



What's Happening in Pasco County Government September, 2016

Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources

Volunteers Needed for Coastal Cleanup, Saturday, September 17, 2016, 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Pasco County Parks, Recreation, and Natural Resources is partnering with Keep Pasco Beautiful to organize the annual International Coastal Cleanup. Every year, volunteers band together to pick up trash along fragile coastal waterways and in Pasco County streets.

The event attracts hundreds of thousands of volunteers around the world who each spend a few hours removing trash and debris from beaches, lakes, rivers and inland areas – while keeping track of every piece of trash they find. The Ocean Conservancy uses that information to produce an annual country-by-country, state-by-state index of the problem of marine debris. In 2015 – 1,190 volunteers picked up 21.89 tons of trash throughout Pasco County!

Teams will be taking part all around Pasco County. Park sites include Anclote Gulf Park in Holiday and Robert J. Strickland Memorial Park (Hudson Beach) in Hudson. Supplies like trash bags and water will be provided. T-shirts will be given out while supplies last thanks to the generosity of our sponsors CH2M and Covanta Pasco.

“There are so many people in our community who are concerned about the environment,” said Kristen King, Keep Pasco Beautiful Coordinator. “They realize that the plastic bag thrown on the side of the road will eventually make it out to the Gulf, which can be deadly for marine animals such as turtles and fish. Our hope is that the cleanup will not only get debris off our streets and waterways, but also educate the public on the dangers of litter and the problems it causes.”

To find out how you can volunteer for the Pasco County Coastal Cleanup call (727) 856-7252 or email kking@pascocountyfl.net.

To learn more about Pasco County's beautiful parks, environmental lands and recreation opportunities, or to reserve park facilities, please call us at (813) 929-2760 or visit us online at www.pascocountyfl.net/parks.

Harbors Plan

Pasco County was awarded a \$1,000,000 FDOT Landscaping / Beautification Grant for U.S. 19 in July, and will be coordinating with the West Pasco Chamber of Commerce and the cities of New Port Richey and Port Richey on design and installation.

The Board of County Commissioners also recently passed a resolution supporting the designation of U.S. 19 as the “Gulf Coast Highway” in cooperation with the West Pasco Chamber of Commerce.

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On July 28, Florida State Senator Jack Latvala and Florida State Representative Amanda Murphy toured the Harbors area with Pasco County Commissioner Kathryn Starkey to see flood damaged areas, stormwater/flood mitigation projects, and redevelopment catalyst sites in Port Richey and New Port Richey. They also discussed other key redevelopment projects like the Anclote Coastal Trail, which is currently funded for design and construction, and will connect Pasco's three coastal parks to the Pinellas Trail System.

Biking/Walking Trail along 301

At the request of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is providing, in conjunction with the US 301 repaving project, a bicycle/pedestrian trail on the west side of US 301 – between Kossik Road (Zephyrhills) and Dade City Avenue (Dade City).

This 4.5 mile path will connect to the existing sidewalk north of Dade City Avenue and to sidewalks currently being constructed south of Kossik Road. This path will eventually be a segment of a regional north/south trail extending from the Withlacoochee State Trailhead in the Trilby Area of northern Pasco County to the Pasco/Hillsborough County line and eventually extending south to Fletcher Avenue in the USF area.

The US 301 path will provide an alternative mode of travel (bicycle/pedestrian) between the two cities and create a much safer environment for both pedestrians and bicyclists. The new path is expected to be ready and open to the public in late August. MPO staff is coordinating with Zephyrhills and Dade City and local Chambers of Commerce to host a grand opening (ribbon cutting) in late September or early October when the weather is a little cooler.

For more information on this path or other bicycle/pedestrian projects please contact the MPO Office at 727-847-8140 or at mpocomments@pascocountyfl.net.

Transportation Projects Totaling Over \$54M Completed This Year

With the current fiscal year winding down in September, Engineering Services will have completed 14 transportation improvement projects and six stormwater pipe replacement projects throughout Pasco County. These include safety and operational improvements at the intersection of Little Road and Massachusetts Avenue and at the intersection of Parkway Boulevard and Shining Star. These projects resulted in new turn lanes, signs, and pedestrian amenities. Traffic signals were improved with the installation of new mast arms at Ridge Road and Congress Street and at Ridge Road and Regency Park Boulevard.

New road construction on Interlaken Road – between Community Drive and Gunn Highway – provides an alternate route to SR 54 and enhances access to Odessa Elementary School. The construction of a missing segment of Chancey Road – from Meadow Pointe Boulevard to Foxwood Boulevard – was completed, allowing better access from local neighborhoods to Double Branch Elementary School.

In an effort to provide a more multi-modal transportation network, more than ten miles of sidewalks and multi-use paths were added to the County's transportation network this year. These projects include new sidewalks along Milestretch Drive – from US 19 to Arcadia Road; along Rowan Road – from Massachusetts Avenue to Ridge Road; and along Moog Road – from Springfield Drive to US 19, just to name a few.

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The total cost of these transportation improvement projects – including all phases through planning, design/permitting, right-of-way acquisition and construction – exceeded \$54M.

Medical Cannabis

On July 19, 2016 county staff held a workshop with the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) to present findings and options for the regulation of medical cannabis, including low-THC cannabis dispensaries within the context of existing legislation and for proposed legislation on medical and low-THC cannabis on the November 2016 ballot.

An existing temporary moratorium on the cultivation, processing or dispensing of medical cannabis, including low-THC cannabis, is set to expire on September 2, 2016. During the August 23, 2016 BCC meeting, the temporary moratorium was extended until December 31, 2016. The extension was given in order to allow staff sufficient time to bring a regulatory ordinance through the adoption process and for Commissioners to learn more about the issues in an upcoming fall workshop.

Libraries

Database to Help You Achieve Your Educational and Career Goals

With a Pasco County Library Card (free to Pasco County residents) and an internet connection, you have 24/7 access to the Learning Express Library. The LEL contains study guides and practice tests for occupation exams in allied health, civil service, electrical, firefighting, Homeland Security, law enforcement, nursing, real estate, and more. There are also study guides and practice tests for college entrance exams, placement tests, high school equivalency tests, and more. The Learning Express Library database can be accessed for free at www.PascoLibraries.org.

Animal Services

There have been many new and exciting things happening at Pasco County Animal Services recently. The construction of our new spree yard, new runs and an agility course for the dogs definitely tops the list. Friends of Animal Services graciously donated the money for our brand new spree yard, which allows more dogs to go out and play during the day. Our runs were donated by a generous group, Premier 1000. These will be a huge help in getting the dogs out so staff can cut back cleaning time. Our pups are absolutely in love with their new agility course! Skyler, an Eagle Scout for troop 707, chose this as his Eagle Scout project. He raised the money by selling doughnuts and opening a GoFundMe account. He also designed the course himself! The shelter is very thankful to all the wonderful people who helped make this all happen.

September is shaping up to be a very busy month, with many events scheduled. Make sure to mark your calendars.

Thursday, September, 1st and 22nd: Visit us at the Odessa Petco from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. We'll have adoptable pets! Odessa Petco, 16248 FL-54, Odessa, FL 33556.

Saturday, September 10th: Become a volunteer at the Pasco County Animal Services Shelter. Stop by at 11 a.m. Please fill out an online application first at: <http://www.pascocountyfl.net/DocumentCenter/View/24247>. Pasco County Animal Services, 19640 Dogpatch Lane, Land O' Lakes, FL 34638.

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Saturday, September 17th: Adoption Event at Tractor Supply from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. The Tail Wagon will be there along with other rescue groups. Tractor Supply, 8447 FL-54, New Port Richey, FL 34655.

Saturday, September 24th: Community Unity Event from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Pasco County Animal Services is bringing the Tail Wagon! Adoptable pets will be available for a reduced adoption fee. Shady Hills Methodist Church, 15925 Greenglen Lane, Shady Hills, FL 34610.

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR ITEMS

To view Official County Meetings Calendar go to the following link:

<http://www.pascocountyfl.net/calendar.aspx>

Thursday, September 1st and 22nd, 2016: Adoptable pets! Visit the Odessa Petco from 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. to find a new furry family member. Odessa Petco, 16248 FL-54, Odessa, FL 33556.

Friday, September 2, 2016: Home and Community Education (HCE) Volunteer Monthly Meeting. 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. You're invited to join us for lunch (at your expense) and to learn about upcoming plans for the new scholastic year. ABC Pizza, 37941 Heather Place, Dade City, FL.

Tuesday, September 6, 2016: Planning and Planting a Fall Veggie Garden. 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Learn which plants will grow best in your garden, how to care for them, and how to harvest the fruit of your labors. Hudson Regional Library, 8012 Library Rd, Hudson, FL 34667. For more information, call the library at 813-956-8538.

Thursday, September 8, 2016: SCORE Seminar: Internet Marketing. 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. Learn how to use the Internet to promote your business brand, products, and services. New River Library, 34043 State Road 54, Zephyrhills, FL 33543. Email: james.karam@scorevolunteer.org or call: 727-842-4638.

Friday & Saturday, September 9 & 10, 2016: Used Book Bazaar. 11 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. each day. Great bargains on a wide selection of books. Hugh Embry Library, 14215 Fourth St., Dade City, FL 33523. For more information, please call the library: 352-567-3576.

Saturday, September 10, 2016: Vegetable Gardening In Small Places. 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Want to grow your own vegetables, but think you don't have the space? This FREE University of Florida/IFAS Pasco Extension seminar will show you how to turn your tiny space into a medley of vegetables - using regular containers, hanging containers, earth boxes, grow pails and other gardening methods. Land O Lakes Community Center, 5401 Land O Lakes Blvd. (Hwy 41), Land O Lakes, FL. Register here: http://pasco.ifas.ufl.edu/events_calendar.shtml.

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Monday, September 19, 2016: Engineering Services Project Management/Public Meeting regarding Starkey Boulevard and Alico Pass Intersection Improvements and Staff Recommendations. (County staff will give two presentations - at 5:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.) West Pasco Government Center Board Room, 1st Floor.

Tuesday, September 20, 2016: Dispelling Common Tree Misconceptions. 2 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. Learn about common misconceptions and demystify our coexistence with trees. From the deepest roots – to the highest

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edges of the canopy – we'll examine the various life cycles of trees and their contributions to our health, property values and psyche. New River Library, 34043 St Rd 54, Wesley Chapel, FL. For more information, call the UF/IFAS Pasco County Extension Office at 352-518-0156.

Tuesday, September 20, 2016: Family Night Out: All Ages Pokéwalk. 6:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. Play Pokémon Go in and around the Land O' Lakes Library. 2818 Collier Parkway, Land O' Lakes, FL 34639. For more information please call 813-929-1214.

Saturday, September 24, 2016: Community Unity Event. 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Pasco County Animal Services is bringing the Tail Wagon! Adoptable pets will be available for a reduced adoption fee. Shady Hills Methodist Church, 15925 Greenglen Lane, Shady Hills, FL 34610.

Saturday, September 24, 2016: Pruning My Trees. 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. Gain an understanding of pruning techniques that lead to healthier and stronger trees. Industry pruning standards and local regulations will be explained at this FREE University of Florida/IFAS Extension seminar. The Home Depot, US 19, Port Richey, FL. Register here: http://pasco.ifas.ufl.edu/events_calendar.shtml.

Saturday, September 24, 2016: SewNew Monthly Sewing Workshop. 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. You're invited to come learn how to sew! (Must bring your own sewing machine, supplies and extension cord.) We work through the lunch hour, so please bring something to eat and/or share with the group. NO FEE. Holy Name Monastery 9 (multi-purpose room), 12138 Wichers Rd, St Leo, FL.

Thursday, September 29, 2016: Adult Craft: Burlap Pumpkin. Make an adorable fall pumpkin out of burlap and twine. To register, please call 727-861-3049. Regency Park Library, 9701 Little Road, New Port Richey, FL 34654.

Friday, September 30, 2016: Coupon Clip, Save, & Swap. 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. Share coupons and learn money-saving tips and tricks. Centennial Park Library, 5740 Moog Road, Holiday, FL 34690. For more information, please call 727-834-3204.

Friday, September 30, 2016: Moms' Night Out. 5:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Join us for some kid-free fun and meet other area moms. South Holiday Library, 4649 Mile Stretch Road, Holiday, FL 34690. For more information, please call 727-834-3331.

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