



# Welaka Gazette

*November 2022*

## **From The Mayor's Desk**

It is officially Fall in the Town of Welaka, and while the leaves are not changing (welcome to Florida), the nights are getting longer, and the days are getting cooler. Fall is my favorite time of the year because of all the great holidays that come with this time of year. This past Sunday, we kicked off the season with our 2nd Annual Spooky Golf Cart Parade and Trick or Treat Event in the park. We had over 500 ghosts and goblins in attendance, and over 50 golf carts participated in the parade. I want to Thank Courtney Desouza, Diana Gonzalez, and Wendy Wood of our Welaka Events Committee for working so hard to put this Event on for our Town. Events like this make Welaka a great place to live and raise a family.

The Events Committee is also preparing for our 2nd Annual Christmas on the River Event in Welaka on Saturday, December 10th. The Christmas Parade will start at Noon at the corner of CR 309 and Maxwell Drive, ending at the intersection of CR 309 and 308B at the red light. We also have several events before and after the parade that day at the Downtown Park, starting at 10:00 AM and going until 4:00 PM; you will be able to get some last-minute holiday shopping done with our craft vendors who will be set up in the park. Starting at 2:00 pm and going until 4:00 pm in Downtown Park, there will also be an opportunity for the children to meet Santa and receive a Christmas toy. Food Trucks will be in the park from 12:00 PM until 4:00 PM that day, along with DJ DR Doom of Iheart Radio, playing your favorite Christmas songs all afternoon. Finally, to close out the day's events, we will conclude with our annual lighted boat parade on the river at 6:00 PM. The boat parade will go from Sportsmans Harbor, on the North end, to River Bend Condos, on the South end of the Town. Spectators can view the boat parade at our Floating Dock at Bryant's Wharf, or visit one of our local eating establishments on the river in that area. Please come out and join in on all of the Christmas festivities this season in Welaka!

On a Welaka Police Department front, our Chief of Police Mike Porath has secured the state funding for a 3rd brand new Police car for the department, and we expect to take delivery of it very soon. He is also in the process of doing interviews to hire a 3rd full-time police officer for the Police Department. Several residents have questioned the need for a third full-time officer, and I have assured them that all three officers will not be working simultaneously. Our goal is to have night and weekend police presence, seven days a week in the Town. If you have an issue at 8:00 pm on a Thursday, it will be comforting to know you can call the Police and have a local officer right here in Welaka respond to your needs. Also, for anyone who lives on CR 309 or 308B, like me, I am sure you have witnessed a significant decrease in the speed of the vehicles. People are paying more attention to how fast they drive in Welaka. For those that worry about Welaka turning into a speed trap, that is not the case. The

reality is that we have residents who walk and bike our streets and children who live and play in our community. We aim to slow vehicle traffic and ensure our residents are safe.

On the Town front, our Public Works Department is working on hanging Christmas lights to get the Town ready for the Christmas Season. They are also continuing to fix streets damaged by the recent storm as they spruce up the Town parks for the holidays. On the Utility Department side, we are working with the engineers to finalize the plans for our new Wastewater Treatment Plant designs as we make our plans to apply for grants and legislative appropriations in the coming year to update our stormwater drainage and pave streets in the Town.

As we prepare to close out 2022 in the Town of Welaka, it continues to be an honor and privilege to serve as your Mayor. The things we have accomplished in our Town this year are nothing short of amazing. While I was a part of it, I can not take sole credit for it because it continues to be a combined effort of our Town Staff, Town Council, Board Volunteers, and Town residents, all working to move Welaka forward together. Until next month, I hope everyone has a safe and happy Thanksgiving, and I look forward to seeing everyone at our Christmas Celebration in December.

*Very Best Regards,*

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie D. Watts" with "MAYOR" written in small capital letters below the name.

## **From The Council President**

In just a couple of weeks, on November 15<sup>th</sup>, the Northeast Florida Regional Council (NEFRC) will be hosting a visioning workshop for the downtown area of Welaka, made possible by the Competitive Partnership Grant they pursued and received on behalf of the town. This event will begin at 6:00 PM and will be held at the Woman's Club of Welaka, located at 644 CR 309 in Welaka.

The purpose of this workshop is to get public input from as many town residents as possible. Developing a vision narrative, including design guidelines, potential landscape features, and ultimately a plan for growth will be the focus.

Mentioning the word growth is controversial. I know that many want Welaka to stay as is. Realistically, that doesn't seem possible with the increased interest in Welaka as well as the development to our north. So, because growth seems inevitable, it is important for us as residents to have a say in what that growth looks like.

Are there things that you would like to see in Welaka? Businesses that you would support? Are there things that you don't want to see? Please come join us on November 15<sup>th</sup> and let your voice be heard.

In Your Service,

Jessica Finch  
Welaka Town Council President



## Need A Meeting With Your Mayor?

To schedule a meeting with your Mayor, please go to [www.MayorWatts.com](http://www.MayorWatts.com) and select the date and time that works for you.



## Do You Have News for the Town of Welaka? PUBLISH IT IN THE WELAKA GAZETTE!

For more information, please contact the **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at [TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov)



If you would like to recognize a Town of Welaka resident for dedicated community service to our Town, a local student with exceptional grades, or to nominate a Town resident who is celebrating a landmarked birthday such as turning 100 years old, please contact our **Welaka Town Clerk, Meghan Allmon**, at [TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:TownClerk@welaka-fl.gov). We will be happy to recognize them at our next Council Meeting by public recognition.



## Eyeglass Recycling – How You Can Help

South Putnam Lion Club would like to remind you that you can drop your unused glasses by Welaka Town Hall in the drop-box in the main hallway. Donate glasses and change someone's life. Imagine if you could help a child read, an adult to succeed in their job, or a senior citizen maintaining their independence. Help to provide our community with more opportunities to grow and thrive.



## Need To Report An Issue or Make A Town Code Violation Complaint?

Need to report a street or parks issue or make a Codes Enforcement Complaint?  
Report online at [www.TellTownHall.com](http://www.TellTownHall.com)



## Helping Hands of Welaka Toy Drive

Helping Hands of Welaka is collecting toys to give out to the children who attend the Welaka Christmas Parade & Festival in December of this year. If you would like to donate, please contact **Harriet Vanslyke** at (631) 764 - 2308



## Sponsor an Event

The Events Committee is seeking sponsors as they plan new events for the future. Some of the events include having a fireworks show at one of our events. Like all things, these things cost money. While the town sponsors these events, we do not have it in the budget to do everything we want to do. If you know anyone who would like to sponsor any of our events, please reach out to our Events Committee at [events@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:events@welaka-fl.gov)

## WELAKA GOLF CART RENEWALS BEGAN OCTOBER 1, 2022

**You Must Provide:** Valid Driver's License, Insurance (with golf cart listed) & \$25.00 (Cash, Check or Money Order)

**WELAKA BUSINESS TAX RECEIPT RENEWALS (Occupational Licenses) BEGAN OCTOBER 1, 2022. You Must Provide:** Business License Application, Proof of Insurance & applicable fee (Cash, Check or Money Order, see Ordinance 2022-07 for fee schedule).

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HELPING HANDS OF WELAKA  
**THANKSGIVING BASKETS**  
WILL BE GIVEN OUT

November 10<sup>TH</sup>

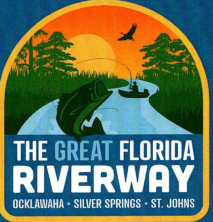
5PM TO 6PM OR UNTIL GONE  
Location: 400 4<sup>th</sup> Ave Welaka-Pavilion

1 BASKET PER FAMILY

PROOF OF ADDRESS

WELAKA RESIDENT ONLY

CAN NOT PICK UP FOR OTHERS




**WHAT COULD REUNITING THE OCKLAWAHA AND ST. JOHNS RIVERS MEAN FOR YOU AND PUTNAM COUNTY?**

**REUNITE THE RIVERS**

Meet your local St. Johns Riverkeeper advocate to learn more and to share your ideas for more access to our rivers.

**November 7 from 4-6 p.m.**  
**Welaka Boat Bar (1001 Front Street)**

For More Information:  
StJohnsRiverkeeper.org | (386) 546-9859



**ST. JOHNS RIVERKEEPER®**

**Tired of eating turkey???**



**Drive-Thru Spaghetti Dinner**  
**Saturday, November 26**  
**5:30-7:00**  
**Woman's Club of Welaka**  
**644 CR 309**  
**\$8 donation per plate**

Dinner includes spaghetti, garlic bread and salad

**\*\*A portion of all proceeds will be donated to charities supported by our club\*\***

Northeast Florida Regional Council  
and The Town of Welaka

# Let's Talk about a Vision for Downtown

## Downtown Vision Workshop

at  
Woman's Club of Welaka



Presentation at  
6:00p.m.

Followed by  
open discussion  
&  
Visual  
Preference  
Survey

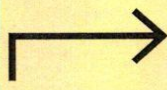
### Facilitators:

Tuesday  
November 15

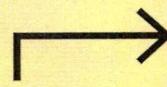
6:00 pm – 8:00pm  
at

Woman's Club of Welaka –  
644 County Road 309,  
Welaka, FL 32193

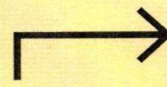
NEFRC



Jack Shad  
Economic Development  
Project Manager

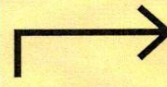


Monica Dominguez  
Regional Planner

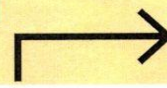


Robert Jordan  
Regional Planner

UF Center for Hydro-generated Urbanism



Martha Kohen  
CHU Research Director



Maria Barrios  
CHU Research Associate



For more information contact **Monica Dominguez**  
at [downtownwelaka@nefrc.org](mailto:downtownwelaka@nefrc.org) or 904-537-8554



**"EVERYONE HAVING A YARD SALE"**

**SILENT AUCTION AND KC BBQ LUNCHEON**

**ARK ANIMAL RESCUE FUND RAISING EVENT**

**DATE: Saturday 11/05/2022**

**TIME: 8:00AM TO 2:00pm**

**LUNCH AND SILENT AUCTION STARTS AT 10:30 AM**

**LOCATION: CRESCENT CITY KENNEL 1952 US HWY 17**

Need Volunteers to assist us, Friday afternoon & Saturday

**ALL PROCEEDS GO TO OUR FOSTER(S)**



*Help us help our community pets.*

Any questions contact [arksaves@gmail.com](mailto:arksaves@gmail.com)

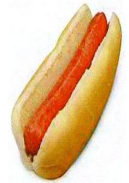
**ARK MOBILE NUMBER 386-559-4610**

The  
**Woman's Club of Welaka**  
would like to invite you to our  
**Annual Christmas Bazaar**  
10:00-2:00  
Saturday, November 12  
644 CR 309



baked goods

Handmade ornaments,  
wreaths and crafts.



hot dog lunches

Please join us!



**COMMUNITY  
YARD  
SALE**

**November 4th & 5th 8AM - 3PM**

**Town Hall Pavilion | 400 4th Avenue, Welaka**

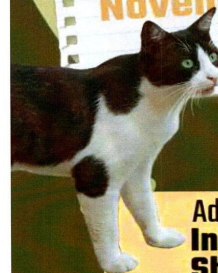
To Benefit  
**Friends of Welaka**

Made with PosterMyWall.com

All cats spayed/neutered

**CAT  
Adoption Day**

At Shrimps 'R Us  
**Sunday,  
November 27th**  
Noon - 3 pm



Adoption Fee \$15  
Includes \$10  
Shrimps gift card  
and cat food



Made with PosterMyWall.com

# TOWN OF WELAKA CONTACT LIST

## Welaka Police Department

Michael Porath - Police Chief  
Direct Line: (386) 524-4015  
Town Hall Extension: 107  
[mporath@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:mporath@welaka-fl.gov)

## Welaka Municipal Services

Meghan Allmon - Town Clerk  
(386) 524-4010 Ext. 102  
[townclerk@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:townclerk@welaka-fl.gov)

## Welaka Utility Department

(386) 524-4016 Ext. 103  
[utility@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:utility@welaka-fl.gov)

## Welaka AFTER HOURS Call Center

(386) 467-8677 / TDD: (800) 955-8771

## Welaka Code Enforcement Department

Pauline Kinney (386) 530-0336  
[codes@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:codes@welaka-fl.gov)

## Welaka Building Department

Justin Morris - Building Inspector  
(386) 524-4013 Ext. 105  
[building@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:building@welaka-fl.gov)

Waste Pro: (386) 328-5445

## Mayor's Office

Mayor Jamie Watts  
(386) 467-9800 Ext. 101  
Direct: 386-524-4009  
[jwatts@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:jwatts@welaka-fl.gov)

## Welaka Town Council

### Council President Jessica Finch

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 2)  
Town Hall Extension: 200  
[jfinch@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:jfinch@welaka-fl.gov)

### Councilwoman Marianne Milledge

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 3)  
Town Hall Extension: 201  
[mmilledge@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:mmilledge@welaka-fl.gov)

### Councilwoman Tonya Long

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 4)  
Town Hall Extension: 202  
[tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:tonyalong@welaka-fl.gov)

### Councilwoman Kathy Washington

(386) 467-9800 (Option 7, Option 5)  
Town Hall Extension: 203  
[kwashington@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:kwashington@welaka-fl.gov)

### Town Attorney

Patrick Kennedy  
[TownAttorney@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:TownAttorney@welaka-fl.gov)

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## **WELAKA CHRISTMAS EVENT INFORMATION**

**December 10, 2022, Saturday**

### VENDOR FEE:

**\$25 up until November 1, 2022**

**\$30 after November 1, 2022**

*(Pay at Town Hall or Mail to Town of Welaka)*



### Christmas Street Parade

Wendy Wood (904) 237-8917  
[wwg8tor@gmail.com](mailto:wwg8tor@gmail.com)

### Food Trucks

Courtney Desouza (904) 554-6458  
[events@welaka-fl.gov](mailto:events@welaka-fl.gov)

### Arts & Crafts Vendor

Debbie Edwards (386) 364-9002  
[bldjedwards@hotmail.com](mailto:bldjedwards@hotmail.com)

### Lighted Boat Parade on the River

Diana Gonzales  
[diana.gonzales@amerisbank.com](mailto:diana.gonzales@amerisbank.com)

# NOVEMBER 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
					<b>COMMUNITY YARD SALE</b> Friends of Welaka Town Hall Pavilion 8:00 - 3:00 PM  11/4/22 & 11/5/22	<b>EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH</b> Gospel Singing Fundraiser Event 4-6 PM  <b>COMMUNITY YARD SALE</b> Pavilion 8-3 PM
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	<b>REUNITE THE RIVERS</b> St. Johns Riverkeeper Welaka Boat Bar 4:00 - 6:00 PM  Trash & Recycling Pickup	<b>Welaka Town Council Meeting</b> 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall		<b>THANKSGIVING BASKETS</b> Town Hall Pavilion 5:00 - 6:00 PM	<b>VETERANS DAY</b> (Town Hall Closed)  <b>Community Advisory Council Meeting</b> 9:00 AM Welaka Town Hall	<b>ANNUAL CHRISTMAS BAZAAR</b> Welaka Woman's Club 10:00 - 2:00 PM
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	<b>Trash, Recycling &amp; Yard Debris Pickup</b>	<b>NEFRC Downtown Vision Workshop</b> Welaka Woman's Club 6:00 - 8:00 PM  Meter-Reading Day	<b>Charter Review Committee Meeting</b> 5:00 PM Welaka Town Hall	<b>Zoning Board Meeting</b> 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall		
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	<b>Trash &amp; Recycling Pickup</b>	<b>Code Enforcement Board Meeting</b> 6:00 PM Welaka Town Hall		<b>Thanksgiving Day</b> (Town Hall Closed)	<b>Thanksgiving Observed Day</b> (Town Hall Closed)	<b>SPAGHETTI DINNER</b> Welaka Woman's Club 5:30 - 7:00 PM
27	28	29	30	1	2	3
<b>CAT ADOPTION DAY</b> Shrimp 'R Us 12:00 - 3:00 PM	<b>Trash, Recycling &amp; Yard Debris Pickup</b>		<b>Charter Review Committee Meeting</b> 5:00 PM Welaka Town Hall			