

Howland's hosting centennial celebration

By JAMIE WACHTER on Wednesday, March 25, 2026

Free ice cream, lunch, prizes part of Saturday event.



W.B. Howland Company is hosting a centennial celebration on Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The company opened its Live Oak location in 1926 on the same property that the current store is located at the roundabout. (JAMIE WACHTER/Lake City Reporter)

The W.B. Howland Company is throwing a party 100 years in the making.

The company's centennial celebration is set for Saturday at its location for the past 100 years, 610 11th Street SW in Live Oak. The event will last from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

It will include a little bit of everything, just like what Howland's has brought to the community for a century.

"We're going to have local officials here," Tyler Gray, the company's operations manager, said about the centennial celebration. "It's a community family-oriented event. We'll have food, giveaways. This is our opportunity to say thank you to the community for helping us, for building with us the last 100 years. So we're going to have activities for the kids, face painting and door prizes."

Among the many items set for the day include a free grilled lunch, free hand-dipped ice cream as a nod to the company's past and door prizes galore, including a pergola and some hand tools as well.

"It goes in line with our industry," Gray added.

Still the biggest portion of the day may be the return of the ice cream. When the company first announced the plans to be dishing it out as part of the centennial celebration, social media — and word of mouth around town — was all abuzz over the dessert.

That treat's return is a nod to its past as the W.B. Howland Company, which set up shop in Live Oak in 1926 after the family previously had locations in Madison and in Clayland (Dowling Park area), served the hand-dipped ice cream from its earliest days.

"There was no other source of a treat that you could buy in town," Howland owner Lyn Fletcher, the grandson of W.B. Howland, said. "There was no Dairy Queens or A&W Root Beer, anything like that."

So when the families rode into Live Oak on their horse and wagon to get groceries and other essentials one day a week, the Howland ice cream became a reward. If the children behaved, they would be treated on the way back home.

"The whole world came to that store growing up as children for ice cream," Fletcher added. "That was the highlight. I can't tell you the thousands of stories where people have said, 'I'm just telling you I looked forward to that ice cream so much.'"

The ice cream, as with the lunch and the tea, sodas and water being served, will be free.

The company also plans to bury a time capsule on the site during Saturday's event. And the ice cream won't be the only thing returning.

Rather, Fletcher said all nine of W.B. Howland's grandchildren — all of whom grew up right by the store and spent their youth running around in the store and working in it — are scheduled to attend and be ambassadors for the company during the event.

"We literally grew up in that old wooden store," Fletcher said, noting there are expected to be around 70 descendants of the company's founder in attendance. "If you had nothing to do, you just hung out in the store."

"This is literally a real appreciation to our communities."



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Gallery hosting coloring contests

Children's workshops, contests for 4-12-year-olds

By JAMIE WACHTER

The Gallery at the Howland Company is hosting a series of coloring contests for children ages 4 to 12 on Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The contests will be held in the gallery area of the store, which is located at 610 11th Street SW in Live Oak. The contests will be held in the gallery area of the store, which is located at 610 11th Street SW in Live Oak. The contests will be held in the gallery area of the store, which is located at 610 11th Street SW in Live Oak.

Endangered Suwannee?

Group calls river among country's 10 most at-risk waterways

By JAMIE WACHTER

A coalition of environmental groups is calling for the Suwannee River to be designated as one of the 10 most at-risk waterways in the United States. The groups are concerned about the river's health and the impact of climate change on the region. The groups are concerned about the river's health and the impact of climate change on the region.

SRWMD modifies water shortage order

By JAMIE WACHTER

The Suwannee River Water Management District (SRWMD) has modified its water shortage order for the region. The new order allows for increased water use in certain areas, but still requires conservation in others. The new order allows for increased water use in certain areas, but still requires conservation in others.

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