



# School auditorium gets major repairs for weakened walls, cracked trusses

## Three ways to learn about Alva

1. Join Alva Inc. at [Alvafl.org](http://Alvafl.org), the Internet home of Alva Inc.
2. Subscribe to Nextdoor Alva Oaks—a neighborhood front porch kind of place to share news and information about Alva. Visit [nextdoor.com](http://nextdoor.com). Limited to Alva residents
3. On Facebook at *Alva, Florida Friends, Family, & Photos*. Members have Alva ties.

## Important

### All activities are open to the public

- ◆ July 9: Talk with Lee County parks planner Jason Lamey on proposed Lehigh Acres park, 7 p.m. Alva Community Center
- ◆ July 13: No general membership meeting for Alva Inc. this month.
- ◆ Aug. 10: Alva Inc. General membership meeting 7 p.m. Alva Community Center. Topic: Scenic Highway

### Inside buzz

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Students should be able to use The Alva School auditorium by November after a year without a place to gather.

Workers removed the roof in June and will replace the roof and the walls as part of the \$854,000 project.

Water damage led to cracks in the roof trusses. Braces were added last November to stabilize the building until repairs could be started.

“Many of the existing wood roof trusses had cracks, which were determined to be structurally unsound,” school district spokeswoman Amity Chandler said by email. “In addition to the truss issues, the supporting masonry block walls had structural cracking. The existing masonry walls did not have structural reinforcing steel, and were determined to be non-salvageable, and also structurally unsound.”

All trusses down the spine of the auditorium will be replaced. School district engineer Scott Reichenbacher compared the work to leaving the head and feet of a body and replacing the torso.



Photo by Juanita Harris/Alva resident

**Workers removed trusses from The Alva School auditorium and put debris in a dumpster (below) to launch resto-**

The auditorium was unavailable for use during the past school year.

**See Repairs, page 5**

## Newsletter Information

The Alva Inc. newsletter is published monthly.

Get the newsletter by email. Send your address to Alva Inc. President Ruby Daniels at:

[rubydaniels@embarqmail.com](mailto:rubydaniels@embarqmail.com)

Readers of the condensed printed version can read the full newsletter online at [Alvafl.org](http://Alvafl.org).

Send news and photos to editor Don Ruane at:

[ruanedon@aol.com](mailto:ruanedon@aol.com)

Join Alva Inc. by completing the membership form on [Alvafl.org](http://Alvafl.org).



# Repairs in progress, grant sought to keep project on track

An application for a \$50,000 will be submitted to the state to help pay for the repairs under way at the Alva Museum.

Alva Inc. and others sent letters of support to help secure the money for the long-needed overhaul. The museum was dedicated in 1909 as the first public library in Lee County. It was dedicated 39 years ago on July 4 as a museum by the Alva Garden Club and the Alva Library Association.

The museum is at 21420 Pearl St. Dave Hanks of John Grey's Painting was busy last month glazing the window panes. The work is slow because of the detail-oriented nature of historic renovation, Hanks said.

Renovations included the removal of a hallway between the two buildings to stop and repair water damage from the hallway's roof.

"The buildings will remain separated until we have enough money to build a wraparound walk to provide access," said Alva Garden Club president Joyce Pilewski. The walkway will have a ramp for people with disabilities.

The work is funded with the help of a \$25,000 grant from Lee County and a matching amount raised by the Garden Club. The letters of support were due by



*Dave Hanks of John Grey's Painting applies putty to a window pane on the side of the Alva Museum.*

July 1 in order to be included in the grant application, which was being prepared by senior planner Gloria Sajgo of the Lee County Department of Community Development.

The museum is open from October through May on Saturdays from 2-4 p.m.



*A dugout Seminole canoe found in the Caloosahatchee River, shells, carvings and other items are on display. In the Alva Museum*

## Historic Alva

### **Museum puts you in touch with area's Native Americans**

Google Seminoles and you're likely to come up with real estate listing for Seminole Harbor Drive in Alva.

But if you want to know some of the history of the Seminole tribe in Lee County there is a display about them among the exhibits at the Alva Museum at 21420 E. Pearl Street,. But you'll have to wait until October to see it. The museum is operated by the volunteers of the Alva Garden Club. They operate the museum from October through May on Saturdays, from 2 to 4 p.m.

You can peek inside the museum each month with this newsletter. Each edition features a different exhibit. To see past editions go to [Alvafl.org](http://Alvafl.org).



## **The Alva Museum**

Open every Saturday Oct—May  
2 pm. — 4 p.m.

Courtesy of the Alva Garden Club  
Meetings the third Tuesday of the month  
2 p. m. — 4 p. m.

Information: 239-728-3180 or 239-728-6543

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# Water projects get state funding



*Fichter's Creek*

State lawmakers approved \$525,000 for three water quality projects in the Alva-North Olga areas when they concluded their special session last month. A fourth project was not funded.

The money represents 27 percent of the funding requested by Lee County for hydrological restoration work on Telegraph Creek Preserve, Fichter's Creek, Spanish Creek Preserve and the Bob Janes Preserve.

The Fichter's Creek project was the big winner, bringing home \$300,000. Fichter's Creek runs north from the Caloosahatchee River and wraps around the northwest corner of the Caloosahatchee Regional Park. The restoration plan includes adding 3.2 acres of lakes, three dry detention areas covering 7.1 acres, culvert replacement, filter marsh creation, and berm work. A construction easement is needed for the culvert work where the creek flows under a private

road. The county has the permits needed and is preparing for construction in 2016.

**Estimated Cost:** \$1,800,000

**Requested Amount:** \$900,000

**Awarded:** \$300,000

Here's a look at the other projects:

**Telegraph Creek Preserve:** Natural sheet flow from the 800-acre preserve into Telegraph Creek will be restored. Erosion control steps also will be taken. The project is in its design phase.

**Estimated Cost:** \$250,000

**Requested Amount:** \$125,000

**Awarded:** \$125,000

**Bob Janes Preserve:** Natural sheet flow will be restored. Water impoundment areas to enhance aquifer recharge on the abandoned farm fields is a possibility. Design work and permitting phases are the next steps.

**Estimated Cost:** \$200,000

**Requested Amount:** \$100,000

**Awarded:** \$100,000

**Spanish Creek Preserve:** The Legislature did not allocate funds for this project. The county wants to reshape berms around two borrow pits to collect storm water and rehydrate nearby wetlands on the Daniels Preserve at Spanish Creek. The borrow pits will be graded and stabilized with grass or mulch to prevent erosion. Native wetland plants will be added in shallow zones along the shorelines. Fencing will be added to keep cattle away. Design work still needs to be completed for the storage areas.

**Estimated Cost:** \$ 1,000,000

**Requested Amount:** \$800,000

**Awarded:** \$0

## Gov. signs Lehigh bill

Gov. Rick Scott signed a bill creating the Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District to replace the East County Water Control District.

The new district can exercise control over roads, streetlights and other services provided it reaches an agreement with Lee County to provide them and wins voter approval at a general election.



*Snail kites frequently soared over the pines searching for food at Caloosahatchee Regional Park in late June.*

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*Ruth Anglickis, Lee County School Board member Pamela LaRiviere, Alva Inc. treasurer Emily Smith and Alva Inc. President Ruby Daniels talk about how to locate a new high school in Alva. Anglickis played a key role in getting Lehigh Senior High School for her community. She advised Alva Inc. to make sure it collected the data needed to support its case.*



*This parcel owned by the Lee County School District is a possible site for the next East Zone high school. Tuckahoe runs along the north side and Joel Boulevard on the east.*

## School board rep hears Alva Inc.'s hopes for next East Zone high school project

Alva once again could be the home of a public high school if the Lee County School Board sees fit when it picks the location for the next East Zone facility in about 18 months. The school could open in 2019.

That school could be built on district-owned property at Tuckahoe Road and Joel Boulevard, Alva Inc. members told school board member Pamela LaRiviere during the June general membership meeting.

If selected the school would restore the community's status lost in 1970 when Riverdale High School opened and Alva High School closed.

LaRiviere advised the group to talk about the school in the community to generate more support. Look for someone with experience in land use matters to sit on the district's construction advisory committee, she said. Alva resident Darren Watkins already sits on the committee, but there is another seat open.

"Do your dreaming. If we had an ideal school, what would it be like," LaRiviere said.

"We're about as east as you can get in the East Zone. Once we had a high school, so we thought we would get a group of people together and gather some information," said Alva Inc. president Ruby Daniels.

"One of the things we would like to see in Alva is a strong environmental

Daniels noted include the site location near Conservation 20/20 properties, Bedman Creek and the Caloosahatchee River.

"We want more than a Future Farmers of America Club," Daniels said.

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**Residents of Alva and Lehigh Acres shared ideas about a proposed park on Joel Boulevard during an information session June 24 with representatives of the Lee County Department of Parks and Recreation at the community center**

## Park could be first of its kind in Florida

A chance to suggest features for a new park to Lee County recreation planners drew about 50 people to the Alva Community Center on June 24.

The proposed park is off Joel Boulevard near the border between Alva and Lehigh Acres. Residents from both communities took part. Construction of the park is still about two years away. The county has set a cost of \$1.5 million to be paid with impact fees, said county planner Jason Lamey.

The park will be the first “agro-eco” park in the state, according to Roy Beckford, director of the University of Florida’s Extension Service office in Lee County. The goal is to help people learn how to use agriculture in an urban area and to enhance the greening of Lee County, Beckford said. The county has plans for demonstration farming projects in the park.

“I’d make sure there would be a community garden,” said Alva resident Wendy

Sprague, who added she would volunteer to help.

Alva Inc. is recommending the park’s uses be tied to an environmental curriculum at a high school that could be built nearby at Tuckahoe Road.

Carol Cherigo of Lehigh Acres said she’s unsure if the park will meet the needs of the people for recreation.

“It seems limited as to trees. When you go to the park you want shade, Cherigo said.

### From Page 1

## Repairs required

Cracking was discovered last summer when inspectors reviewed re-roofing work. Braces were installed in November.

School resumes Aug. 24. By then the exterior should be completed, but interior work will still be ongoing. School officials hope to have the interior work completed by mid-October.

Gulfpoint Construction of Fort Myers is the general contractor on the job.

The roof will be replaced with structural steel trusses, metal decking, insulation and shingles.

A structural metal stud

wall system with a stucco exterior finish will replace the walls. There will be a new floor and wall finishes for the interior of the auditorium.

Original parts of the building were constructed in 1914. The building became the home of a middle school after the Alva High School was replaced around 1970 by Riverdale High School. The auditorium is now part of The Alva School, a K-8 school.



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