

Courtesy Denise Wauters

Chokoloskee Post Office Closing?

On Wednesday, May 8, a meeting was held at the Chokoloskee Family Church of God where the U.S. Postal Service heard our thoughts on the fate of the Chokoloskee Post Office. Some



Courtesy of Patty Huff

Mullet Rapper on History Channel

By Denise Wauters

They say we all get 15 minutes of fame, but I never dreamed the Mullet Rapper would. When the History Channel called me in May of last year and asked if they could use the Mullet Rapper as a prop in the Swamp People: Serpent Invasion show I about fell out of my chair. How did *they* know about our little paper? How exciting!

It took me a minute to figure it out but eventually I discovered that Dusty Crum was the instigator.

If you are not aware, Dusty is a resident of our community and owner of Wildman's Pizza, Pasta and Pythons located in the building with Right Choice Supermarket. Dusty is a star on the History Channel's Swamp Peoples: Serpent Invasion show. Quoting the History Channel "It is no secret that Dusty Crum is one of the strongest and most proficient snake hunters around. Nicknamed 'The Wildman', Dusty has a knack for taking on the giant constrictors known as Burmese pythons."

When I met him, Dusty told me he suggested the idea of using the paper in the show. "When I need to know what's going on in and around town I check out the Mullet Rapper first!" he said. It was a perfect fit for the show.

We were all poised around the TV the night it aired. Moms were called. Family & friends notified. Everyone was ready. When Dusty walked on screen with the Mullet Rapper in hand the roars went up. What a great experience. Thank you so much Dusty and History Channel. Now we can describe the Mullet Rapper "as seen on TV!"



residents had received a letter from the USPS, explaining the background that brought this meeting to our small town. According to the letter:

"Chokoloskee Post Office was placed under emergency suspension on 02/13/2021 due to the loss of the lease and moved into the alternate quarters. Since the suspension, alternate delivery service has been provided via PO Box service at the Everglades City Post Office. Retail services have been provided by Marco Island Post Office and Everglades City Post Office."

Due to the Emergency Suspension the office is being studied to evaluate the facility operations in an effort to

See **Post Office**, p7

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Local Event Calendar

May 26, 2024 to July 6, 2024

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
May 26	27 Memorial Day No School	28	29 Food Pantry p2	30 Ladies' Coffee City Seafood 8:30a Last Day of School	31	June 1 Canepole Classic p2 Tax Holiday p5
2	3	4 City Council p2	5 Food Pantry p2	6 ● New Moon Ladies' Coffee Everglades Cafe 8:30a	7	8
9	10	11	12 Food Pantry p2	13 Ladies' Coffee Island Cafe 8:30a	14	15
16 Father's Day	17	18 P&Z p2 Ribbon Cutting p2	19 Juneteenth Food Pantry p2 Free Park Day p2	20 Ladies' Coffee City Seafood 8:30a Third Thursday p11	21 ☾ Full Moon	22
23	24	25	26 Food Pantry p2	27 Ladies' Coffee Everglades Cafe 8:30a	28	29 Praise Night p2 Parade & Fireworks p2 Spammy Jammy p2
30	July 1	2 City Council p2	3 Food Pantry p2	4 4th of July Ladies' Coffee Island Cafe 8:30a	5 ● New Moon	6

Events

June 1 | 10 am - 1 pm 2nd Annual Canepole Classic

The 2nd Annual Canepole Classic will be hosted June 1 at Trail Lakes Campground. Join us for a fun day of fishing for the kids with Cane poles. Sign Ups will be required to ensure availability. Info: <https://allevents.in/ochopee/2nd-annual-canepole-classic/200026369662128>

June 18 | 10 am Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

You are invited to the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new wastewater treatment plant on Tuesday, June 18, 2024, at 10:00 AM. The event will be held at the plant located at 401 South Copeland Avenue.

June 19 Free Park Day

Celebrate Juneteenth National Independence Day in the national parks June 19! Admission is free. See you there! Info: <https://www.nps.gov/ever/planyourvisit/fee-free-days.htm>

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?

June 29 Parade & Fireworks | 10 am

Celebrate Independence in Everglades City. Join the parade at 10 am, then come to McLeod Park for kiddies' best-dressed contests, free hot dogs, raffles, and prizes. Fireworks start at 9 pm when it gets dark. For more information, phone Karen at City Hall (239) 695-4299

Community

Food Pantry Wednesdays | 9:30 am - Noon

Food is distributed from the rear of Everglades Community Church 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 am - 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 | 7 pm

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>

Entertainment

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. Billy O Celebration June 1, Josh Garret June 22.

Crabby Lady (Goodland) has live music every weekend.

Stans (Goodland) has music Tues - Sundays. Shows start at 1 & 5.

Save The Date

September 28

Blessing of the Stone Crab Fleet

Mark your calendar for the 14th annual Blessing of the Stone Crab Fleet to be held on September 28th in Everglades City at Camellia Street Grill. Come enjoy live music, free food, great company and local vendor booths!

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Independence Celebration
In Historic Everglades City

Join us for this year's Independence Day celebration and parade in Everglades City!

Our theme, "Flying the Flag," promises a patriotic extravaganza. Starting with a "Bang" at 10 am, everyone is invited to decorate their vehicles and join the fun. Trophies await the most creative entries. From the Collier County Sheriff's Office Honor Guard to hot-rods and antique cars, there's something for everyone.

To enter the parade, call Karen at (239) 695-4299 or email KCochrane@CityofEverglades.org

After the parade join us for an action-packed day at McLeod Park. Kids can bounce in the Bounce House, strike poses in the Photo Booth, get their faces painted, and compete in fun costume contests with great prizes.

Plus, the Everglades Lions Club will be serving up delicious hot dogs, chips, and beverages. Don't forget to browse through the unique artworks at the vendor booths.

Schedule:

- 10:00 am Opening Ceremony
- 10:30 am Parade - Best Entry Wins
- 11:00 am Booths, Food, Contests
- 11:30 am Parade & Kiddie's Contest
Winners Announced
- 12:30 pm Raffle Winners Announced
- 9:00 pm FIREWORKS

Every year, we rely on donations from local businesses or individuals like you to fund the fireworks for our celebration. Unfortunately, the cost for fireworks has risen significantly. We need your support!

If you'd like to contribute, you can drop your donation in a collection box placed in local businesses around town or send a check to the City of Everglades City. Just remember to write "fireworks" in the memo section and mail it to PO Box 110, Everglades City, 34139.



MULLET RAPPER
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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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MulletRapper.com

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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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Mayors Annual Fish Fry

On May 11 at 5 PM, McLeod Park was alive with community spirit as Everglades City held the Mayor's Annual Fish Fry. This beloved event celebrated our Sheriff's Department, Firefighters, EMS, and Veterans.



Courtesy of Kevin & Helen Bryan

The Everglades City Lions Club served up a fantastic meal of fresh fish and all the fixings, adding to the warm and welcoming atmosphere. Friends



and neighbors gathered to enjoy the delicious food and show their appreciation for the brave men and women who keep our community safe.

A highlight of the evening was the special flag cake. The event was a big success, bringing everyone together and reinforcing the strong bonds within our community.



Courtesy of Kevin & Helen Bryan



Courtesy of Kevin & Helen Bryan

FWC seeks Photo Project Participants

Calling all wildlife watchers! The FWC needs participants for an innovative new photo project



Courtesy of FWC

We'll say it; we need your help! The Everglades is a big place, and it can be challenging to create and analyze reliable data about its wide variety of wildlife. That's where you come in.

The Everglades Wildlife Watch is a new Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) volunteer program and participatory science project based in south Florida, hosted on the Zooniverse platform. Focused on improving our understanding of wildlife patterns on the FWC's wildlife management area system, this project combines in-the-field volunteering with online participation to give us a region-wide idea of the species that call south Florida home.

Visit: Zooniverse.org/Projects/FWC/Everglades-Wildlife-Watch

Throughout the region's 17 wildlife management/wildlife and environmental areas, volunteers are setting and maintaining trail cameras. As those cameras collect photos, the images are uploaded to our Everglades Wildlife Watch Zooniverse project, where anyone can jump online and classify photos. Just follow the link, create a free account and start identifying the wildlife in the photos from your own home. If you get one wrong, don't sweat it. With consensus analysis, your identifications will be combined with others to give us the most accurate picture of wildlife activity in these areas. With your help, we will be able to sort through more photos than we ever could alone and gain a better understanding of how animals are using our WMAs.

Once photos are analyzed and the wildlife has been identified, the data is sent to our area biologists so they can better manage each WMA or WEA. The results will also be uploaded to our interactive Data Dashboard, where you can see what kind of wildlife has been spotted on our cameras around the region and learn more about each species.

The FWC oversees more than 6 million acres of public land established as WMAs. These lands are managed to protect fish and wildlife resources and provide wildlife-based recreation. Visit MyFWC.com/WMAs to learn more about Florida's public lands or plan your next outdoor adventure with the WMA Recreation Finder.



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Courtesy of Kevin & Helen Bryan



Bank of Everglades Building Update

by Patty Huff

The Everglades Society for Historic Preservation has been working diligently over the past two years to secure the funding necessary to rehabilitate the historic bank building as the new Everglades Area Visitor Center and Trail Town Headquarters. We continue to submit grant applications and request appropriations funds to cover the increasing cost of materials and fees.

We have reviewed the design plans received from our architects REG of West Palm Beach, and the construction documents are near completion. We have also completed the extensive Environmental Review which is awaiting review and certification by HUD. Once these two milestones are done, bids will go out for a general contractor and work can begin on the building with the first step demolishing the rear 1950s addition which is in disrepair.

The next step will be to rebuild the foundation and install the new historic windows. ESHP would like to extend its appreciation to the City and all our donors for their support. It's been a long process, but we are now confident that we will start to see some work on the building and will continue to keep the public informed about our progress.

Old Farts Fly-in

On April 18, 2024, Everglades City welcomed a unique and lively event: the Old Farts Fly-In. Sixty aviation enthusiasts arrived, bringing an exciting display of aircraft flying in and out of the Everglades Airpark. Local arrangements ensured they enjoyed the best of Everglades City, including visits to various restaurants. It was a delightful gathering, filled with camaraderie and vibrant activity.



Check Presentation



Earlier this month, Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart visited Everglades City to present Mayor Howie Grimm (pictured here along with City Council members Tony Pernas, Mike McComas, and Vicky Wells) with two checks: \$450,000 for Everglades City, Carnestown and Copeland Pump Stations Rehabilitation and \$1,125,000 for the Everglades City Pump Station Rehabilitation. Congressman Diaz-Balart stated how proud he was of this community and believed that we are the most resilient people in the world.



Disaster Prep Tax Holiday

As we gear up for hurricane season in Florida, there's some good news to share! The Disaster



Preparedness Sales Tax Holiday kicks off on June 1, meaning certain important items like flashlights, coolers, generators, and more will be tax-free for two weeks. This is a big relief for folks getting ready for any storms headed our way.

Plus, there's another tax holiday coming up from August 24 to September 6, so mark your calendars! To make sure you're ready for whatever comes our way, it's a good idea to take stock of your belongings. Snap some pictures and jot down how much things cost in case they get damaged during bad weather. It might take some time, but it'll really help if you ever need to file an insurance claim.

Mark Friedlander from the Insurance Information Institute suggests checking your insurance policies too, especially since the cost of fixing up homes after disasters has gone up by about 55% from 2019 to 2022. Let's stay prepared and keep each other safe!

For more information on how to be ready for a hurricane, check out this link: [Florida Disaster Preparedness Guide at: https://www.floridadisaster.org/planprepare/florida-hurricane-guide/](https://www.floridadisaster.org/planprepare/florida-hurricane-guide/)

Polluted Parks Report



Courtesy of NPCA.org

The pristine beauty of Everglades National Park beckons, but behind its breathtaking vistas lies a silent menace: air pollution. Recently, the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) unveiled its 2024 "Polluted Parks" report, shedding light on a stark reality: our parks are under siege from pollution.

The numbers paint a sobering picture: 98% of parks, including Everglades, grapple with concerning levels of haze pollution. Ozone pollution, harmful to human health, affects 96% of parks, leaving visitors and wildlife vulnerable. Moreover, a staggering 96% of parks suffer serious harm to their ecosystems, impacting the delicate balance of plants and animals.

Amidst these challenges, Everglades National Park stands as a symbol of resilience, but it cannot weather this storm alone. Your awareness and action are crucial. Learn more about how you can help protect our parks from pollution and safeguard their future. Read the full article <https://www.npca.org/case-studies/case-study-everglades-national-park>.

Florida Bay Forever

Are you looking for a way to make a positive impact in your community while adding a touch of flair to your vehicle? Look no further than the Florida



Bay Forever Specialty Plate! This unique plate not only adds a distinctive touch to your car but also supports the conservation efforts of Florida Bay, a natural wonder nestled at the end of the Everglades watershed.


Florida Bay is more than just a picturesque estuary – it's a vital ecosystem teeming with life and attracting visitors from far and wide. However, this precious ecosystem is facing threats that require our attention and support.

Your support will aid in initiatives such as water cleanup, preservation of historic sites, and environmental education programs. Plus, purchasing a specialty plate voucher is easy – these license tags are now available from Roberta, County Clerk's office, in City Hall. Buy one today and support Florida Bay!

Graduating Class of 2024

Everglades City School

Congrats!




Ian Cabezas

Congrats!



Katie Collins

Congrats!




Waylon Demere

Congrats!



Carson Foss

Congrats!




William Herrin

Congrats!



Taylor Mayberry

Congrats!



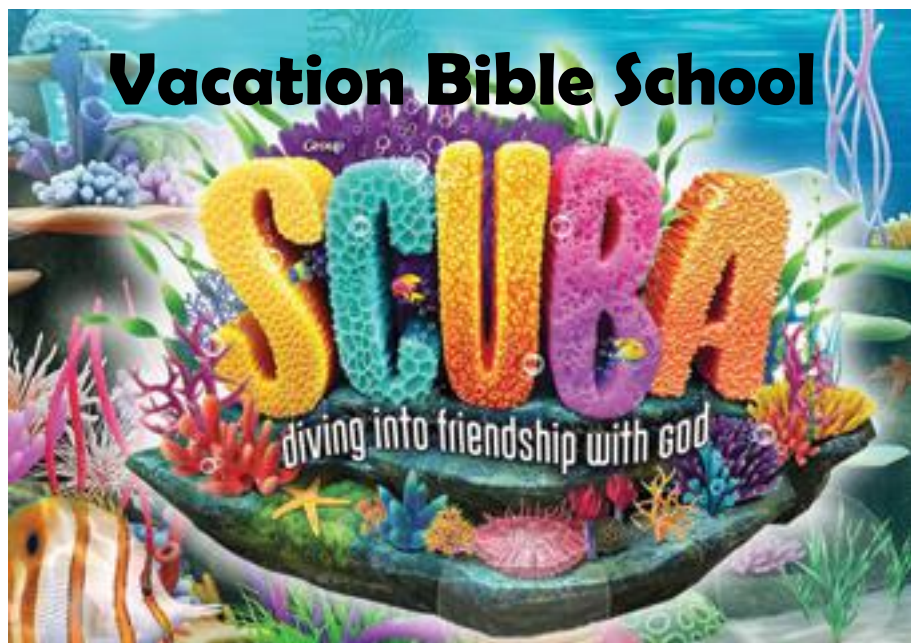
Theodore Smallwood

Congrats!



Aulbrey Wooten

Vacation Bible School




Vacation Bible School
Chokoloskee Family Church
July 15-19th, 6 - 8pm
Ages 5-11
This is a free event. Each night you attend, you'll be entered into a drawing to win two Nintendo Switch consoles.



The Everglades Society for Historic Preservation coordinated the project to showcase our high school graduates on banners along Collier Avenue. Jill Whitcomb was instrumental in working together with the school and parents. If anyone or business wishes to sponsor any one of the students (\$100), please call Patty at 239-719-0020.

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EVG School Updates

By Dr. Cherie Allison
Principal, EVG, Everglades City School



Weekly reading prizes will be awarded to K – 5th grade students and middle/high school students! All you have to do is pick up a reading card from Ms. Stone and fill it out for weekly prizes! All the reading data will be shared with Mrs. Owen at EVG! We will kick off our new school year with a celebration for the summer reading participants! Plus, (new this year) Mrs. Owen will also give students “Reading Team” credit for their summer work!

We are very excited about our Book Club. These students will be following the Adventure of *Alex and Ace in the Adventure of the River Grass* set right here in Florida by author Susan Steinman. The students are really excited, and Mrs. Baumler and I are just as excited to set off on this adventure with them set in our own backyard of the Everglades.

Also available to families are lots of FREE summer activities at the South Regional Library branch!

Free activities for grades K – 5 and grades 6 – 10!

See the EVG website, under resources/media center for all the details.



Everything’s coming up Roses at EVG with our High School students and their flower dissection labs! These hands on experiences are priceless.

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Grades 6-12
Adults

Visit any library in Collier County to sign up!

1. Take a reading card
2. Read at your own pace
3. Turn in your card at any library to be entered into the weekly grand prize drawing!

www.CollierLibrary.org

EVG STUDENTS who participate in the CCPL summer reading program will also be CELEBRATED at EVG when school resumes!

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Post Office

From Page 1

meet customer retail needs, increase efficiency, cut costs and improve productivity. Over time customer needs change, with many customers now receiving and paying bills online as well as communicating via email or text. The letter also says that:

“If a decision is ultimately made to discontinue the Chokoloskee Post Office and you are a Post Office Box customer, you will have the option of Post Office Box delivery at the Everglades City Post Office. The Everglades City Post Office is 4.0 miles from the Chokoloskee Post Office... Retail services would continue to be available through a variety of channels beyond traditional brick-and-mortar facilities, such as the www.usps.com website, stamp consignment locations, and Stamps by Mail, Fax, and Phone.”

Letter from Residents

Steven and Kate Riley, residents of Chokoloskee have this to say in a letter they provided to us.

“The history of postal service on Chokoloskee Is. is historic as you must know. Smallwood’s Store and Museum represent all of that past. People come from all over the World to this small “neck of the woods” rich in American history including the United States Post Office! You have a replica of our Post Office in the Museum. Now we must tell visitors they cannot mail anything from “Chokoloskee, FL 34138”.

We personally beg you to rethink what you are proposing and reach out and TRY to find a way to keep small town’s small with local postal service!

Read the full letter online at <https://visitevergladescity.com/let-your-voice-be-heard-the-chokoloskee-post-office/>

They also provided some ideas for us to consider in their letter:

- Small and more efficient Post Office that is mobile in case of hurricanes. Driven to high ground when needed.
- Less hours of operation. A small community can deal with that.
- Increase PO Box rates vs. gas by driving to Everglades City.
- Reach out to see if a location can be donated for operations. We personally would work very hard to hopefully make that happen.

Whether you’re for or against moving the Chokoloskee Post Office, we all need to come together and voice what we believe is best for our community.

Thank you to Steven and Kate Riley for their lovely letter and we encourage you to read the full letter above. 🙏



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ENP Is Hiking Fees For Park Run Businesses

By Captain Mike Merritt

Everglades National Park has now been given the ability to tax business owners who make a living and have built their business in the National Park.

The Park has had the right to do this since 2015. They tried implementing this just before Hurricane Irma devastated us here in Everglades City and other coastal areas.

There was a lot of push back from Florida Guide Associations and Captains that make a living taking clients into the National Park to either fish or just sight see and photograph the beauty of it. Then the Hurricane hit south Florida, then we had the COVID shut down, then Hurricane Ian hit us and did terrible damage up the gulf coast. Now, it seems the National Park feels the timing is right to go ahead with this fee increase. So, just to give you a better understanding of what is happening I will try to explain.

All businesses that operate in the National Park are required to obtain a Commercial Use Authorization Permit from the National Park. This requires us to have certain documentation to be considered legitimate. This includes a \$500,000 liability Insurance policy listing the National Park as insured. Then there is boat insurance, Coast Guard Maritime License, and of course other things. We are also currently paying a fee of \$850 annually.

The park recently hosted a Zoom meeting, but not all Commercial Use Authorization (CUA) holders were aware of it, and not all were able to join and participate.

The meeting agenda included notification that the Park will be installing a new fee schedule for all CUA Holders. This fee schedule is based on our total gross business receipts. 3% for anyone making up to \$250,000 gross annually. It goes up from there to \$5 up to \$500,000 then 5% on anything over \$500,000. So this equates to a tax on our gross revenue.

Anyone that operates a business knows that your gross revenue does not mean you are making that amount of money. For example, if a fishing guide has gross receipts of \$50,000 he is probably making about 1/2 of this as actual income. Operating and running has some major expenses. That being said, not even the IRS taxes us on our income without allowing us to utilize expense deductions.

We are adamantly opposed to the National Park having the authority to tax us and we feel they are forcing us to take them on as a business partner. Only they get 3% for doing absolutely nothing to help our business.

I held a meeting at the Island Cafe

here in Everglades City and invited Rep. Lauren Melo, Congressman Mario Diaz Balart, Senator Rick Scott, and Senator Marco Rubio. They all showed up or had an associate attend to hear from us.

We informed them of what was taking place and unanimously they were all opposed to this type of fee schedule. The Park is supposed to be charging us an amount that would cover the cost of operating their CUA program. We all know what happens when the government has the authority to charge you for something, they tend to expand these programs therefore increasing the costs and the need to charge more.

This is already evident as we just received another email from the Park notifying us that they want to expand the CUA program to offer "training" for all CUA Holders. They are already trying to expand this program and they haven't even been able to run the one they have efficiently. There are lots of CUA holders that have not received the proper paperwork back from the Park. There are some who have not had the required stickers for our vessels in 4 years. And now they want to expand the program and charge us even more money.

We need a public outcry and I am hoping that by informing everyone through this article and meetings that we will eventually be heard and figure out how to prevent this madness. I know the government doesn't really understand simple economics because they are not operating on what they make, they are operating on what we make. I would ask anyone concerned to write or call your representatives and let them know this is not acceptable.

I tried to explain it this way. I am not opposed to paying a fee that does what it is intended to do. But I as an individual would like to decide where my money is better spent. I as an individual, provide a scholarship at our local high school. I have mentored a couple young men in our local community. I have another young man that I have committed to mentoring once he graduates high school. If the Park takes another 3% of my income this may very well be the money I no longer have available to use for these things that actually help our community.

I hope this helps you, the reader, better understand what is happening here at the local level. We need as many people on our side as possible.



CHOKOLOSKEE FAMILY Church

DOING LIFE TOGETHER GET CONNECTED:

Chokoloskeefamily.com
239.252.0098

1236 Demere Lane, Chokoloskee, FL

CHURCH SCHEDULE:

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

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Update From City Hall

By Michael McComas
Everglades City Council

At the recent City Council meeting the Mayor announced the news that the wastewater treatment plant was operating normally, ribbon cutting is tentatively planned for June 18 and planning for several projects including the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) and the community center were ready to begin.

Presentations were received from the NCH Safe and Healthy Children Coalition asking for the annual

Ordinances were heard including amending the mowing Ordinance and Milestone Inspections of tall residential buildings

Public comment included discussion of mowing liens on Block 15 Lot 11 which was referred to City Attorney Lombardo for negotiation. Patty Huff then requested authority to add banners of 2024 Everglades City School graduates to the poles containing Centennial Banners. Captain Mike



Photo Courtesy of Patty Huff

proclamation of Drowning Prevention Month and the results of the Collier County Community Assessment were presented by the Richard M. Schulze Foundation and Eileen Connolly Keesler of the Community Foundation.

Several First readings of proposed

Merritt alerted the Council to the recent meeting held by the guides with representatives from Senator Rubio and Senator Scott's offices. They also met with State Representative Lauren Melo regarding the National Park Service's intention to add a 3% charter fee over and above the Concession Fees (CUA) they currently pay. Collier County Commissioner Bill McDaniel requested Capt. Merritt contact him to enlist the support of the County Commission to support their opposition.

During City Reports Councilman McComas inquired about the existence of a business license for the Premier Trolley Services which has advertising signage on at least one of the trolleys



parked at the Everglades Adventure Center (formerly the Seafood Depot). He then inquired whether there had been a zoning change as the lot currently contains at least 5 trolleys several with expired registrations and followed up by asking if the SaveTheEvergladesDepot.com site was a 501(c)(3) fundraising vehicle. Failing to receive any positive responses Councilman McComas filed a formal Code Enforcement complaint.



Elevating Homes Program

By Tony Pernas
Everglades City Council



Three families will be receiving elevated modular homes to replace ground-level mobile homes, and four families will have their homes elevated. Demolition has started on the mobile homes, and we expect all of the elevated modular homes to be completed in the next few months. Elevation of homes will start in the next couple of weeks as

Driving through the low-lying communities of Everglades City, Plantation Island, and Chokoloskee in southwest Collier County, you see that many of the homes are lifted up on pilings to mitigate against storm surge. However, there are still many homes at ground level. As a result, storm surge from Hurricane Irma in 2017 and Hurricane Ian in 2022 caused widespread damage to ground-level homes.

well. For additional information, please visit: <http://www.cedrvoad.org>

For many families, the only long-term solution is to lift the house. However, the lifting of a home can be expensive, and many low-to-moderate-income families cannot afford it.

The Communities of Everglades Disaster Recovery (CEDR) is a non-profit organization that was formed after Hurricane Irma to bring together government, civic, and faith-based organizations, businesses, and volunteers to make our community more prepared, resilient, and self-sufficient.

After Hurricane Ian, CEDR, with funding from the Collier Community Foundation and Volunteer Florida, initiated the Elevating Homes Program. The program's goal is to raise homes in Everglades City, Chokoloskee, and Plantation Island for low-to-moderate-income homeowners affected by Hurricane Ian.

In 2023 (April to May), CEDR accepted pre-applications followed by applications for families that met the qualifications of the program (i.e., primary residence, low-to-moderate income, veteran, etc.). Families were then notified that they have been selected for the program.

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Unit 1: Beds:3 Bath:2 SqFt:1492 | Unit 2: Beds:2 Bath:2 SqFt:1388
MLS# 223088994



Memorial Day Monday May 27, 2024

By Reverend Dr Bob N. Wallace
Everglades Community Church

Memorial Day is an American holiday observed on the last Monday of May to honor the men and women who died while serving in the U.S. military. Originally known as Decoration Day, it originated in

On May 5, 1868, General John A. Logan, leader of an organization for Northern Civil War veterans, called for a nationwide day of remembrance later that month. The date chosen for Decoration Day was



the years following the Civil War which took place from April 12, 1861, to May 26, 1865, and became an official federal holiday in 1971.

The Civil War, which ended in the spring of 1865, claimed more lives than any conflict in U.S. history. As a result, the country established its first national cemeteries. By the late 1860s, various towns and cities began holding springtime tributes to the fallen soldiers. People decorated their graves with flowers and recited prayers. The exact origin of this tradition is unclear, but one of the earliest Memorial Day commemorations was organized by a group of formerly enslaved people in Charleston, South Carolina, less than a month after the Confederacy surrendered in 1865.

In 1966, the federal government declared Waterloo, New York, as the official birthplace of Memorial Day. Waterloo is a village located in Seneca County, New York. It serves as the primary county seat of Seneca County. The population of Waterloo was 5,171 at the 2010 census, making it the most populated village in Seneca County. The village is named after Waterloo, Belgium, where Napoleon Bonaparte was defeated in battle. Notably, Waterloo, NY is recognized as the birthplace of Memorial Day.

The tradition of honoring fallen soldiers began there in the aftermath of the American Civil War. On May 5, 1866, a local druggist named Henry C. Welles proposed the idea of decorating the graves of fallen soldiers with flowers. This led to the first official observance of Memorial Day in Waterloo on May 5, 1866. The village continues to commemorate Memorial Day with parades, ceremonies, and events, paying tribute to those who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. Waterloo had been celebrating the day since May 5, 1866, with community-wide events and grave decorations.

not tied to any specific battle anniversary.

On the first Decoration Day, General James Garfield delivered a speech at Arlington National Cemetery, and participants decorated the graves of the 20,000 Civil War soldiers buried there. By 1890, each Northern state had made Decoration Day an official state holiday.

Southern states continued to honor the dead on separate days until after World War I.

Since 1971, Memorial Day has been observed on the last Monday of May, marking the beginning of the summer season. Each year, a national moment of remembrance takes place at 3:00 p.m. local time.

On this solemn day, let us remember and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in service to our nation.



EVERGLADES COMMUNITY CHURCH
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NON-DENOMINATIONAL

101 S. Copeland Avenue, PO Box 177
Everglades City, FL 34139, 239-784-7318
The Rev. Dr. Bob N. Wallace, Pastor

◆ **Sunday Worship - 11:00 am** ◆

Listen to past sermons online:
www.evergladescommunity.church

Mimi's Bell

By Reverend Dr Bob N. Wallace
Everglades Community Church

The Dresden bell rung at the beginning of worship is from the Dresden Frauenkirche (German: Church of Our Lady) a Lutheran church in Dresden, the capital of the German state of Saxony. Destroyed during the Allied firebombing of Dresden towards the end of World War II, the church was reconstructed between 1994 and 2005. The bell was recovered and gifted to



Everglades Community Church by Mimi Bruckert.

The story of the bell is an interesting one. The history of this bell is in a picture frame high above the bell in the Narthex; however, what follows is copied from that document. Read it with wonderment and gratefulness as the bell is rung three times before the 11 o'clock Sunday morning worship. That was suggested many years ago by Dr. Walter Burke (Stevie Burke) who suggested the three rings would be for the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

The Legacy

In 1932 Mimi Bruckert recalls visiting with her grandmother in Dresden, Germany, and attending the Frauenkirche Church. During World War II, the Frauenkirche Church was destroyed by fire and has since been restored. In 1946 when the Russians controlled Dresden as part of East Germany, they removed all art, artifacts, and anything they wanted. Most of these items were sent back to Russia for their use. Anything they took from the churches, museums, that they did not want, they sold in government sponsored stores. Mimi's mother attended the Frauenkirche Church before the war and purchased the bell in 1946 as a remembrance of this church. The bell was passed down thru Mimi's family and was donated to Everglades Community Church by Mimi Bruckert. It is displayed in the church narthex (front entrance) and is rung each Sunday at eleven o'clock before worship.

The Frauenkirche Church was a classic baroque church that was originally built 1726 and 1743. Even though the Saxony Elector was a Catholic, the name of the church (Church of Our Lady) was built as a Lutheran Cathedral. Dresden city architect, George Bahr, was a Baroque master and was known for capturing the essence of the Protestant Movement by designing the altar, chancel, and baptismal font to located within clear sight of the congregation.

A famous organ master created a great organ for the church and Johann Sebastian Bach performed a recital on it.

The single most mesmerizing feature of the Frauenkirche Dresden, and perhaps in the entire city, is the dome. Made of sandstone and weighing upwards of 12,000 tons, this 314-foot-tall dome is referred to as the Stone Bell. Amazingly, there are no internal supports and it proved to be quite stable. This accomplishment is often compared to Michelangelo's Dome at Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome

Mimi Bruckert (1926-2013)

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 or call (239) 252-5026. Come explore Everglades heritage today!

Exhibits

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

Observing Juneteenth – More Black History of Everglades City June 20 | 2 – 3 pm



Museum Manager Thomas Lockyear will reprise his Black History of Everglades City talk on the day after Juneteenth — with the addition of new discoveries and expanded information. Mr. Lockyear will share the recently revealed story of one of the town's earliest residents, a Civil War Veteran who served in the 34th Colored Infantry, and discuss the significant though often overlooked

contributions made to the region's history by African American residents of the greater Everglades City area.

Museum Birthday Event

Did you catch the excitement that swept through town on April 27th? It was none other than the Tamiami Trail Anniversary Celebration and Museum Birthday – a day packed with nostalgia and family-friendly fun.

Kicking off the festivities was an Early Bird Walking Tour, a serene stroll down memory lane where participants could immerse themselves in the history of the trail.

And what's a celebration without some good eats? Attendees enjoyed complimentary hot dogs and a slice of birthday cake, adding a tasty touch to the day's events.

For those keen on reminiscing, old-timers gathered to share stories and memories, offering a glimpse into days gone by.



Photo Courtesy of Patty Huff



Live music by Spirit of the Everglades provided a delightful soundtrack to the proceedings, infusing the air with a lively energy.

But the highlight of the day? The one-of-a-kind laundry cart races at the Museum of the Everglades – a quirky

yet thrilling spectacle that had everyone cheering for their favorites. Participants of all ages joined in, vying for the chance to win a trophy.



The event's host Thomas Lockyear Museum Manager brought us featured insightful speakers, including Craig Daniels, a local fishing guide. Craig is the descendant of multiple historical families and experienced most local historical events as a child, making him a living connection to the past and a witness to the unfolding tapestry of history.

And let's not forget Patty Huff, who provided an update on the Bank of Everglades project, adding a touch of excitement for the future.

Thank you museum team for all the work you do to bring this event to us every year.

Here's to many more years!



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Amazon Prime Ecolodge

By Captain Mike Merritt

Amazon Prime Ecolodge, how it all started.

I named it Amazon Prime Ecolodge! This was partially a joke, then we decided, why not? After all it is a Prime location in the heart of the Amazon for an ecolodge.



I often get asked when talking to people, "How did a guy who grew up in Everglades City end up with a lodge in Brazil's Amazon?" I like to think it was providence, God's providence.

I remember as a boy growing up and watching TV we were only allowed to watch certain shows. My dad raised us strict and one of the things he was strict about was what we viewed on TV. He believed as most parents did at that time, we should spend most of our time outdoors.

One of the shows that we were encouraged to watch was National Geographic. I loved this show because it allowed you to view parts of the world, we knew we would never see. There were a lot of interesting places and the one place that I always dreamed of seeing was the Amazon. Of course, as a boy and even a young man I never dreamed I would actually go there. But having been raised by a dad that loved the Everglades and did his best to teach us about all its characteristics and its wildlife, he started me on this path. When I was 4 years old, he rallied the whole family which was my mom, myself, and my 2 older brothers, and bought us passage on a cargo/passenger ship bound for Australia. He purchased a small car called a Morris Minor and we put everything we owned on the roof and began traveling Australia. We lived in a tent for a year and a half. Dad worked where he could to make money and we explored Australia. We lived there for nearly 3 years. So, my desire for adventure, I have come by it honestly because of my dad. I love the remoteness of the Amazon, and I love to share it with others.



For you to understand how this came about, I have to share some history. When I got married, Diana and I ended up getting involved in Foreign Missions at the church we attended. This started out as our way of helping to raise funds for missionaries and their families so they could continue to live in these foreign countries and spread the gospel. This led to us getting

invited to travel to Nicaragua with some Pastors and we met the missionaries on site. A few years later we traveled to Liberia, Africa. I traveled there a few different times with my Pastor. One day my Pastor came to me and asked, "Hey would you be interested in traveling to Brazil with me and going to the Amazon?" I didn't even hesitate, of course I will! He was flying there to meet up with the Missionary Bennie DeMerchant, who had been in Brazil's Amazon for over 50 years. Pastor Bennie had flown float planes up and down the Amazon River, and all over the Rain Forest. He had 15,000 flight hours racked up in 2 float planes.

I was told that he might even be able to take us fishing while we were visiting. Now I had heard stories and even read a book that Bennie DeMerchant had written, *Full Throttle*. I was really excited to go spend time with this man. He loved to fish whenever he was not doing God's work. And he incorporated fishing into his outreach. I am going to share a story that he told us while there and I believe it is in one of his books. He would fly his plane over remote villages that he wanted to reach with the gospel. He had prepared some home-made fishing flies that he tied himself. He used a fly rod to catch the peacock bass. He knew that the local villagers used nets to catch fish, but he also knew the peacock bass (locally called Tucunare) would jump over the fishermen's nets. So, he tied a bunch of these fly ties and put them in small plastic bags with written directions inside on how to use them to catch the Tucunare. He would then, weeks later, fly back over the village and if the people waved at him, he would land the plane on the river and visit the villagers. This act of kindness opened the door to their hearts. Give a man a fish, feed him for a day, teach a man to fish, feed him for a lifetime. As a result of this man's labors in the Amazon he was responsible for over 2000 churches being started with 50 years of Missionary work. He was well known in the area with the local government using him to fly into remote areas when needed, often dropping medicine to remote indigenous tribes.

There are many more stories, but if you want to read them there are 2 books he has written you can probably find online. *Full Throttle* and *Still Flying Full Throttle Well*, I flew to Manaus with my Pastor and

long-time friend Pastor Daniel Kyle. Pastor Bennie DeMerchant picked us up at the airport. When we got everything loaded and were driving in his truck he asked, "Which one of you boys want to go catch a bass in the morning?" Of course, I informed him that I brought my fishing rod and would love to go. So, the next morning he and I loaded up what we

needed into his float plane and took off out of Manaus. We flew over some rivers and some small creeks, over the Rain Forest and about 50 minutes of nothing but jungle and waterways. I remember being in awe of the vastness of the Rain Forest. I was absolutely amazed by this and remember thinking about how I would love just to get down there in the middle of that jungle. We landed on a small river that widened out enough for a safe landing. After we idled up the river to a small



floating one room camp, we tied off the plane and got out his canoe with a 5hp mud motor and off we went.



Once we started fishing that narrow little river, I had the feeling like I belonged there. I felt right at home with the surroundings even though the sights and sounds of the jungle were completely foreign to me. Some people are star struck when they meet famous people, I was star struck at what I was experiencing in the Amazon.

We caught lots of fish and I even landed one that Bennie said was 20 lbs. We were sleeping in hammocks that night under a roof but out on a deck, I was again amazed at all the sounds of the nightlife. Birds, frogs, insects and of course the Howler Monkeys all added to the symphony of sounds. Being raised in the Everglades and learning a lot from dad about the sounds we hear at night I was full of questions about what sounds we were hearing and what they were coming from.

We fished some more the next day and then flew back to Manaus to take care of the church business we came to do. After the church conference was over, we went back to his little camp and spent 2 more days fishing. When I left Brazil the only thing, I could think about was being able to do this again. I wanted to have my own place there, somewhere in that Amazon Forest!

After this trip I returned 6 more years to Manaus, Brazil. I formed a friendship with a local guy that worked as our interpreter the 1st year. Fabio Abreu and I became very good friends and now we are business partners at Amazon Prime Ecolodge on the Urubu River.

I am very fortunate to have formed friendships and relationships with many people in Manaus and now on the Urubu River. Our lodge is located approx. 145 miles NE of the city of Manaus. The lodge is in the heart of an area where 2 different ecosystems meet. We are on the dark waters of the Urubu River, "Vulture River," and traveling just a few miles east we enter into the muddy water that feeds into the

Amazon River. We have some really good Peacock Bass Fishing in these dark waters. There are also many other species such as Arowana, Wolf Fish, Apapa, Piranha, and even Arapaima. The water levels rise and fall an average of 50 feet each year. Our lodge is floating so access is always easy. The Prime Fishing season is during low water months when the fish have come out into the river to feed.

During high water months is the best time to come and enjoy the ecotours, as we can access so many more areas of this amazing place. The wildlife, plant life, and the sounds of the jungle, can all be experienced during high water.

Pink River Dolphin, Sloths, Monkeys, Macaws, Toucans, Parrots, Parakeets, many birds of prey, are all things you can experience during a stay here.

It is truly an amazing experience, and my wish is to share it with as many people as possible. As I said, I believe it was providence that put me in Manaus, and on the Urubu River. So let me invite you to come see for yourself what the Amazon has to offer.

103-Day Gulf Red Snapper Recreational Season for 2024



Courtesy of FWC

Florida's 2024 private recreational Gulf red snapper season will open June 1 and run consecutively through July 31.

The season will reopen in the fall for 3-day weekends (Friday – Sunday) from Sept. 1 – Nov. 30. Harvest will also be allowed Labor Day (Sept. 2), Veterans Day (Nov. 11) and Thanksgiving Day (Nov. 28).

This season applies to recreational anglers fishing from private vessels in Florida Gulf state and federal waters. For-hire operations that do not have a federal reef fish permit may also participate in the season but are limited to fishing for red snapper in Florida Gulf state waters only.

The 2024 Gulf Red Snapper recreational season spans a record 103 days, marking it as the longest season since the state took over management of Gulf red snapper.

In the event of rainy days impacting the number of fishing days, Florida will evaluate additional Gulf Red Snapper season dates to add later in the season.

If you plan to fish for red snapper in state or federal waters from a private recreational vessel, even if you are exempt from fishing license requirements, you must sign up as a State Reef Fish Angler (annual renewal required) at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com.



Waterkeeper

By Ray Bearfield
Collier County Waterkeeper



“It’s an honor to share our commitment to water quality with Mullet Rapper readers.”

The Collier County Waterkeeper, by way of introducing ourselves, is part of an international alliance dedicated to protecting water for generations to come. Here in Collier County, that is no small task given its size.

Nor are the problems from one end to the other always the same. Each region — from the Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary to the north to the Gordon River watershed to the west, and the Ten Thousand Islands to the south — is unique. Besides our shared concerns, each has unique special issues. We first became active in the Everglades City region when we contributed to the public comment on a master plan for management of the Green Heart of the Everglades, which the South Florida Water Management District purchased from private interests. No one knows better than the citizens of Everglades City what a two-edged sword the purchase of “conservation” lands can be. From the establishment of Everglades National Park to the formation of the Big Cypress National Preserve, what is justified as an act serving the “greater good” can have a calamitous effect on individuals whose connection to a special place predate that official recognition.

For that reason, and because the Waterkeeper is committed to protecting not only the quality of water, but the culture of the communities that depend on that water, we spoke out strongly in favor of allowing airboat operators to continue to work in the new “preserved” area.

In the course of those discussions, we met Stephen Lenz. And it was an item of his we saw on our Facebook page that prompts this, our first public outreach to the Mullet Rapper readers and the citizens of the county’s original capital.

Stephen posted a picture of a fence constructed by a boater in Australia who had been ordered by the city in which he resided to spare passersby the sight of his boat parked beside his home.

The issue struck a chord with me. I went round and round with code enforcement officers in Naples, back in my guiding days, about the same thing.

See, Naples, which used the “quaint fishing village” myth for so long it eventually died of old age and newer and fancier places to spend tons of money, didn’t allow residents to put a boat where it could be seen.

I couldn’t get my skiff

behind my house. The best I could do was put it along the side, behind a big stand of banana plants and essentially invisible to everyone but — you guessed it — the code enforcement guy whose mission in life was to make sure that the former quaint fishing village didn’t reveal its roots by letting a boat show.

The fellow in Australia, according to Stephen’s post, was more clever than I proved to be. He put up the fence, then hired an artist to paint on that fence a scene that looked exactly like his boat parked beside his house.

Touché.

I’m using that example because we believe it’s important to protect Collier County’s original culture in the face of pressure by new arrivals to conform to ideals they lived with elsewhere and seek to import.

At one meeting about the Green Heart management plan, a new resident, who identified as a former Colorado resident, warned the Everglades airboat community of the fight he was willing to lead to stamp out airboat “noise.”

Our take is simple. Everglades City is the last bastion of Collier County’s native culture.

We’ll help you protect it.

Ray Bearfield is a former newspaper editor, environmental writer, and fishing guide who is now the Collier County Waterkeeper. Connect at www.colliercountywaterkeeper.org.



Have you ever thought about going to the Amazon? Now you can! Capt. Mike Merritt's lodge in Brazil's Amazon. Fishing and Ecotour packages available.

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amazonprimefishing@gmail.com

561-252-4324

Tart Cherry Crumble

Submitted by Elaine Middelstaedt

For the Cherries:

- 1 lb. tart cherries, frozen
- 2 Tbsp sugar
- 2 Tbsp flour
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- Pinch of salt

For the Crumble:

- 1 egg
- 7/8 cup sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 stick butter

Directions:

1. Position a rack in center of the oven and preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Spread the frozen cherries in an ungreased 9x9-inch baking dish, deep pie pan, or similar-sized dish. Toss the cherries with the sugar, flour, cinnamon, and salt.
3. Make the crumb mix: blend the egg and sugar, add the flour and baking powder. Mix well, and crumble on top of the cherries.
4. Melt the stick of butter and pour on top.
5. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the crumble is dry and browned and the cherries are bubbling.
6. Cool for at least 30 minutes before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Alligator Hunt



If you've ever dreamed of participating in an alligator harvest, now is your chance! The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) has opened applications for two exciting opportunities: the Statewide Alligator Harvest Program and the brand-new Alligator Super Hunt.

Here's what you need to know:

1. Alligator Super Hunt:

This innovative program offers a flexible alternative to the traditional statewide hunt. With each permit, hunters can harvest two alligators from most alligator management units and private property (with owner permission) from August 15th to December 31st. To apply, simply pay a nonrefundable \$5 fee for each application. You can submit multiple applications between May 3rd and June 3rd, increasing your chances of being drawn. This year, 100 permits will be awarded.

2. Statewide Alligator Harvest Program:

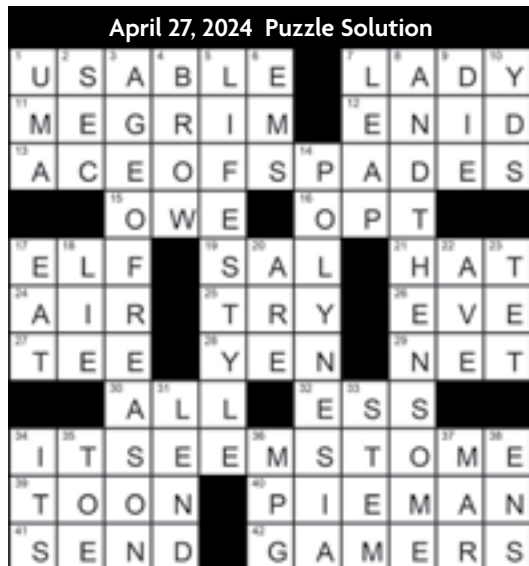
Celebrating its legacy since 1988, this program continues to be a model for sustainable resource use. The hunting season runs from August 15th to November 8th, allowing permit holders to harvest two alligators from a specific management unit or county. While there is no cost to apply, applicants must submit credit card information and can only apply once during each phase. This year, a total of 7,356 permits will be awarded.

How to Apply:

Applications for both programs open today at 10 a.m. ET and can be submitted online at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com or at any county tax collector's office or license agent.

Whether you're a seasoned hunter or looking for a new adventure, don't miss this opportunity to be part of Florida's rich wildlife conservation efforts. For more information and to apply, visit MyFWC.com/Alligator.

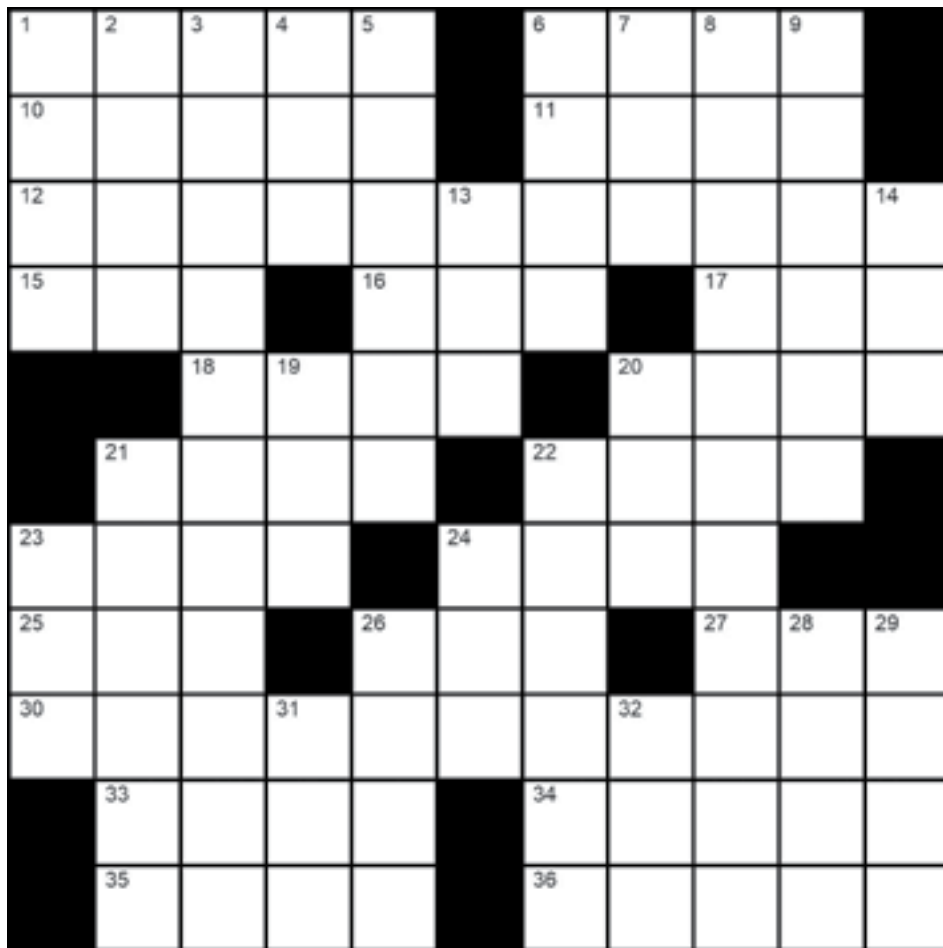
Grab your gear and get ready for an unforgettable alligator hunting experience!



MULLET RAPPER CROSSWORD

Across

1. Pitcher, of a sort
6. Chooses, with "for"
10. Car dealer's offering
11. Length x width, for a rectangle
12. Rich chocolate cake with apricot jam filling, originally served at a Viennese hotel
15. Spanish wave
16. "How obvious!"
17. Barbecue offering
18. Character
20. Basil, e.g.
21. Apple leftover
22. Beer buy
23. Bang-up
24. It holds a yard
25. "Fantasy Island" prop
26. Backboard attachment
27. Bar order
30. Rooting out or complete destruction
33. Everglades beast, shortly
34. Archaeological find
35. Carve in stone
36. Graf rival



Down

1. "Not to mention ..."
2. "Agreed!"
3. Preschooler's creation, perhaps
4. Bat wood
5. Pester
6. Curse
7. Ace
8. like earth's inhabitants
9. "Animal Farm," e.g.
13. Morgue, for one
14. "Chicago" lyricist
19. Bauxite, e.g.
20. Consumes
21. Bully
22. Lily-family member
23. Amber, e.g.
24. Abbr. on an input jack
26. Deep
28. Auld lang syne
29. Aims
31. Elmer, to Bugs
32. Not just "a"

First Baptist Church

Knowing Him and making Him known!

Praise Night, last Saturday of the month,
light supper, music, fellowship at 6:30 pm!

All-ages Sunday School: 9:45 am
Sunday Worship: 11:00 am & 6:00 pm
Wednesday Worship: 6:00 pm

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

Summertime Fishing

By Captain Mike Merritt



Summer time is approaching fast! With May upon us and June right around the corner, it is starting to get hot out on the water. The mornings are still great, so an early start is advisable. I wish I could tell you the winds have laid down, but this week we are experiencing some strong SSW winds. It is pushing the water in, so the tide floods out fast and makes the fishing difficult. The days that we have low winds have been awesome out there. The water has cleared up, and for the guys that are sight fishing, it made for some spectacular days chasing Tarpon, Snook, Reds, and even some Permit.

As we get farther into the month, we should see some regular wind patterns start up. This will allow for us to start targeting those schools of Permit that are so much fun! Live Crabs, large shrimp, or some well-placed jigs can catch these guys. The offshore wrecks will get worked over, and you may also find those Cobia too. But always be aware of the Sharks. Sometimes it is better to just leave when they show up. I do the same thing inshore. I would rather leave good fishing than feed good fish to the Sharks. It takes discipline, especially when the clients don't understand. Our Shark population has exploded. I never saw this as a kid growing up here. I have watched it grow over the years to a point that I think they are eating a lot of fish that are being released.

Snook fishing should continue to get better as the month goes on, but it is still not where it should be at this time of the year. I am usually catching 20-30 Snook per day or more. That is not happening. I am catching 10 a day except on good days where I might catch 15 or more. I tell the younger guides that catching 75-100 Snook per day was normal for so long I never thought it would be this slow. I for one am hoping this is only a cycle not the new norm. I lure fished one gentleman today and we boated 10 Snook. One 36" fish made the day, but it just seems like the smaller fish we usually have in good numbers are not around. But keep on fishing because the big ones are around and you just have to work harder to find them.

Redfishing has also slowed down but this is normal for this time of year. The fall Redfishing is always best. Sometimes it's hard to remember how the fishing should be when you have seen the decline for so many straight years. I was talking about this today, and I really think it is directly related to the changes that have taken place here over the last 50 years. Our Turtle Grass is nonexistent and there are more Mangroves choking off water flow in some areas. I believe the lack of grass is the absolute worst thing that could have happened as this was an estuary for the small fry. We used to catch all kinds of small Gag and Black Grouper in the grasses. Haven't had that happen in years. Maybe one day our National Park will implement a program to address the health of the Islands. The cause of this is more than likely a water quality issue. Hopefully our Everglades survive long enough to get healthy again.

Seatrout continue to bite even though they have no grass to hide in. These fish have adapted and we catch them all throughout the Islands. If you want some fish for a fish fry, then they are your best bet right now! We still have a true fishing paradise here and my hope is that the next generation will be able to say the same thing. Enjoy these fantastic Everglades! And good luck fishing.

Capt. Mike Merritt

Guide | (561)252-4324 | SnookFishing1@juno.com

Barron River Tides									
5/25/2024	Sat	5:37 AM	2.16	H	6/8/2024	Sat	5:41 AM	2.12	H
5/25/2024	Sat	11:03 AM	0.92	L	6/8/2024	Sat	11:22 AM	0.9	L
5/25/2024	Sat	3:17 PM	3.07	H	6/8/2024	Sat	3:47 PM	3.1	H
5/26/2024	Sun	12:24 AM	-0.32	L	6/9/2024	Sun	12:25 AM	-0.3	L
5/26/2024	Sun	6:34 AM	2.14	H	6/9/2024	Sun	6:25 AM	2.11	H
5/26/2024	Sun	11:43 AM	0.96	L	6/9/2024	Sun	12:08 PM	0.92	L
5/26/2024	Sun	3:56 PM	3.06	H	6/9/2024	Sun	4:34 PM	2.95	H
5/27/2024	Mon	1:11 AM	-0.28	L	6/10/2024	Mon	1:10 AM	-0.17	L
5/27/2024	Mon	7:31 AM	2.14	H	6/10/2024	Mon	7:07 AM	2.13	H
5/27/2024	Mon	12:32 PM	0.99	L	6/10/2024	Mon	12:57 PM	0.93	L
5/27/2024	Mon	4:46 PM	2.98	H	6/10/2024	Mon	5:31 PM	2.77	H
5/28/2024	Tue	2:02 AM	-0.19	L	6/11/2024	Tue	1:55 AM	-0.02	L
5/28/2024	Tue	8:27 AM	2.18	H	6/11/2024	Tue	7:50 AM	2.18	H
5/28/2024	Tue	1:33 PM	1	L	6/11/2024	Tue	1:52 PM	0.93	L
5/28/2024	Tue	5:51 PM	2.83	H	6/11/2024	Tue	6:34 PM	2.57	H
5/29/2024	Wed	2:59 AM	-0.07	L	6/12/2024	Wed	2:43 AM	0.14	L
5/29/2024	Wed	9:18 AM	2.25	H	6/12/2024	Wed	8:33 AM	2.25	H
5/29/2024	Wed	2:59 PM	0.96	L	6/12/2024	Wed	3:01 PM	0.9	L
5/29/2024	Wed	7:19 PM	2.65	H	6/12/2024	Wed	7:44 PM	2.38	H
5/30/2024	Thu	4:00 AM	0.08	L	6/13/2024	Thu	3:35 AM	0.31	L
5/30/2024	Thu	10:01 AM	2.34	H	6/13/2024	Thu	9:15 AM	2.33	H
5/30/2024	Thu	4:29 PM	0.81	L	6/13/2024	Thu	4:18 PM	0.82	L
5/30/2024	Thu	9:09 PM	2.5	H	6/13/2024	Thu	8:57 PM	2.22	H
5/31/2024	Fri	5:00 AM	0.23	L	6/14/2024	Fri	4:28 AM	0.46	L
5/31/2024	Fri	10:40 AM	2.46	H	6/14/2024	Fri	9:55 AM	2.41	H
5/31/2024	Fri	5:39 PM	0.58	L	6/14/2024	Fri	5:24 PM	0.69	L
5/31/2024	Fri	10:37 PM	2.42	H	6/14/2024	Fri	10:08 PM	2.1	H
6/1/2024	Sat	5:56 AM	0.39	L	6/15/2024	Sat	5:19 AM	0.59	L
6/1/2024	Sat	11:18 AM	2.61	H	6/15/2024	Sat	10:33 AM	2.49	H
6/1/2024	Sat	6:40 PM	0.31	L	6/15/2024	Sat	6:19 PM	0.53	L
6/2/2024	Sun	12:00 AM	2.38	H	6/15/2024	Sat	11:19 PM	2.03	H
6/2/2024	Sun	6:49 AM	0.54	L	6/16/2024	Sun	6:07 AM	0.71	L
6/2/2024	Sun	11:56 AM	2.78	H	6/16/2024	Sun	11:12 AM	2.56	H
6/2/2024	Sun	7:37 PM	0.05	L	6/16/2024	Sun	7:08 PM	0.35	L
6/3/2024	Mon	1:16 AM	2.38	H	6/17/2024	Mon	12:32 AM	2.02	H
6/3/2024	Mon	7:39 AM	0.67	L	6/17/2024	Mon	6:53 AM	0.8	L
6/3/2024	Mon	12:35 PM	2.95	H	6/17/2024	Mon	11:51 AM	2.64	H
6/3/2024	Mon	8:29 PM	-0.18	L	6/17/2024	Mon	7:54 PM	0.18	L
6/4/2024	Tue	2:18 AM	2.37	H	6/18/2024	Tue	1:35 AM	2.06	H
6/4/2024	Tue	8:27 AM	0.76	L	6/18/2024	Tue	7:37 AM	0.87	L
6/4/2024	Tue	1:13 PM	3.1	H	6/18/2024	Tue	12:29 PM	2.74	H
6/4/2024	Tue	9:19 PM	-0.34	L	6/18/2024	Tue	8:37 PM	0.02	L
6/5/2024	Wed	3:12 AM	2.32	H	6/19/2024	Wed	2:25 AM	2.1	H
6/5/2024	Wed	9:12 AM	0.83	L	6/19/2024	Wed	8:18 AM	0.91	L
6/5/2024	Wed	1:50 PM	3.2	H	6/19/2024	Wed	1:03 PM	2.85	H
6/5/2024	Wed	10:06 PM	-0.43	L	6/19/2024	Wed	9:18 PM	-0.13	L
6/6/2024	Thu	4:03 AM	2.24	H	6/20/2024	Thu	3:10 AM	2.14	H
6/6/2024	Thu	9:55 AM	0.86	L	6/20/2024	Thu	8:56 AM	0.94	L
6/6/2024	Thu	2:27 PM	3.24	H	6/20/2024	Thu	1:35 PM	2.97	H
6/6/2024	Thu	10:53 PM	-0.44	L	6/20/2024	Thu	10:00 PM	-0.25	L
6/7/2024	Fri	4:53 AM	2.17	H	6/21/2024	Fri	3:55 AM	2.17	H
6/7/2024	Fri	10:38 AM	0.89	L	6/21/2024	Fri	9:34 AM	0.95	L
6/7/2024	Fri	3:05 PM	3.2	H	6/21/2024	Fri	2:05 PM	3.1	H
6/7/2024	Fri	11:40 PM	-0.4	L	6/21/2024	Fri	10:42 PM	-0.34	L

Eateries

Everglades City

Camellia Street Grill
Daily 11 am – 8 pm
(239) 695-2003

Captain Morgan's Seafood Grill Corp
Thur-Sat 11 am – 8 pm
Sun 12 pm-8 pm
Closed on Holidays
(239) 232-0041

City Seafood
Mon-Fri 8 am – 3 pm
Sat & Sun 8 am – 4 pm
(239) 695-4700

Diving Pelican
Sun-Thur 11 am – 8 pm
Fri-Sat 11 am – 8:30 pm
(Outside bar to 11 pm)
(239) 232-0475

Everglades Cafe
Tues-Sat 7 am – 3:30 pm
(239) 351-4875

Island Cafe
Daily 6 am – 9 pm
(239) 695-0003

Nely's Corner (Inside EFC)
Fri-Sun 6:30 am – 4 pm
(239) 695-4222

Rod & Gun
Daily 11:30 am - 7:30 pm
(239) 695-2101

Triad Seafood Market & Cafe
Opens October
(239) 695-2662

Wildman's Pizza Pasta & Pythons
Mon-Thur 11:30 am – 8 pm
Fri-Sat 11:30 am – 9 pm
(239) 426-9453

Chokoloskee

HavAnnA Cafe
Opens October
(239) 695-2214

Goodland

Crabby Lady
Tues-Sat 11 am – 6 pm
Sun 11 am – 5 pm
(239) 394-5663

Kirks Fish House
Opens October
(239) 394-8616

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
Closed Wednesdays
Mon, Tues, Thur, Fri 10:30 am – 4 pm
Sat & Sun 10:30 am to 5 pm
(239) 695-2682

Port of the Islands

Angler's Cove
(Closed for Maintenance)

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
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
Opens December
200 Datura St E, Everglades City

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

Classifieds

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!

Services

Mike's Outboard Service
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Mercury - Yamaha - Suzuki
Anything Electric
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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
(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

Ladies Coffee
Thursdays | 8:30 am
Rotates Everglades City Restaurants
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



HELP WANTED: The Mullet Rapper is seeking photographs of happenings in Everglades City and surrounding areas. If you like to attend local events, have a camera (phones work) and you have the desire to share your imagery with the community please contact me or send your photos with a brief description to:

MulletRapper@gmail.com

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 & Chokoloskee:** (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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