



Putnam County NEWS & NOTES

Volume 1, Issue 2

Spring 2004

PARKS AND RECREATION COMPLETES 2004 SPRING SOCCER REGISTRATION

Increase in County soccer program participation and facilities

Putnam County- Registration for the County's 2004 Spring Soccer Program was completed February 27th, 2004, with an increase of over 200 children registered. In 2003, there were 268 children registered for the Spring season with 23 teams playing inter-league games. The 2004 roster shows 485 children registered with 41 teams playing. "I am pleased to see such an increase in participation in the County's youth sports programs" stated Suzanne Davis, Director of Parks and Recreation.

On Monday, March 1st Parks and Recreation crews began preparing four additional 30' x 40' soccer fields located adjacent to the County's Central Complex. The property for these two fields was purchased for

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1** *Parks and Recreation – 2004 Soccer Registration
National County Government Week*
- 2** *County Budget Process Commences*
- 3** *Commissioners Travel to Tallahassee*
- 4** *"You Asked" Column*
- 5** *Employee of the Quarter*

National County Government Week

April 18 – 24

Whether residents in Putnam County use its transportation system for business or pleasure, they should know that their County is working hard to improve and maintain transportation systems so people and products can travel and be transferred in a more efficient manner. That is why the theme for this year's National County Government Week (NCGW) celebration is "Transportation: Counties Move America's People and Products". The County provides many essential services that are a key ingredient of our country's continued economic development, but without county-owned transportation systems, this development would stagnate.

Transportation systems are the cogs of America's economic engine. County highways, roadways, bridges, airports and transit operations are vital elements of these systems. County governments build and maintain about 1.77 million miles of highways – 45 percent of the nation's highway and roadway network. There are 256,000 county bridges – 44 percent of all bridges nationwide. And county governments own or operate about one-third of the transit systems, including bus, rail and van services.

During NCGW, Putnam County will be informing and educating its citizens about the various ways the County keeps America moving.





the purpose of accommodating the projected increase in players, especially the largest group which is the Under 6 group. When the Under 6 teams play, the field can be divided into seven smaller fields, which will allow for earlier playing times for the younger children. With 14 teams in this age group the increased number of fields will make this objective more realistic. It will take approximately two weeks to prepare the fields for play. The fields will be equipped and ready for the opening night of the 2004 soccer season on March 29th. The Spring season is considered a “short” season and lasts for 6 weeks, while the Fall program consists of 12 weeks of play. Registration for the Fall program will open in August before school starts. The registration fee of \$20 includes a team shirt, soccer shorts and socks.

Coaches for the program are all community volunteers who dedicate many hours to the children’s programs. “The County is fortunate to have so many individuals committed to volunteering their time to youth sports programs,” stated Suzanne Davis, Director of Parks and Recreation.



BUDGET PROCESS FY 2004-2005 COMMENCES Budget Committee Meets on March 16th

Each year the Board of County Commissioners legally adopts a budget to determine how much money it will raise and to prioritize how it will be spent. By State law, the budget year begins on October 1st and ends on September 30th. The County’s operating budget is funded primarily from taxes, licenses and permits, intergovernmental revenues, fines and forfeitures.

To initiate the process, the Budget Committee reviewed projections of revenues and expenditures for year 2004-2005. Each of the County’s Department Heads has been asked to submit proposed operating budgets to the Budget Officer and then attend workshop sessions which have been calendared for May and June. The Budget Committee will prepare a tentative budget which will be recommended to the Commission in July. After the Commission reviews the tentative budget and any changes are made, the Budget is adopted by the County Commission at the second meeting in September. The Commission does not foresee a need to increase the millage rate for the new budget based on current projections.

Board of County Commissioners April Meetings

**Tuesday, April 13, 2004
8:30 a.m.**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2004
8:30 a.m.**

COMMISSIONERS TRAVEL TO TALLAHASSEE 2004 Legislative Day for Florida Counties

On March 24th, the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) hosted its annual "Legislative Day and Reception" for the County Commissioners, Administrators and Legislative Staff. The event was an excellent opportunity for the County Commissioners to obtain up-to-date information on legislative proposals that may affect Putnam County. It also provided an occasion for Commissioners and staff to meet one-on-one with members of Putnam's legislative delegation to discuss FAC'S Legislative Program and specific issues concerning the County. The following is a list of some of the topics which were addressed by the Commissioni

- Article V / Revision 7 Implementation (state funding of co
- Juvenile Justice Funding – oppose shifting
- Small County Funding Initiative – advocate additional resources, increased State aide
- Transportation Funding

The Small County Coalition also met and all who traveled to Tallahassee were in attendance.

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

PC Specialist

Equipment Operator II

Equipment Operator IV

Maintenance Worker

Contact Human Resources at 386.329.0221 for additional information.



Property Taxes

Did you know that in Florida, you receive a 2% discount if your property taxes are paid in January. It is worth paying early! To save even more, pay your taxes in November and receive a 4% discount.

If you do not receive your property tax bill in the mail during October or November, contact your county tax office. The money is still due and the due date does not change if you did not receive your property tax bill.

The taxes you are paying now are for the calendar year of 2003. They are based on the value of your property in February 2003. Taxes are assessed each year, which means they can fluctuate each year.

If you do not pay your property taxes, a tax lien will be placed on your property. Anybody will be able to buy your tax lien. You will then owe the property tax amount, in addition to the interest charged by the new owner of the lien. For example, if your property taxes are \$2,500 for this year and you do not pay them, somebody can buy your tax lien and you could owe \$3,000. If you do not pay within the year, more interest will be added and you will also owe the property tax plus the tax lien. After two years, the owner of the lien can demand payment and begin the process of repossessing your home, in order to recover the cost of the tax lien.

Helpful Hints

- ✓ Property tax bills are mailed in October or November.
- ✓ Pay your property tax in November and receive a 4% discount.
- ✓ Or, pay your property tax in December and receive a 3% discount.
- ✓ You may also make arrangements to pay your taxes quarterly.

Sources: <http://www.myflorida.com/dor/property>; Nico Brooks, Director of Administration, Alachua County Tax Collector's Office

YOU ASKED:

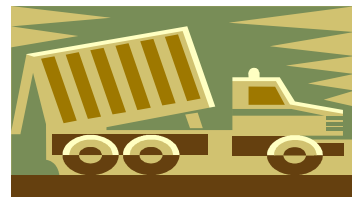
What changes in solid waste collection and disposal services will I see after Waste Pro begins providing solid waste collection and disposal services on April 1, 2004?

On April 1, 2004, Waste Pro will be the company contracted by the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal District to collect garbage, yard trash, bulk items, and recyclables. The District is comprised of the five (5) Putnam County Commissioners and the Mayors of the City of Palatka, Crescent City, and the Town of Interlachen. The contract with Waste Management was scheduled to expire in September 2004. Waste Management asked the District if it could sell the contract to Waste Pro effective April 1, 2004. The District agreed, and simultaneously extended the contract with Waste Pro for five (5) years at a new rate of \$8.35/household/month (up from the previous \$7.20/household/month). However, there will be no increase in October 2004 in the Solid Waste Assessment (the bill that homeowners pay each year). The District will pay the difference because the District will be finished paying off a loan for landfill improvements in 2004.

The District chose not to go out for bids for two reasons: Waste Pro personnel have prior successful experience in Putnam County, and Waste Pro is a more rural-oriented waste hauler, more adept at collecting garbage in rural areas like Putnam County. Waste Pro has committed to providing eight (8) new

trucks starting in April 2004 which should significantly improve the service level. The new trucks are smaller and should minimize damage to the many dirt roads in Putnam County. The District also expects that the new hauler will help revitalize the curbside recycling program. Waste Pro has committed to stop using split body trucks to collect garbage and recyclables together, and instead, will use dedicated trucks for recyclables collection. This should help eliminate confusion by customers and provide for more reliable service. The County has emphasized to Waste Pro managers that the recyclables collection must be consistent to be effective.

Waste Pro is reviewing at the established routes for recyclables collection to see if there are ways to make collection more efficient and reliable. The office location and the telephone numbers for garbage collection will stay the same. If you have any complaints or require information you can contact Waste Pro at (386) 328-5445 or 1-800-852-6132. Waste Pro's office hours are from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., Monday through Friday.



COUNTY SELECTS EMPLOYEE OF THE QUARTER

Willie Montgomery is the County's most recent selection for Employee of the Quarter and received a recognition certificate and one hundred dollar U.S. Savings Bond. Mr. Montgomery has been an employee Putnam County for greater than five years and works for the Parks and Recreation Department as a Maintenance Technician II. When Mr. Montgomery is not working he enjoys spending time as a community volunteer. Mr. Montgomery was instrumental in the development of the Woods Road Community Park in San Mateo. He volunteered his Saturdays to work with other volunteers to install two swing sets, a fence at the front of the park and creating a space for the Park's proposed basketball court and pavilion area. He also volunteers his time by keeping score at basketball games which are scheduled in the evening and on weekends. "Willie has a true dedication to the Parks & Recreation Department, the community and the youth of Putnam County" so stated Suzy Davis, Director of Parks and Recreation.

The employee recognition program was established less than two years ago as a means for fellow employees to nominate coworkers they felt were providing commendable service to the citizens and performing their duties in an exemplary manner. An anonymous five-person committee is chosen at random by the County Administrator to serve a one-year term. This committee evaluates and selects an employee from the nominations provided.

Those selected as Employees of the Quarter are then eligible for the Employee of the Year designation. A plaque and cash gift of five hundred dollars is given to the Employee of the Year at the Board of County Commission meeting in December. The County's Employee of the Year for 2003 was Jean Jungenberg, a paramedic with the County's Department of emergency Services. A plaque with her name and place for future employees hangs in the County Administration building.