts Ranch this spring. With a focus on the pioneer era of Florida history, our skilled staff and volunteers will guide your children through hands-on experiences related to cattle ranching, food production, gardening, and daily chores. Families can drop in between 10 a.m. – 1 p.m. on April 23 for a peek at ranch life on our 14-acre property, complete with the preserved and restored ranch buildings the Roberts family used until their Red Cattle Company closed in 1979.



“Our goal with the Collier County Museum Division Homeschool Days is to provide a free experience that encourages engagement with our local history by appealing to the diverse age range and abilities of students in southwest Florida’s homeschooling community,” said Curator of Education Elaina Gyure. “We want the homeschool families of southwest Florida to feel welcome in our history museums.”

The Collier County Museums have begun offering triannual Homeschool Days for preschool through early high school, with modules geared towards each level. We're giving approachable history lessons with a focus on what we like to call SSTEM (a combination of history and STEM) to get kids excited about our region's heritage and history. Homeschool Days will cycle through our five museums so your family can get to know all of them!

While RSVP is not required, it is encouraged to ensure enough supplies for students. Call our Curator of Education at (239) 252-8242 or visit [www.CollierMuseums.com/Events](http://www.CollierMuseums.com/Events).



Photos Courtesy

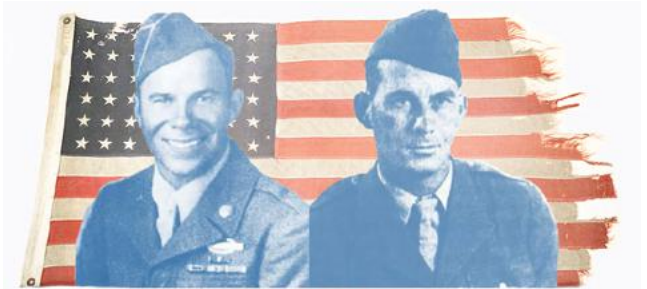


## New Student Exhibit at Museum will Honor Veterans

By Thomas Lockyear

Every year Museum of the Everglades collaborates with our local school to create an exhibit that celebrates a specific aspect of this unique community. Students are encouraged to submit artwork, photos, videos, stories, interviews and more – the field is wide open - to help us share a part of the character and history of the area with visitors from around the world.

This year we have challenged the students to celebrate military veterans from the greater Everglades City area. This can include historic figures from the region's storied past, friends or family members, ancestors, those who recently served or are still deployed, etc. Our goal is to identify as many veterans from the area as we can and salute their service to our country with creative, artistic, and literary tributes composed by our local students.



As in previous years, Friends of Museum of the Everglades have pledged \$1500 toward prizes for student entries in this Creative Response Contest. The award ceremony, which will be held this year on Friday, May 17th from 5pm to 7pm, will include the distribution of cash prizes to students of all ages across a variety of categories.

To coincide with the exhibit, the Museum will be partnering with the Everglades Society for Historic Preservation to install banners honoring local veterans who have passed on street new banners opposite the Centennial banners currently displayed on lampposts throughout town. The plan is for the banners to be hung in time for Memorial Day.

The exhibit will also include historic information about the greater Everglades area's contributions to our Country's armed conflicts in both natural resources and manpower.

Thousands of board feet of bald cypress were logged for the building of Navy vessels during WWII, and many local fishing vessels were commandeered and repurposed as patrol boats to protect coastal waters.

Men and women from Everglades, Chokoloskee and Ochopee have served in nearly every military action since the Civil War, and profiles of hometown heroes like Peg & Totch Brown (both Bronze Star recipients during WWII)

will be prominently featured as well. Families are encouraged to help their students share stories and photos of any friend or family member who has served or is currently serving to ensure that they are included in the exhibit. The deadline for student submissions is 4pm on Saturday, May 4th.

We likewise call upon any other community members who know of veterans from the area to share information about them with us. In time, we hope to develop a complete and comprehensive list of our veterans that would facilitate creating a plaque or monument honoring their service.

Please call the museum at (239) 252-5026 or contact [Thomas.Lockyear@colliercountyfl.gov](mailto:Thomas.Lockyear@colliercountyfl.gov) for more information.

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# Everglades City Community Garden Update



Photos Courtesy Tod Dahlke

Hey neighbors! We've got some exciting news about our beloved community garden in Everglades City, lovingly hosted by Tod Dahlke. Shoutout to the amazing Denise Horvat and her husband Bill – they're the real MVPs! When harvest time rolls around, our dedicated volunteers get to take home some fresh goodies for themselves. Whatever's left over goes straight to the food bank at Everglades City Church, where they're doing incredible work every Wednesday with a huge food donation. The church is now collecting cleaning supplies too, all to help out our neighbors in need. Come join us in the garden – not only will you get to enjoy some tasty treats, but you'll also be lending a helping hand to our community. Let's grow together!

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Wednesday Worship: 6:00 p.m.

416 School Drive / P.O. Box 550, Everglades City, FL 34139, Call Us:(239) 695-3871

# TAMIAMI TRAIL ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION & MUSEUM BIRTHDAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 27<sup>TH</sup> 10<sup>AM</sup> - 2<sup>PM</sup>

EARLY BIRD WALKING TOUR  
FREE HOT DOGS!  
FAMILY FUN!  
BIRTHDAY CAKE!  
OLD TIMERS' TALK

LIVE MUSIC BY SPIRIT OF THE GLADES  
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**AT MUSEUM OF THE EVERGLADES**  
105 W. BROADWAY IN EVERGLADES CITY  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL 239-252-5026

## Tamiami Trail Celebration 2024

Museum of the Everglades will be holding their annual celebration of the Tamiami Trail Anniversary (and Museum Birthday!) on Saturday, April 27th. Festivities will begin at 10am beside the Museum with a prayer and dedication followed by Tamiami Trail-themed giveaways.



The world's only laundry cart races will begin promptly at 11am on the eastbound side of Broadway in front of the Museum.

Live music will be performed throughout the day by "Spirit of the Glades"- a harmonious duo playing bluegrass and comfortable country with a genuine, old Florida feel. Free hot dogs and birthday cake will be served from 11am to 1pm courtesy of the Friends of Museum of the Everglades.

At 1pm the Old Timers' Talk returns with stories and reminiscences from some of our region's oldest and wisest residents. Come and enjoy as they share treasured memories in the Museum's theater area.

Construction of the Tamiami Trail began in 1923 and was completed on April 26th, 1928. Museum of the Everglades opened in 1998 on the 70th Anniversary of the Trail's completion. The Trail Anniversary and Museum Birthday are celebrated every year on the Saturday closest to the actual date of the historic event.



Museum Manager Thomas Lockyear will also be offering a complimentary one-hour historic walking tour at 9am for early birds. For more information, call the Museum at (239) 252-5026.



# Spring Alert: Black Bears Roaming

As spring unfolds its vibrant colors, it also brings about increased activity in Florida's wildlife, particularly our beloved black bears. With their emergence, it's essential to stay BearWise® to prevent conflicts between humans and these majestic creatures.

## BearWise® Tips for Spring

As black bears venture out in search of food, here are some friendly reminders to keep interactions with them positive and safe:

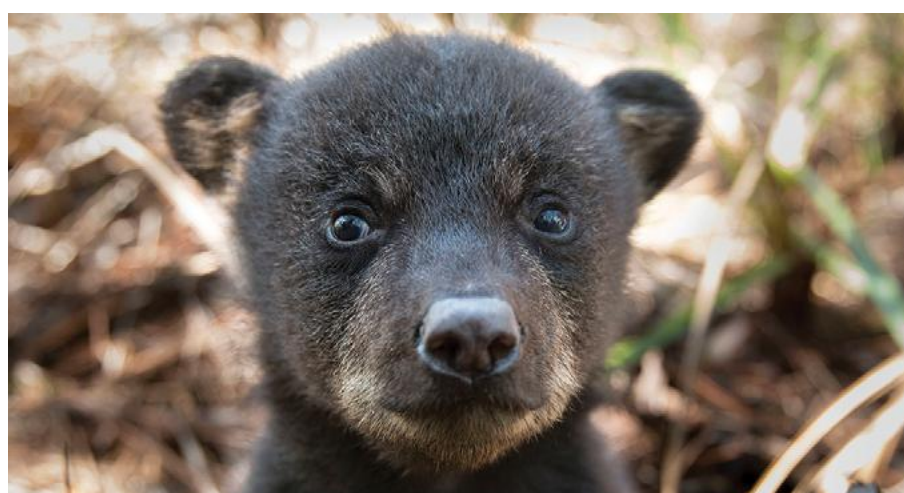


1. **Respect Their Space:** Never feed or approach bears. It's illegal and can lead to dangerous situations. Let them roam freely without human interference.
2. **Secure Your Property:** Remove potential food sources like unsecured garbage, pet food, and bird feeders from your yard. Store garbage in bear-resistant containers and secure compost, gardens, and beehives with electric fencing.
3. **Stay Informed:** Be aware of bear activity in your neighborhood and share sightings with neighbors. Spread awareness about BearWise® practices to help create a bear-friendly community.
4. **Dog Safety:** Keep your dogs on a short leash and close by when walking outdoors, especially in bear-prone areas. Make noise before letting them out in the yard to give bears a chance to retreat.
5. **Drive Cautiously:** Bears are more active on roadways during spring. Reduce your speed, particularly during dawn and dusk, and watch for wildlife crossing signs to avoid collisions.

## In Case of Conflict

If you encounter bear conflicts or witness someone harming or feeding bears, don't hesitate to reach out to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) for assistance. They're here to help ensure the safety of both humans and bears.

Let's make this spring a safe and enjoyable season for all, including our furry friends. For more BearWise® tips and information, visit [MyFWC.com/Bear](https://MyFWC.com/Bear) and [BearWise.org](https://BearWise.org). Together, we can coexist harmoniously with Florida's wildlife!



Imagery Courtesy FWC

# An Attempt to Rescue Sick Sawfish

Next week, NOAA Fisheries will initiate an emergency response effort with partners to attempt to rescue and rehabilitate smalltooth sawfish affected by this mortality event. We hope to prevent additional losses of this endangered species.



Photos Credit Dana Bethea

An effort of this kind has never been done before in the United States. The logistics are complex.

"If the opportunity presents itself, this would be the first attempt ever to rescue and rehabilitate smalltooth sawfish from the wild," said Adam Brame, NOAA Fisheries' sawfish recovery coordinator. "We're hopeful for positive outcomes from these rescue attempts, and grateful to our partners for their support as we work to protect this endangered species."

"It's important to note that active rescue and rehabilitation are not always effective in saving stranded animals. However, it can still give us critical information to learn about the nature of the distress," he added.

## Understanding the Response Effort

**Why is rescue and rehabilitation necessary?**

The smalltooth sawfish was the first marine fish to receive federal protection as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act in 2003. They were historically found in coastal waters from Texas to North Carolina, but now generally only found in Florida.

As of March 24, 109 sawfish had been affected by this event, with 28 documented deaths. Affected sawfish have been large juveniles and adults (7–14 feet in length).

"We suspect that total mortalities are greater, since sawfish are negatively buoyant and thus unlikely to float after death," said Brame. "Given the limited population size of smalltooth

sawfish, the mortality of at least two dozen sawfish could have an impact on the recovery of this species."

## Who is participating?

- NOAA Fisheries
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Havenworth Coastal Conservation
- Ripley's Aquariums
- Mote Marine Laboratory
- Dynasty Marine Associates, Inc.

## Where will rescued sawfish be taken?

Several partner agencies have offered to house and rehabilitate the sawfish, including:

- Ripley's Aquariums
- Mote Marine Laboratory
- Dynasty Marine Associates, Inc.

## What is the care plan for rehabilitation?

Veterinarians and scientists are working to better understand the cause of these issues and will develop specific care guidelines as we learn more. We will work directly with the animal care teams. The rescued sawfish will be under constant observation at quarantine facilities. With the aid of the Smalltooth Sawfish Recovery Implementation Team and partners, we will make the final decision about an animal's rehabilitation status. "Our goal is to release all rescued sawfish back to the wild once rehabilitated," said Brame.





# Right Choice Supermarket

By Patty Huff

How we love our local supermarket, and what would we do without it? Right Choice is open 7 days a week from 9 am to 7 pm. Petra Gengenbach has done an outstanding job in adding to the variety of products every year: freshly cut meats, fresh produce from Oakes Farms, beer/wine/soda, frozen foods, snacks, household supplies, and much more.



Although many of us do a lot of our shopping in Naples, we especially appreciate the convenience and wide range of items available just around the corner. If Petra does not carry a



specific product and you request it, she will do her best to include it in her orders. Two of my last-minute favorites to serve to guests are Ciabatta bread with parmesan cheese (in the frozen department) and the quick and easy dessert The Father's Table New York Style Cheesecake.



An ATM machine is located there as well as a bookshelf full of free books.

Thank you, Petra and all your employees, who keep this little grocery store open for us! You are appreciated!

# 2024 Eggstravaganza Great Success

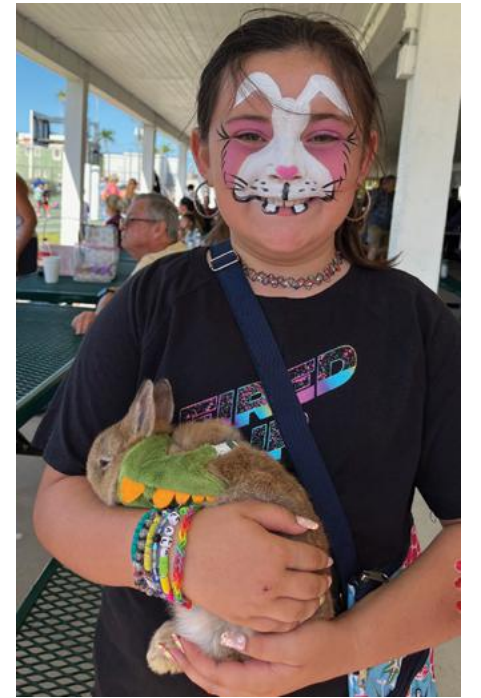
By Jesse Wilson | Chokoloskee Family Church



It was another amazing turnout at the annual Everglades City Eggstravaganza! Most of the kids from Everglades City and the surrounding area came out to enjoy free food, bike giveaways, face painting, a large easter egg hunt, a massive water slide, and obstacle course, and an appearance from the Easter Bunny courtesy of Collier County Sheriff's Department. Three lucky kids also won some Nintendo Switch game console's!

This years event was organized by Chokoloskee Family Church, and sponsored by the Florida Stone Crabbers Association, Everglades Community Church, First Baptist Church of Everglades City and Cool Cruisers Classic Car Club. Special thanks to 4Kids Foster Care, the Lions Club for giving free hotdogs and chips away, and for Will and Valerie Irizarry for providing free fried chicken and french fries!

Photos: Jesse & Charity Wilson, Patty Huff





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# Where Can I Just Slow Down?

By Reverend Dr Bob N. Wallace  
Everglades Community Church

Chokoloskee Island. That's where time seems to slow down. And the whispers of the past echo through the mangroves located at the edge of the Ten Thousand Islands off Florida's southwest coast at approximately 25°48'46" North latitude and 81°21'39" West longitude. Chokoloskee Island is opposite the mouth of the Turner River near the southeastern end of Chokoloskee Bay which stretches about 10 miles (16 km) in length and 2 miles (3 km) in width and runs southeast to northwest along the mainland of Collier County. Separated from the Gulf of Mexico by the northern end of the Ten Thousand Islands and connected on the mainland by a causeway to Everglades City, the island reaches a high point of approximately 20 feet (6.1 meters) above sea level. This wonderful ecosystem is situated right in the heart of the Everglades making best part of Chokoloskee Island its tangle of mangroves, waterways, and coastal wilderness. Though small (about a ¼-mile square),

Chokoloskee contains more history than some major cities. Ancient shell mounds built more than 2,000 years ago by Native Americans contain stories of a remarkable civilization of



By Spaluch I - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

Calusa people who established their dominance in southwest Florida. The name Chokoloskee is derived from an Indian word meaning "Old Home" which captures the island's connection to the past, its enduring presence, and the lives that have crossed on its shores

Chokoloskee is an unincorporated community. It is in the Ten Thousand Islands and is a census-designated place (CDP) in Collier County renowned for its excellent fishing opportunities. Anglers from everywhere explore the surrounding waters casting lines for snook, redfish, tarpon, and other species. Bird watching in the island's mangrove tropical forest provides a haven for herons, egrets, ospreys, and other coastal birds. Kayaking and canoeing is big, paddling through the intricate waterways immersed in the tranquil beauty of the Everglades.

Ted Smallwood's General Store is a historic site with a unique museum

that takes you back in time. Wooden rocking chairs, canning machines, and animal skins recall the spirit of old Florida. Locals say there may be more ghosts in Chokoloskee than living souls. Legendary characters like Edgar J. Watson are said to still inhabit the area. Watson was one of the most notorious outlaws who relocated to the area in the 19th century. Born in Ridge Springs, South Carolina, he was on the run following a series of homicides. He settled in the Ten Thousand Islands area, where he purchased 40 acres of land near the Chatham Bend River. There, he began raising crops,

area was extremely remote, accessible only by water until a causeway was built in 1956. Moonshine production and plume hunting were part of its colorful history. As of the 2020 United States census, Chokoloskee Island had a population of 346 people, residing in 155 households. Its isolation was eased by the causeway connecting it to Everglades City. The island's history is rich, and its present-day charm lies in its simplicity and connection to nature. Chokoloskee's natural beauty and closeness to the Ten Thousand Islands make it a captivating place to explore. Chokoloskee remains a

including sugarcane, but remained troublesome. There were mysterious reports circulated about his workers going missing when they asked for pay. Bodies would occasionally wash down the river—laborers from Watson's field. Watson himself was killed after trouble with other residents on the island in 1910. Watson's story became a local legend and was the subject of books and movies. The Smallwood Store runs the *Bloody Watson Tour* which explores how Watson forged through the flooded grasslands to set up shop. The Smallwood Store is now run by the descendants of Ted Smallwood, one of the pioneering entrepreneurs of the community who died in 1951. The store is on the National Register of Historic Places.

In the late 1800s, settlers replaced the Calusa people and Chokoloskee became a trading center, exchanging locally grown produce for supplies. The

classic definition of a sleepy little fishing village with a rich past.

There are several mobile home parks in the Chokoloskee vicinity having all age and 55+ communities. Outdoor Resorts at Chokoloskee Island is a condominium RV resort with 23 privately owned luxury RV sites offering an eight-unit motel and marina. Additionally, Chokoloskee Island Resort Mobile Home Park offers mobile homes for sale or rent. It's an all-ages park.

Everglades Airpark is nearby with a 2,400-foot runway (LDA- 2,300), AvFuel 100 LL self-service available 24/7, passenger terminal, bicycles available for rent and minutes from Chokoloskee, fishing, airboats, swamp buggies, everglades tours, and dining.

Yes, Chokoloskee Island is a place on the lower southwest coast of Florida where you can just slowdown and enjoy life.

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[www.evergladescommunity.church](http://www.evergladescommunity.church)



# Museum of the Everglades

105 West Broadway Avenue Everglades City, FL



Originally a 1927 commercial laundry, the Museum of the Everglades building testifies to the town's history as a bustling business center and the region's first county seat. Now a museum, it's open Tuesday to Saturday from 9 am to 4 pm with free admission. Certain events may require reservations. Book your reservation at [colliermuseums.com](http://colliermuseums.com) or call (239) 252-5026. Come explore Everglades heritage today!

## Exhibits

### WE ARE STILL HERE - the Continuing Story of the Miccosukee Tribe

January 23 – May 11

Pauline Reeves Gallery will present both the past and present of the Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida. Created in collaboration with the tribal council, the exhibit explores the Miccosukee's culture and heritage while celebrating their unique achievements in self-governance, education, environmental protection, and more.

### Thank You for Your Service – A Salute to Everglades Veterans

May 14 – Sept 14



This year's annual collaboration between the museum and local students will be a tribute to veterans from the greater Everglades area – from the distant (back to the Civil War) and recent past up to present day. Students will submit a creative response to the topic in a medium of their choice (painting, drawing, writing, video, photographs, etc.). Their contributions will consist of both tributes to specific veterans – friends, family, ancestors – and more general pieces honoring all veterans. For their part, the museum will present profiles of area residents who have served and information about the ways in which local people and businesses supported the war efforts in many of our country's armed conflicts.

## Third Thursday Talk Series

### Paved With Good Intentions: How the Road Through the Everglades Harmed the Seminole and Miccosukee

April 18 | 2 – 3 pm

While we celebrate the construction of the Tamiami Trail as a “miracle of modern engineering” that connected Florida's coast and opened Southwest Florida to tourism, we often fail to acknowledge the reality that there were indigenous people living in the lands the road was built through. The Tamiami Trail not only displaced the native population, but it also had devastating and irreparable effects on their culture — socially, economically, and spiritually. In this talk, Museum Manager Thomas Lockyear attempts to tell “the other side of the story” and explores the concept of the Everglades as “stolen land”.

### War Stories – Profiles in Courage and Lesser-known facts about Everglades' contributions our Country's Armed Conflicts

May 16 | 2 – 3 pm

Museum Manager Thomas Lockyear will share a collection of anecdotes and stories about Everglades residents who served in the U.S. Military and how local businesses contributed vital resources to our country's armed conflicts. The talk will also include profiles of hometown heroes like Peg & Totch Brown who were both Bronze Star recipients in WWII and the story of Phineas B. Meyers who was thrown in the brig for cursing at a General during the Civil War among others.

## Wilderness Wednesdays at the Museum Series

January 3 - April 17 | 2 – 3 pm

Explore the Everglades every Wednesday, 2-3 pm, at the Museum of the Everglades with Wilderness Wednesdays through end of April. This lecture series, presented by park rangers and staff from other partner organizations, covers diverse topics on the Everglades ecosystem's flora, fauna, and biodiversity. For more info, contact (239) 252-5026 or visit [CollierMuseums.com/events](http://CollierMuseums.com/events)

# Local Volunteer Receives Lifetime Achievement Award

Last week Collier County Museums held an Appreciation Dinner for all the volunteers who donate their time across the five-museum system. During a brief ceremony, volunteers were recognized with service awards ranging from 5 to 15 years. At the peak of the celebration, a number of particularly dedicated volunteers received Presidential Service Awards at bronze, silver and gold levels for hundreds of hours worked. They received certificates from the White House in presentation folders and signed by the President.

The highest honor - a Lifetime Achievement Award went to our very own Sherry Geiger - who has dedicated more than 6000 hours of her time to volunteering at Museum of the Everglades!

“I've been here for seven years now, and Sherry started volunteering about a week after I started. She's been right here beside me the whole time. You couldn't ask for a more loyal and dedicated worker. Sherry volunteers twice a week and is always there to cook and serve food at our events - she's the best” said Museum Manager Thomas Lockyear.

Congratulations on your award Sherry and thank you for sharing our local hospitality with visitors and helping to make Museum of the Everglades one of the most visited spots in Collier County.



# Everglades Area Visitor Center

By Patty Huff

The Everglades Area Visitor Center has been very busy this year. In February we welcomed 889 visitors from 42 states throughout the U.S., 9 countries from around the world, and 12 counties outside of Collier County.

Before Hurricane Irma, the Welcome Center in Carnestown at the corner of SR29/US41 was the busiest welcome/visitor center in Collier County. Unfortunately, the Welcome Center was forced to close after the damage from the 2017 hurricane. Soon afterwards, our Chamber of Commerce was dissolved and left a void in welcoming tourists to our area. The Everglades Society for Historic Preservation took up the challenge of re-opening a visitor center in the Glades Building, thanks to Craig Woodward.

Everglades Society for Historic Preservation (ESHP) would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the 14



Photo Patty Huff

wonderful volunteers who have greeted people from around the world during our busiest season. We've had a lot of fun getting to know one another, and every volunteer has expressed their delight in talking to the many interesting people visiting Everglades City, many who are experiencing our area for the first time.

Now that our winter residents are starting to return to their other homes, ESHP is seeking assistance from

locals to volunteer at our Visitor Center. You are guaranteed to love it, if you enjoy meeting new people from around the world. Please call me at (239) 719-0020 if you would like more information.

And, to all those leaving, have a safe trip home and we will see you next year!!







## Easy Stuffed Peppers

### Ingredients:

- 6 bell peppers, variety of colors
- 1 lb. lean ground beef
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 tsp minced garlic
- 1 cup cooked white rice
- 1 tsp salt
- 14 oz. petite diced tomatoes
- 8 oz. tomato sauce, divided
- 1 cup shredded zucchini
- 2 tsp Italian seasoning
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese, shredded

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Boil water. Cut and deseed peppers. Blanch peppers for 2 mins; drain.
3. Brown beef and onion in skillet, drain. Add garlic, then cooked rice, half of tomato sauce, diced tomatoes, shredded zucchini, Italian seasoning, and salt. Cook until heated.
4. Fill peppers with mixture. Place in casserole dish. Top each with remaining tomato sauce. Cover with foil.
5. Bake covered for 10 mins, then uncovered for 15 mins. Add shredded mozzarella, bake 3 mins until melted. Enjoy!

March 30, 2024 Puzzle Solution

1	P	U	M	I	C	E	7	U	B	E	R
11	W	R	I	T	H	E	12	S	O	D	A
13	T	O	S	E	E	K	14	E	D	D	Y
15	M	M	E	16	A	N	Y				
17	E	T	A	19	R	O	S	E	B	U	D
23	M	A	N	24	F	A	C	T	U	R	E
25	E	R	A	S	U	R	E	26	I	N	N
27	G	E	L	28	N	F	L				
30	A	S	I	F	32	A	D	I	D	A	S
35	R	E	N	U	36	R	E	N	E	S	T
37	R	E	G	L	38	E	D	E	R	L	E

### Pets of the Everglades

Gnarl's  
at Chokoloskee  
Island Resort

—  
Owner: Lisa

## MULLET RAPPER CROSSWORD

### Across

1. Alt. spelling
4. Big laugh
8. Bad place to eat
9. Desperately sad
11. Explorer called "the Red"
12. Cause to become worse
13. Surround, as a castle
15. Authority
16. Blew the horn
17. Brought into play
18. Assumed name
20. And others, for short
23. Removes feathers
27. Barbie's beau
28. Dress
29. Captivate
31. \_\_\_ land
32. He's looking for a buyer
33. Major city of western Ukraine, near the Polish border
34. Caddie's bagful
35. "Absolutely!"

	1	2	3		4	5	6	7			
8					9						10
11					12						
13				14				15			
16							17				
				18			19				
20	21	22			23			24	25	26	
27				28							
29				30				31			
32								33			
	34							35			

### Down

- |                                      |   |  |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Bird that builds a hanging nest   | 7. Needing extinguishing                      | 21. Article of faith                                       |
| 2. Dispatch boat                     | 8. Chapter 11 issue                           | 22. Go fish  |
| 3. Carnegie Hall offering            | 9. Common name for a roller coaster           | 24. Hunger for   |
| 4. Pigment that makes your blood red | 10. Make a path                               | 25. Singer whose milkshake brings all the boys to the yard |
| 5. Dadaism founder                   | 14. A scaleless fish common in the Everglades | 26. Eastern European                                       |
| 6. Piles                             | 17. Most of the time                          | 28. Long, long time  |
|                                      | 19. High point of a trip to Europe?           | 30. A pint, maybe  |
|                                      | 20. Seek out supplements...                   |  |

# News

From page 1

This isn't your ordinary news channel. Oh no, Swamp News is like a breath of fresh air, injecting fun and laughter into every segment. With plans to keep the good times rolling and the audience growing, Tukey and Jessica are on a mission to deliver hilarious and relevant content week after week.



Now, you might be wondering about the youthful energy that fuels this dynamic channel. Tukey and Jessica are firm believers that the youth are the future of the Everglades. That's why they've enlisted the help of a talented team from Chokoloskee Family Church, where Tukey serves as a youth leader and Jessica as a kids church pastor.

Meet the stars of the show: Nora, the charming host with a heart of gold; Brenda, the quick-witted



co-host who always keeps things lively; and Ava, the multi-talented wonder who wears many hats as co-director and co-writer. Together, they bring a youthful exuberance and a genuine love for their community to every broadcast.

But we can't forget about the unsung hero of



Swamp News: the legendary Skunk Ape! With a knack for stealing the spotlight, this lovable creature adds a touch of whimsy to every segment.

So, where can you catch all the action? Swamp News is just a click away, with episodes streaming on Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61557405324715>), and soon on Instagram, and YouTube, every Friday.

And, if you're itching to be a part of the Swamp News magic, they're always on the lookout for interesting folks to interview. Just drop them a line on their Facebook page or shoot them an email at [swampnewsfl@gmail.com](mailto:swampnewsfl@gmail.com).

In the ever-changing landscape of news media, Swamp News stands out as a beacon of positivity and community spirit. So next time you're craving a dose of feel-good fun, dive into the wild world of Swamp News and let the good times roll in the heart of the Everglades!



# Fishing Report

By Captain Mike Merritt



Fishing this month is looking good! The weather has turned nice and the Snook bite seems to be getting better each day. This is when these fish really move into the Islands in preparation for the summer spawning. They show up and feed very aggressively. I love to fish some topwater lures for them this time of year early in the morning. There will be lots of oversize fish so be careful handling and releasing these big spawning fish.

Also we will start to deal with more sharks showing up and they are eager to eat the fish you hook. If you run into this happening my advice is to move on from that area to avoid this happening. Nothing worse than hooking a big Snook to only have a 10ft. shark eat it at the boat. The Redfish bite has continued to be good and if it holds up this month it will add to the fun! You can fish the shorelines in



the Islands and catch Snook and Reds together. We have been fortunate to catch quite a few oversize Reds lately.

The Reds can be caught on live bait, Shrimp, cut bait and scented jigs. These all work as these fish can really pick up on the scent of whatever bait your using. So, working the jig as slow as you can works best. The Seatrout continue to bite also. These are all over the flats now but are also being caught in the Islands and Rivers. Jigs, popping corks, and live shrimp all produce. There are a lot of smaller fish around now as the water warms up.

The offshore bite will pick up for Permit and Cobia also this month. Tarpon continue to be spread out in the Islands, Rivers, back Bays and throughout the entire area. It is a great time of year so enjoy the bounty! Good Luck Fishing

Capt. Mike Merritt

Guide | (561)252-4324 | [SnookFishing1@juno.com](mailto:SnookFishing1@juno.com)

# IT'S JUST A HOBBY

By Richard M Hurd

United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, Marco Island, FSO-Public Affairs

Have you had the opportunity to visit the Marco Island Library? If you had, you might have observed three replica models of the United States Coast Guard Cutters (USCGCs) painstakingly created by Marco Island's own, Richard Heinrich.

A passion of Heinrich is his hobby of building USCGCs from scratch. Over four decades, he has meticulously built twenty-two models, each consuming hundreds of hours and as much as 2 years to complete. His most challenging build was the USCGC MUNRO (WHEC-724), completed in 2012. The MUNRO model began in 2010 with design



plans from the USCG, which Heinrich converted to scale drawings. Heinrich's next step was to make a complete paper model of the MUNRO, with each part numbered and taped into place. Heinrich's MUNRO "files" contains dozens of unrolled paper sections, each connected to his original paper template from 2010. Hundreds of hand constructed model parts individually glued into place begin a process that, for Heinrich, is not complete until six or seven coats of paint are applied.

In addition to this fascinating hobby, Heinrich volunteers as a docent at the Military History Museum located at the Naples Airport, where his model of the USS Chicago (CA-29) is proudly displayed at the entrance. Heinrich added: "I'm always amazed at the pleasure people get from my models, but to me, it's just a hobby."

In the Fall of 2022, Hurricane Ian destroyed much of Heinrich's first floor workshop, forcing him to take a hiatus from his model building. After nearly four decades of "just a hobby" he finds comfort in a new construction challenge; a mine countermeasure vessel. Today's modern mine countermeasure ship exhibits complexities unlike any he has encountered, including communications systems, the rigging, the mast, and the hull that only a master craftsman like Heinrich can appreciate.

Although Heinrich takes pride in the history of all twenty-two models he has built over the decades and is still motivated by the ever-increasing complexities

of newer ship designs, his ultimate satisfaction comes from the accolades from those who view his "masterpieces", including this simple remark: "it's so nice!"

The USCGC MUNRO (WHEC 724) model, constructed by Richard Heinrich in 2012, is exhibited at the Marco Island Library, while the USCGC BLACKTHORN (WLB 391) model, built by him in 2010, is displayed at the USCG Auxiliary Flotilla facility in Marco Island.

Barron River Tides				
4/13/2024	Sat	1:53 AM	-0.23	L
4/13/2024	Sat	7:53 AM	1.87	H
4/13/2024	Sat	1:10 PM	0.91	L
4/13/2024	Sat	5:51 PM	2.7	H
4/14/2024	Sun	2:54 AM	-0.09	L
4/14/2024	Sun	9:29 AM	1.77	H
4/14/2024	Sun	12:42 PM	1	L
4/14/2024	Sun	7:01 PM	2.48	H
4/15/2024	Mon	4:05 AM	0.04	L
4/15/2024	Mon	1:10 PM	1.89	H
4/15/2024	Mon	4:13 PM	1.05	L
4/15/2024	Mon	8:53 PM	2.31	H
4/16/2024	Tue	5:15 AM	0.12	L
4/16/2024	Tue	1:29 PM	2	H
4/16/2024	Tue	5:49 PM	0.97	L
4/16/2024	Tue	10:21 PM	2.27	H
4/17/2024	Wed	6:16 AM	0.17	L
4/17/2024	Wed	1:33 PM	2.1	H
4/17/2024	Wed	6:55 PM	0.84	L
4/17/2024	Wed	11:35 PM	2.3	H
4/18/2024	Thu	7:09 AM	0.22	L
4/18/2024	Thu	1:19 PM	2.21	H
4/18/2024	Thu	7:44 PM	0.68	L
4/19/2024	Fri	12:38 AM	2.38	H
4/19/2024	Fri	7:54 AM	0.27	L
4/19/2024	Fri	1:27 PM	2.35	H
4/19/2024	Fri	8:24 PM	0.52	L
4/20/2024	Sat	1:27 AM	2.46	H
4/20/2024	Sat	8:33 AM	0.33	L
4/20/2024	Sat	1:45 PM	2.5	H
4/20/2024	Sat	8:59 PM	0.36	L
4/21/2024	Sun	2:08 AM	2.51	H
4/21/2024	Sun	9:07 AM	0.39	L
4/21/2024	Sun	2:06 PM	2.63	H
4/21/2024	Sun	9:32 PM	0.2	L
4/22/2024	Mon	2:44 AM	2.51	H
4/22/2024	Mon	9:39 AM	0.47	L
4/22/2024	Mon	2:28 PM	2.73	H
4/22/2024	Mon	10:05 PM	0.07	L
4/23/2024	Tue	3:20 AM	2.47	H
4/23/2024	Tue	10:08 AM	0.55	L
4/23/2024	Tue	2:47 PM	2.79	H
4/23/2024	Tue	10:39 PM	-0.05	L
4/24/2024	Wed	3:58 AM	2.39	H
4/24/2024	Wed	10:35 AM	0.62	L
4/24/2024	Wed	3:04 PM	2.84	H
4/24/2024	Wed	11:15 PM	-0.13	L
4/25/2024	Thu	4:40 AM	2.29	H
4/25/2024	Thu	11:00 AM	0.7	L
4/25/2024	Thu	3:19 PM	2.87	H
4/25/2024	Thu	11:54 PM	-0.18	L
4/26/2024	Fri	5:29 AM	2.17	H
4/26/2024	Fri	11:23 AM	0.78	L
4/26/2024	Fri	3:40 PM	2.89	H

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(239) 695-3261

**Eateries**

**Little Bar**  
Mon-Sat 11:30 am – 12 am  
Closed Sundays  
(239) 394-5663

**Paradise Found**  
Wed-Mon 11 am – 8 pm  
Closed Tuesday  
(239) 330-7773

**Stans Idle Hour**  
Tue-Sat 11 am – 9 pm  
Sun 11 am – 6:30 pm  
Closed Monday  
(239) 394-3041

**Ochopee**

**Joanie's Blue Crab Cafe**  
Thur-Tues 10:30 am – 4 pm  
Sat & Sun 10:30 am to 5 pm  
(239) 695-2682

**CR92 & US41 (Naples)**

**Gator's Crossing**  
Daily 11 am – 11 pm  
(239) 394-0288

**Markets**

**Right Choice Supermarket**  
Daily 9 am – 7 pm  
(239) 695-4535

**Grimm's Stone Crab**  
Mon-Sat 8 am – 5 pm  
(239) 695-3222

**Worship**

**Chokoloskee Family Church**  
Sun: 10 am School & Worship, 6 pm Service  
Wed: Youth 7 pm  
1236 Demere Ln, Chokoloskee

**Everglades Community Church**  
Sun: 11 am Worship, 9:45 School  
101 Copeland Ave, Everglades City

**First Baptist Church**  
Sun: 9:45 am School, 11 am Worship & 6 pm Service  
Wed: 6 pm Bible Study  
416 E School Dr, Everglades City

**Holy Family Catholic Church**  
Sunday: 10:30 am Mass (Dec - April)  
200 Datura St E, Everglades City

**Goodland Baptist Church**  
410 Mango Ave. Goodland  
Sunday: 10 am Worship  
Wed 6 pm Bible Study

**Classifieds**

**WANTED:** Seeking Dick Jay paintings. Please contact me at [lmstattel125@gmail.com](mailto:lmstattel125@gmail.com) if you're interested in selling.

**HELP WANTED:** Captain Morgan is seeking front/back end help, wait staff, kitchen staff. Apply now at 102 South Copeland Avenue Everglades City

**PET PHOTO CALL:** If you have cute, crazy or just lovable pets please send their photo to the Mullet Rapper and we'll put them in the paper for all to enjoy. They'll be Famous!

[MulletRapper@gmail.com](mailto:MulletRapper@gmail.com)

**FREE CLASSIFIED:** Got wheels? Sell 'em for free in our classifieds! Cars, bikes, even skateboards welcome. Hurry, deadline's May 12. Don't miss this wheely good deal! This opportunity is good for issue, #455, only. Maximum of 20 words, additional words are billable. Act fast – Deadline for submissions is May 12.

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\*Boat Systems & Electrical Troubleshooting  
Servicing Everglades City and Marco Island  
Mike Lyne Ph:(305)519-3774  
[lowermatmike@gmail.com](mailto:lowermatmike@gmail.com)

Showcase your skills and offerings in the Services section of our classifieds! Our community is eager to discover your services. List your service today and let the Mullet Rapper help you grow your business!  
[MulletRapper@gmail.com](mailto:MulletRapper@gmail.com)  
(941) 999-1237

**Clubs**

**AA**  
Wednesday | 5 pm  
First Baptist Church  
416 School Drive, Everglades City

**Everglades Lions Club**  
2nd Thursday of the month | 6 pm  
September - May  
Jinkins Fellowship Hall behind Everglades Community Church  
101 S. Copeland Ave, Everglades City  
[evergladeslionsclub@gmail.com](mailto:evergladeslionsclub@gmail.com)

**Ladies Coffee**  
Thursdays | 8:30 am  
Rotates Everglades City Restaurants  
[snookcity@gmail.com](mailto:snookcity@gmail.com)  
(239) 719-0020

**Goodland Civic Association**  
3rd Tuesday of the month | 6:30 pm  
Goodland Community Center  
417 Mango Ave, Goodland  
(239) 776-1372

**Helpful Numbers**

**EC Airport:** (239) 695-2778  
**EC City Hall:** (239) 695-3781  
**EC Public Library:** (239) 695-2511  
**EC Trash Pickup:** (239) 252-2380  
**EC Visitor Center:** (239) 232-0473  
**Carnestown Recycle:** (239) 695-4331  
**Goodland Recycle:** (239)252-2380

**Post Office**

**Everglades City & Chokolossee:** (239) 695-2174  
**Copeland:** (239) 695-2202  
**Ochopee:** (239) 695-2099  
**Goodland:** (239) 394-7387

**Local Parks**

**Big Cypress:** (239) 695-2000  
**EVG National Park:** (239) 695-3311  
**Fakahatchee Preserve:** (239) 961-1925

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