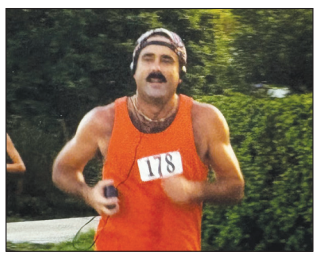


BAYSHORE BOOM
New Gallery, Warehouse, and Events Coming Soon..
A/4



FAREWELL BIG AL
Beloved Restauranteur a "Small Town" Philanthropist...
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THANKS FOR THEIR SERVICE AND SACRIFICE
Honor Flight Escorts Local Veterans to Washington D.C....
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Coastal BREEZE news

October 17 - 23, 2024 Covering Marco Island and South Collier www.coastalbreezenews.com ...a Fresh Perspective



The monthly beach cleanup volunteers had their work cut out for them on Saturday, October 12 as they picked up after Hurricane Milton. It was a big turnout with over 50 members from monthly sponsors MICA and Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, with the Marco Island Academy Key Club providing additional assistance. See "Beach Cleanup After Hurricane Milton" on A/6 for more.

Protecting Florida Panthers

The Risks of Fiddlers Creek Development

By Matea Denisen

Fiddlers Creek is facing opposition in its proposition to build 750 luxury apartments, including 225 affordable housing units, in Naples, Florida. The proposed initiative would require rezoning and new infrastructure on 50 acres of a federally required Florida panther preserve. Local conservationists and environmental agencies have expressed concern over the project's potential damage to Rookery Bay Reserve and Collier-Seminole State Park. Both locations are protected and known for their critical habitats and wildlife, including the endangered Florida panther.

The Collier County Planning Commission previously recommended denying the project, citing environmental concern. Additionally, the extension of Auto Ranch Road, required to access the housing, has been opposed by nearby residents who fear the increased traffic it would bring. Rebecca Brady, Board President of Friends of the Florida Panther Refuge, has other worries, describing how the development would threaten local wildlife. "This land, in particular, was designated as required panther mitigation by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as part of the approval for the Fiddlers Creek development," explains Brady. This could have devastating results for the Florida panther whose leading cause of death is habitat loss and vehicular strikes.

The decision now commences to the Collier County Commissioners for a hearing on November 12th. The main issue for debate is whether developing in an area concentrated with vital ecosystems is worth the imminent risk. During the hearing, Fiddlers Creek will attempt to rezone 50 acres of section 29 from a preserve to a residential area. Brady warns, "Collier County is prime panther habitat." This endangered species remains confined to a limited region in southern Florida, primarily within the Everglades, Big Cypress National Preserve, and surrounding conservation areas. About a third of occupied panther habitat is privately owned, including ranches and rural lands that are part of the Florida Wildlife Corridor habitat mosaic.

Wildlife corridors are essential for the survival and health of the Florida

Panthers continued on A/3



Photo by Stop Foundation

"Broketail" (right) and her kittens roam through a critical habitat in Immokalee, The Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge. She is well known by biologists for being a great mother to her kittens and is easily recognizable by her broken tail.

Marco Police Chief Commits to Improve

By Kelly J. Farrell

Marco Island's police union expressed a vote of no confidence in Chief Tracy Frazzano during a meeting held on September 28. And Frazzano intends to address and correct their concerns, she said.

"Events which led to these concerns include, but are not limited to, Chief Frazzano entering active crime scenes in workout attire, making poor operational decisions resulting in unnecessary risk to the wellbeing of our members and the community, and taking disproportionate disciplinary actions against our members," wrote Marco Island Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 95 President Jonathon Gray in a letter to City Manager Michael McNees dated October 7.

"This vote is a serious reflection of the sentiments among our uniformed members, and I want to assure you that I do not take it lightly," said Frazzano in a prepared statement received Friday.

"I recognize that I am not perfect and do have weaknesses. I am committed to being a continual learner and will take this opportunity to work diligently with my team to create a better internal culture for the Marco Island Police Department," Frazzano said.

As the city prepared for the earliest and worst possible outcomes from Hurricane Milton, McNees said that responding to the concerns brought forth in the letter was to be handled immediately after the storm cleared.

The storm downgraded to a category 3 when it hit Wednesday and Thursday. City officials worked to respond to requests for information about the police department on Friday, scheduling appointments for additional meetings, McNees said.

"I was a little surprised, but I was aware there were issues with the union," McNees said.

Prior to making detailed public comments about the contents of the letter and challenges between the chief and the

Chief continued on A/6