



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



March-May 2023 News & Updates; Spotlight on Leon County Tech

Upcoming Meetings

Board of County Commissioners

- Tuesday, May 9
- 3pm - Regular Meeting
- 6pm - Public Hearings
- 5th Floor, County Courthouse
- Review agenda [HERE](#)

Blueprint IA

- Tuesday, May 11
- 1pm - Budget Workshop
- 3pm - Regular Meeting
- 2nd Floor, City Hall
- Review agendas [HERE](#)

CRTPA

- Monday, May 22
- 1:30 pm
- 6pm - Public Hearings
- 2nd Floor City Hall
- Agenda will be posted [HERE](#) on/about May 15

Board of County Commissioners - Workshop on Addressing Homelessness

- Tuesday, May 23
- 1:00
- 5th Floor, County Courthouse
- Agenda will be posted [HERE](#) on/about May 15

Click [HERE](#) for the complete Commission calendar.

Hello Rick,

I hope you and your family are doing well. Our two daughters are wrapping up 3rd grade and pre-school and are REALLY looking forward to the next few months! Summer camps, trail hiking, fishing on Lake Jackson, and perhaps a day trip to SGI are in our near future. :-)

As you know, March, April, and May are usually the busiest months in Leon County. Every weekend is overflowing with festivals, neighborhood gatherings, community forums, etc. Many recent events are included in this newsletter, and you'll also see announcements about many others taking place in the next few weeks. We hope to see you at some of these events!

Also in this issue, we're very proud to provide a spotlight on **Leon County's technology sector**. This article was written specifically for our newsletter by Eddie Gonzalez Loumiet, one of Tallahassee's most influential tech leaders. He is CEO of Ruvos and he also leads Launch Tally, an initiative that promotes and supports local technology companies. Thank you for your work on this, Eddie!

Finally, we've also included a new, recurring newsletter section in which we highlight a local business. This issue features **Fitzgerald Collaborative Group**, a full-service architecture, interiors, and urban design firm working on major local and national projects.

What's on the horizon? The designs for the **Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path** and the **Lake Jackson Greenway** will be published very soon. If you'd like to be notified as soon as they become available, please send an email to my Chief of Staff, [Jodi Wilkof](#), and she'll add you to our email subgroups for those projects.

Enjoy your summer, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments or suggestions. As always, it's a great honor serving you.

All the best,

Rick Minor

P.S. If you have friends and family who might be interested in receiving this newsletter each month, please ask them to sign up at www.LeonCountyFL.gov/RickMinor. Thank you!

Spotlight On Leon County Tech



This month, we are excited to focus on some of the impactful and innovative work that is being done locally in the technology sector. In our community, there is a lot of work - and a high amount of collaboration - being done in the tech sector and our area is emerging as a regional tech hub, with involvement in impactful projects throughout the world.

Special thanks to Eddie Gonzalez Loumiet, CEO of [Ruvos](#), a local technology company that provides a range of services including data analytics, cyber security, cloud computing, and more. Eddie leads [Launch Tally](#), an initiative to support and promote Tallahassee's technology companies.

Click [HERE](#) to read a piece Eddie wrote for this newsletter. In it, he shares some of the latest on Tallahassee's flourishing technology ecosystem, including the history of LaunchTally and updates on some of those organizations "launching" Tallahassee technology to the next level, including Career Source Capital Region, Domi Station, Florida Technology Council (FTC), FSU College of Communication & Information (CCI), FSU Data Science, Innocatio Park, MagCorp/MagLab, NAT20, and the Office of Economic Vitality (OEV),

UF Innovate Accelerate / SidMartin Biotech Incubator



Rick recently visited the **UF Innovate Accelerate / SidMartin Biotech Incubator** in Alachua County. More than 112 companies have gone through this incubator's programs, raising more than \$9.3 billion and creating more than 8,000 jobs. When we visualize success for our own **North Florida Innovation Labs**, it looks a lot like this! Congrats to the award-winning Sid Martin team for their outstanding work and persistence.

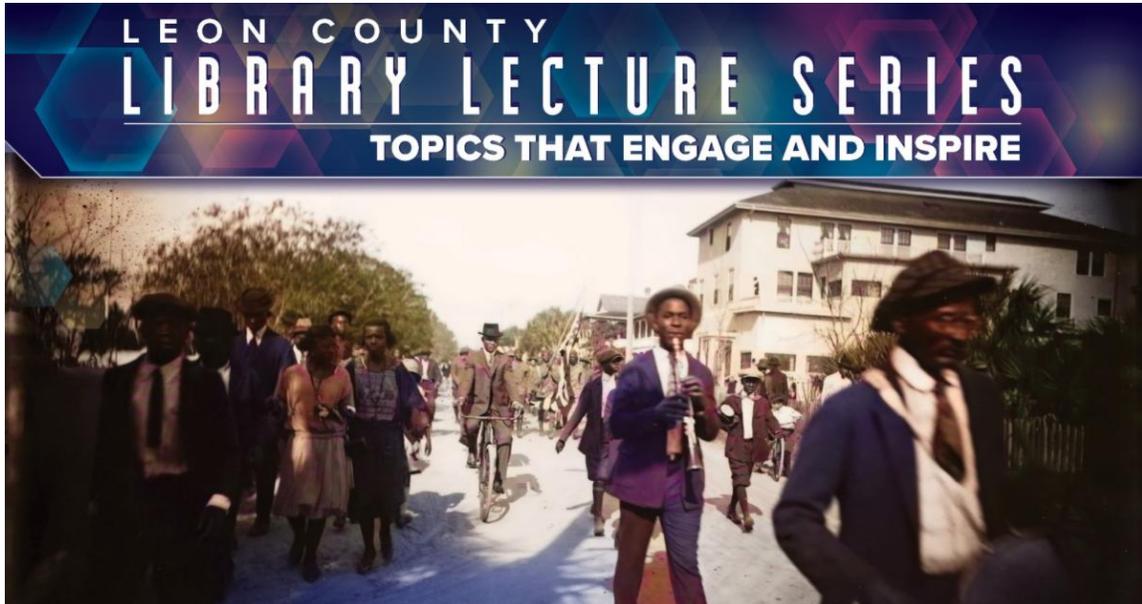
VISITOR INFORMATION CENTER & GIFT SHOP GRAND OPENING



Join us in celebrating the Grand Opening of The Leon County Division of Tourism/Visit Tallahassee Visitor Information Center and Gift Shop at the newly renovated historic Seaboard Freight Station (old Amtrak Station) on Wednesday, May 10 from 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m during National Tourism Week.

This is an exciting moment for our community, as the center is now dynamically positioned between businesses, hotels, campuses, and venues to take advantage of visitors of all sorts. The opening program will include ribbon cutting, refreshments, music, model train displays, tours and more.

Emancipation Day: Where Do We Go From Here?



Join Leon County Government for an engaging and interactive discussion about **Florida Emancipation Day**, which is recognized each year on May 20. The event will be on Tuesday, May 16th at 6:00 pm at the Leon County Main Library.

The lecture will feature a panel of local professors and historians in conversation about how Florida Emancipation Day was celebrated in the past and how Leon County citizens can remember and celebrate this historic day now and in the future.

Emancipation was proclaimed in Tallahassee-Leon County on May 20, 1865, more than two years after President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation freed those enslaved in southern states. Communities around the state began holding annual emancipation celebrations on May 20, a tradition that continues today.

In 2020, Leon County became the first county in Florida to officially recognize Florida Emancipation Day.

The panelists include Dr. Andrea Oliver, assistant professor of history at Tallahassee Community College, and local historians Gloria Jefferson Anderson and Hunter Hill. This program will be moderated by Althemese Barnes, founder and executive director emeritus of the John G. Riley Center & Museum.

The Leon County Library Lecture Series is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided. You can learn more [HERE](#).

Press the Chest: Free CPR Training



LEON COUNTY PRESS THE CHEST



Free CPR Training for the Community



The annual **Press the Chest community CPR training** event is back on Saturday, June 3 from 10:00 am - Noon!

Hosted by Leon County EMS, people of all ages are invited to learn the lifesaving skills of adult hands-only CPR, child CPR with breaths, adult and child choking relief, and AED awareness.

Each participant will receive an American Heart Association CPR Anytime Kit containing a CPR manikin, DVD, and educational materials. Participants can take these personal CPR kits home to train family and friends.

Register and learn to save lives at LeonCountyFL.gov/PressTheChest.

Update on the Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path at May 22nd CRTPA Meeting



The May 22, 2023 CRTPA Board meeting agenda will include a presentation by the design contractor regarding the Phase 2 (60%) **Design Plan** for the **Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path**. The materials for the agenda item will be added to CRTPA.org on May 15 and can be reviewed through “Resources” then “Meetings” and finally the “May 15, 2023 CRTPA Meeting”. These materials will also be available on the [Thomasville Road MUP project page](#) when the agenda is posted.

The Phase 2 Design Plan adhered to the original goals of the Feasibility Plan, which was to provide a multimodal path that is connected and able to offer a recreational opportunity for all users. A few key points include:

- 12' path for the majority of the corridor (Betton Road to Metropolitan Boulevard). In

- some spots the path drops to 8' due to right of way constraints.
- Closure of the middle access to the Circle K for safety purposes.
- 4.5' between the back of curb and the path with some areas having to be reduced to 2' due to right of way constraints.
- A sidewalk connection from Gardenia Drive to Waverly Road (6' wide).
- Improved sight triangles for residences and business along the corridor due to the removal of the bike lane.
- A crossing at Woodgate Way and Thomasville Road (on the southern leg – east to west) with a pedestrian island.
- A path (instead of a sidewalk) from Live Oak Plantation to Metropolitan Boulevard, and
- No impacts to any significant trees in the corridor. A few Sago Palms and no tree greater than 4" will be removed.

Leon County Named Florida Trail Town

The prestigious designation recognizes outstanding efforts to embrace regional trails, including paved multi-use and paddling trails



Leon County has earned the coveted designation of **Florida Trail Town** by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), recognizing the County's commitment to providing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Specifically, the designation highlights Leon County's stewardship of Florida greenways, like J.R. Alford Greenway, the St. Marks Trail, Miccosukee Greenway, and more.

Trail Towns are communities that are situated close to long-distance non-motorized recreational trails and welcome hikers, bicyclists, skaters, and joggers with restaurants, shops, and lodging. The prestigious designation recognizes outstanding efforts to embrace regional trails, including paved multi-use and paddling trails. The designation also reflects the County's efforts to promote resource-based recreation and create a thriving economy based on outdoor activities.

Aptly named "**Trailahassee**," Leon County lies in one of the most biologically diverse regions in the U.S. and is home to more than 700 miles of varying trails with abundant

biking, hiking, paddling, equestrian and running trails. Leon County's natural beauty, combined with its commitment to sustainable tourism and resource-based recreation, makes it an ideal destination for those looking to experience the great outdoors.

The Trail Town designation is part of FDEP's broader effort to promote sustainable tourism and encourage communities to embrace resource-based recreation. Trail Town candidates are considered for approval by the legislatively established Florida Greenways and Trails Council.

Designated Trail Towns will be featured on the Office of Greenways and Trails website and given metal signs that can be placed at trailheads and town gateways. The designation provides communities with an opportunity to promote their commitment to sustainable tourism and resource-based recreation and to attract visitors who are interested in experiencing the great outdoors.

Earn Your Free STACPRO Certificate



"Third Friday" Community Training

**WHEN HUMAN TRAFFICKING
COMES TO WORK**

Friday, May 19 | 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM Eastern

The Big Bend Coalition Against Human Trafficking (BBCAHT) and The Survive and Thrive Advocacy Center (STAC) invite you to participate in BBCAHT's Monthly 3rd Friday Community Training Program: When Human Trafficking Comes to Work

REGISTER

This free webinar one of the "Third Friday" community training events hosted by BBCAHT and STAC to inform and engage the North Florida community and beyond. We are happy to extend this invitation to friends and colleagues – please join us!

Sex and labor trafficking victims, adults and youth, are trafficked and exploited in plain sight, including at our area businesses and workplaces. How can we as employees, managers, workers and customers recognize and respond to trafficking that protect the bottom line and our businesses from liability? How can we help keep trafficking victims and the workplace safer? This interactive webinar is a live presentation of the online [STACPRO](#) training program and will provide vital information for: anyone working in an office, child welfare, businesses like restaurants or retail establishments, the financial sector, non-profit/social services agencies, the faith community, the justice system, and any organization large or small. While STACPRO is available online, attending this LIVE event means you can ask questions and participate with one other attendees.

Accreditation: 2.0 hours of Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits from The Florida Bar; Certified by FL Dept. of Business and Professional Regulation for mandated human trafficking training for public lodging establishments; Professional Development, Greater Tallahassee Chamber of Commerce.

Presenters: Robin Hassler Thompson, Executive Director and Graciela Marquina, Community Services Advocate, STAC

The Village Square 2023 Town Hall



The Village Square's annual town hall hosts commissioners from the City of Tallahassee and Leon County to have a constructive (and neighborly) discussion about where we are, where we're going and what the challenges out there on the horizon might be. This year's town hall was facilitated by Tom Flanigan of WFSU and powered by the Tallahassee Democrat and Leadership Tallahassee. In case you missed it, you can watch the program in its entirety [HERE](#).

County Receives \$75,000 to Build Local Financial Empowerment Efforts with Specialized Focus on Racial Wealth Equity



Recently, Leon County Government was awarded a **Cities for Financial Empowerment Fund (CFE Fund) grant of \$75,000**, along with intensive technical assistance, to participate in the CityStart initiative with a focus on racial wealth equity.

The CityStart initiative helps local leaders develop and implement proven strategies to help local families and communities become more financially stable. Bloomberg Philanthropies' [Greenwood Initiative](#), whose mission is to accelerate the pace of Black wealth accumulation in the U.S., is advising the CFE Fund and grantees on the design and execution of the CityStart program utilizing a racial wealth equity lens. In partnership with the Capital City Chamber of Commerce, the funds will be used to host strategic community roundtables, host a financial empowerment symposium, and continue to prioritize financial stability, especially of Black residents.

As part of the County's ongoing efforts to address poverty and inequity, County staff will

work closely with the CFE Fund and community partners to craft a municipal financial empowerment blueprint that identifies actionable implementation steps based on the financial needs of residents, especially Black residents, key administrative priorities, and partnership opportunities.

The CFE Fund grant aligns with Leon County's ongoing coordination and collaboration with neighborhoods to improve their social and economic outlook. The grant also aligns with the Capital City Chamber's recently launched Bank On Tallahassee initiative, which connects people to safe, affordable, and certified banking accounts and empowers people and families to improve their financial capability, health, and independence. Learn more at BankOnTLH.com.

CityStart is part of a [suite of investments from Bloomberg Philanthropies](#) to promote financial stability among residents of U.S. cities.

Leon County is part of the fifth cohort of CityStart partners for the CFE Fund and the second cohort of CityStart partners to focus their blueprints on racial wealth equity strategies. The development of the blueprint will be informed by a series of meetings with key stakeholder groups that focus on the needs of Black residents and help identify opportunities to address the racial wealth and assets gap, facilitate intergenerational wealth transfer, and build resident, family, and community financial stability.

In addition to Leon County, seven other local governments were selected through a competitive process, including: Baltimore, Md.; Cleveland, Ohio; Monroe, La.; Newark, N.J.; Norfolk, Va.; Rocky Mount, N.C.; and Sacramento, Calif. These eight new local government partners join 32 localities that have already completed the CityStart financial empowerment public blueprint process.

WFSU: Is Birding Better at Lake Jackson When It's Dried Down?



WFSU's Ecology Blog visit [Lake Jackson](#) with a group of birders who make the most eBird observations here. eBird is a free app developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, which lets users create lists. Over the last couple of years, eBird observations have jumped here, likely due to the lake's drying down.

They wondered- is birding better at Lake Jackson during a dry down? eBird may have an answer for us.

Dig deeper into the story on the [WFSU Ecology Blog](#).

Hurricane Preparedness Week

Hurricane Preparedness weather.gov/hurricane 

Prepare Before Hurricane Season

-  Develop an evacuation plan
-  Assemble disaster supplies: food, water, batteries, charger, radio, cash
-  Get an insurance checkup and document your possessions
-  Create a communication plan with a hand-written list of contacts
-  Strengthen your home



NOAA

The 2023 hurricane season starts June 1.

The best time to prepare for hurricanes is BEFORE hurricane season begins. Avoid having to rush through potentially life-saving preparations by waiting until it's too late. Get your disaster supplies while the shelves are still stocked, and get that insurance checkup early, as flood insurance requires a 30-day waiting period. For more information, go to noaa.gov/prepare-before-hurricane-season

Lake Munson Shoreline Clean-Up



Rick recently participated in the Lake Munson Shoreline Clean-Up, an event for local area volunteers in coordination with the Boy Scouts of America Troop 23. The Lake Munson drawdown has exposed litter along the shoreline and also presented an opportunity to educate and engage the public. The shoreline cleanup demonstrates the County's continued commitment to preserving our natural resources and protecting and ensuring Lake Munson's water quality and health.

Honor Flight Tallahassee

Last Saturday, Rick flew to DC as part of Honor Flight

Tallahassee - a day where Tallahassee veterans are celebrated with a day of honor in our nation's capital. During the trip, Rick served as the guardian for Larry Gonzalez, an Army veteran who served in Vietnam from 1970-71.



Celebrating Sandy Beck

At the most recent County Commission Meeting, Rick presented a proclamation to Sandy Beck to recognize her 34 years (1989-2023) as the Education Director of St. Francis of Assisi Wildlife Association, Inc. (SFW), our local wildlife rehabilitation center.



Teen Advisory Board

Teens! Join the Library's Teen Advisory Board and create programs for teens, earn community service hours, and connect with your community! Meetings are 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month at the Main Library. For more info: <https://bit.ly/42L1EKj>



Library of Things

Have you checked out the Library's "Library of Things" Many new items have been added over the last couple months! Reserve an electric post-hole digger, Bocce ball, a canopy tent, and so many other items.

To learn more: visit Leoncountylibrary.org/things



Rick in the Community



Greeting neighbors at the Springtime Tallahassee parade.



Discussing North Monroe with local business owners at the recent NEBA meeting.



Introducing Jerry Sailey at Word of South



Welcoming high school students at Leon Works



With US Housing and Urban Development Secretary Marcia Fudge



In Woodgate, a District 3 neighborhood celebrating its 50th birthday!

Local Business Spotlight: Fitzgerald Collaborative Group



Rick recently visited Fitzgerald Collaborative Group - a full-service architecture, interiors, and urban design firm. Their practice areas include aviation, K-12 and higher education, public safety, commercial office, industrial, and worship spaces. Recent projects include contributions to the new Tallahassee International Airport International Passenger Processing Facility (IPPF), the Cascades Park mixed-use development, and the North Florida Fairgrounds master planning and community engagement (currently in process).

Click [HERE](#) to learn more about the Fitzgerald Collaborative Group, in a document they prepared for this newsletter.



Tallahassee International Airport and IPPF



FAMU Way Restrooms



FAMU Way Restrooms



Firehouse 40



In Memoriam - Marilyn Wills

It is with great sadness that we share news of the passing of Marilyn Wills. Marilyn passed away at the age of 87 in Tallahassee on February 12. Among other things, Marilyn served as a President of the Florida League of Women Voters (LWV) as well as a President of the Tallahassee LWV. A celebration of her life was held on April 23, 2023 at Bradley's Pond.

Her good friend, Jessica Minor-Lowe, shared these memories:

I first met Marilyn Wills in 2009 at a voting rights press conference at the Florida Capitol. Very quickly after meeting her, I realized that Marilyn: (a) knew her stuff, and (b) did not suffer fools gladly. Over the years that followed, I sat through many legislative hearings - and League meetings - with Marilyn, and I leaned, heavily, on her insights and wisdom.

She was one of the most principled people I ever met, and expressed deep indignation whenever lawmakers violated democratic norms. (This being Florida, Marilyn's sense of outrage was frequently activated). Although she was retired by the time I met her and had already led a full and active life as a math teacher and cross country coach, her energy, acuity, and commitment to the League's mission exceeded that of members half her age. I recall how much respect her fellow board members had for her opinion during her tenure on the state League board and how, as Executive Director, I felt the loss keenly when her term ended and she stepped down. I feel that same loss now.

Marilyn was a special person who put her profound intellect and innate sense of justice to work to make our community and state fairer and more democratic. Her example is an inspiration to all of us who knew her, and I'm sure that she'd like nothing more than for us to celebrate her contributions by carrying on her work: showing up to the Capitol, attending Ethics and Elections hearings, and giving those bastards hell whenever they try to undermine citizens' voting rights and civil liberties.

Although Marilyn herself hated accolades and would probably grumble and roll her eyes at my sentimentality, the next time I affix my LWV button and head to the Capitol, it will be in her honor. Thank you for everything you gave to us and for us, Marilyn. We will miss you.

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