



Week in Review

Oct. 14 - 26, 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, 680 E Main St., Bartow, Florida 33830

Bartow Celebrates Florida City Week

Last week was Florida City Week, sponsored by the Florida League of Cities. As part of Bartow's celebration, the City hosted **Bartow Senior High School** AP Government students and their teacher Robin Rawlins. The kids got a lesson in Bartow history from Jayme Jamison with the Polk County History Center and learned about the importance of voting from Randy Barnes and his young assistant from the **Polk County Voters' League**. Mayor Tucker and Commissioner Longworth reiterated that message and spoke to their roles in the governance of the City.

The students then engaged in a mock City Commission meeting, assuming the roles of Mayor, Commissioners, City Attorney, City Manager, City Clerk and department heads as well as concerned citizens. Guided by actual City Attorney Sean Parker, the students tackled the question of what to do with a hypothetical \$1 million grant for a storm mitigation project.

The students (and their teacher) are to be congratulated for their interest and engagement in the process. They left no doubt that they were a group of future leaders!



Florida City Week "Speed Dating"



- Krazy Cricket
- The Cookie Lady Bakery
- Havana Delights
- Super Organic Smoothie
- Citrus Air Conditioners Inc.

In celebration of Florida City Week, Bartow also hosted a City Services Speed Dating event on Oct. 25. Representatives from Bartow's public facing departments set up stations at Front Page Brewing to answer questions about services, programs and amenities in the City.

While the attendance was less than what was hoped for, those residents who did attend were interested and engaged. One woman noted that, until she spoke directly with members of our sanitation crew, she had been under the impression that Bartow did not recycle - and vowed to spread the word to her doubting neighbors.

As a reward for coming out, all attendees received a raffle prize from a local merchant. Many thanks to our generous sponsors who provided raffle prizes, including:

- Palace Pizza of Bartow
- Hacienda Mexico
- Greater Bartow Chamber of Commerce & Welcome Center
- Bartow Golf Course & Mulligans

And a special thanks to Front Page Brewing for allowing the City to use their space.

Let's Have a (Halloween) Parade!

The 81st(!) Bartow Community Parade and Carnival will take place next Thursday, October 30.

This cherished community tradition began in 1942 and has been enjoyed by generations of Bartow residents. This

year's event is proudly sponsored by the Crickette Club of Bartow, Junior Service League Bartow, **Bartow Rotary Club**, Kiwanis Club of Bartow, Zonta Club of Bartow, Engage, **Main Street Bartow**, the **Greater Bartow Chamber of Commerce & Welcome Center**, and **City of Bartow Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts** as well as the Bartow Fire Department and **Bartow Police Department**.



The fun kicks off at 4:30pm as the parade lines up on First and Second Avenue, right across from the Chicken Shack. The parade will wind its way through town, ending at Mosaic Park, the site of the Carnival. Got a great costume? Registration for the costume contest is free and begins at 5:30, with the first contest kicking off at approximately 6:30.

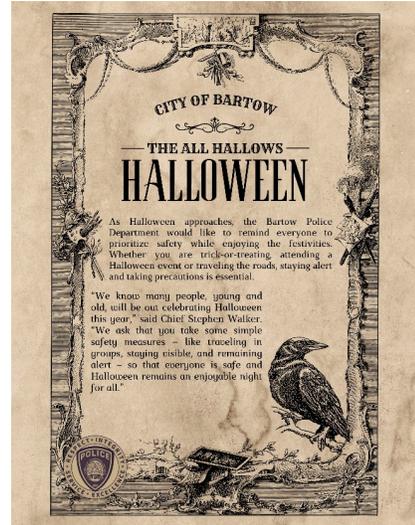
Proceeds from carnival concessions and merchandise sales have supported numerous worthwhile causes.

Many thanks to all who work so hard to make this event a success, year after year - many of who were at the Commission meeting on Monday. See you there!

Speaking of Halloween...

As Halloween approaches, the Bartow Police Department would like to remind everyone to prioritize safety while enjoying the festivities. Whether you are trick-or-treating, attending a Halloween event or traveling the roads, staying alert and taking precautions is essential.

"We know many people, young and old, will be out celebrating Halloween this year," said Chief Stephen Walker. "We ask that you take some simple safety measures – like traveling in groups, staying visible, and remaining alert – so that everyone is safe and Halloween remains an enjoyable night for all."



Ideal Cabinetry Donation Benefits Fire Dept.

The Bartow Fire Department and Ideal Cabinetry got together for a photo opportunity on Thursday, October 16. This was in celebration of the recent donation of cabinets from Ideal

Cabinetry for the fire department's Main Station kitchen and conference room remodel as well as the remodel of the newly acquired Southeast location for the Bartow Fire Department which is located at Clower Ln. and E. Clower St.

Bartow Fire Department would like to express our sincere appreciation to the owners, management, and staff of Ideal Cabinetry for their partnership and continued support of the Bartow Fire Department and our community.

Hydromax Fire Hydrant Inspection Underway

Beginning today and continuing for approximately one month, a company called Hydromax will perform annual fire hydrant maintenance on the 1100 hydrants citywide. They will start in the downtown area and work outward.

The first hydrant to be inspected is located at 224 E Boulevard Street, by the Chamber of Commerce. Each hydrant takes about 5 minutes to test and 30 minutes to paint.

What to expect? The maintenance will cause brief periods of lower than normal water pressure. Also, because these tests disturb the naturally occurring sediment in the

hydrant, there may be some water discoloration. The water is still safe. Turning on an outside spigot for a few minutes will result in clearing the water up.



October is Arts & Humanities Month

Arts and cultural programs enrich the lives of all who live, work, and visit the City of Bartow by inspiring imagination, sparking dialogue, preserving heritage, and strengthening civic pride. The arts also contribute to the economic vitality of the City by supporting local businesses, fostering tourism, and encouraging community development.

The National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities and 4,500 plus local arts agencies have regularly celebrated October as National Arts and Humanities Month.

Among these are the Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance, which held its 2025 Polk Art & Culture Hall of Fame and Annual Awards Ceremony at the Bartow Civic Center on Oct. 14. As part of that event, longtime Bartow business and community members John and Terry Frost were inducted into their Hall of Fame Class of 2025.

The Commission also recognized October as National Arts & Humanities Month at a recent meeting. The proclamation was accepted by Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance Director Daryl Ward, Michell Githens, President of the Board of Directors, Polk Arts & Cultural Alliance, Marcia Morse Mullins, President of Bartow Art Guild and John and Terry Frost.

Hazardous Waste, Electronics and Tire Collection Day a Success

The City's Solid Waste division teamed up with **Polk County Government Florida** to help residents dispose of household hazardous waste and electronics this past Saturday.

After dropping off old paints, pesticide sand batteries as well as computers, and other electronics , residents also were able to get rid of any old tires that have been cluttering their space. According to our partners at Keep Polk County Beautiful, more than 2,600 tires were collected for proper disposal on Saturday.



"This is an accomplishment that would not have been possible without your generous donation of dumpsters and hauling services," noted Executive Director Katie Hayes. "Your team's time, effort,

and coordination make a tremendous difference each year in helping us provide this valuable service to our community. Your team truly make the event successful!"

Bravo to our Sanitation crews!



World Polio Day Observed Oct. 24

The **Bartow Rotary Club** has proudly served as a cornerstone of our community for over a century, fostering service, fellowship, and leadership since its establishment in 1924.

The Club has upheld the core values of Rotary International by advancing peace, combating disease, promoting access to clean water, supporting education, strengthening local

economies, improving maternal and child health, and protecting the environment. In addition, the dedicated members have generously contributed their time, talents, and resources to numerous impactful projects that have significantly enhanced the quality of life in Bartow and beyond, embracing the principle of "Service Above Self."

These projects include the Rotary's groundbreaking PolioPlus program, launched in 1985, and the Global Polio Eradication Initiative launched in 1988, have partnered with organizations such as the World Health Organization, UNICEF, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to immunize billions of children and reduce polio cases by 99.9 percent.

Recognizing this, at last Monday's City Commission meeting, Mayor Tucker proclaimed October 24 as a day of recognition and celebration honoring World Polio Day and encouraged all citizens to join in honoring the immense contributions of the Bartow Rotary Club and to support its continuing mission of service, goodwill, and global health.

CRA Issues Call for Artists

The City of Bartow Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) invites qualified artists to submit proposals for the design and installation of murals on two public restroom exterior walls, as part of the CRA's ongoing efforts to promote public art and strengthen our community identity.



Artists may submit proposals for one or both projects, which will transform two ordinary spaces into vibrant landmarks for the City of Bartow and CRA Distract. Themes should reflect a diverse community, honoring the history and vibrancy of our City.

The project is open to all professional artists (individuals or teams) with a minimum of five years of experience from Polk, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Osceola and Orange Counties. [More information on the projects and how to apply is available here.](#) The deadline for applications is Oct. 31.

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