

KEY NOTES

NEWS FROM
THE PERDIDO KEY ASSOCIATION



December 2018

December 10 PKA Holiday Party!

Please join your fellow Perdido Key Association members at this year's PKA Holiday Party. It will be from 6 to 9 PM on Monday, December 10, 2018 in the meeting room of the Seafarer Condominium, 16401 Perdido Key Drive (just east of the Crab Trap Restaurant). Food and beverages will be provided but you are welcome to bring a dish to share. We hope to see you there!

Consider Becoming a PKA Director

The Perdido Key Association's 2019 election cycle has begun. If you would like to nominate a candidate for PKA Director or become a candidate yourself, please contact PKA Secretary Pat Hodson (chair of the Nominating Committee) at manager@shipwatch.net by December 31, 2018. With excellent conference call capability at our PKA Board of Directors meetings, you do not need to be a full-time Perdido Key resident to be an active member of the Board. Voting for Directors will take place at the PKA Annual Membership Meeting to be held from 10 AM to Noon on Saturday, February 23, 2019 at the Eden Condominium, 16281 Perdido Key Drive. More information on the Annual Membership Meeting will be distributed in the coming weeks.

Another Decision toward Beach Access at 16400 Perdido Key Drive

At its November 14, 2018 meeting, the Escambia County Board of Adjustment ruled on a proposed change to the current HDR-PK (High Density Residential) zoning of the County-owned property at 16400 Perdido Key Drive just east of the Crab Trap restaurant. After almost four hours of discussion with testimony both for and against the measure, the Board unanimously approved the Escambia County staff request to allow a variance on the property zoning for recreation use "to construct a public beach access point on the subject parcel." Additional steps are required before part of the property can be open to public use, including more specific studies and planning plus

coordination with US Fish and Wildlife. A significant portion of the property will be protected for the Perdido Key beach mouse.

The Board of Adjustment decision followed the October 18, 2018 Escambia County Board of County Commissioners decision “To direct staff to begin to procure the planning aspect moving forward and utilize the funds that are in the Perdido Key Beach Acquisition Project of \$50,000” (minutes available at <http://www.escambiaclerk.com/BMPDF/20181018-2.pdf>). One proposal for the property calls for 24 parking spaces and another for 39. Background information on the issue is available from *Pensacola News Journal* September 25, 2018 article “Three options under consideration for Perdido Key beach access” by Jim Little at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/09/25/perdido-key-beach-accessescambia-county-considers-three-options/1412852002/> and August 2, 2018 article “Perdido Key beach mouse or parking lot” by Melissa Nelson Gabriel available at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/beaches/2018/08/02/perdido-keybeach-mouse-parking-lot-escambia-commissioner-candidates-underhillmcmillan/872655002/>.

Santa Rosa Island Privatization Issue Still Active

While Escambia County residents voted overwhelmingly to keep existing Santa Rosa Island beach ownership rules (i.e., leasing instead of private ownership), some in Santa Rosa County hope to move forward with privatization. As covered in the *Pensacola News Journal* November 26, 2018 article “Advocates of beach ownership changes push for new legislation despite recent vote” by Melissa Nelson Gabriel, the issue remains active but with changed political dynamics. Representative Matt Gaetz who sponsored a 2017 privatization measure in the US House of Representatives was reelected while Senator Bill Nelson who opposed the measure in the US Senate was defeated by Governor Rick Scott – Scott like Gaetz a Republican. The US House of Representatives, however, is now controlled by Democrats. The article concluded that it was unlikely Congress would move forward to change ownership without approval from the Escambia County Commission which officially has “no position” on the issue. To access the article, go to:

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/local/pensacola/beaches/2018/11/26/pensacola-beach-fee-simple-advocates-push-new-legislation/2113576002/>.

More Direct Flights from Pensacola

Two new direct flights from Pensacola International Airport were recently announced. United Airlines will begin daily seasonal service from Pensacola to Newark Liberty International Airport (serving the New York City area) on June 6, 2019 while Silver Airways will begin nonstop service between Pensacola and Ft. Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport on February 13, 2019. For more on these developments, see the *Pensacola News Journal* October 15, 2018 article “United Airlines announces new seasonal flights from Pensacola to Newark” at

<https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/10/15/pensacola-newark-flight-united-airlines-announces-new-seasonal/1650155002/> and the *South Florida Business Journal* November 15, 2018 article by Billy Jean Louis “Silver Airways to launch nonstop Fort Lauderdale-Pensacola Flight” at <https://www.bizjournals.com/southflorida/news/2018/11/15/silver-airways-to-launch-nonstop-fort-lauderdale.html>.

Pensacola Bay Ferry Service Ends

Gulf Coast Marine Services and the Gulf Islands National Seashore are ending their agreement to operate two 150 passenger ferries between downtown Pensacola, Pensacola Beach, and Ft. Pickens. Captain George Aswad of Marine Services noted that his company had lost over \$300,000 operating the ferries in less than six months due to high cost of operations and low ridership. National Seashore Superintendent Dan Brown stated he was optimistic the ferry service would be available in 2019. For more on the issue, see *Pensacola News Journal* October 30, 2018 article by Melissa Gabriel Nelson “After Unsuccessful 2018 Seasons, beach ferry operator and National Park Service end agreement” at <https://www.pnj.com/story/news/2018/10/30/ferry-operator-says-pensacola-beach-ferry-service-end-weekend/1818852002/>.

1000 Friends of Florida and Nathaniel Pryor Reed

The Perdido Key Association has been associated with 1000 Friends of Florida for several years. The fellow non-profit organization has provided expertise and on-the-ground support to help PKA pursue its purpose of promoting the “welfare and orderly development, combat deterioration, lessen neighborhood tension, and maintain the natural beauty” of Perdido Key. Nathaniel Pryor Reed, one of the cofounders and leaders of 1000 Friends for several decades, passed away in July 2018 at age 84. He had a very active public life in addition to his work with 1000 Friends, including as a US Assistant Secretary of the Interior and promotion of Everglades protection initiatives and the Florida Greenways program. Further information on Mr. Reed is available in a recent 1000 Friends of Florida newsletter available at <http://www.1000friendsofflorida.org/nathaniel-pryor-reed-1933-2018/>.

Community Events

Holiday in the Park at Big Lagoon State Park – The Friends of Pensacola State Parks and the Florida State Parks are hosting “Holiday in the Park” at Big Lagoon State Park on Saturday, December 1, 2018, from 5 to 7 PM. Community friends and families attending will be treated to a vibrant light display, free snacks and beverages, and opportunities to give Santa their gift requests. The event is free with no park entry fee. Please join your neighbors at the event where the State Parks and Friends wish to thank the local community for its support of our local State Parks during the year.

Gulf Shores Ancient Canal – At a November 8, 2018 presentation at the Gulf Shores Cultural Center Auditorium, Dr. Gregory A. Waselkov – Professor Emeritus of

Anthropology at the University of South Florida, discussed long-time local lore about a canal across Fort Morgan Peninsula from Little Lagoon to Oyster Bay (adjacent to Mobile Bay). Academic research over the past several years, as supported by volunteers organized by citizens of the City of Gulf Shores, has confirmed that a half mile waterway dug in about the 6th century AD by the area's early inhabitants was used for hundreds of years as part of a trade network that extended into the center of the North American continent. The local inhabitants used dugout canoes on the canal to bypass the more hazardous route from Mobile Bay around Fort Morgan and into the Gulf of Mexico. The canal is one of several identified in Florida. The City of Gulf Shores plans to preserve a section of the canal as part of a heritage trail. (Information obtained partly from Coastal Alabama Business Chamber website and the *Mullet Wrapper*)

Have a Wonderful Holiday Season!

It has been a memorable year for our country, state, county, and Perdido Key. As we look forward to the New Year, we have hopes for progress toward some of the preferences expressed by many PKA members, such as the Perdido Key Master Plan, Perdido Key Shared-Use Path, Perdido Key Drive traffic and parking improvement, plus beach erosion mitigation and perhaps underground utilities. The PKA Board of Directors will keep you informed of these and other issues of community interest.

We wish you the very best of Holiday Seasons!

December Calendar

Dec 01: Holiday in the Park at Big Lagoon State Park
Dec 01: Lighted Boat Parade and Fireworks at Pensacola Beach
Dec 01: Handel's "Messiah" at the Saenger Theater in Pensacola
Dec 01, 08, et al.: Brandon Styles Impressions & Magic at OWA every Tuesday and Saturday in December
Dec 01-31: Ice Skating at the Wharf
Dec 02: Chabad of Pensacola Grand Menorah Lighting in Pensacola
Dec 07: City of Gulf Shores Christmas Parade
Dec 07, 08, 27, 29: Pensacola Ice Flyers at Pensacola Bay Center
Dec 08: Lighted Boat Parade from Lulu's Gulf Shores to Flora-Bama
Dec 08: Pensacola Christmas Parade
Dec 10: PKA Holiday Party at Seafarer Condominium
Dec 15: Wreaths Across America at Barrancas National Cemetery
Dec 22: Dollar General Bowl at Ladd-Peoples Stadium in Mobile
Dec 25: Christmas
Dec 31: New Year's Eve festivities including Pelican Drop at Blue Wahoos Stadium, Flora-Bama New Year's Eve Bash, and New Year's Eve Street Party at The Wharf

The following websites provide additional information about events taking place in our great Gulf Coast region:

<https://www.visitpensacola.com/>
<http://mygulfcoastchamber.com/>
<http://www.visitperdido.com/>
<http://mulletwrapper.net/>
<https://myescambia.com/>
<http://www.emeraldcoastfl.com//>
<http://alabama.travel/festivals-and-events>
<http://www.cityofmobile.org/calendar/>

[Perdido Key Association Board of Directors](#)