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WWALS Watershed Coalition advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacochee, Alapaha, Little, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities.



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** **When it's finished, which it isn't yet.**

## Submissions open for Second Annual Suwannee Riverkeeper Songwriting Contest

Hahira, Georgia, April 1, 2019 — No fooling but fun: today songwriters can start submitting new songs about the Suwannee, Withlacoochee, Alapaha, or Little Rivers, or other lakes, swamps, springs, or sinks in the Suwannee River Basin. New this year is a separate winner category for finalists younger than eighteen, in the Second Annual Suwannee Riverkeeper Songwriting Contest. Well-known radio personality Chris Beckham will be the Master of Ceremonies inside in air conditioning Saturday afternoon, August 24, 2019, at The Salty Snapper in Valdosta, Georgia. Three judges will select winners as finalists play. Snacks are included, plus a silent auction and kayak raffle. Come have some family musical fun supporting your local nonprofit WWALS Watershed Coalition and Suwannee Riverkeeper.



*Photo: Bret Wagenhorst, of Emmett Carlisle playing at the 2018 Contest*

Last year's winner, Laura D'Alisera has driven from Jacksonville for every contest organizing committee meeting this year, and will sing this year while the judges are judging. She says, "To encourage working songwriters, this year we will pay mileage for finalists to the venue in the biggest city in the Suwannee River Basin, from 50 up to 125 miles. Yes, and mileage for judges, too."

Tickets are \$10 online or \$12 at the door. Or \$150 per eight-seat VIP table right in front of the stage. Everything about the contest is online here:

<http://www.wwals.net/pictures/2019-08-24--suwannee-riverkeeper-songwriting-contest/>

The song submission deadline is Friday, July 12, 2019. The entry form is online, for your song lyrics and information about the song and to introduce you if you become a finalist. You can send your song as an electronic file or on a USB stick.

The Contest Committee will choose half a dozen finalists according to criteria such as

they're really about some of our waters in the Suwannee River Basin. Finalists will be announced Saturday, August 10, 2019.



*Photo: Mary Caroline Pindar, of the Songwriting Contest Committee: Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman, WWALS Events Committee Chair Eileen Box, 2018 Contest First Prize Laura D'Alisera, Contest Committee Chair Scotti Jay, Lead Water Quality Tester Sara Jay, and, all the way from Pine Mountain, GA, Tom H. Johnson Jr., 2019-03-25*

Most distant Committee member Tom H. Johnson said, "I've driven four hours from Pine Mountain, Georgia, to Live Oak, Florida for each committee meeting, because this is a fun event and a great showcase for WWALS advocacy."

The contest is 1-5 PM, Saturday, August 24, 2019, at The Salty Snapper, 1405 Gornto Rd, Valdosta, Georgia. The first prize is \$300. Prizes of \$50 each will go to one winner from within the Suwannee River Basin, and one from without. There will be one winner per musical genre.

New this year: there will be one or more youth winners under 18 years old.

Contest committee chair Scotti Jay said, "You've all got a song in you about manatees or sturgeon or tea-colored rivers or blue springs. High school and middle school students: you can do it. Write one down and send it in!"

Every musical genre is welcome, and anything from spoken word to *a capella* to bands may play. You must be present to win. You do not have to sing, but you do have to be onstage with your song's performance. All finalists must arrive 11AM for sound check.

Suwannee Riverkeeper John S. Quarterman said, "Everybody liked the event and the venue last year, so this year with more lead time we hope to have even more people send in songs and more people come listen to them." He added, "Since surprisingly last year everybody wanted to hear quite a bit about our advocacy, I and others will speak about that. But it's not all work: you will also hear about outings and festivals and other fun events."

Sponsoring the contest is a great opportunity for businesses and individuals to get their name in publicity about the Contest, from radio and TV and newspaper interviews and public interest spots, to a banner to hang at your place of business, to a banner at the event and a mention in the program. Help support clean water advocacy

and get more people to see your business.

**WWALS Watershed Coalition, Inc. (WWALS)** advocates for conservation and stewardship of the Withlacoochee, Willacoochee, Alapaha, Little, and Suwannee River watersheds in south Georgia and north Florida through education, awareness, environmental monitoring, and citizen activities. Founded in June 2012, WWALS has board members from multiple counties in south Georgia and north Florida, and members from all over the Suwannee River Basin and from farther away. Since December 2016, John S. Quarterman is the Suwannee Riverkeeper®, which is a staff position and a project of WWALS as the Member of Waterkeeper® Alliance for the Suwannee River Basin.

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