



District 3 Annual Update

from Dan Winchester, District 3 Commissioner

Serving the people of District 3 • 487-1157



Widening I-10 Does Not Have to Threaten Lake Jackson

While I agree that I-10 needs to be improved, my discussions with citizen groups, environmental agencies, and the Department of Transportation (FDOT) have shown me that we can improve I-10 without hurting Lake Jackson. We have invested millions of dollars in the Lake Jackson cleanup, and we don't want to make the mistakes of the past. We should keep a sensitive eye on protecting the tax dollars spent on this environmental and recreational jewel.

I am working with the Friends of Lake Jackson to ensure that there is no new impact on Lake Jackson. Nancy McGrath, President of the Friends of Lake Jackson, is serving on the FDOT Project Advisory Group and is also forming a Citizens Advisory Group. McGrath says, "Working with FDOT this early in their design process is an unusual opportunity to have input regarding the needs of our unique aquatic preserve. Our goal is to make sure this particular 2.5 mile stretch of the I-10 expansion, which crosses directly through the Lake Jackson Basin, is constructed in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible."

Dear Neighbor,

We have many important projects taking place in our county and especially within District 3. I am very proud of the cleanup of Lake Jackson, the progress on new parks and ball fields, and the many road and stormwater improvements as outlined in Blueprint 2000. Yet from providing emergency medical services, to improving stormwater flooding, to building new parks and libraries, we have our work cut out for us.



But I still need to hear about what is important to you.

What things can we be doing to improve Leon County? How do you feel the County Commission is doing? What are the priorities that you would like to see addressed?

I want the opportunity to sit down and talk with you, one-on-one, to hear your thoughts and ideas. That is why I am going to start scheduling regular "Let's Talk" sessions. At these informal get-togethers, you can come to me and voice your concerns. Your participation in County Commission meetings remains important, but I want to be able to talk with you in an environment where we can focus on District 3. Our first "Let's Talk" session will take place at the Lake Jackson Library branch on Tuesday, September 9th from 5:30 - 7:30pm. I hope to see you there.

In the meantime, or if you can't attend the session, please contact me with your feedback at 487-1157 (office) or at 562-2001 (home). As I may get several hundred calls, I hope you will understand if it takes me a few days to get back to you.

Thank you for your interest. It is an honor to serve the people of District 3.

Sincerely,

I want to hear from you! You can call me at my County Commission office at **487-1157** or at home at **562-2001**, or you can e-mail me at **danw@mail.co.leon.fl.us**

Our first "Let's Talk" Session will take place on Tuesday, September 9th at the Lake Jackson Library branch (in the Food Lion shopping center) from 5:30-7:30 pm.

Protecting Your Penny: Roadway Improvement Projects

Part of my work as your County Commissioner is to make sure that your tax dollars are well spent. That's why I've been paying careful attention to projects funded by the 1¢ sales tax that voters endorsed. Here are brief updates on some roadway projects:

Improving Capital Circle NW: The current design for widening Capital Circle NW from Highway 90 to I-10 shows a six lane divided roadway with curbs and gutters, improved stormwater facilities, grassy medians, traffic signal upgrades, bike lanes, sidewalks, and other traffic and pedestrian safety improvements.

Improving Highway 27 N: Plans for development from I-10 to the Ochlockonee River include milling and resurfacing the roadway, improved traffic flow, removal or modification of some median openings, and the addition of left turn lanes at all median openings. Another project adds a new right service/turn lane from John Knox Road to Lakeshore Drive.



City of Tallahassee's Mission Road Improvements: The Mission Road project includes widening the roadway to allow for bike lanes, median strips, and center turn lanes. Other features of the project are new traffic signals at Gearhart Road and Fred George Road; upgrades to landscaping, sewer, water, and stormwater drains; and additional stormwater retention facilities, sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.

Improving West Tharpe Street: Leon County is conducting a corridor study to determine what changes are needed to improve traffic flow and traffic and pedestrian safety on West Tharpe Street from Ocala Road to Capital Circle NW. Possible changes include creating four lanes and/or widening bike lanes and sidewalks. For additional information on citizen advisory panels and public meetings, contact Sally Dowlen, Leon County Public Works at 488-8003.

Gus Winchester Memorial Foundation to be Established

I want to thank the hundreds of constituents who reached out to me and my family over the past few months. For those of you who don't know, my little brother Gus had a fatal accident in March. We love, miss, and think about him every day. Thank you for your understanding and kind words during this difficult time.

Gus led a great life and set an example of courage for all of us. I am proud to announce the establishment of the Gus Winchester Memorial Foundation, which we hope will fund a youth fishing camp, build houses for underprivileged families, and offer scholarships to disadvantaged aspiring builders in remembrance of Gus's work. Gus, you will always be the wind beneath our wings.



Stormwater and Flooding Improvements



With the summer rain we are faced with the importance of stormwater and flooding improvements throughout the county. I continue to meet with citizens one-on-one, and with neighborhood associations to look for solutions for better flooding and stormwater maintenance. Here are some areas where stormwater and flooding improvements are taking place:

- **Lake Jackson retrofit ponds:** The #1 Blueprint 2000 stormwater project, the Lake Jackson retrofit ponds are in various design stages. After spending millions of dollars restoring Lake Jackson, we now have to protect our investment by building a series of stormwater ponds to clean the water before it pollutes Lake Jackson.
- **Okeeheepkee Prairie Pond:** Scheduled for construction late fall or early spring.
- **Harbinwood Estates:** Includes Cynthia, Harriet, Faulk, and Longview Drives.
- **Lakeshore Drive**
- **Old Bainbridge Road**

Parks Update

- Canopy Oaks Park to open in September
- Playground added at Lee Vause Park
- Permanent bathroom to be added at Tower Road Park
- Okeeheepkee Prairie Park to start construction in Spring 2004

Northwest Park

The City has plans to create a large, multi-use park at the intersection of Mission Road and Fred George Road. Though there is no provision for the park in the City's budget for the coming year, I am reopening talks with Mayor Marks on this much-needed facility. Please call Mayor Marks at 891-2000 and tell him you support bringing District 3 another great park.

Jackson View Park

Plans for Jackson View Park feature a boardwalk, a pier for fishing and boating, and some walking trails to provide more public access to Lake Jackson.

Lake Jackson Greenway

The proposal for the Lake Jackson Greenway links all state and local land surrounding Lake Jackson to provide acres of recreational green spaces for biking, hiking on nature trails, and enjoying Lake Jackson.



Laying sod at Canopy Oaks Park, which will open in September.



I am also working to build a brand new Community Center in District 3!

Northwest Leon Needs a Stand-Alone Library



Our storefront library is simply inadequate.



I believe in investing in our children and families, and our branch libraries provide us that opportunity. Despite the electronic revolution brought on by the Internet, libraries are still the best way for children to come together to read and learn. It's high time that the northwest side had a stand-alone library of its own.

While I am proud that we were able to expand our little storefront library two years ago, it's simply too small to serve our needs. Many of you have requested more reading space, more tutor rooms, a meeting room, and more designated quiet areas for individual reading.

I am working to secure the adequate funding for a new stand-alone library to be built in our district. With a new library will come more reading opportunities, extended story hours, and a great place for families to come and share the joy of reading with one another.

However, funding for a stand-alone library in the Northwest is being threatened. I urge you to contact your other County Commissioners, thank them in advance for supporting funding for a new branch library, and tell them that libraries are important to you and your children.

Support our branch libraries! Call your County Commissioners at 488-9962 and let them know that libraries are important to you and your children.



Even with the temporary measures in place, too many accidents are being caused by wildlife crossings.

Lake Jackson Ecopassage: Where Road Safety Meets Environmental Protection

As Lake Jackson's health has been restored, we are seeing more wildlife than ever. Unfortunately, as the water recedes due to natural causes, wildlife attempts to migrate back and forth across US Highway 27 between Lake Jackson and Little Lake Jackson. The 21,500 motorists who drive by this area each day threaten the migrating wildlife, and when the wildlife is threatened, the health of Lake Jackson is threatened as well.

Most important of all, migrating wildlife threatens motorist safety.

While thankfully no one has been hurt in the accidents that have already taken place, I am working aggressively to build a permanent Lake Jackson Ecopassage to help protect motorist safety. The Lake Jackson Ecopassage — at no additional cost to Leon County taxpayers — will consist of a permanent series of culverts and

guidewalls designed to allow wildlife to pass safely under the road. With the Lake Jackson Ecopassage we protect wildlife, we protect the tax dollars invested in Lake Jackson's restoration, and we protect the safety of those who drive by this area every day.

For more information, contact Matthew Aresco with the Lake Jackson Ecopassage Alliance at 562-3093.

At no cost to you, the Lake Jackson Ecopassage will be a secure passage for wildlife and will protect motorist safety.



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