



Week in Review

May 19 - June 2, 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

Officer Sills Receives New Ballistic Vest, Commendation from Armor Express

On May 27, Shannon Lodholz from **Armor Express** visited the **Bartow Police Department** to present Officer Mark Sills with a new ballistic vest, a plaque and a challenge coin from the company. Armor Express was the manufacturer of the vest worn by Officer Sills when he was shot in the line of duty on April 18, most likely saving his life. The armor company provides officers who have been saved by their ballistic vests with new equipment and other rewards in recognition of their bravery and valor.



Deborah King Retires

Deborah King retired from the City's Purchasing Department after 26 years with the City. A party was held in her honor on Friday with many staff and City leadership, including Mayor Tanya Tucker, stopping to wish her well. Congrats to Deb!

Achievers on Display

Juneteenth Celebration

The Banner Pole Committee will present an "Achievers on Display" Juneteenth Celebration on Friday, June 20 from 6:30 - 7:30pm at Polk Street Community Center, 12550 Polk St.

Hosted by Commissioner Leo Longworth, the event will be an evening of interaction, engagement and celebration as some of Bartow's Legends share their stories.



Pardon our Progress Paving begins at the Bartow Golf Course

The parking lots at Mulligans Bar and Grill and the **Bartow Golf Course** are (finally!) getting an upgrade! The paving project will be divided into two phases, focusing first on the north lot near the restaurant.

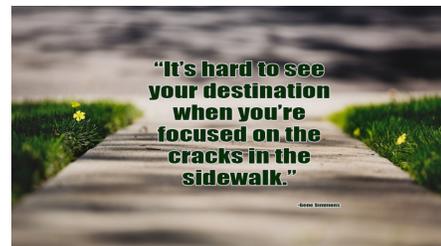
Beginning today, the north side of lot will be closed for improvements. The South parking lot will remain open for both golfers and Mulligans patrons. Work is projected to last 30 days. Note that the Golf Course will be closed on June 2 for unrelated aerification.

Once the north lot is complete, work will begin on the south parking lot. Parking for lunch customers at Mulligans will be available in the (new and improved) north lot. All golfers will park in the Idlewood Venue's parking lot. Two six-seater golf carts will shuttle golfers between their vehicles and the course. Updates will be provided when this work is set to begin.

Thanks to all for their patience as we complete these long awaited improvements!

Community Meeting Focuses on Improvements on Crown and Maple Avenues

The City of Bartow Public Works Department will hold a Community Meeting to discuss sidewalk and other improvements on Crown and Maple Avenues on Tuesday, June 3 from 6 - 7pm at the Polk Street Community Center, 1255 W. Polk Street.



The goal of the project is to improve both motorist and pedestrian safety in the corridor between Polk Street W. and Steward Street W. to include the installation of new channel barricades on the west side of Crown Avenue to prevent vehicles from entering the stormwater pond and the addition of ADA compliant sidewalks on Maple Avenue with updated crosswalks. Residents who live in the affected area are encouraged to attend and learn more.

For more information, contact Public Works Director Billy Groover at bgroover.fleet@cityofbartow.net or call (863) 698-1685.

Inspections of 3000 Utility Poles Begins on Tuesday



Starting tomorrow, June 3, and continuing for the next three months, Osmose Utilities Services will be inspecting approximately 3000 utility poles in the City. These inspections will help ensure reliable power for our community and safety for our workers.

As part of the inspection process, crews may use hammers or drill and dig around the bases of the poles. Crews may need to walk through private property to access some poles. The work will not interfere with electric service. Questions? Call 863-534-0100.

Playing catch up.... The Month of May brought:



...National Pet Month

Pets bring joy, comfort and companionship to millions of Americans, including our own City Commission members, enriching homes and communities with unconditional love and loyalty.

National Pet Month, observed each May, is an opportunity to celebrate the many benefits of pet ownership, as well as to recognize the responsibilities that come

with caring for animals as well as to stress that adoption is a compassionate choice that saves lives and gives animals in shelters and rescues a second chance at happiness in a loving home.

Animal shelters, veterinarians, rescue organizations, and volunteers in the City of Bartow are essential partners in protecting animals and supporting pet owners in our community. The Polk County Bully Project Animal Rescue is one such vital organization. Accepting the proclamation were their representatives Angela Lorio & Shannon Medina.

...National Bike Month

Each May, communities across America recognize National Bike Month to celebrate the many benefits of bicycling and to encourage people of all ages to enjoy biking as a form of recreation, transportation, and physical activity.

National Bike Month provides an excellent opportunity for families, individuals, and schools to embrace the joys of biking and explore all that Bartow has to offer by bike.



The proclamation recognizing National Bike Month in the City was accepted by Commissioner Pfeiffer and her husband Bob.

...Just Say No Week

The "Just Say No" movement was one part of the U.S. government's effort to revisit and expand the war on drugs in the 1980s, encouraging children to reject

experimenting with or using drugs by simply saying the word “no.”

Because many young people continue to feel pressured to abuse drugs and alcohol, our community participated in the ongoing national effort to combat this problem during the week of May 19 through 23. A proclamation declaring Just Say No Week was accepted by Just Say No Committee Member Ernie Cooper.



...The 62nd Annual Sheriffs Youth Villa Classic Golf Tournament

The Sheriffs Youth Villa Classic once again was played on Memorial Day Weekend at the Bartow Golf Course. The tournament serves as a major fundraising source for the Florida Sheriffs Youth Villa, located here in the City. The tournament has historically raised over \$1,825,000 to support the

Youth Villa, which has a mission of preventing delinquency and developing strong, lawful, resilient, and productive citizens who will make a positive contribution to our communities for years to come. The Youth Villa in Bartow houses up to 20 college students.



...and Emancipation Day

The end of slavery was proclaimed in Tallahassee on May 20, 1865, 11 days after the end of the Civil War, and two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was issued by President Abraham Lincoln. For this reason, Emancipation Day is traditionally celebrated on May 20 in Florida.

The final reading of the federal orders of emancipation occurred in Galveston, TX, on June 19, 1865, bringing freedom at last to all enslaved persons in the country and is the reason behind the national Juneteenth observance. The lengthy delay in some states' announcements after the delivery of the federal Emancipation Proclamation was caused by the fact that the Civil War still raging. Because of this, news and enforcement had been slow to reach the more remote slave states.

At the last City Commission meeting, Mayor Tucker and the Commissioners proclaimed Emancipation Day in Bartow and stated that the City “opposes and rejects any form of oppression and supports the City of Bartow citizens other organizations working to achieve racial equality and to protect the human rights of all people.”

The proclamation was accepted by Zelma Harris, Juneteenth Committee Co-Chairperson. That committee will host a Juneteenth celebration on June 14 at Over the Branch Park, 715 W. Polk St., from noon until 5pm. There will be live music, vendors, dancing and more!



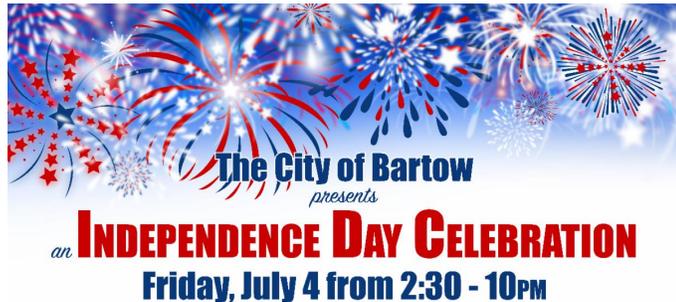
City Manager Offers Kudos for Landscaping

"I want to thank the Parks & Recreation crew, specifically Tim Griner. Nancie Lott, Wesley Harbin Jr., Aaron Harbin, Terry Peacock, Greg Strickland, Joshua Taylor, Walter Williamson and Jeffery Zentz. These men and women are responsible for the new beautification features recently completed at City Hall, our Fire Department and Bartow Police Department, as well as in the traffic triangle on Hibiscus and Soledad. These areas look colorful, fresh and very welcoming for City staff, residents and visitors to our city."

-Mike Herr, City Manager

City to Host Independence Day Celebration

Hosted by the City of Bartow for the first year, the Independence Day Celebration will take place in Mosaic Park on Friday, July 4, from 2:30 - 10pm.



Attendees are invited to bring blankets and lawn chairs and settle in for an afternoon and evening celebrating our nation's independence.

Pack a picnic of snacks and non-alcoholic beverages or take advantage of a variety of food options available for sale. The event will stay true to the traditional celebration and feature live music, food trucks, children's activities, family games and, of course, FIREWORKS!

The Opening Ceremony will start at 2:30pm with local dignitaries including Mayor Tanya Tucker. Bartow Idol winner Natalie Suarez will then set the patriotic mood with her rendition of the Star Spangled Banner. An afternoon of family fun will include a moon bounce and inflatable games, a rock wall, a balloon artist, face painting and a roving magician.

There will be live music all day ending with headliner Eli Mosley presented by @ThunderCDJR who will lead in to the Fireworks Extravaganza at 9:10pm.

Get all the details on the City website at cityofbartow.net/529/July-4-Celebration Vendor and sponsorship opportunities still are available. For more information, email nvelaquez@cityofbartow.net or call 863.534.0120.

Bartow City Manager and Commissioner Honored with Home Rule Hero Awards

Bartow City Manager Mike Herr and Commissioner Trish Pfeiffer have been awarded 2025 Home Rule Hero Awards from the Florida League of Cities (FLC) for their hard work and advocacy during this year's Legislative Session.



FLC, the united voice for Florida's municipal governments, recognized their efforts throughout session to promote local voices

making local choices, protect the Home Rule powers of Florida's municipalities and advance the League's legislative agenda.

"This session, local leaders stepped up once again, bringing persistence, perspective, and a strong voice for local decision-making to every conversation," said FLC Chief of Legislative Affairs Casey Cook. "The League and our legislative team deeply appreciate their leadership and are proud to recognize the meaningful difference they made for Florida's cities."

Home Rule is the ability for a city to address local problems with local solutions with minimal state interference. Home Rule Hero Award recipients are local government officials, both elected and nonelected, who consistently responded to the League's request to reach out to members of the Legislature and help give a local perspective on an issue.



Library Kicks of Summer Reading Fun with Foam!

Kick off this summer with a *SPLASH* of color at the Bartow Public Library's Summer Ready Kickoff Party! Come to the Library, located at 2150 S. Broadway Ave., on June 5 at 2pm and play in the foam bubble pit and explore a fire truck from the Bartow Fire Department.

Don't forget to pick up your reading log bags to start tracking your reading and earning prizes all summer long - as well as a book or five!

Bartow Bash 2025 Summer Camp started TODAY

This week's theme is "Color Me Summer" with a special field trip to the Crayola Experience in Orlando!

Looking for a fun, active, and unforgettable way to spend the summer? Bartow Bash is the place to be! Packed with games, crafts, sports, field trips, theme days, and tons of outdoor adventures, this camp is perfect for kids who want to make the most of their summer break.



There is still time to sign up for a week or a whole summer of camp full of excitement, learning and nonstop fun. Call 863.534.0120 for more information.

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.**

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