

BE IN THE KNOW!

Description

WHISPER CREEKERS ARE IN THE KNOW!

What's going on at Whisper Creek and beyond? Find out right here!

? LOCAL FINDS & FUN

? WHISPER CREEK FUN FACTS ? SAFETY & WELLNESS TIPS

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10 THINGS YOU MAY NOT KNOW ABOUT LABELLE

By Greg Stangl

Although Whisper Creek is technically located in Glades County, I think we identify closer with the City of LaBelle and Hendry County. Creekers spend lots of time taking almost daily trips to the Walmart and Farm and Fleet. To me it is interesting to know and understand what is happening in “our” city as it faces unprecedented challenges in growth and infrastructure.

1. LaBelle was named for Laura June and Carrie Belle Hendry, daughters of the pioneer cattleman Captain Francis Hendry. In French the word LaBelle means beautiful.
2. LaBelle High School has produced not one but two professional football placekickers: Bill and Martin Gramatica.
3. In 1936 the Caloosahatchee was dredged, widened and straightened in order to alleviate flooding problems. The previous river had many oxbows and parts of it were unnavigable. Now it serves as a major waterway from Ft. Myers to the Atlantic.
4. The city of LaBelle holds an annual festival celebrating the state tree, the cabbage palm, called the Swamp Cabbage Festival on Feb. 24 and 25. It includes a 5K walk/run, beauty pageant and rodeo among others. It is held at Barron Park.
5. The City of LaBelle has recently annexed the “Paul” property which is the area just behind the Walmart. It consists of nearly 5000 acres and will have up to 1,500 homes along with stores, parks and a trade school. This and several other building projects will more than triple the population in the next 10 years.
6. The Florida Department of Transportation is studying the possibility of building a dual span bridge over the Caloosahatchee near the current bridge location. The bridge would be high enough for boat traffic and would eliminate the need for the drawbridge. No date has been set for the project.
7. They have also proposed a second bridge located several miles north of the current bridge and would build roads to allow a bypass of LaBelle and the heavy traffic on state 29 and downtown congestion of traffic on state 80. If this plan comes to fruition, it could eliminate much of the noisy traffic that roars by Whisper Creek.
8. LaBelle is known as the “City of Oaks” and has 100s of old growth oaks throughout the community, many of which can be seen in Whisper Creek. Many of these oaks are aging and the city has a plan to plant new trees.
9. LeBelle has a humid subtropical climate bordering on a tropical savanna climate. I think this means hot summers and warm winters.
10. LeBelle is rapidly transforming into a bedroom community with people that want to move away from the highly congested Ft. Myers area. Residents that I have talked to are not happy about the influx of people and traffic. It’s destroying the “little town” feel.

BUILDERS' CHOICE SUPPLY

A REVIEW BY GREG STANGL



This local building supply store has everything you need for all of your home construction projects. Before I knew of its existence, I regularly made the two hour round trip to the Home Depot in Ft. Myers for all my building needs. Its prices are a little higher than the big box stores, but for convenience it's the go-to place.

Located near the LaBelle airport you will find construction lumber, electrical and plumbing supplies. It also features windows, decking materials and all the tools you could ever need.

For those interested in price, I am listing the prices of common construction grade 2X4X8s. Yes, Builders Choice is a little more expensive BUT it costs a lot of time and gas to get to Ft. Myers.

Builders Choice Supply 4.95 Ace Hardware. 5.49 Home Depot 3.36

For all your local home improvement needs I recommend Builders Choice Supply in LaBelle. It's close, convenient and the place to go when you don't want to suffer the choking traffic and two hour round trip drive to Ft. Myers. It gets 5 out of 5 hammers from me.

Builders Choice Supply 875 S. Elm St. LaBelle Fl. 863-674-9900

Labelle TACO WARS!

By Greg Stangl





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I thought I would do some hard core investigative journalism (and get some lunch at the same time) and compare local places that serve tacos. Now keep in mind that these are my opinions and they may vary from yours.

So where do tacos come from? Your instincts are probably correct here: Tacos as we know them originated in Mexico and came to the US via the large number of Mexicans who migrated here. For years, Tacos were seen as lower-class street food. Now they have become Americanized, using staples such as hamburger, yellow cheese and bell peppers.

I decided not visit Taco Bell as part of this research. I do love their tacos however, and their prices vary from \$1.79 to \$5.19 per taco. By the way, McDonald's breakfast burrito (after all, what is a burrito but a rolled-up taco?) is \$2.19 for two. And I like their mild sauce.

I tried to compare taco-to-taco in the Labelle area and did not include any \$ for additional items such as beans or rice. The criteria that I used to compare tacos consisted of the overall taste of the food, the price, and the service. All of these were soft corn tacos and heated before serving.

LAREDO TACO AT THE 711 GAS STATION

(\$5.00 per taco)

The Good

They serve a really large soft taco for a reasonable price. I had the chicken with shredded green pepper, onions, tomatoes and topped with shredded cheese. They make it right in front of you and you can select toppings from a limited menu. My wife had the beef taco and really liked it. They are kind of like the Subway of tacos. Service is fast!

The Bad

I felt the taco was just a tad dry, but there were other topping options and I may have missed the sauce. My taco was just slightly warm, not hot and lacked any spicy flavor. I prefer shredded pork but that was not offered as an option. I do have to mention that this taco left a taste in my mouth that lasted for a long time after consumption.

BEEF O'BRADY'S TACO TUESDAY

\$7.99 for two tacos (\$4.00 each) which includes chips and salsa.
Prices are higher when it's NOT Taco Tuesday

The Good

Service is good and fast and done with a smile. The margaritas are excellent! The tacos are generous and served with chips and salsa. We had the blackened fish tacos and I found it hard to finish all the food. Maybe we should have split our dinner?

The Bad

As long as you're there and as long as you're in a restaurant it's easy to add a drink or two to your

order. Then there is the (18%) tip added onto the bill. It's not hard for the bill to top out over \$20.00 per person.

FIESTA FOOD MARKET

\$4.00 for a single shredded pork taco.

'Located about a block north of the Caloosahatchee draw bridge on Rt. 29. You have probably driven by it a hundred times.

The Good

Good. In my opinion, the best tasting taco of the bunch. It was overstuffed, served warm and plenty of optional toppings. This seems to be the place where the "locals" eat. Also served with a small container of a delicious mild salsa.

The Bad

Traffic is a little heavy in this area and it can be hard to get in and out of their parking lot.

So, in summary, for a quick taco lunch I recommend the Fiesta Food Market. For a nice leisurely dinner with friends, Beef O Bradys is the spot to go.

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HAVE YOU BEEN TO ROOSTERS FARM STAND?

Are you in market for some fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables? Check out Roosters Farm Stand located on Route 80 just 18 miles north of LaBelle. You will find an impressive display of fruits, vegetables and plants. We recently purchased some plants there and we were impressed by the quality, size and price of the plants.

Operated by brothers and native Floridians Tyler and Trevor Baer, Roosters features fresh tomatoes, a wide variety of fruits

and vegetables, locally harvested honey and fresh juices, jellies, cheese and salsas. When you think about locally grown Florida agriculture, Roosters is something to crow about!

~ Greg Stangl

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LOCAL FINDS & FUN

Welcome to the new Labelle CULVER'S!

By Greg Stangl

I recently sat down with Lea Nour the owner of the new Culvers at 44 Lashley St. in LaBelle to find out about the new restaurant and what they plan to bring to the community. It is located across the street from the LaBelle Brewery next to Amigos and Beer.

Q. What brought you to invest in a Culver's Franchise?

Lea came to the US from Lebanon at 18 thinking that she wanted to get into the hotel business. She was given the opportunity to be an operations manager for Culvers for 6 years before purchasing her own franchise.

Q. What makes Culver's different?

Lea said that everything in the Culvers culture is about putting people first. People come in as customers and leave as friends. We hand craft every meal and we celebrate our guests. Our core values include doing the right thing, delighting in every moment, practicing kindness and growing stronger together.

Q. What is *your* favorite thing on the menu?

Lea reports that she loves the cod dinner and especially the hamburgers, made from fresh, never frozen beef.

Q. When will the restaurant open?

The Culvers in LaBelle is scheduled to open Monday Dec. 2. And as a special treat, the first 100 customers in line will receive a free pint of custard.

Q. Will you be hiring?

The LaBelle Culvers is always interested in hiring people from the community regardless of age or experience. Lea said the pay is competitive and they do offer benefits. Job positions are posted on the website Indeed or you can call 863-230-6032 for more information.

Q. Is there a senior discount?

Culvers offers a 5% senior and military discount on every order. (Be sure to ask for it!) Team members get 50% off.

Q. What are some ways you plan on getting involved in the LaBelle community?

Culvers offers community organizations the opportunity to participate in "share" nights. Groups such as

cheerleaders, bands or clubs can send members to volunteer as greeters and runners at Culvers and the groups will receive a share of the profits for the night. They have already joined the local Chamber of Commerce.

In 1984 Craig and Lea Culver along with his parents opened up their very first restaurant in Sauk City Wisconsin and began serving butter burgers and frozen custard. Now there are close to 1500 restaurants in 30 different states.

About 15 years ago I interviewed Craig Culver for a business magazine and I found him to be sincerely interested about offering high quality food in a clean environment with a warm and friendly staff. I believe he has accomplished his goal. You will be pleasantly surprised with your first visit to Culvers. It lacks the “corporate indifference” that you will find at so many other fast-food restaurants.

Another reason I am so familiar with the franchise is because their headquarters is located in Prairie Du Sac Wisconsin about 5 miles from our home in Merrimac. In this writer’s opinion, Culver’s offers an upscale alternative to the everyday burger place. With a menu that includes the signature butter burgers (the top and bottom of the bun are lightly coated in butter then seared on the grill) beef pot roast, fried shrimp and pork tenderloins in addition to their wonderful custard. There’s sure to be something for everyone.

On a personal note, my wife and I frequent the Culvers in Sauk City Wisconsin. I love the two-piece cod dinner (I substitute the fries with onion rings) and my wife likes the loaded single butter burger combo or sometimes the fish sandwich. When we are in the mood for a treat, we like the turtle sunday (single scoop please). And no they do not use live turtles! It’s made with ice cream, hot fudge, caramel and pecans all topped with a cherry! YUM! When you’re ready for something really decadent try one of their salted caramel malts. It’s to die for!

CULVERS TO OPEN DECEMBER 2. SEE YOU THERE!

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