

Lake Jackson Ecopassage

Turtle-lovers and Soccer Moms unite.

Since 2000, Dr. Matt Aresco, “the turtle man,” has documented over 11,000 attempted animal crossings--9,000 of these were turtles. Fortunately, once Matt saw the number of animals being killed, he went into action. He erected thousands of feet of nylon fence to block the animals off the highway and he walks the fence every day, and moves those stopped by the fence to safety. This method has helped save about 90% of the animals, but it is a temporary solution at best. The fence requires constant maintenance and daily monitoring, with some animals slipping under or climbing over the fence—not just turtles, but animals like frogs, beavers, otters, and foxes. A permanent solution would consist of concrete guidewalls and a series of under-highway culverts.



“How does the turtle cross the road?”
(Highway 27 crossing - Lake Jackson)

a serious road hazard. Some of those turtles are quite big and could cause a serious auto accident from vehicles swerving to avoid such large creatures.

I have been a supporter of the ecopassage from the beginning---it just makes sense. It will provide safe passage for people and safe passage for the animals of Lake Jackson. I’ve encouraged the County and the local transportation planning agency to take advantage of federal DOT grant funds earmarked exclusively to mitigate the environmental impacts of federal highway projects. This project has broad support not only locally, but nationwide. And happily, there is strong support by our local transportation planning agency as well.



“Large Snapping Turtle is rescued from heavy traffic where Hwy 27 crosses Lake Jackson”

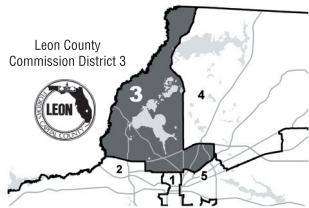
THANK YOU CITY OF CAIRO!

For years Cairo, Georgia’s sewer treatment systems have frequently leaked untreated sewage that has flowed downstream into Leon County. Not only was the Ochlockonee River being polluted, but Lake Talquin and Lake Iamonia were also under threat.



As Leon County’s representative, I have been working with Georgia officials to remedy this problem, and it appears that our efforts are paying off. The Georgia Environmental Protection Department has ordered the City of Cairo to construct a new plant, or suffer substantial fines and penalties. By all indications, they are working quickly to have this done.

I am glad we were able to preserve our relationship with the City of Cairo and move this forward without wasting resources on protracted enforcement actions. Leon County continues to monitor this project and will continue finding ways to work cooperatively with our neighbors to the North.



Fall 2005

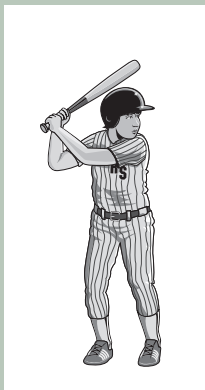
District 3 Annual Update

from Dan Winchester, District 3 Commissioner

Serving the people of District 3 • 606-5373

Northwest Park:

The City bought this 80-acre parcel at the corner of Fred George & Mission Roads years ago, and promised to develop it into a park – the owner of the land even sold it to the City with the City’s assurance that the land would only be developed as a park. This year the parcel narrowly escaped being sold to developers by the City. Thankfully, it is now back on schedule with a projected construction start date of 2010. I encourage you to call the Mayor and City Commission at 891-8181 and thank them for saving this irreplaceable parkland. Let them know you care about the Northwest Park as much as I do.



Dear Neighbor,

Great things are happening here in Leon County. As your Commissioner, I’ve been working hard to focus on the issues that you’ve asked me to tackle.

In my last newsletter I told you that one of my highest priorities was to bring a new branch library to our district. I am pleased to let you know that the County Commission has approved this project. We have purchased the land and have retained an architectural firm to begin the design phase, and construction should begin some time next year on Hwy 27 North and Perkins Road.



I am also pleased to report that we’ve opened Canopy Oaks Park on Point View Drive. Further, Capital Circle NW construction will begin this fall, and we have worked out a great plan to allow I-10 widening to begin without harming Lake Jackson.

Unfortunately, the news is not all good.

I was unsuccessful in fighting back a change in zoning for what is known as the “Summerfield Development” on North Monroe Street. In a close vote – and against my strong opposition – the Leon County Commission voted to allow this massive development to go into an already overstressed area of our district. The ruling is being contested in court, and while that outcome is uncertain, I want you to know I will continue to do everything I can to restore some reasonability to the developer’s plans.

If you would like to get involved or if there is anything I can do for you, please call my County Commission office at 606-5373 or my business office at 562-2001. As I often get dozens of calls a day, I hope you will understand if it takes me a few days to get back to you.

Thank you for letting me serve you.

Sincerely,

P.S. I want to hear from you. You can also email me at danw@leoncountyfl.gov



Prescription Drug Coverage “Extra Help” for Qualified Medicare Recipients

It’s come to my attention, that thousands of residents living here in Leon County are now eligible for a prescription drug plan through Medicare. Medicare has a new enhanced program called “Extra Help,” which will provide those who have limited, moderate or low-income resources, with help paying for many prescription drugs. This help may come in the form of no premiums, no deductibles or as little as \$1.00 to \$5.00 in co-pay.

If you are a Medicare recipient you may qualify for this “Extra Help” program. To find out if you are eligible to receive assistance through this program, I encourage you to contact Rashad Mujahid at the Medicare Outreach Office here in Tallahassee at (850) 942-8885 ext. 114. You can reach him by email at Rashad.Mujahid@ssa.gov.