



# Week in Review

April 14 - 21, 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

## Bartow Police Dept. Responds to Threat

Sending well wishes and gratitude to Bartow Police Department Officers Vince Agostino and Mark Sills along with deputies from the Polk County Sheriff's Office, who were involved in a shooting last Friday afternoon near Publix.

During an exchange of gunfire with suspect Wayne Volz of Fort Meade, Officer Sills was shot in the chest. Officer Sills' ballistic resistant vest saved his life. He and a sheriff's deputy, who was shot in the forearm, were transported to area hospitals after being treated on scene by Bartow Fire Department personnel and Polk County Fire/EMS. Both were released later that night and are on their way to full recoveries. The suspect was shot several times and transported to Bartow Regional Hospital, where he later succumbed to his injuries.

Said City Manager Herr, "From the expedient manner in which our emergency telecommunicators answered the initial call to the rapid response of law enforcement officers in subduing the perpetrator, to the paramedics from our Fire Department who rendered aid to Officer Sills and the injured Polk County deputy, as well as the suspect, all of our Police and Fire personnel directly or indirectly contributed to the successful resolution of what could have been a far more dire situation.

"I am thankful too for the equipment and training provided to our first responders, as well as for the partnership we enjoy with the Polk County Sheriff's Office and Polk County Fire/EMS," he added.



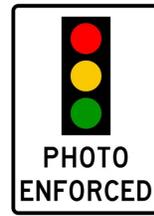
## Red Light Camera Program Now Live

The City of Bartow and the **Bartow Police Department** are working to improve community safety by installing red-light safety cameras at 8 high-risk intersections. The program launched on this past Monday. For the first 30 days, violators will receive warnings. Beginning May 21, violations

will incur fines.

The cameras, which will be operational 24/7, are installed at the following intersections (which are marked with signs noting that cameras are in use):

- Wilson Ave. at Van Fleet Dr. / SR 60
- W. Main St. / SR 60 at Crown Ave.
- Holland Pkwy. / US 17 / US98 at Van Fleet Ave. / US 98
- Broadway Ave. / US 98 / at E. Van Fleet Dr. / SR 60
- Holland Pkwy. / US 17 at Main St.
- S. Holland Pkwy. US 17 at W. Wabash St.
- Holland Pkwy. / US 17 at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
- S. Holland Pkwy. / US 17 at E. Georgia St.



More information about the program can be found [here](#).

## April is Child Abuse Prevention Month

Children who have adverse childhood experiences are at a higher risk of short and long-term physical, psychological, and behavioral challenges. This can be combatted by providing parents and caregivers with the resources and support so they are better equipped to give their children safe and nurturing experiences.



The State of Florida has established Hope Florida - A Pathway to Prosperity, which is a personalized approach to helping families overcome barriers to self-sufficiency through community collaboration. Floridians can call 850-300-HOPE to speak with a Care Navigator for support to develop a plan to achieve economic self-sufficiency, referrals to local partners, and help identifying goals and barriers in their lives.

During the month of April, Florida recognizes Child Abuse Prevention Month to remind everyone that they can help children increase positive childhood experiences, which lead to happier, healthier childhoods. This was declared at the April 7 City Commission meeting, with a proclamation presented to Heartland for Children Director of Community Relations Shawna Butler and Tyiesha Ghent, Community Engagement Specialist .



## Bartow Bash Registration Open

Registration for 2025 Bartow Bash Summer Camp is now open. The Camp, for kids in K through 5th grades, runs from Monday through Friday from June 2 - July 25.

Doors open daily at 7:30am and camp pick-up is at 5:30pm. Pay \$65 a week for each child and CHOOSE your location - either Polk Street Community Center or Carver Recreation Center. The price includes food, field trips, and new friends!

Register your child online at [bartowrec.recdesk.com/Community/Program](http://bartowrec.recdesk.com/Community/Program).

## Application Period for Organization Funding Now Open

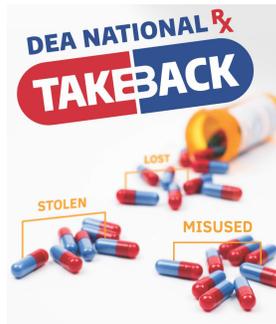
The City of Bartow is accepting Organization Funding requests for Fiscal Year 2025 - '26 from nonprofits, tax exempt entities and community-based organizations.

Applicants must offer a service that augments one provided by the City or provide a necessary service that the City does not currently offer. To be considered for funding, both Nonprofit Organizations and Community Partners must submit an application.

A training session will be held at 10am on Tuesday, May 13 at City Hall, 450 N Wilson Ave., to answer any questions related to the application process and provide guidance on the presentation process.

Completed applications and supporting documentation **MUST** be submitted by June 16. Note that submission of applications does not guarantee funding.

**More information and a link to the application are available here.**



## DEA Drug Takeback Program

Law Enforcement personnel will be set up in the parking lot of the Bartow Police Department, 450 N. Broadway Ave., on Saturday, April 26 from 10am - 2pm to accept expired or unneeded medications for disposal. The event aims to provide a safe, convenient and responsible means of getting rid of unwanted prescription drugs, while also educating the general public about the potential for abuse of medications. Note that vapes, needles and illegal drugs will not be accepted.

## CRA Hosting Monthly Community Meeting

The Bartow Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) invites Bartow residents to attend the next session of their Community Engagement series from 10 - 11am on Tuesday, April 29, at Liberty Link Foundation 360 (The Williams Building), 1150 Martin Luther King Junior Blvd.



Held the last Tuesday of every month, the series provides information about CRA initiatives, including Community Clean-Up program as well as Home Repair and Commercial Façade grants. The April event also will feature guest speakers from the United Way of Central Florida who will discuss resources for free vision, dental and health care, food pantries and assistance for children.

Questions? Call Cheryl Baksh, CRA Coordinator, at 863-534-0100 ext. 2771

## Best in the Biz?

Can we do it again? Help the Bartow Golf Course retain the title of "Best Golf Course," by once again nominating our hometown course in *The Ledger's* Central Florida Community Choice Awards. **Cast your vote here.**



## Squeeze in a Trip Downtown

Trying to Squeeze a lunch break into your day? Don't forget that the City of Bartow's Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) makes it easier for workers in Bartow to access the many restaurants and shops within the CRA downtown district during their lunch hour.

Last year, the Agency commissioned the Citrus Connection to operate a free SQUEEZE shuttle from 10:30am until 2:30pm Monday through Friday. The eight-seat golf cart shuttle circulates through the areas around Main St. every 10 minutes, with stops on Church, Main and Polk Streets, as well as Wilson and Mill Avenues, Boulevard Street and South Broadway.

## Help Keep Bartow Beautiful at the Great American Clean-Up Event

Join Bartow's Solid Waste Department and Keep Polk County Beautiful for their annual Great American Clean-Up Event on April 26 from 8am - noon.



Volunteers who pre-register will receive a t-shirt and a ticket to Bok Tower Gardens. Youth needing community service hours for graduation can earn four hours by helping to organize the event. Lunch will be provided at Mary Holland Park after the Clean-Up.

Community and civic associations, school and youth groups, families and friends, businesses, sports teams and others are encouraged to organize their members and participate. To sign up, request a packet via email at [solidwaste@cityofbartow.net](mailto:solidwaste@cityofbartow.net) or pick up a packet at 2060 E. Highway 60. Questions? Call 863.534.0181.

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