

FREE

May 2026  
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# The Waldo Phoenix

- Waldo's Local Newspaper -  
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Derek Wohlust, director of the Driveway Theatre Project, brought an imaginative presentation of *Treasure Island* to Waldo on Saturday, April 25. Rather than a traditional stage performance, the cast recreated the feel of an old-fashioned radio drama, complete with actors gathered in a “radio studio” setting as they performed for the listening audience.

Audience members enjoyed watching the performers bring the classic pirate adventure to life using voices, sound effects, and lively storytelling. The unique format gave attendees a glimpse into the golden age of radio entertainment while

adding a creative twist to the beloved tale.



The Driveway Theatre Project's visit offered an afternoon of family-friendly entertainment and showcased the talent and creativity of traveling performers dedicated to keeping live theater fun and accessible. If you missed it, you missed a great event in Waldo. They even gave away, “Pirate Booty!” A good time was had by those who were present.



## Paper Bag Deli Soon to Open in Waldo

The former Hardee's building was purchased by Richard

Sterck and is the family's fifth location for Paper Bag Deli in the area. The new location will be located at 15145 NE U.S. Hwy. 301 Waldo, FL 32694 and will be the first of the brand to offer drive-through service.

The new restaurant will feature many of the brand's classic sandwiches, a new Italian style sandwich for the location, and a full coffee bar with drip coffee. Check out the online menu for the Gainesville locations to get an idea of what is served!

City officials and WAHS provided historical pictures to the restaurant which may be displayed at the location. The outside of the building has been redone with a new mural and is an amazing new look for that area of Waldo! The expected opening date is June 1st with operating hours being around 6am to 5pm. However, this timeline is subject to change as they continue their renovation efforts. Once Paper Bag Deli opens, we greatly encourage the Waldo community to show up and support this venture. We all succeed, when we support!

## Waldo, Alachua County's Second City

By Glen Johnson

Micanopy is widely recognized as the oldest continuously inhabited inland town in Florida (and in Alachua County), with American settlement dating to 1821.

Waldo (which was originally known as Bellamy Station in the 1820s and later as Fort Harlee during the Seminole Wars) follows as the next oldest which most people don't know. It is widely known that it was renamed Waldo in 1859 when the Florida Railroad arrived in Bellamy station after Dr. Benjamin Waldo. The Alachua County government's own historical summary explicitly calls it "the second oldest town in the county."

Other early communities like Newnansville, (established around 1828 as the original county seat) came much later but eventually declined after the county seat moved to Gainesville in the 1850s. Towns like Archer, Hawthorne, and others emerged even later with railroad development in the mid-19th century.

Note that there were earlier Native American settlements in the area, but the question refers to towns in the modern/historical context. Waldo is and will always remain

the second oldest town in Alachua County. Due to the bad luck of several fires, and the loss of historical buildings when U.S.301 was constructed, like the Icehouse, the Opera House and who knows what else Waldo lost, a lot of its history is forgotten. History that was a part of Waldo, showing how great Waldo is, was, and always will be. Today, if you look around you will see there are several things happening to Waldo which is helping it come back, and all it needs is the support of its people and the people traveling through the Crossroads of where history was and it's grand future are about to meet. Welcome to Waldo, folks, the counties second city.



### IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWING BURN BANS

County officials continue to stress the importance of following burn bans. The community is reminded that a brief period of rain does not necessarily reduce fire danger enough to make outdoor burning safe.

While recent rainfall may leave the ground looking damp, experts say those conditions can

be misleading. Light or short-lived rain often wets only the surface, while dry vegetation just underneath remains capable of fueling a fast-moving fire. In many cases, warm temperatures, wind, and low humidity can quickly dry out grasses, leaves, and brush again. That is why burn bans are not lifted simply because of one shower or a day of wet weather. Fire risk is based on a broader set of conditions, including how dry the vegetation is overall, how long an area has been without meaningful rain, and whether weather conditions could allow a fire to spread rapidly.

Ignoring a burn ban can have serious consequences. Even a small backyard fire, burn pile, or stray spark can ignite dry materials and quickly grow out of control, threatening homes, woods, and nearby communities. The community should not assume that a little rain means the danger has passed. Until a burn ban is officially lifted, residents are urged to follow restrictions and avoid outdoor burning. Doing so can help prevent wildfires, protect emergency responders, and reduce the risk of unnecessary damage. We must work together to keep Waldo and the surrounding communities safe!

### City of Waldo News

By Kim Worley



#### Waldo City Square

Visit the below webpage for positive Waldo information.

[THECROSSROADSWALDO.FL.COM](http://THECROSSROADSWALDO.FL.COM)

\* Eat, Pray, Love - Dinner Church on Cole Street is no longer serving dinners on Thursday nights due to the sale of the buildings. They will however still do the food give a way on the 3rd Thursday of the month Sponsored by: Free Canaan United Methodist Church, Waldo. For more information call 352-339-0340 Mr. Eugene Green

#### DOWNTOWN VETERANS PARK

Waldo Monthly Market

1st Saturday Markey 8AM to 2PM

First Saturday of the month **free** to set up, free to visit.

#### THE SQUARE

\* Grace Christian Prep School – Open House Tuesday Nights 5:30 PM - 7:30PM. They will

help you sign up your child for the next school year in Waldo.

\* Alachua County Sheriff's Substation at the Square will be open to the public the second Monday of the month from 10am to 4pm. Come meet with them regarding any concerns or issues you may have.

#### WHAT IS LOCATED AT THE SQUARE???

**City Hall** – go thru Main doors and City Hall is located through the door on the right.

**NEW SCHOOL** – opening in the Noe Wing– Grace Christian Prep School – Dr. Graham is the principal -email - [dregraham@gracecpsedu.com](mailto:dregraham@gracecpsedu.com) or

Call 352-554-4733

This school is a private school; you will need to apply for funding to help pay for the school fees – the school can help you achieve this. There are deadlines that you **MUST** follow to apply for the funding help. Please contact Dr. Graham to get your student signed up for the next school year.

**Waldo Area Historical Museum** - Main Building, go through the double doors to the hallway area and turn left.

**Alachua County Sheriff's Sub Station** - in the PODS –

you will see the star on the building. Call 352-955-1818 to set up a meeting. The Community Relations team from the Alachua County Sheriff's Office will be working one day a month at all our substations across the county. They will be working in Waldo the 2nd Monday of every month 10am – 4pm.

Council meetings 2nd Tuesday of the month 7pm in building 5 Library- special meetings and /or date changes happen – check with City Hall

#### City Council Meeting Schedule

**SPECIAL MEETINGS WILL BE SET AS NEEDED – SIGN UP FOR CODE RED ON CITY WEBSITE TO STAY INFORMED.**

Regular Meetings	Second Meeting if Needed
May 12, 2026	May 26, 2026
June 9, 2026	June 23, 2026
July 14, 2026	July 28, 2026
August 11, 2026	August 25, 2026
September Meetings	TO BE ANNOUNCED

New Things come up after the paper is published – please call City Hall or check the light up sign board to get more information.

**UTILITY BILLS**

**City of Waldo website payments**

**Waldo-fl.com**

**Go to make a payment tab on City of Waldo website**

**Waldo-fl.com**

**If paying on the city website, make sure it is the City of Waldo Website and not a third-party website like Doxo. If you pay to the wrong website, it will be your responsibility to get your money back and to pay your bill via the correct website or in the office. Reminder when paying by credit card there is a 3.5% service fee.**

**WALDO-FL.COM**

Do not forget to turn your bill over for messages from the City. Water bills need to be paid before the 10th to avoid late fees.

If your water is turned off for non-payment, **IT WILL NOT BE TURNED BACK ON** until the next business day. City of Waldo hours are Monday – Thursday 7am to 5:30pm. City of Waldo is closed on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

**Waldo Trash, Recycle & Bulk Pickup – GFL Environmental**

**Weekly Trash Pickup**

GFL is contracted with the City of Waldo for residential trash service.

Pickup is every **Wednesday** — please place cans at the curb by **7:00 AM** and return them after collection.


**Holiday Delays**


Trash and recycling will be picked up **Thursday** instead of Wednesday on:

\* Martin Luther King Jr. Day

\* Memorial Day


**Yard Waste Guidelines**

 Accepted: Leaves, grass, shrub clippings, and small tree limbs (under 5 ft long, 8 in diameter, and 40 lbs per bundle)

 Not Accepted: Boards, fencing, lumber, dirt, rocks, bricks, or concrete

**Bulk Item Pickup**

Includes appliances (stoves, washers, dryers), furniture (chairs, sofas, beds), rugs (rolled into 5 ft sections under 40 lbs), large toys (bikes, play sets, strollers), and limited home repair items (cabinets, ceiling fans, doors, trim, sinks, toilets).

 Call **352-377-0800** to schedule a bulk pickup.

**CITY OF WALDO HOLIDAY CLOSINGS: VETERANS DAY, THANKSGIVING EVE AND DAY, CHRISTMAS EVE, CHRISTMAS DAY, NEW YEAR'S EVE, NEW YEARS DAY, MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY,**

**MEMORIAL DAY, JUNETEENTH, JULY 4TH,**

**LABOR DAY, Extra days may be added depending on when holiday's fall- check with City Hall or SIGN UP FOR CODE RED ON OUR WEBSITE WALDO-FL.COM.**

**AFTER HOURS EMERGENCY NUMBERS:**

**EMERGENCY 911**

**NON-EMERGENCY SHERIFF'S OFFICE** for fire or police 352-955-1818 X 5

**AFTER HOURS WATER OR SEWER ISSUE** 352-258-6921 or 352-258-3110

**FPL ELECTRIC OUTAGE** 1-800-468-8243

**CLAY ELECTRIC** 888-434-9844

**WINDSTREAM** 1-800-347-1991

**Poison Control** 800-222-1222

If you see something suspicious call 352-955-1818 X 5 right away to report- help keep our town safe.

**City Holiday Closing Dates****City Hall is closed on Fridays**

Monday January 19 - **Martin Luther King Jr. Day**

Monday May 25 – **Memorial Day**

**July 4th** observed Monday July 6 – due to Saturday Holiday

Monday September 7 -**Labor Day**

**Waldo Branch Library News**

Submitted by Sarah Grainger

Waldo Branch's hours:

Tuesday - Friday 10 – 6 pm

Saturday 10 – 5 pm

15150 NE US Highway 301, Waldo  
(352) 866 – 7392**Summer at the Library: “Rawrrr Into Reading”**

The Alachua County Library District invites readers of all ages to take part in Summer at the Library: Rawrrr Into Reading, kicking off June 6, 2026, with Reader Palooza at the Tower Road Branch.

Participants can pre-register starting May 23 using the Beanstack app to track reading minutes through August 8, earn badges, and enter weekly prize drawings. Grand prizes include tablets for one child, one teen, and one adult, sponsored by Sushi Sake.

Need help signing up? Stop by the Waldo Branch Library, and we will be glad to help. All registrants will receive a summer tote bag while supplies last, and children and teens can also choose a free book. A full lineup of performances and programs will be offered throughout the summer at library branches.

**May Library Programs**

*The listed ages show who the program is designed for, but everyone is welcome to join!*

Programs for Children and Teens

**Story Time**, Every Tuesday at 10:30 a.m. (Ages 0–5)

**Saturday Story Time**, Saturday, May 16 at 11 a.m. (Ages 0–5)

**Family Art Time**, Saturday, May 16 at 11:30 a.m. (All Ages)

**Tween Book Club**, Saturday, May 16 at 3 p.m. (Ages 10–14)

This month we will read *The Ruby Code* by Jessica Khoury.

**Read With a Dog**, Wednesday, May 20 at 4 p.m. (Children)

Programs for Adults

**ArtSpace: Drawing and Painting Series for Adults**, Friday, May 8 from 2 - 4 p.m.

**Virtual Book Discussion**, Tuesday, May 12 at 4 p.m. (online, call for more info)

**Stitch & Chat**, Wednesday, May 13 at 3 p.m.

**Movie Talk**, Friday, May 15 at 10:30 a.m.

**The Page Turners - Book Club for Adults**, Wednesday, May 27 at 3 p.m.

This month we will discuss *Redhead by the Side of the Road* by Anne Tyler.

ArtSpace for All Ages

**ArtSpace: Paper Fashion Design**  
Friday, May 1 at 4 p.m.

Celebrate National Textiles Day by creating your own mini paper garments.

**ArtSpace: Mini Notebook Keychains**

Thursday, Apr. 30 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 2 at 2 p.m.

Create adorable mini paper notebook keychains.

**ArtSpace: Cricut Mother's Day Cards**

Thursday, May 7 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 9 at 2 p.m.

Create a custom Mother's Day card while learning the basics of Cricut Design Space and Cricut crafting tools.

**ArtSpace: Popsicle Stick Weaving**

Thursday, May 14 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 16 at 2 p.m.

Join guest artist Heather O'Dell in this introductory fiber arts weaving program.

**ArtSpace: Crochet 101**

Thursday, May 21 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 23 at 2 p.m.

Discover the joy of crochet as we learn essential techniques.

**ArtSpace: Paint and Pencil Series: Calm Rainy Scene**

Thursday, May 28 at 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 30 at 2 p.m.

Enjoy the rainy season by painting an acrylic rainy background.



### Homemade Blackberry Lemonade Recipe by Soup Loving Nicole



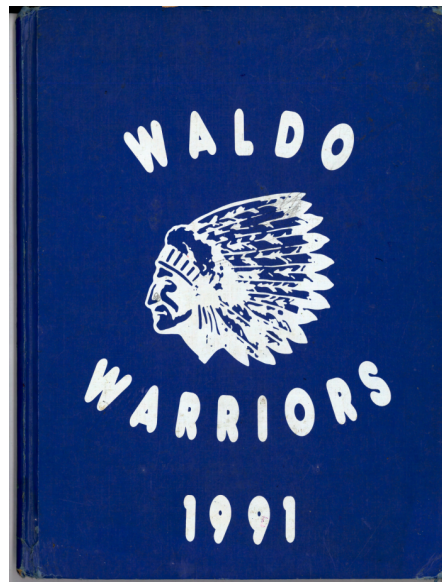
#### Ingredients:

- \* 3/4 cup white sugar
- \* 4 1/2 cups water, divided
- \* 1 cup blackberries
- \* 2 tablespoons white sugar or to taste
- \* 1 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- \* Ice cubes

#### Directions:

1. Heat 3/4 cup sugar and 1/2 cup water in a small saucepan over medium heat. Cook and stir until sugar has dissolved, about 2 minutes. Let cool.
2. Place blackberries and remaining 2 tablespoons of sugar in a blender; blend until smooth.
3. Combine simple syrup, blended blackberries, remaining 4 cups of water, and lemon juice. Place a fine-mesh sieve over a pitcher and pour lemonade into the pitcher; discard solids. Serve over ice.

4. Drink and enjoy!



#### WE NEED YEARBOOKS!

The Waldo Area Historical Society is in search of yearbooks for Waldo residents from Waldo Community School, Waldo Jr. High, and even for Hawthorne Middle/High since our residents attend that school as well. We are looking to expand our yearbook archive and we

need your help! WAHS is accepting physical donations of yearbooks OR we can digitally scan yearbooks and return them to you.

The growth of our archive is only possible with the support from the community! Have any other items such as report cards, community event images, old paperwork related to Waldo, etc.? We would love to add these to the collection to share with the community! WAHS will gladly scan and return these items and return them to you so that you may keep your treasure.

Reach out to us by email [info@waldohistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@waldohistoricalsociety.org), by phone (352)-448-6058, or in-person at the Waldo Area Historical Museum located at Waldo City Square.

Museum hours available on our website  
[www.waldohistoricalsociety.org](http://www.waldohistoricalsociety.org).



*First Baptist Church of Waldo*  
*www.fbcwaldo.org*  
*14370 SR-24 Waldo, FL 32694*



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 OF ALACHUA COUNTY

*www.childrenstrustofalachuacounty.us*  
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*32606*  
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*www.gainesvillestreetrods.com*



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Waldo Lodge No. 10 F. & A.M.

14370 NE 142nd Street Waldo, Florida 32694  
(352) – 240 – 6950

We believe in the family, the church, the community, and the country. Freemasonry believes in the Philosophy and practice of “making Good men better.” We are one of the world’s greatest Philanthropic Fraternities.

Meets on the 1st Tuesday of the Month  
Refreshments @ 6:30 PM  
General Meeting @ 7:30 PM

**Braze Ranch**



At Braze Ranch, we believe the best meals start with ingredients raised with care. Our Angus/Wagyu cattle are pasture-raised here in Waldo, producing beef that’s rich, flavorful, and perfect for gathering around the table. Paired with Waldo’s famous sweet potatoes, it’s a meal that tells the story of this place—simple, authentic, unforgettable. By choosing local, you’re not just enjoying wholesome food—you’re investing in the future of our community. From weeknight dinners to holiday feasts, make it local. Make it Braze Ranch.



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