



The NOODLE

Open up and say AHHHH!!!



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Welcome to the July 2022 edition of *The Noodle*, written and published by the FYC. For this issue of *The Noodle*, members of the FYC were asked to write about some of their favorite 4th of July Memories. This topic allowed members to share their thoughts and memories about the 4th of July and what it means to them. We hope you will take a few minutes out of your busy schedule to learn about our experiences and enjoy our thoughts and opinions in this edition of *The Noodle*!

Current Members:

John Baldino

Shevie Barnes

Derek Carraway

Alexander Gonzalez

Leah Gorman

Morgan Griffin

JJ Humphrey

Michelle Sandiford

Josh Tapia

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Christina Waldron

Serena Wetmore





My favorite 4th of July memory

My favorite 4th of July memory was last year because my mom and I, along with some friends, went to stay at a church called Zion with a big hill. My mom and I, along with some friends. I visited another church called Tabernacle Baptist church.



The Tabernacle was having their 4th of July picnic on a Sunday night. They had a cookout, some music, and fireworks, the fireworks were thunderous to my ears, but the music and food were good. Tabernacle had a children's home that we got to help at. The children's home was located across the road from the church. We all met some of the children who lived in the home. We did crafts and read stories with the children. We also did a little bit of cleaning for the children's home. Tabernacle also went

to a camp meeting each night called Greer Baptist camp meeting. We had to sit outside at the camp meeting and listen to different preachers preach. After a service one night, we got to see some more fireworks, but they were also too loud for my ears.

I learned a lot last year, and I enjoyed the experience of the fireworks even though they were loud. I also enjoyed getting to help at the children's home and going with the children to the camp meetings.

By Michelle Sandiford





Best 4th of July Ever!

The 4th of July! Independence Day! I can think of several memorable years. Countless ones were gathering with my family, having a meal, but one recent one comes to mind that stands out.

It was back in 2019. The 4th fell on a Thursday that year which I usually hate when it falls midweek, but my job decided to give us the 5th off too, so it was all was good. Since I had like four days off, my mom and I decided to go to the beach for a little mini getaway. My then girlfriend (now wife) also came down and joined us. That's where what made it a little more special and memorable than some. That's because we had a long-distance thing going on at the time. I was down here in Florida, and she lived up in Tennessee.

When we both got to the beach, we spent every second we could together. We went out to eat a few times, enjoyed the pool and the ocean, and because it was the 4th of July holiday weekend, we obviously got to watch all the fireworks.

That was a real all-nighter, lasting for hours into the night after the main show the city put on, thanks to the countless private citizens who were shooting off their fireworks late into the night. All of that combined for a tremendous memorable 4th of July!



By Derek Carraway





Favorite Fourth of July Memory

My favorite Fourth of July memory was last year when a friend made reservations for our family and hers at Disney's Beach Club Villas. We went to the resort's theme pool, and it was amazing! Only hotel guests are allowed to use Storm-Along Bay, the resort's theme pool. The pool area is like a theme park! There is a water slide, a current pool, a lazy river, and swimming areas. And for the little children, there is a playground, a splash area, and sand for digging. Since everyone was older, none of us went to the kiddie area.



Getting to the waterslide was an adventure! I rode it a lot. I had to go out of the pool area, cross the "street," and climb up many, many, many steps (in what looked like an old ship) up to the entry of the water slide. The slide is 230 feet long!! This slide was fast! Part of it was in a tunnel! And if memory serves me right, the bottom was sandy where the slide entered the theme pool.

Quite a bit of the pool had a sandy bottom. My mom, her friend, and I rode the lazy river together. That was fun! I'll never forget the time my mom went on the water slide with me. Everything started great. Then either the height or the spiral staircase made her feel scared. She clung to the railing. She climbed those steps to the top but clung to the railing. She only rode it once. There was a hot tub too. But none of us used it. We topped off the day by watching fireworks at Epcot! We watched it in France. Trees and so many people limit our view. We got there shortly before it started. So, all the prime spots were taken. But we enjoyed it. And we were away from the crowds.

I'm very grateful for my mom's friend, who included us in her vacation plans. It was nice to visit the resort for two days and for my mom to see her childhood friend, and for me to meet her husband and college-aged kids. My dad worked most of the holiday, so he missed out on the swimming. I'm glad he could join us for the fireworks and spend some quality time together!

By J.J. Humphrey



Fireworks and Friends on the 4th of July

My favorite 4th of July memory is going to Apalachicola with Cathy Cadell, her husband Charlie, and their family. Cathy is the daughter of a good friend of my mother and father, John Caddell. They are from Montgomery, Alabama, and have been our neighbors and good friends on St. George Island for longer than I have been alive.



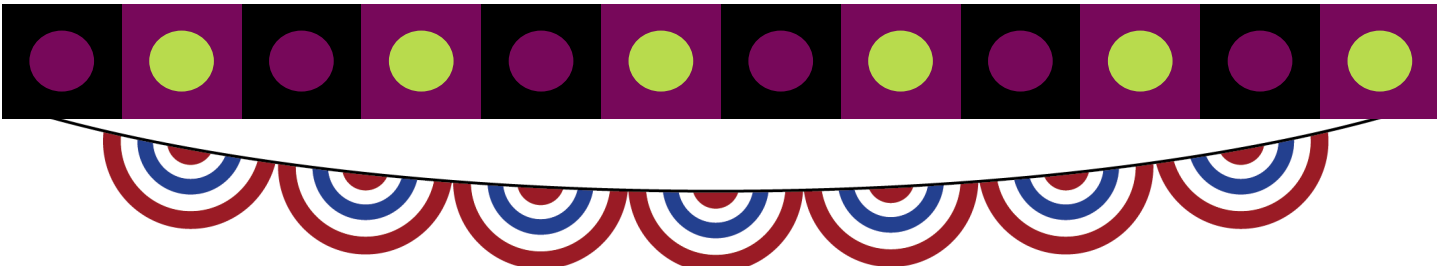
For the past two years, Cathy has bought a table on the dock for the fireworks celebration. Hundreds of people are there, and the atmosphere is friendly and fun. Cathy invited us to join her and her family. This year she is doing it again. Two years ago, we ate at my favorite restaurant, the Owl Café, before joining Cathy.

After dinner, we walked to the docks along the river, where the tables are set up to view the show. Shrimp boats are docked along the Apalachicola River, and you can see the bridge you drive across to get to Apalachicola and St. George Island. The view is excellent, and Apalachicola always has the best fireworks I have ever seen. It is so much fun to be so close to the spectacle.



After the fireworks are over, we drive home to St. George Island, where we can see tons of other fireworks all along the beach. I drive on the road right near Gulf Beach Drive and watch the fireworks at night in the pitch-black sky. They light up the sky; it is like exploding lightning!

By John Howard Baldino



My Favorite 4th of July Memory

If I had to pick one, my favorite 4th of July memory is when I see all my family and friends. I think it is a wonderful holiday to celebrate, especially doing it in the summer.

I enjoy watching the fireworks because I like the different shapes and colors they showcased at these events, and when my niece has a Roman candle coming, she tells us when people start running. I really love the sparklers and the poppers. I enjoy them because when you throw them at people, everyone has a good time running away and running around.

Having my family all together is amazing too, and we do the fireworks all the way to 11 pm. Seems kind of early, don't you think?

There are a few things that I am grateful to have been taught about on the 4th of July. The 4th of July is a federal holiday in the United States. This is the date that we declared our independence as a Sovereign Nation, which happened July 4th, 1776. This is also why we call the 4th of July Independence Day.



I'll see you August 5-6 for the 15th annual youth summit! We are excited about the opportunity to host everyone and can't wait to see you there.

By Leah Gorman



4th of July Memory

There are so many moments when it comes down to this holiday. But if I were to pick my favorite memory, the most memorable 4th of July is the year we were at a friend's party for a pool party and rocked out as we waited that night for the fireworks to start.



It is an exciting feeling of old-school American tradition to have like a barbecue and gather to celebrate with others. Once we were hanging out at their house in the pool, and then we did sparklers before leaving to go to Lake Desoto in downtown Lake City.

When we got there, we had no idea anything would go bad. Still, we were all wrong; before we knew it, a group of palm trees caught fire. Hence, the fireworks stopped until the fire department came to put the fire out in the palm trees. The excellent part is that no one was hurt in the fire.



Once they were given the ok to continue the fireworks, they moved to a different spot on the lake, the palm trees, to prevent them from catching fire again so they could finally do a box of fireworks for that year.

I'm excited to see what the next 4th of July holiday will be like!

By Morgan Griffin





My Ideal Fourth of July



You might wonder why I say my ideal Fourth of July instead of my favorite. Although some Fourth of Julys has been better than others, I don't really have a favorite. The reason for this is that the noise of the fireworks bothers my ears. I described it once as "an explosion going off inside my head, causing me physical pain." Therefore, I have noise cancellation earphones. I guess it has something to do with my premature birth because I know other people who feel the same way. And it's not just that I don't like the noise, but I don't like the pollution that goes into the air when the fireworks go off. It smells terrible

and is probably unhealthy for the planet. (I am a bit of an environmentalist).

My ideal Fourth of July would be parades or maybe a pool party. As for other things I would change, I would enjoy just a nice picnic and an opportunity to appreciate the history and diversity of this great country. Often, I end up in my room, wearing my ear protectors and playing iPad.

I have lots of empathy for all the dogs and other animals out there; they would likely rate this as their least favorite holiday. I wish I could feel more excited when this day comes around every year. Maybe one day, I'll invent some 100 percent silencing earphones and help everyone else experiencing the same struggle.

By Serena Wetmore





Summer of 06'



Today I share a memory that will still stay with me. It was something to remember.

One of my favorite 4th of July memories is spending time with my grandmother at my aunt's house in Lancaster. My family and I were visiting relatives up north. I was bunking in with my cousins Sean and Michael. It was fun playing outside and video games later because it is the type of thing that I loved to do when I was a kid.

I remember when my grandmother took my cousins and me outside to light up some fireworks, and people in the neighborhood also showcased their fireworks. As a kid, it was fantastic, all the different colors. Nowadays, paying for fireworks is expensive or has been that way. So many things were going on, and sometimes it was getting too loud for my ears because I was sensitive to the noise. I wanted to go back inside, but my grandmother stopped me and wanted to experience the moment of having some family time.

I still have a photo of us together smiling. The picture is somewhere lost in an old family computer. Nonetheless, my grandmother wanted to cherish moments like this because you never know if moments like the time we spent will ever happen again.

By Alexander Gonzalez





How Do I Become Part of The Florida Youth Council?

The Florida Youth Council is a group of youth (between the ages of 15 and 17) and emerging leaders (between the ages of 18 and 30) with disabilities or special health care needs that live in Florida.

The Florida Youth Council is all about getting youth and emerging leaders involved in self-advocacy, peer mentoring and other activities that will improve the quality of life for youth and emerging leaders with disabilities in Florida. The program empowers youth and emerging leaders to decide what issues are important to their generation, to discuss those issues in their state and local communities, and to develop strategies to address them.

We are seeking a group of enthusiastic, motivated youth and emerging leaders to participate. If you would like to take a leadership role in advocating for youth and emerging leaders in Florida, please visit The Florida Youth Council website at www.floridayouthcouncil.com. The program is open to application year round. We hope to hear from you soon!



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