

A Day at the Beach, Chase's Call...

Nataley and Chase were childhood sweethearts, and this rare love only strengthened through high school and college, so it was no surprise to anyone who knew them that they would marry in October of 2008.

This beautiful union included Barrett, then Brooks, followed by Bella. The Childers family was beautiful, active and happy, with baseball games, ballet recitals, and time spent with family. Mr. and Mrs. Childers, a stunning couple inside as well as out, a couple whose love for each other and their family was an inspiration to all who knew them.

On Sunday afternoon, July 13th, 2025, their world would come crashing down. Nataley, Chase, and their children were staying with her grandparents for the weekend, and decided on a beach day, something they had done plenty of times on their visits with family. They were tossing the football on the beach, playing with beach toys, and enjoying their family day on the beach. A woman walked up to Chase and told him a family was in trouble in the water and asked if he would help. Of course, this former police officer ran into the water without hesitation. This is the character of Chase Childers.



There was another gentleman, a former first responder, who also ran into the ocean to help this family in distress. Apparently, the daughter of a family had gone into the water, followed by the Dad, Mom, and two other siblings, and all were caught in a deadly rip current.

Chase and the other rescuer worked diligently to save this family. One by one the family members all made it to safety. The man who helped in the rescue made it back to shore, but there was no sign of Chase.

Nataley was frantically trying to watch her children while monitoring the shoreline waiting for her husband. She phoned her grandmother and grandfather asking her grandfather to please pick up her children, while she and her grandmother waited to hear of Chase's rescue. The gentleman who had helped the family along with Chase, told Nataley he was completely exhausted. He told

her he saw Chase next to him, exhausted and fighting to stay afloat, and he told her Chase was there one second and gone the next. Sadly, he couldn't help Chase because he barely had the strength to save himself, and he was truly sorry.

The Coast Guard searched for Chase and found him in the water after about an hour and a half. The ambulance brought his body back to the beach where Nataley was waiting. This sweet young wife was about to endure a pain no one can possibly comprehend unless you have lost the love of your life under similar circumstances. She climbed into the ambulance and saw her precious husband, and hugged him tightly, laying across his chest, commenting that his arms still felt warm. Their beautiful love story had come to an abrupt end, their day at the beach should never have ended in this way, which leads us to ***Chase's Call***.

There is another family grieving the loss of their dear son right now. Tyrese Haynes, a local young man, rising high school senior, and varsity basketball player, who went into the ocean for a swim with a friend on Friday, July 11th. The friend survived, but Tyrese lost his life. His body was found on Saturday afternoon, July 12th. Both of these tragedies happened along the Litchfield Beach area of Pawley's Island.

After speaking with friends currently visiting Pawley's Island this week, it was very disturbing to hear they had no idea about the drowning deaths of two people in just the past week. Why aren't these deaths and this deadly rip current being shared on every news outlet in the Lowcountry? We realize this is a public relations and marketing nightmare for any beach town, especially at this time of year, but there are things more essential than tourist dollars, and sold out vacation rentals. Lives are at stake, lives that are irreplaceable, fathers, sons, and loved ones that must not be disregarded, or forgotten.

Pawley's Island is a wonderful place to live and to visit, a place with beautiful beaches, friendly people, and also a place which drew in around 750,000 people during peak beach season in 2024, according to townofpawleysisland.com. Georgetown County, which includes Pawley's Island, recorded over \$ 380 million in annual tourism spending as of late 2023, and while this figure spans the entire county, it's reasonable to believe Pawley's Island represents the lion's share of tourist dollars for the county. This is mentioned only to relay the fiscal capacity of this county and this town to be more proactive in the safety of the people who visit their beaches. The signs and life rings posted and available at beach access points may have been satisfactory over the past several years, but more people are traveling to our beaches than ever before, and the safety measures must keep pace with these current times.

The town of Pawley's Island must do more to ensure the safety of local residents and visitors alike. **There is no lifeguard presence, there is no warning flag system, and there is no digital alert system.** While the condolences of the mayor are appreciated, as are the magnets being

placed in rental properties to educate guests on the dangers of rip currents, it is regrettably inadequate. Pawley's Island cannot reap the benefits of a thriving beach destination, without accepting the burden of protecting those who contribute to their thriving beach economy. Five drownings in the past twenty six months is unacceptable, and two drownings within two days is inconceivable.

This petition is humbly presented to honor the memory of an extraordinary young man, husband, and father, Chase Childers. Chase, who selflessly entered the water to save a family in distress, and made the ultimate sacrifice, along with his wife and children.

These signatures are given by the people who believe every precaution should be taken in order to ensure the water safety of each and every person, resident or visitor, in Georgetown County and Pawley's Island.

We the undersigned, respectfully petition the Georgetown County Council, Georgetown County Planning and Zoning Department, Georgetown County Parks, Recreation & Aging Services, the Georgetown County Emergency Services/Emergency Management, Pawley's Island Town Council, Pawley's Island Police Department, and the Georgetown County Sheriff's Department, to adopt the following beach safety measures aimed at preventing future tragedies from rip current and surf conditions.

In tribute and loving memory of Anderson "Chase" Childers, who courageously lost his life while trying to save others on July 13, 2025. We ask these measures be formally named "***Chase's Call***" in his honor, as a living memorial to Chase, and a lasting tribute to his beloved wife and children.

These measures will not only protect residents and visitors by improving awareness and response to dangerous water conditions, but they will stand as a lasting promise from local officials and authorities—a visible, daily reminder of the commitment of the Town of Pawley's Island and Georgetown County in safeguarding every person who steps foot onto their beautiful beaches.

We thank the emergency rescue crews, and first responders for their efforts to rescue Chase. We also thank those who are keeping our dear family in their prayers. Our only comfort and hope is found through our faith in Jesus Christ, and He will sustain us.

Respectfully submitted by the family of Anderson Chase Childers

Susan P. Mitchell

Aunt of Nataley Childers

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Recommended Safety Measures

1. Colored Flag Warning System

Myrtle Beach uses the warning flag system and the state of Florida uses this system including a 2014 amendment that ensures all beaches use the same warning flag system.

2. Rip Current & Hazard Signs at all Access Points.

Signs showing explanations of the flag meanings

QR Codes or URL's linking to daily hazard updates.

3. Digital & Broadcast Alerts

Apps & Text alerts should be sent by local emergency management.

There should be daily updates on beach conditions, and text alerts on any hazardous swimming conditions and/or water related fatalities.

A text alert may have warned Tyrese Haynes not to swim that Friday afternoon, a text alert may have warned the family of five that swimming was dangerous in that area of the beach, and a text or warning about the rip current, as well as an alert to the drowning of another victim in the same area within a day, might have spared Chase's life.

Posts on Social media, along with electronic signs at beach access points would be a great asset, since people would be notified of conditions before going onto the beach.

4. Lifeguard Stations

Lifeguards are an invaluable presence because they can verbalize actual warnings to beachgoers, they can change the warning flags as needed, and provide a place for flags to be most visible to swimmers, and their most important role is they are trained to save lives in the event of a hazardous swimming condition such as a rip current. (These positions would be staffed from 9:00 AM until 6:00 PM, from May 15th through September 15th.)

Myrtle Beach, North Myrtle Beach, Surfside Beach, Folly Beach, Isle of Palms, Hilton Head Island, all have flag systems and seasonal lifeguards.

Hunting Island State Park, and Edisto Beach have signage and limited warning systems.

Pawley's Island and Litchfield Beach have no formal flag warning system and limited signage.