



LEON COUNTY COMMISSIONER

Rick Minor

DISTRICT 3 NEWSLETTER



January - February 2025 News & Updates

Upcoming Meetings

Board of County Commissioners Annual Retreat

- Monday, January 27, 2025
- 9:00 am
- For further information, call 850-606-5300
- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about Jan. 20

Board of County Commissioners

- Tuesday, January 28, 2025
- 3:00 - Meeting
- 6:00 - Public Hearing
- County Courthouse, 5th Floor
- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about Jan. 20

Board of County Commissioners Meeting

- Tuesday, February 11, 2025
- 3:00
- County Courthouse, 5th Floor
- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about February 4

Blueprint Meeting

- Thursday, February 13, 2025
- 3:00 - Meeting
- County
- City Commission Chambers
- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about February 6

CRTPA Meeting

- Tuesday, February 18, 2025
- 1:30 pm
- City Commission Chambers
- The agenda can be

Hello Rick,

Snow and sleet in Leon County! As I type this, the ice is slowly melting off of our roads and sidewalks, but frigid temperatures will continue for the next several nights. Please visit [Leon County's emergency information portal](#) for the latest updates on our community's response to the weather: closures for schools and roads, service changes, cold night shelters, etc.

If you receive this newsletter regularly, you probably know that improving the **North Monroe corridor** (Tallahassee's #1 Gateway) continues to be a high priority for my office, and I'm proud to say that we're seeing real progress. In fact, about **\$31 million of investments from the Florida Department of Transportation and Blueprint** are under construction now or coming in the next couple of years:

- In progress: **Lake Jackson Greenway**. Phase 1, which will create a greenway from Lake Ella to the Trousdell Center, should be completed within the next few weeks. In addition, a pedestrian crossing at Tharpe St. is forthcoming.
- Recently completed: **New landscaped medians** (from Allen Rd to Lakeshore Dr) provided by FDOT.
- Coming in Spring 2025: **Additional landscaped medians** (from Allen Rd to John Knox), provided by Blueprint and FDOT.
- Coming in FY2025: **New sidewalks** (on west side, from John Knox Rd to Lakeshore Dr) provided by FDOT.
- Coming in 2027: **North Monroe Resurfacing (John Knox Rd to Capital Circle NW)**: Currently in design, FDOT has funded the resurfacing of North Monroe.

Earlier this week, WTXL's Maya Sargent did a great story on public AND private projects on North Monroe, and you can find that coverage [here](#).

Despite all of this good news, there's still so much that must be done for North Monroe. In May, the CRTPA and Blueprint will be reapplying for a USDOT *Safe Streets for All* grant which, if successful, will bring \$21 million for badly needed safety improvements to the corridor. We'll keep you updated on this as well as the other projects.

viewed [here](#) on or about Feb.11th

Board of County Commissioners Workshops

- Tuesday, February 25, 2025
- 2:00 - Southside Action Plan
- 3:00 - Comp Plan Updates
- County Courthouse, 5th Floor
- The agenda can be viewed [here](#) on or about Feb. 18th

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

Please see below for information about the annual Point In Time (PIT) count, upgraded railroad crossings, and a host of worthwhile community events.

Thank you once again for the incredible honor of representing you at the Leon County Commission, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions, comments, or suggestions.

As we work through this winter weather, hang in there, be safe and stay warm!



Rick Minor

Commissioner, Leon County District 3
MinorR@leoncountyfl.gov

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!

Volunteers Needed for 2025 Point in Time Count



Every year, Rick volunteers in the annual Point in Time (PIT) Count of those experiencing homelessness in our community. Volunteers are needed for the 2025 PIT count. Training is on Sunday, January 26th, so please register below by 11:59pm on Saturday, Jan. 25th if you'd like to participate as a volunteer this year.

To learn more, [click here](#) to listen to a story about the PIT Count by WFSU's Margie Menzel and [here](#) for a piece done by Brianna Shaw at WCTV.

Volunteering for the PIT Count is a rewarding and educational way to give back to the community - hope to see you there!



Volunteer's Needed 2025 PIT

On the week of January 27, 2025, volunteers will conduct the Point in Time (PIT) count of those thought to be experiencing homelessness in Leon, Wakulla, Franklin, Gadsden, Liberty, Jefferson, Madison and Taylor Counties. Volunteers will survey neighbors from sun-up to sun-down from January 28th-31st. Interviews conducted at the PIT are essential to understanding the needs of households who require social services and permanent housing. By understanding the scope of homelessness, goals can begin or be refined to end homelessness.

PIT requires the commitment of over 100 volunteers. All volunteers must attend a training to learn how to conduct surveys in a compassionate and informed manner. The volunteer training for Leon, Wakulla and Gadsden Counties will be 1/26/24 from 3-5pm. Other county trainings will be scheduled to accommodate county specific volunteers.

Join Us

**JANUARY
27-31**

LUNCH & SNACKS ARE
PROVIDED FOR VOLUNTEERS
DURING COUNT

WE NEED HELP WITH :

- Hosting Donation Drives
- Volunteers to Survey during the count
- Sponsorships
- PIT Planning in All Counties



Scan here to
sign up!

For more information please visit www.bigbendcoc.org or call 850-792-5015



January 27-31
2025

The Point-in-Time Count is an annual census conducted to help us better understand homelessness in the Big Bend area.

This year our Outreach teams will canvas the area surveying people who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness, in order to gather information that will provide a “snapshot” of what homelessness looks like in our community on a single night.

The data captured through this initiative helps our community plan interventions that ultimately end homelessness.

As a thank you for completing a survey, we offer participants basic essentials, snacks, and a \$10 gift card. We also want to provide snacks for volunteers.

WE NEED YOUR HELP TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Make a Difference!
DONATE

- Monetary Donations
- \$10 Gift Cards– (Grocery & Fast Food are acceptable)
- Cold Weather Essentials (knit hats, gloves, handwarmers, thermal blankets)
- New socks and underwear
- Toothbrushes, toothpaste, and deodorant
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Snacks (crackers, water, drinks, candy, etc.)

For more info contact:

Tori Stephenson at

tstephensonbigbendcoc.org or

850-792-5015 ext. 1009

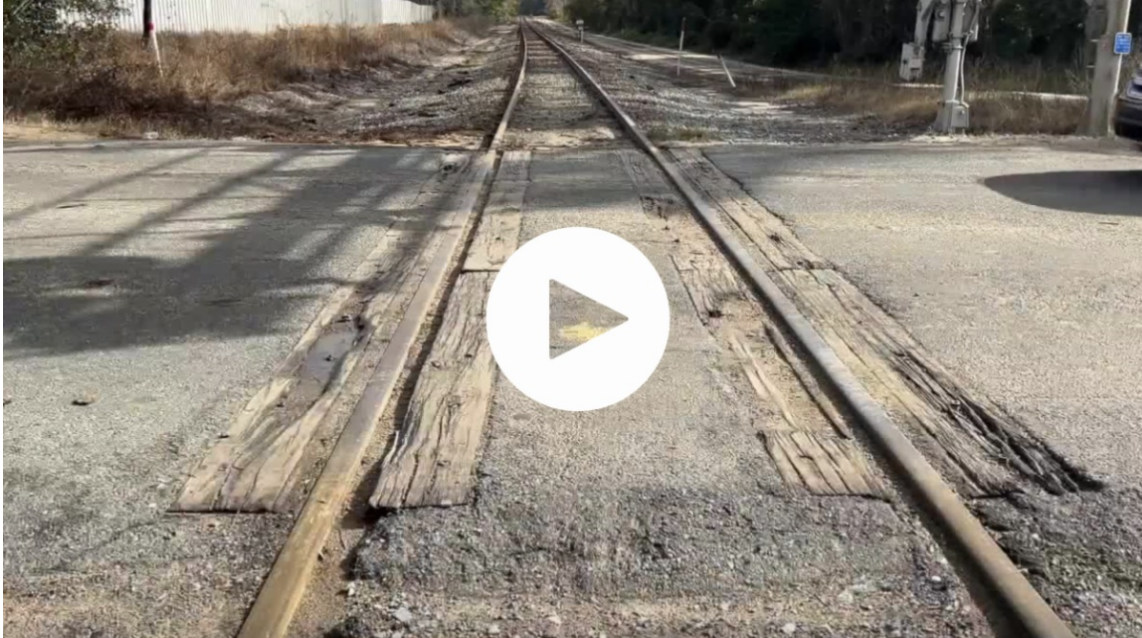
To donate, visit our website

www.bigbendcoc.org



REGISTER HERE

Railroad Crossings Upgraded



If you drive in the area of Fred George Road or Gearhart Road, you've likely noticed the improvement of the railroad crossings in those areas. This is because the County Commission recently approved an agreement with the Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad to complete these repairs.

Although the original plan was to start these improvements in January, County staff worked with the railroad to move the schedule up so that they were able to complete the work early.

As part of this project, a total of seven railroad crossings in Leon County were improved. Big thanks to our County staff and to the Florida Gulf & Atlantic Railroad for completing this project so quickly!

You can learn more about these railroad crossing improvements in this [WTXL story](#).

Shuckers Oyster Bar Closes



Rick and his family enjoying Shuckers Oyster Bar in March 2024

By now you have likely heard the sad news that a long-time District 3 favorite, Shuckers Oyster Bar, has closed. We'd like to thank Johnny and Lisa for their 39+ years of hard work and dedication to the residents of Leon County - and particularly District 3. Best wishes for their retirement! Shuckers was one of our family favorites and we all will miss it very much.

You can learn more about Johnny, Lisa, and the closure in this [Tallahassee Democrat article](#).

Rick on the Radio



On Monday, December 16th, Rick appeared on the Greg Tish Show on Real Talk 93.3. Many thanks to everyone who sent in so many fantastic "BIG IDEA" suggestions. Rick, Greg, Bill and Doug discussed quite a few of them - and much more.

[Click here](#) to listen to the program online.

Neighborhood Safety Meetings



Rick has been working with the Leon County Sheriff's Office to host neighborhood safety meetings for neighborhoods throughout our District. At these meetings, we discuss proven crime prevention methods, tips/hints for keeping homes safe and procedures to activate a neighborhood safety program.

If you'd like to schedule one of these neighborhood safety meetings for YOUR neighborhood, **please let us know**.

Leon Works Expo Exhibitor Registration Open



Make connections and build opportunities as an exhibitor during the 10th annual Leon Works Expo. Leon County Government and the Tallahassee-Leon County Office of Economic Vitality will host the Leon Works Expo on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the Donald L. Tucker Civic Center. The Expo will connect hundreds of local high school students to employers and academic institutions, creating opportunities to explore careers in the skilled workforce.

Businesses interested in showcasing their career opportunities and engaging with the next generation of workers can register now at LeonCountyFL.gov/LeonWorks. The deadline to register is Friday, April 11, 2025.

Learn How to Become a Guardian ad Litem



Are you interested in finding out how you can make a difference in a child's life?

Join the Florida Guardian ad Litem Office, Circuit Two for an informative webinar on Thursday, February 6, at 7 p.m. via Zoom.

During the webinar, receive information about:

- Florida Guardian ad Litem Office Mission: Learn about their mission, vision, and the vital role their office plays in the lives of children in the foster care system.
- Volunteer and Mentor Opportunities: Learn more about how to become a Guardian ad Litem volunteer or mentor.
- Training and Support: Find out about the comprehensive training and ongoing support they provide for their volunteers.
- Q&A Session: Get all your questions answered by members of their staff.

Email Volunteer Recruiter Laurel Rigg at Laurel.Rigg@gal.fl.gov to register. Visit GuardianadLitem.org for more information about the Florida Guardian ad Litem Office and their volunteer and mentor opportunities.

Leon County's Annual Adopt-A-Tree Program is back!



The graphic features a stylized tree with green leaves on the left. To its right, the text reads "Leon County ADOPT-A-TREE PROGRAM". Below this, a box lists "TREE SPECIES" as Eastern Redbud, Riverbirch, and Shumard Oak. At the bottom left is the Leon County logo, and to its right, it says "Apply by January 31, 2025" and "LEARN MORE AT LeonCountyFL.gov/AdoptATree".

Leon County is proud to offer the 2025 Adopt-A-Tree Program. Applications are now being accepted through **January 31, 2025**, on a first-come, first-served basis. If you live inside Leon County but outside of Tallahassee city limits, you may qualify to have a tree planted on your property for free.

Residents will have the option to have a tree delivered to their residence for planting at their convenience. This project provides an enjoyable and educational experience for the entire family, and comprehensive instructions for tree planting and care will be provided upon tree delivery. For those who prefer assistance with tree planting, County staff is available to assist upon request; just choose the "delivery and plant" option.

If you agree to water the tree three times a week for one year, Leon County will plant the tree anywhere between your house and any publicly maintained road or any privately maintained road with public access. To learn more about tree care, [click here](#). To find other tree resources, [click here](#).

[Click here](#) to complete the County application for adopting a tree. Residents residing within the Tallahassee city limits are encouraged to explore the City of Tallahassee's

Beware of Scams!



BEWARE OF SCAMMERS POSING AS LCSO DEPUTIES

Scammers posing as LCSO deputies are calling people, claiming they have warrants and demanding payment. Remember: **LCSO will never** ask for money over the phone. Concerned about a warrant? **Verify** it through our official channels, not over the phone. Stay alert and share this warning to protect others!

Our office was recently made aware of a District 3 resident that was scammed out of a great deal of money.

The Leon County Sheriff's Office (LCS) has advised that scammers are pretending to be LCSO deputies, telling people there is a warrant for their arrest and demanding payment to resolve it. Please remember: the LCSO will NEVER call you and ask for money over the phone. If you are concerned about a warrant, do NOT try to verify it through a phone call. Always contact the LCSO directly through official channels for assistance.

In addition, the Tallahassee Police Department is warning residents about a recurring pine straw scam. Scammers are approaching homeowners, claiming to work with their current landscaper or offering leftover materials at a discount. After completing the work, they demand excessive payments, often using pressure or intimidation tactics.

To protect yourself, always ask for a written estimate, request a business card, and verify the company's business license. Reputable companies will provide this information without hesitation. If you feel threatened by a solicitor, do not engage and contact the Consolidated Dispatch Agency at 850-606-5800.

Remember, some general signs of common scams include:

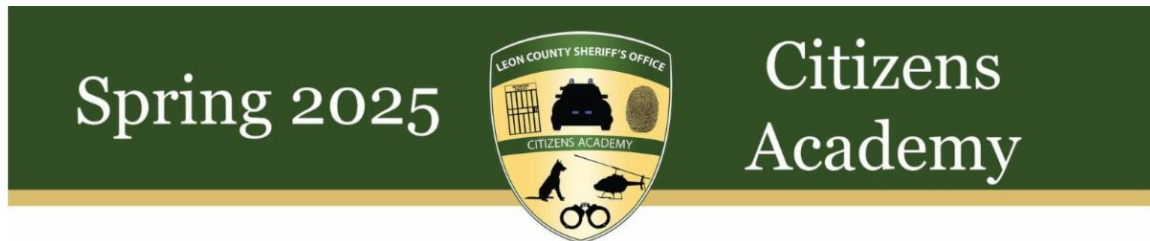
- Unsolicited calls or emails;

- High-pressure tactics or too-good-to-be-true offers;
- Threats of loss if immediate action is not taken; and
- Requests for immediate payment by wire transfer, credit, prepaid debit, or gift cards.

For further information on how to protect you and your loved ones from scams, check out [this information sheet](#) provided by the Tallahassee Senior Center.

Stay vigilant and take necessary precautions to avoid falling victim to these scams.

Applications Now Open for the Leon County Sheriff's Office Citizens Academy



Welcome

Community involvement is the most powerful force any law enforcement agency has in the fight against crime. Through the Citizens Academy, citizens become more involved in making Tallahassee and Leon County a better place to live. Although graduates of the Citizens Academy are not qualified for daily street duty, they do acquire a better understanding of the Leon County Sheriff's Office operations and responsibilities. Citizens Academy graduates gain greater awareness and appreciation of the difficult challenges and decisions a deputy sheriff faces everyday.

CLASSES INCLUDE:

The Citizens Academy doesn't limit participants to classroom training. Students are given the opportunity to:

- Ride with a deputy during a tour of duty.
- Tour the detention facility and courthouse.
- Attend a SWAT demonstration at the Law Enforcement Academy.
- Shoot some of the high powered weapons used by deputies.

SCHEDULE:

2/25	6:00pm: Opening Night (Sheriff McNeil & Command Staff)
3/4	6:00pm: Courthouse & Judicial Services Tour
3/11	6:00pm: Ride Along Week
3/18	6:00pm: K9 Unit
3/25	6:00pm: Capital Region Real Time Crime Center, Dive Team, Reserves & Traffic Unit
4/1	6:00pm: Crime Scene
4/8	6:00pm: Training Unit
4/16	10:00am-2:00pm: SWAT Demo/Bomb/Hostage/Aviation & Drone
4/22	6:00pm: CDA Tour
4/29	6:00pm: Detention Facility Tour
5/6	6:00pm: Graduation

HOW TO REGISTER:

Go online to: www.leoncountysos.com/Citizen-Center/Resources/Citizens-Academy and submit a completed application to the Community Relations Unit of the Leon County Sheriff's Office. Pending the outcome of a background inquiry, applicants are selected to attend the Citizens Academy by lottery. Class size is set at thirty (30) participants.

QUESTIONS?

Shonda Knight, Director of Community and Media Relations
 Leon County Sheriff's Office
 2825 Major James Morgan Jr. Way,
 Tallahassee, FL 32304



The Leon County Sheriff's Citizens' Academy is designed to promote better understanding

between the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Leon County.

The LCSO Citizen's Academy offers an exciting program unique to our area. Indeed, the curriculum and training are not what you might expect. Typically, the students attracted to the academy are a culturally diverse group of people including bankers, businessmen and women, judges, housewives, school teachers, media representatives, retirees and citizens from all walks of life.

Participants meet one evening a week for 10 weeks. They learn about virtually every aspect of a deputy's job including recruiting, administration, patrol operations, traffic enforcement and communications, criminal law, SWAT and hostage negotiations, crime scene investigations, corrections and many other areas.

The Citizen's Academy isn't relegated to classroom training. Students are given the opportunity to:

- Ride-a-long with a deputy
- Tour the Leon County Detention Facility
- Tour the Leon County Courthouse
- Tour the Public Safety Complex
- Attend a SWAT demonstration at our local training facility
- Shoot some of the high powered weapons used by officers
- Participate in simulated officer encounters

Although graduates of the Citizens Academy are not qualified for daily street duty, they do acquire a better understanding of the Leon County Sheriff's Office operations and responsibilities, as well as, a greater awareness and appreciation of the difficult challenges and decisions a deputy sheriff faces every day.

Applicants are selected to attend the Citizens Academy after first submitting a completed online application and pending the outcome of a background inquiry. Potential candidate's names are then selected by lottery. Class size is set at twenty (20) participants.

For more information contact Executive Director of Community and Media Relations Shonda Knight at (850) 606-3270.

[APPLY HERE](#)

Valentine's Day Group Wedding Ceremony



Are you or someone you know ready to tie the knot in 2025? Say "I Do" with the Leon County Clerk of the Court. [Register now](#) for the Clerk's Third Annual Valentine's Day group wedding!

The single group ceremony will be officiated by Clerk Gwen Knight and will be held at 2:00 p.m., on Friday, February 14, 2025. The ceremony will take place outside on the front lawn of the Main House at the Goodwood Museum and Gardens, located at 1600 Miccosukee Road, Tallahassee, Florida.

"This is the third edition of what will be an annual event," Clerk Knight said. "I am grateful for the continued partnership with Goodwood Museum & Gardens along with the outpouring generosity of our local professionals to bring this very special event to our community."

To participate in the Valentine's Day Wedding, couples must obtain a marriage license and register online by February 3, 2025. The Clerk has waived the normal \$30 wedding ceremony fee. Standard marriage license fees will still apply.

For information on how to apply for a marriage license, please click [here](#). After applying you can sign up for the group ceremony at the [ceremony sign up page](#).

Following the ceremony, couples will receive a special Commemorative Marriage Certificate and access to the wedding photos online. For more information regarding the event, please contact the Marriage Division at (850) 606-4060. For more information about the Goodwood Museum and Gardens, visit www.goodwoodmuseum.org.

Family Financial Education Series



Learn more at LeonCountyLibrary.org/FFS

Take control of your financial future with Leon County's Family Financial Education Series, featuring practical tools and expert guidance to help you build a budget, manage debt, improve credit, and plan for major milestones.

Join us on Thursday, January 30, from 6-7:30 p.m. at the Northeast Branch Library.

This workshop is perfect for individuals and families seeking to strengthen their financial foundation. Dinner and prizes included!

For more information and to register: LeonCountyLibrary.org/FFS

2025 Spring Seed Library



The Seed Library Program was launched in February 2015 and is a collaborative effort between the LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System and UF/IFAS Leon County Extension. The Seed Library Program promotes fruit, vegetable, and herb seed planting in Leon County and encourages residents to grow their own nutritious food.

Starting **Saturday, February 8, 2025**, visit any library branch location and check out up to five seed packets per month using your library card, or three packets per month without a library card, while supplies last. No need to return them, they are yours to keep.

Spring 2025 Kickoff

Saturday, February 8, 2025
10 a.m.-12 p.m.
Leon County Main Library

Join us for the 2025 Spring Seed Library kickoff where you can pick up a variety of seeds, participate in educational activities, and learn how to create a successful home garden. The kickoff will offer fun for all ages, including:

- Hands-on seeding activities.
- Information about vegetable gardening techniques and sustainable gardening practices.
- Healthy cooking demonstration.
- Ask-a-Master-Gardener booth.

Ask questions and interact with the knowledgeable staff from the Leon County Office of Sustainability and UF/IFAS Leon County Extension.

Spring 2025 Seed Varieties

- California Blackeye Pea from [Victory Seed Company](#).
- Carbon Tomato from [Johnny's Select Seeds](#).
- Cocozelle Zucchini from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Country Gentleman Sweet Corn from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Lemon Cucumber from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Moon and Stars Watermelon from [Victory Seed Company](#).
- Provider Bush Bean from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Red Malabar Spinach from [Johnny's Select Seeds](#).
- San Marzano Tomato from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Thai Basil from [True Leaf Market](#).
- Yolo Wonder L Sweet Pepper from [True Leaf Market](#).

Planting Information

[Spring 2025 Seed and Planting Information](#)

Recipes

Cook [healthy recipes](#) using the 2025 Spring Seed Library varieties.

Leon County News and Alerts

Don't miss out on crucial updates

from Leon County!

Subscribe to Leon County news and alerts for the latest info on County programs and services.

Sign up [here](#).



Winter Events



Rick and his family on stage at the New Years Eve Celebration at Cascades.



Participating in DEMP Week 2025 events, such as the anti-bullying rally and the celebrity basketball game.

Leon County Commission, District 3 | 301 S Monroe St | Tallahassee, FL 32301 US

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