

Week in Review

The Best of Bartow

Sept. 2 - 8, 2024

IT TEAM CELEBRATED

The advancements of technology continue to transform our everyday lives, providing enhanced communication, health, education, safety, and economic benefits for all. Information technology (IT) professionals are the vital backbone behind these transformations, working behind-the-scenes to develop, maintain and support the critical infrastructure of our digital world, from managing day-to-day operations to ensuring robust cybersecurity defenses.

IT Professionals Day will be celebrated Sept. 17 in the City of Bartow to recognize and thank the dedicated individuals who make up the City's IT team and who so often are unsung heroes. At the last City Commission meeting, the Mayor presented a proclamation to IT Director Frank Canovaca.



CITY CELEBRATES RACE EQUALITY MONTH

Bartow is proud to promote appreciation and understanding of various cultures, recognizing that the City's character is formed by the traditions, experiences, heritages and languages of our residents.

Bartowians should continue to work and live together with respect and harmony, overcoming prejudices, fears, and stereotypes. While honoring its past, the City looks forward to expanding opportunities for current and future residents regardless of their cultural background. In light of this, at their regular meeting on Wednesday, Mayor Pfeiffer and the Commission proclaimed the month of September as Race Equality Month. The proclamation was accepted by Community Relations Committee Co-Chairperson Gloria Washington.

DISABILITY VOTING RIGHTS - REV UP!

There are more than 61 million people with disabilities of all ages in the United States, more than half of whom are eligible voters. Because this population has a critical interest in policies and decisions made and enacted at local, state, and national levels, making sure that they are able to cast a ballot is imperative.

REV UP – “Register! Educate! Vote! Use your Power!” – is a national effort to build the power of the disability community and includes the celebration of Disability Voting Rights Week from Sept. 9 to 11. At last week's Commission meeting, Mayor Pfeiffer proclaimed that Bartow would join in this observance. The proclamation was accepted by resident Lisa Peterson



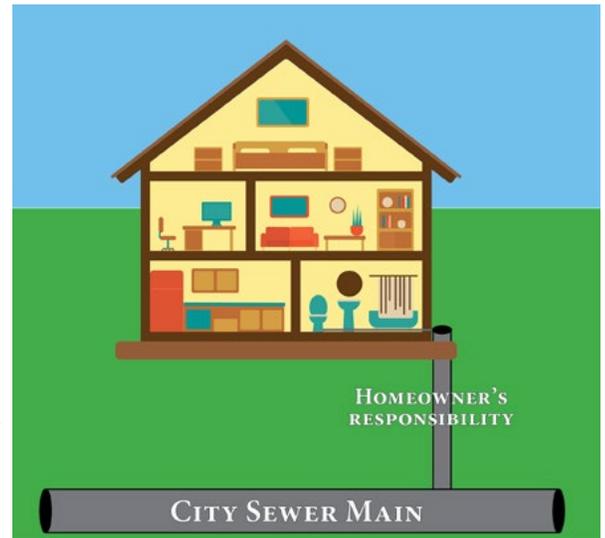
GUIDE TO SEWER LINES

Recently City crews had to deal with some nasty sewer line back-ups. While some issues - like tree roots intrusion - are out of our control, many are a result of things being put down the drain or in the toilet that, over time, can cause serious clogs.

Help us help you by following these tips:

- Don't put grease, dairy products or food scraps down the drain. Your garbage disposal doesn't break them down adequately, and they can contribute to clogged lines. Instead, scrape food and grease into the trash.
- Don't flush paper products other than bathroom tissue down the toilet, even if the products are marked "Flushable." Baby wipes, feminine hygiene products, paper towels and other foreign materials do not break down quickly and can result in blockages and other sewer problems.

For more info, check out the City's website at cityofbartow.net/departments-services/water-reclamation-facility/resident-s-guide-to-sewer-lines



CITY CELEBRATES STAR SPANGLED BANNER

The *Star Spangled Banner* was written during the War of 1812, when, by the dawn's early light on September 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key saw the American flag flying over Fort McHenry, signifying an American victory. This sight inspired him to write the words to the iconic songs that became our National Anthem on March 3, 1931.

In response to a call by the Bartow Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution for a day to celebrate the historical significance of *The Star-Spangled Banner*, Mayor Pfeiffer and the Commission proclaimed Sept. 14as Star Spangled Banner Day and urged all citizens in Bartow to recognize and celebrate the anniversary of the birth of our country's National Anthem. The proclamation was accepted by Kellie Sage, Regent, Bartow Chapter of the American Revolution, Bartow Chapter DAR Representative.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

The City and the Bartow CRA are very excited to partner with Polk County Government Florida and the Polk County History Center to mark the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which will be celebrated on July 4, 2026.

"One Nation, Many Stories: Polk County" is an exhibit that will be located at the Bartow Civic Plaza, 200 E. Davidson St., adjacent to the History Center. The exhibit will consist of 16 unique lamp post banners, each with unique thematic elements and vibrant colors, along with 16 unique digital exhibitions, each expanding on the thematic elements represented by the banner and including visual elements such as historic images and a variety of video content.

A dedication is scheduled for 4pm on Tuesday, Sept. 17, at the Bartow Civic Plaza. The public is invited.

SEPTEMBER IS HUNGER ACTION MONTH

Hunger and food insecurity continue to be a serious challenge affecting nearly one in six households in the United States. For nearly 60 years, the Bartow Community Service Center has provided much-needed food assistance and other essential services in Bartow, including the distribution of more than 200,000 pounds of food annually to those in need. This effort impacts nearly 21,000 families each year, including serving over 26,000 hot meals to individuals who may otherwise go without.

Since 2008, Hunger Action Month has been nationally recognized in partnership with Feeding America, bringing awareness to the critical issue of hunger in our nation and encouraging communities to take action to address food insecurity. Declaring the observance in Bartow, Mayor Pfeiffer and the Commission called upon all citizens to join in recognizing the significant impact of the Bartow Community Service Center, and to act against hunger by supporting local food banks, volunteering, donating, and raising awareness of the importance of food security for all. The proclamation was presented to Rusty Music of the Bartow Community Service Center.



SUICIDE PREVENTION & ACTION MONTH

September also is "Suicide Awareness Month," created to raise the visibility of mental health and proactive suicide prevention resources in our community. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals between the ages 10 and 34 with more than 48,000 people dying by suicide annually in the United States. These deaths directly impact 100 additional people, including friends, service members, family, social media connections, and neighbors.

The City of Bartow recognized Suicide Prevention and Action Month at its last meeting, and placed its full support behind those who work in the field of mental health, education, and law enforcement and encourage all residents to take time to understand mental health through education and recognize that we need to take care of our mental health while we take care of each other. The proclamation was presented to Larry Williams, Chief Executive Officer and President of Peace River Center and colleague Kirk Fasshauser, Director of Crisis Services.



PICTURE BOOK PUMPKIN CONTEST

This Fall, help adorn the Bartow Public Library shelves with pumpkins that look like your favorite book character! From now through Sept. 21, you can pick up a Picture Book Pumpkin kit from the library, take it home and decorate it as a book character of your choosing. Submit your creation by October 5 and be entered into a raffle for a spooky book basket. The Picture Book Pumpkin Contest is open to all ages, so everyone can join in the fun! (One raffle entry per household.) The winner will be contacted on October 18. Call 863.534.0131 for more information.

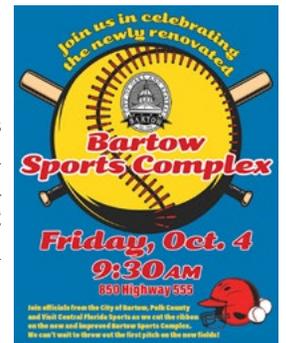
MARK YOUR CALENDARS...

DIVERSITY LUNCHEON

Bartow's Community Relations Committee will host their annual Diversity Luncheon at noon on Sept. 18 at the Bartow Civic Center, 2250 S. Floral Ave. The featured speaker will be Kristopher J. Childs, PhD. For more information or to purchase tickets, call the Bartow Chamber at 863.533.7125.

SPORTS COMPLEX OPENING

Join the City and our Polk County partners in celebrating the opening of the newly renovated Bartow Sports Complex. At 9:30am on Friday Oct. 4, officials from the City of Bartow, Polk County and Visit Central Florida Sports will commemorate the completion of improvements that include four new fields, newly paved driveways, organized grass parking, batting cages and restrooms, as well as a new fence around the RC Track. The Bartow Chamber of Commerce will assist with the ribbon cutting after which athletes from across the region can play ball!



80TH ANNUAL COMMUNITY PARADE AND CARNIVAL

Held this year on Thursday, Oct. 24, the tradition kicks off with a parade starting at 4pm. The parade begins at Main St. and First Ave. (in front of the Chicken Shack), heads west on Main St, and then turns south on Broadway Ave, finishing near the Bartow Civic Center. A carnival will follow at Mosaic Park, 1865 S. Broadway Ave., with a moonwalk, food trucks, BINGO, and, of course, a costume contest.

SQUEEZE SHUTTLE SERVICE GET KUDOS FROM TEAM FDOT

Thanks to Janella Newsome, Director of Public Information, Florida Department of Transportation, District One, for sharing this review by L.K. Nandam, District One Secretary, of Bartow's Squeeze shuttle service, provided by the City and the CRA...

"The executive team and I recently used the free "Bartow Squeeze" transportation service, and it was fantastic! I highly recommend giving it a try during your lunch break. Offered by Bartow's Community Redevelopment Agency, the service runs Monday through Friday, 10:30am to 2:30pm with a 10-minute route from the DOT building to Tom's Chicken Shack, making it easy to reach downtown restaurants and shops."

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 9 – SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

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L. Nandam



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