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**Cedar Key Chamber hosts biggest WoW so far**



**Becky LaFountain of Cedar Key stands with her dog Milton, a yellow Labrador retriever. She was one of the many participants in the Bow-WoW Dog Walk-Run.**

**Story, Photos and Videos**

**By Jeff M. Hardison © March 16, 2019 at 8:39 p.m.**

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**CEDAR KEY** – The Third Annual Workout on the Waterfront (WoW) in the City of Cedar Key proved to be the biggest ever Saturday (March 16), with the addition of dogs into this healthy fun happening.

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Here are a couple of the many winners from the Bow WoW Run. Makayla Northup and her dog Briggs came in fourth (left). Kasey Northup and her dog Trooper came in seventh. The plaque she is holding says 'Best of Show' for the Bow WoW event, although there no contest for Best In Show. These young ladies' father, Rod Hunt of the Nature Coast Biological Station, made the plaques for the actual awards at this event. He said he made this one for his daughter Kasey so that she would have something to take home from the day.

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**Savanna Barry holds her dog Dixie, a mini-dachshund. Many people were impressed by Dixie’s ability as a ‘twirler’ – where she would spin in place on command. Barry is a Regional Specialized Extension Agent based in Cedar Key at the UF/IFAS Nature Coast Biological Station. She specializes in coastal marine ecosystems, especially seagrass meadows. Her extension programs focus on sustainable coastal tourism, habitat restoration and enhancement, and coastal literacy and stewardship.**

**[https://youtu.be/ieZ\\_s3PT1Dk](https://youtu.be/ieZ_s3PT1Dk)**

**In this video, Dixie the mini-dachshund does the tricks of sitting and circling. Notice her light-up dog collar. Savanna Barry tells her dog Dixie to do the tricks.**

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**These four judges decided the most talented dog entrant in the Bow-WoW walk-run. They are (from left) Camille Ervin, Briley Taylor, Cait Cunningham and Jackie Wells, all visiting Cedar Key from Tallahassee.**

With the Bow WoW being added for the first time, another dimension showed the event expanding, although it was led by a different group this year than in previous years.

Cedar Key Vice Mayor Sue Colson said “We love bow-wows,” which is very similar to what she said during another recent canine-oriented event on Cedar Key, when she said, “We love dogs in Cedar Key.”

Hosted by the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce this year, the community-oriented celebration and fundraiser known as Workout on the Waterfront changed a bit from the first two years when the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences’ Nature Coast Biological Station served as the host.

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**As the sun rises, it shines relatively softly to herald the onset of the morning's weather that is – well, it is Chamber of Commerce weather. Perfect temperature, humidity and just a hint of a Gulf breeze carried from start to finish for the participants.**



**People line up to buy shirts from this event.**

As always, one beneficiary this year is the International Coastal Cleanup effort. That cleanup effort began across many nations more than 30 years ago, when communities rallied together with the common goal of collecting and documenting the trash littering their coastline.

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International Coastal Cleanup Day is scheduled to be on Saturday, Sept. 20, 2019.

The other three community beneficiaries from the 2019 WoW are the renovation of the multi-purpose (tennis) courts at Cedar Key School, The Children's Table in Levy County and the Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce.

The Children's Table is one of two food pantry operations, which help people on Cedar Key.

The 2019 WoW included four races. They were a dog-accompanied 1K walk-run, a 5K classic walk-run, a Kayak Challenge and a Recycled Regatta.

Bow WoW dogs and their best human friends enjoyed a walk-run around beautiful downtown Cedar Key. That race started at 8 a.m.



Here is a still shot just before the start of the Bow-WoW walk-run. At least one of the participants did so with a prosthetic leg.

<https://youtu.be/prOTm3YQDgE>

In this video the start of the Bow-WoW run is shown.

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Seen here seconds before the start of the 5K race, the people are ready. Notice the buoys hanging over the start-finish line. That is the Park Place Condominiums in the background. The clock shows two minutes and two seconds before 8 a.m., however that would have been the time if Florida had opted out of Daylight Saving Time -- which it did not. Mendy Allen holds the bullhorn at the left in this photo. She started the walk-run for people and dogs as well as the 5K.

[https://youtu.be/9\\_xXChR4k88](https://youtu.be/9_xXChR4k88)

In this video, the Coastal Heritage 5K run is shown as it started promptly at 9 a.m.

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**Mike Allen, Ph.D., is a professor of Fisheries and Aquatic Science in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida. He is stationed at the Nature Coast Biological Station on Cedar Key. He and his wife Mendy Allen, and the team of researchers at the NCBS initiated the Workout on the Waterfront three years ago. After running this most recent 5K, he crossed the finish line and said 'Wow!'**

Both the Bow-WoW and the 5K run started and ended at the corner of A Street and Third Street near the Lil Shark Park, which is also called City Park.

The Atsena-Otie Kayak Challenge Kayak Race started at the beach near the park. Kayakers faced a stiff breeze as they went to Astena-Otie Key, where they collected one piece of trash and then returned to the beach. The Kayak race is for ages 12 and older.

The Repurpose-It-Regatta included three entrants. All vessels entered the race at G Street and Third Street. This regatta is fun and includes vessels built from recycled material.

There were vendors in the park.

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**(from left) Verna Brown, Bill Brown, Junie Burr and Marcia Pollock are seen behind the table for The Children's Table.**

Bill Brown, his wife Vera Brown, and volunteers Junie Burr, Marcia Pollock and two other volunteers who did not want to be photographed or have their names listed (they and God only know why), were manning the tent for The Children's Table.

They sold breakfast food and drinks, and lunch food and drinks.

Bill Brown said this was a warm-up drill for the group that plans to be among the vendors at the March 30 and 31 Cedar Key Arts Festival.

The 55th Annual Old Florida Celebration of the Arts in Cedar Key promises to attract artists and art lovers. Visit <http://www.cedarkeyartsfestival.com/> for details.

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Seen here (from left) are Joshua Chen, Dr. Sarah Szurek and Jodian A. Blake representing the UF Health Cancer Center. They mentioned that March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.



Jodian A. Blake and Joshua Chen welcome one of the first visitors of the morning to the tent for UF Health Cancer Center.

Sarah Szurek, Ph.D., a medical anthropologist who is the program director of the UF (University of Florida) Health Cancer Center's Office of Community

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Outreach and Engagement was accompanied by Jodian A. Blake, MPH, CTTS, and Joshua Chen, health education and behavior intern.

Blake is a certified tobacco cessation specialist and Chen is among the UF Class of 2019 graduates who will wrap up his studies in May.

They brought lots of information as well as promotional items such as squishy alligator squeeze toys for stress relief and mild physical therapy hand exercises, lip balm, ink pens, sunglasses and small containers of hand sanitizer to give away.

Dr. Szurek said the UF Health Cancer Center is on a mission to serve the residents and visitors of 22 North Central Florida counties. It seeks to assure the research related to cancer is relevant to this part of Florida, as well as elsewhere.

“The UF Health Cancer Center is committed to building equitable community-academic partnerships to improve the health and well-being of residents in North Central Florida,” she has said. “We are engaging with communities to understand not only their challenges, but also their strengths as we take action to reduce the cancer burden in our state. The aim is to facilitate a process of mutual co-learning between community members and researchers by leveraging existing resources and implementing new programs that build local capacity.”

As program director of the Office of Community Outreach and Engagement, Dr. Szurek is responsible for developing and managing community-based programs that identify cancer-relevant needs, target cancer prevention, and improve health outcomes in 22 counties in Florida.

Another vendor from UF in the park was the UF College of Veterinarian Medicine’s Aquatic Animal Health scientists.



**Laurie Adler, a biological scientist, stands next to a game that was available for children to play as they learn about sea creatures and conservation.**

UF Stranding Coordinator Amber Lee Kincaid and Laurie Adler, a biological scientist, were present to tell people all about the animals in the oceans. They also provided children with an opportunity to play an education game and win prizes, such as a small informational card about dolphins, or candy.

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**Cedar Key Chamber of Commerce President Caryn Stephenson stands near some of the many tables of items that were donated for silent auctions. These items included a bicycle, bottles of wine, guided fishing tours, works of fine art and much more.**