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ALL ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Pawn shop offers folks help when they need it

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FUN WITH A TWIST OF CARDIO

Pickleball is one of our area's most popular sports



LOCAL FOCUS FAITH & WORSHIP PAGE 13

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Sid Herrod, Tyler Finkelstein, owner; and Hunter Patterson. Photo by Linda Williford

THE COMMUNITY PAWN SHOP

BY LINDA WILLIFORD

Tyler Finkelstein has special memories of visiting the beach with his family while growing up. He is originally from Montgomery, Alabama. Tyler said, "My father had a pawn shop, Capital Pawn, in Montgomery, and I worked with him from 12 years old until I decided to move to the beach to Gulf Shore in 2020 and opened Anchor Pawn."

Finkelstein has 25 years' experience in the pawn business. He explains how pawning works. You take in an item of value, and you receive money (a loan) against that item. It's a 30-day loan that does not affect your credit score. When the loan is paid off, then you can redeem or take back your item. Or you can just pay the finance charge and renew your loan for another 30 days. There is

an 80% redemption ratio where customers pick up their items after pawning.

Anchor Pawn buys as well as sells. "The top 5 items that we pawn, buy, sell, and trade are jewelry, firearms, coins and bullion, tools, and electronics." Finkelstein added, "I also pay top dollar for scrap gold."

When asked how do you determine if something brought to you is stolen property, Finkelstein explained. "When someone brings in an item, we ask open ended questions to inquire about ownership of the item." They put the customer's information into an online systems software that local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies have access to determine if item has been stolen. If stolen, the item will be returned to the victim of theft. "My dad would say, Son, always remember that there's too much

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Tyler Finkelstein,
owner of Anchor Pawn.
Photo by Linda Williford

good money in this business to go after bad money.”

If the store buys an item stolen, he may lose the money when returned to the rightful owner, but he said, “It’s a small price to pay to do the right thing. You can sleep well at night doing the right thing, and that’s how I try to live and conduct myself in business.”

“We offer quick cash during economic downturns as well as in the best economic conditions.” Pawn shops offer consumer goods to facilitate the buying and selling of second-hand items at a lower price than retail, adding “that some consumers do business with him to invest below retail prices. During economic downturns, pawn shops see increased demand as people look for ways to manage their finances. Pawn shops are positioned as a barometer for the economic health at the community level.”

Many times, in the signage of a pawn shop, you will see three balls or three circles. Finkelstein says that the three balls are tradi-

tionally thought to represent the three stages of the pawn process: the loan, the pledge of the item, and the retrieval or redemption. Many believe its origin dates to medieval times when pawnbroking was first established in Lombardy, Italy.

“People are the favorite things about the pawn business, Dad would say, we’re not in the pawn business; we’re in the people business.” About 40% of his business comes from tourists or visitors to the area. “Typically, they will come to the store to find great deals on merchandise versus paying retail somewhere else.” Tyler said that he knows consumers do business with him because they appreciate dealing with quality merchandise.

If you want to pawn, buy, sell, or trade, you can go shopping at Anchor Pawn, located at 3859 Gulf Shores Parkway, Suite 5. For more information, go to www.anchorpawn.shop or call 251-224-4895.



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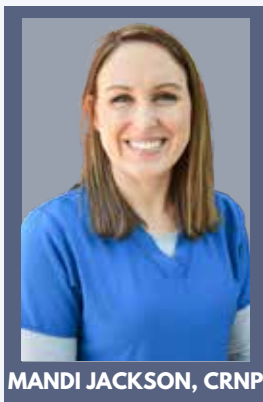
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Photos by Linda Williford

FOLEY'S FASTEST GROWING SPORT

BY LINDA WILLIFORD

Pickleball is a new sport that is a combination of badminton, tennis, and ping pong. It uses a smooth-faced paddle to hit a perforated, hollow plastic ball over a 34-inch-high net. According to the Sports and Fitness Industry Association, this sport is the fastest-growing in the United States. In 2024, it was estimated there were 19.8 million participants in the United States, a 311% growth since 2021. It's a sport for all ages but is very popular with middle-aged and older adults because it is low impact and is easy on the joints.

The game was created in 1965 on Bainbridge Island, Washington, at Joel Pritchard's summer home as a children's backyard game. Pritchard later served in the United States Congress and as Washington's lieutenant governor. Pritchard and his two friends, Barney McCallum and Bill Bell, are credited with devising the game and establishing the rules. In 2021, pickleball was named the official state sport of Washington.

"I love, love, love it!" says Rayma Mullenix, a local pickleball player in Foley. "I was introduced to the sport when I moved to the Grove Community, and I fell in love with it. I'm very competitive, and I love the competition." Rayma was a long-time tennis player

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{local} Faith & Worship

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St. Andrew by the Sea is a Christian congregation of people from diverse backgrounds whose journeys of faith have brought us to each other. All of God's children are welcome. We join in worship on Sunday morning to praise God, fellowship with one another, hear the Gospel, and become inspired to do God's work in our community.

As a community church, we partner with local organizations that are doing the Lord's work. Meeting local needs in a hands-on way is why we're launching the St. Andrew Preschool this fall.

For the last eleven years, the Rev. Dr. Larry Wood has counted himself blessed to serve here, in large part because St. Andrew continues to look outward and keep its sense of purpose, which also seems to resonate with new members of all ages. Every Sunday, the growing church family still sings, "We are standing on holy ground..."

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Del Key and Rayma Mullenix. Photos by Linda Williford



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before pickleball. “This sport is easier on my body,” she said. Rayma has been playing pickleball for 2 years.

With pickleball being so popular, there is a need for more facilities and locations for the sport. The City of Foley Leisure Services

Executive Director, David Thompson said, “There is an outdoor pickleball facility being built behind the Coastal Alabama Farmers & Fishermen’s Market. It is tentatively slated to open in June.” This facility will be home to 12 courts and will be an open-play style recreational facility. The courts will be first come, first served.

The Foley Event Center currently has a tournament scheduled for August. The Foley Sports Tourism website will provide more information in the coming weeks.

There are also indoor pickleball courts available and open to the public. The Bama Beach Pickleball Club has listed on its website places to play and upcoming tournaments. They host tournaments at the Foley Event Center periodically and also have classes for pickleball beginners. Go to bamabeachpickleballclub.net for more information. OWA has indoor facilities as well and hosts tournaments. More information is at pickleballatowa.com.

Del Key, an avid pickleball player, plays more for recreation and health benefits than competition. He said, “I play for exercise.” He has 50 years of experience in tennis. When he moved to Foley, he was looking for tennis players but instead found pickleball players in his community. He says, “To learn and get good at pickleball, it generally takes about 3 to 4 weeks, as opposed to tennis which takes about 2 to 3 years.”

According to health experts, pickleball is a full-body cardiovascular workout that burns calories for weight control and improves flexibility. Researchers at Utah State University discovered that a six-week pickleball course not only improved health outcomes but also improved cognition, which is critical for functional independence, especially as one ages.



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