



Week in Review

Feb. 11 - 16, 2025

The *Week in Review* is prepared and published by Laurie Hayes, Director of Communications, for the staff and residents of the City of Bartow, 450 N. Wilson Avenue, Bartow, Florida 33830

Welcome to the new *Week in Review* via Constant Contact.

The Bartow PD Citizens Academy is now accepting applications

Join the Citizens Academy and get a behind the scenes look at the daily operations of the Bartow Police Department.

The 10-week Academy will meet from 6-9pm every Thursday from March 13 until May 15. Applicants must be 18 years of age or older, live or work in Bartow and pass a background check.

Participants in the Academy will learn about the law and policing in our city and have the opportunity to interact with the various units including K-9, traffic and DUI enforcement, patrol and detectives. In addition, they will be exposed to firearms, training, recruiting and techniques used to fight crime in the City of Bartow.

Spots are limited. Apply by March 1. For more info or to register, contact Officer Mike Butler at 863.534.5034.

BARTOW POLICE CITIZENS ACADEMY

March 13 - May 15, 2025



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Classes will expose citizens to firearms, training, recruiting and techniques used to fight crime in the City of Bartow.

SPOTS ARE LIMITED. APPLY BY MARCH 1



BARTOW POLICE DEPARTMENT CITIZEN ACADEMY

Must be 18 years old, live or work in Bartow, and pass a background check.

Free. 10-week academy meets 6 - 9pm every Thursday

CITY OF BARTOW
POLICE DEPARTMENT
450 N Broadway Ave.
Bartow, FL 33830
863.534.5034

CONTACT
Officer Mike Butler



Residents Weigh in On S. Jackson Ave. Improvements

Approximately 18 residents attended a meeting held last week to discuss improvements that could lower motor vehicle speeds and enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists along the 1.3 mile corridor of S. Jackson Ave. between E. Clower St. / E. Soledad Ave. and E. Main St.

Working with Patel, Green & Associates, the City conducted a safety study in the area last year and found excessive speeding to be a serious issue along that stretch of road. Meeting

attendees, most of whom reside in area, overwhelmingly concurred with this analysis. Police Chief Stephen Walker addressed some of their concerns from an enforcement perspective. And Public Works Director Billy Groover noted that the City already has identified safety improvements to be made in the area using available funding. These include:

Clower St. to Georgia St.

- Improve existing crosswalk ramps
- Improve existing crosswalk markings
- Adding crosswalks in recommended areas
- Installation of sidewalk in front of Summerlin Academy
- Installing mid-block raised pedestrian crosswalk at Wilson Park and Nye Jordan Park rear entrance sidewalk
- Installation of tubular markers at the exit of the High School parking lot as recommended.
- Restriping and installation of reflective markers on Jackson Ave. from Clower St. to Stuart St.

Pearl St. & Summerlin St.

- Installation of stop signs
- Improved crosswalk ramps
- Improved crosswalk markings
- Complete Jackson St. Corridor
- Updated street lighting package as recommended
- Updating all crosswalk markings
- Updating stop bar markings
- Updating centerline markings with appropriate reflectors
- Installing bicycle route signage and markings

Groover and Lucas Cruse of Patel Greene also noted that the City is considering additional features that would support future designation of the corridor as a segment of the long-distance Collier to Polk Trail being planned by the Florida Department of Transportation. Cruse gave a presentation that illustrated some of the possibilities and collected citizen feedback on the ideas. It is hoped that grant funding will be available to support this effort.

Leadership Bartow Gets a City Crash Course

The Leadership Bartow program was established by the Greater Bartow Chamber

of Commerce in 1984 to enhance the civic participation of emerging leaders within the greater Bartow area.

Every two years, the program selects the best and brightest individuals in the Bartow area to participate in a 24 month program oriented to developing leadership skills, fostering understanding of the major issues facing the Bartow area, improving the communications network among leaders of disparate backgrounds and interests and, most importantly, motivating them to contribute through voluntary participation in civic activities.



Members of the Leadership Class XX spent last Thursday getting acquainted with the workings of City of Bartow government. The participants met with City leadership and toured facilities including Solid Waste, Fleet, the Water and Wastewater Plants, the Electric, Fire and Police Departments as well as visiting the Carver and Polk Street Centers. Many thanks to City Attorney Sean Parker who organized the day and to all who contributed in making the day a success.

Fluoride Workshop Scheduled for Feb. 18

The Bartow City Commission will hold a Public Workshop regarding the pros and cons of adding fluoride to the City's water supply on Tuesday, February 18 from 6 - 8pm at the Bartow Civic Center, 2250 Floral Ave. Panelists will include Florida Surgeon General Dr. Joseph Lapado and Dr. Johnny Johnson, Jr., DMD, MS, a Pediatric Dentist, Diplomate American Board of Pediatric Dentistry, Life Member of the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry and President of the American Fluoridation Society.

Dr. Lapado will be joined by Dr. Ashley Malin, PhD, Assistant Professor Department of Epidemiology, College of Public Health and Health Professions & College of Medicine, University of Florida and Dr. Griffin Cole, DDS, a member of The International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology.

Dr. Johnson will be joined by Dr. Steve Slott, DDS, a General Dentist and American Fluoridation Society Communications Officer.

Following presentations on both sides of the issue, there will be an opportunity for questions and public comments. Based on the information and feedback gleaned from the meeting, the Commission will vote on whether to continue to add fluoride to City water at a future regular meeting.

City to Celebrate Gow Fields Day on Feb. 26

Lakeland native Gow Fields, President and CEO of Fields & Company, Inc. and long time public servant, will be honored later this month as part of the Florida Department of Transportation's Annual Black History Month program.

Fields became a member of the Lakeland City Commission in 1992. He held the office of commissioner until being elected to a four-year term as Mayor in 2010, during which time he served as President of the Florida League of Mayors.



Fields has been inducted into the Polk County Public Schools Hall of Fame

and the Kathleen High School Hall of Fame, and received the Distinguished Alumni Award from Kathleen High School and for Polk State College.

The Lakeland Chamber of Commerce recognized him as the 2019 recipient of the prestigious George Jenkins Award, Lakeland's highest community service award. Last year, he was awarded the Jere Annis Leadership Award for his outstanding leadership and service to the Lakeland community.

Fields continues to contribute to the public through volunteering, advocating for causes, participating in various community groups, demonstrating a strong commitment to improving the local area.

At their last meeting, Mayor Pfeiffer and the Commission honored Field's many contributions to the region and declared Feb. 26 as Gow Fields Day in the City. The proclamation was accepted by Caryn Ruth, FDOT Black History Month Recognition Representative.

State of the City Address Slated for Feb. 27

Bartow City Manager Mike Herr will provide an update on City accomplishments across the various departments as well as present his vision for Polk's Capital City in 2025 and beyond at a State of the City breakfast presented by the Greater Bartow Chamber of Commerce. The event will be held at 8 am on Thursday, Feb. 27 at the Bartow Civic Center, 2250 S. Floral Ave.

Herr, a long-time public servant and former president of Econ Engineering, was hired as Bartow's City Manager in January 2023. He previously served as City Manager in Winter Haven and Plant City as well as Polk County Manager, among other high level municipal positions. Herr also is a member of the Florida League of Cities Advocacy Committee, the National League of Cities Small Cities Advisory Council, and the National League of Cities Transportation Infrastructure Committee. He received a Career Excellence Award from the Florida City County Manager Association in 2009. Under Herr's leadership, the City of Bartow has seen considerable investment in infrastructure as well as City amenities, services and personnel.

Tickets are \$25 per person and include a buffet breakfast. To register or for more information, go to bartowchamber.com or call 863.533.7125.



Bright Ideas Innovation Sessions Planned

Last year, the City launched a Bright Ideas Innovation Program. Spearheaded by City Manager Mike Herr, the program creates a framework for every member of the City staff to develop and submit ideas for review, feedback and adoption.

The City will host three Bright Ideas Innovation Sessions for City staff to share more about the program and offer assistance in submitting an idea either in writing or online. The sessions will be held on February 27 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the Commission

Chambers at City Hall; on March 19 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the Gause Room at the Carver Recreation Center and on March 28 from 9 - 11am or 2 - 4pm in the PRCA Conference Room at the Civic Center.

13th Annual Blarney Duathlon to be held March 15

City of Bartow Parks & Recreation once again will host the Annual Blarney Duathlon / 5K on Saturday, March 15. Now in its 13th year, the duathlon consists of a 1 mile run, an 11 mile Bike ride and a 3 mile run. A 5K race will be held at the same time. Discounted entry fees are available on a sliding scale through March 9. Register at tinyurl.com/bartow0blarney.



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