

We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way.



CONNECTIONS



SUMMER 2020



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A MESSAGE FROM THE GENERAL MANAGER

By now many folks have seen the rendering of a giant sea turtle and dolphin on the Destin Water Users (DWU) water tower that reaches up to 169 feet in the air off Calhoun Avenue in Destin. The tank has a storage capacity of 750,000 gallons of water and was constructed in Spring 2019 by Phoenix Fabricators. This particular tower was constructed by DWU to improve operation of their water distribution system and provide additional fire protection on the west side of their service area.

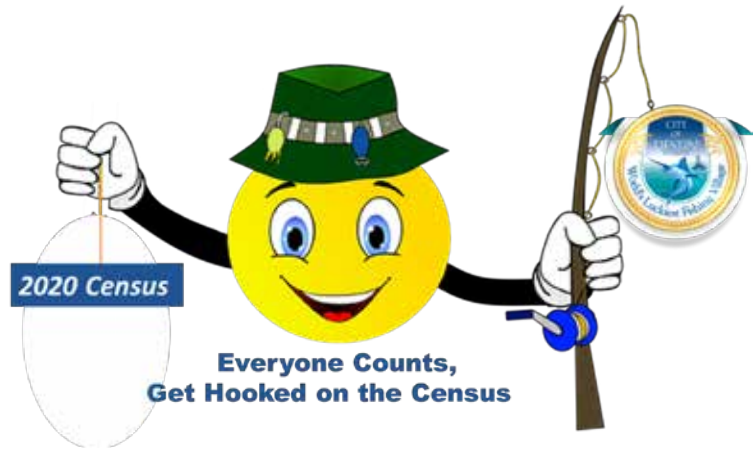
Artist, Eric Henn, of Dayton, Ohio, is the guy up in the lift making the sea creatures come to life.

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Citizen Response to the 2020 Census is Critical

Please assist your city by participating in and completing your 2020 Census. Our count of the U.S. population happens every 10 years. This year's Census will generate population numbers that will be used for the next 10 years to determine political representation, as well as the awarding of over \$775 billion dollars in federal funding in a myriad of uses from infrastructure to financial support for disaster operations like the current crop of programs supporting members of our community affected by COVID-19.



Financially in Destin, our local gas and sales tax is distributed to our community based on our permanent population, so getting the count right is important. If for any reason we have an undercount, it will affect us for the next 10 years.

There are multiple methods to complete the 2020 Census. The primary means

of completion this year is on-line at www.2020census.gov. You can complete the Census by taking the electronic survey. The survey should take 5-7 minutes to complete. Additional time may be required for larger families. The Census can also be completed by phone at 1-844-330-2020.

The Census website provides specific instructions based on your language requirements. The remaining two options are to complete a written survey or if the Census Bureau suspects enough undercount, actual on-the-ground counters may conduct door to door canvassing like we did in 2010.

Mailed surveys will be sent out sometime this summer or fall once all electronic and phone response percentages have been determined. Those addresses that did not respond on-line or by phone will be more likely to receive a written survey to complete. Bottomline, we have multiple options for completing the Census. Please avail yourself of one of them and ensure that you help shape our future.

- James T Wood Jr., DWU Board Member and 2020 Census Volunteer

Message from the GM continued

Destin Water Users had a previous working relationship with Henn since he painted the mural on Tower 3 located on the DWU George French Water Reclamation Facility, which can be seen behind Target in Destin.

"We're proud of the work he is doing," said DWU General Manager Lockwood Wernet. "Since the Tower is located in the heart of Old Destin, we wanted to paint something that paid tribute to the heritage of our community."

Henn started the Destin water tank off Calhoun on Feb. 17, 2020. He makes his own patterns and then puts them up using magnets and duct tape to get his outline.

"It's pretty primitive how I do it," Henn said. "I just basically need to know where the eyeball is and just some prominent

features and then I go from there. I just need the basics. It kind of comes natural and I feel blessed that I can do a business that I love," he added.



Henn does all the painting with brushes or rollers and has different techniques where he rolls colors into each other. In the dolphin, he has used eight different colors of aqua switching between brushes.

"It's just all learning throughout the years what works," he said.

In addition to the turtle and dolphin, Henn painted various species of fish, scenes from the ocean floor, and a coral reef on the vast canvas of the tower.

"We hope that this mural will spark some joy in those that pass by each day and showcases our rich history in our beach community,"

- Lockwood Wernet.

EMPLOYEES OF THE MONTH



MARCH 2020
Jessica Law



APRIL 2020
Tony Martindale



MAY 2020
Abby Martin



TOM WEIDENHAMER, PRESIDENT

Message from the **PRESIDENT**

During these trying times, we want to assure you that your drinking water and treated wastewater are safe. Coronavirus, which causes COVID-19, is a type of virus that is particularly susceptible to disinfection. Standard treatment and disinfectant processes are effective in treating viruses. Therefore, do not worry about using tap water for drinking, cooking or personal hygiene or reclaimed water for irrigation.

The Water and Wastewater Sector provides a vital public health and safety service and is considered essential critical infrastructure as are its workers. To ensure that we could always deliver safe water to you and properly treat wastewater, DWU implemented a Half-Staffing Plan. We divided employees into two shifts working one week on and one week off. This employee separation plan was designed to ensure that we always had a healthy staff to conduct our business and serve you, our members. In addition to the staffing plan, our managers encouraged employees to follow proper social distancing guidelines or wear masks, practice good hand hygiene protocols, and regularly disinfect high touch surfaces and tools to keep

everyone healthy. We also closed our lobby for a period of time to limit public contact like many other businesses did.

We returned to full staff and reopened our lobby in early June. However, our employees are continuing to follow proper social distancing guidelines or wear masks, practice good hand hygiene protocols, and regularly disinfect high touch surfaces and tools to keep everyone healthy.

Early on, we began making sure customers were aware of all available payment methods, including social distancing methods such as on-line credit card payments and check payments that can be made with no additional fees. We encouraged members to call our office during normal business hours to make a credit card payment over the phone, with no additional fees and we reminded folks about our drop box in front of our Main Street office.

We suspended cut-off and late penalties for several months to help our members who were struggling to pay their bills. We did not forgive payments; we simply gave them more time to pay. If you are still behind, please contact our office and speak to a customer service representative to make arrangements to pay your past due balance.

Moving forward, we are monitoring the number of infections and infection rates so we can be prepared to respond appropriately. We are also monitoring

employees' health and encouraging those who are not feeling well to stay home. The last thing we are monitoring is our income and expenditures. We slowed our spending to essential items only for a period of time and we are beginning to slowly increase our spending as we have seen a recovery in our water and sewer sales.

Our mission statement is "We live and work in a little piece of paradise, and DWU is intent on doing our part to keep it that way." We believe that we have done our part as we responded to the coronavirus. We are thankful for the dedication and commitment of our employees and the work they did to ensure the public health and safety of our community. We hope that we are through the worst of this pandemic, but rest assured, we are prepared to respond in any way needed to ensure our members that they have a safe reliable drinking water supply and that wastewater will be properly managed.

In closing, we need your help. Please do not flush anything except toilet paper down the drain. Products like wipes and paper towels do not break down in the waste stream and they invariably lead to clogged lines and equipment failure that cause sewer overflows in our system and possibly in your home. Please throw wipes and paper towels in the trash.



DESTIN WATER USERS, INC.

P.O. Box 308
Destin, FL 32540-0308

OFFICE HOURS

The DWU office is open Monday through Friday
7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

PHONE NUMBERS

Administrative Office – Bill Payment Questions and Concerns
(850) 837-6146

Emergencies, Nights, Sundays and Holidays
(850) 837-6551

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Running late? Pay your DWU bill over the phone! We accept American Express, MasterCard, Visa and Discover. Contact a Customer Service Representative for more information. You can also pay your bill online at www.dwuinc.com or dial 1-833-394-8398

WANT YOUR MONTHLY BILL PAID AUTOMATICALLY?

You can now sign up for autopay using a credit card or your checking account by visiting www.dwuinc.com

PAY ONLINE



Paying your DWU bill is easier than ever! Simply go online to dwuinc.com and click "Payment Options" at the top of the page. It will take you to the correct location and provide instructions on getting set up for this convenient payment method.



ANNUAL WATER QUALITY REPORT

DWU strives to provide you safe and reliable drinking water.

Please go to <http://dwuinc.com/advisorynotices/dwu-water-quality-report>

to view your 2019 Annual Water Quality Report and learn more about your drinking water. This report contains important information about the source and quality of your drinking water.

In 2019, DWU detected 20 contaminants in the drinking water. However, none of these contaminants were above the EPA acceptable levels for drinking water. For a translation of the water quality report or to speak with someone about the report please call (850) 837-6146.

If you would like a paper copy of the 2019 Annual Water Quality Report mailed to your home, please call (850) 837-6146 or email cs@dwuinc.com.

DESTIN WATER USERS BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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President



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