

HAPPENINGS

ISSUE NO. 417

JANUARY 2025

SERVING PORT ST. JOHN & CANAVERAL GROVES

HAPPENINGS
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Call 321-633-7499 or e-mail to happenings1@att.net.
www.happenings.net

*** PSJ Christmas Parade Results! ***

The morning of the 35th annual Port St. John Christmas Parade started cool and overcast, but better than last year with a storm bearing down on us. The cold didn't stop the groups attending from putting on a great show with over a mile of classic cars, motorcycles, dazzling floats, golf carts and ATVs, mudders and monsters. We had a lot of new entries this year and Fay Blvd. was lined with a large crowd to enjoy it. The cool weather felt like Christmas weather.

Last year's approaching storm caused Brevard Public Schools to cancel all school participation. This year they came out in force and looked awesome. Challenger 7 and Enterprise Elementary attended, and seven groups from Space Coast JrSr High came out. Thank you all for coming out and showing why you're great!

We are not a county-funded parade, so please remember these businesses and people who give back to make our community a wonderful place to live. As always, a VERY BIG THANK YOU goes out to our wonderful sponsors who make the parade possible: Parrish Healthcare, HAPPEN-



INGS, Orion Connectivity Services, Freedom Air & Plumbing, Higginbotham-Baldeon Agency, Englemann State Farm Insurance, Dominos, Maureen Rupe, Allstate Insurance, All Air and Heat, Inc., Shipping Depot, Amvets Post 2415, Freedom Optical, Launch Credit Union, and ChiChi's Cosmic CrunChis.

Also, thank you to the residents of Fay Blvd. who get blocked in for 2 hours every year as the Christmas parade goes by. We appreciate you!

And of course, a BIG THANK YOU to the Christmas Parade Committee, many of whom miss the parade every year staging the entries to create the parade, and our newest volunteers. YOU ARE AWESOME! Parade photos are on Facebook at Kati Photography and more are available online at portstjohncommunityfoundation.com.

A big THANK YOU to Challenger 7 Elementary for allowing us to stage the parade there.

Christmas Parade Winners:

Best Overall - Enterprise Elementary

- 1st Place Creativity - Parrish Healthcare
- 2nd Place Creativity - Wildflower Beauty
- 1st Place Spirit - Enterprise Elementary
- 2nd Place Spirit - PSJ Golf Carts
- 1st Place Theme - Port Java
- 2nd Place Theme - Butternut Farm
- 1st Place Marching Musical:
 - Space Coast Vipers Marching Band
- 1st Place Non-Musical - Space Coast HS SFROTC
- 2nd Place Non-Musical:
 - SCJr/Sr High School Cheerleaders

or current resident

Resident
Brevard County, FL

PRSRST STD
U S POSTAGE
PAID
COCO A, FL 32922
PERMIT NO. 53

ECRWSS

Meet Your New OB-GYN

Rahul Lohana, MD

Rahul Lohana is an expert in women's health who enjoys providing compassionate care to his patients. Dr. Lohana possesses the knowledge, skills and expertise in the medical and surgical care of the female reproductive system and associated disorders.

PARRISH HEALTHCARE CENTER
TITUS LANDING

250 Harrison Street
Titusville, Florida 32780
Phone: 321-268-6868

For more information visit
parrishhealthcare.com/lohana




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MEDICAL GROUP
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Medicare, Medicaid and most insurances accepted.

parrishmedgroup.com

PSJ Community Center Schedule - January, 2025

The center is open Mondays–Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Fridays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

For latest information about any of these programs or to register, call 321-633-1904.

Mondays

Seniors At Lunch, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Outside Basketball, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Game Room, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Billiards, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Community Cares Aftercare, 2:30 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Tuesdays

Seniors At Lunch, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Outside Basketball, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Game Room, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Billiards, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Community Cares Aftercare, 2:30 - 6 p.m.
Dancing Little Stars-Ballet/Tap Combo Classes,
(ages 3-6) 5:10 - 5:55 p.m.

Wednesdays

Home School Class P.E. 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
Seniors At Lunch, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Outside Basketball, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Game Room, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Billiards, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Community Cares Aftercare, 2:30 - 6 p.m.

Thursdays

Seniors At Lunch, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Billiards, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Outside Basketball, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Game Room, 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Community Cares Aftercare, 2:30 - 6 p.m.
Gentle Yoga, 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

Fridays

Outside Basketball, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Game Room, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Billiards, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Dancing Little Stars, 10 – 11:45 a.m. and 10:45
- 11:15 a.m.
Seniors At Lunch, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Community Cares Aftercare, 1:30 - 6 p.m.
Zumba - Coming Soon - Every Monday 5:30-
6:30 p.m.

About Kel's Kitchen

Culinary Kids—Every other Wednesday at 4:30-
6:00 p.m. A special program for the child who
has a keen interest in all things culinary. This
program runs every other Wednesday. The focus
is on developing foundational skills to carry into
your kitchen at home. \$22.00 per child. Adult
must accompany child and you must preregister
at www.floridakelskitchen.com

About Dancing Little Stars - Tuesdays 4:00-
4:45 p.m./5:00-5:45 p.m. & Fridays 10:00 – 10:45
a.m./10:45 – 11:15 a.m.

Ballet, Tap and age appropriate Hip-Hop classes
for boys and girls, ages 2-7. Classes focus on
rhythm, concentration, memory and balance...
while having fun! Our full-scale dance recital is
held at the end of the dance season in May. Enroll-
ment is open. Tuition is \$65 per month with the
recital costume included with tuition. Register on-
line at www.dancinglittlestarsbrevard.com <http://www.dancinglittlestarsbrevard.com>.

About Yoga With Diane

Gentle Yoga - Thursdays, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.
Gentle Yoga with Diane - Relax, rejuvenate and
enjoy yoga that meets you where you are! Approp-
riate for beginners, all body types with alterna-
tives offered to accommodate physical conditions.
All that is needed is a yoga mat and water bottle.
Recommend not eating two hours prior, small
fruit snack okay. Price is \$7 per class. Visit www.psyyoga.com for further information.

About Homeschool Class P.E.

Wednesdays, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m.
This is a great opportunity for exercise and so-
cialize in a fun nature. Price is \$2 per class. Call
321-603-2118 for more information.

Food For Thought

A Healthy Start

The beginning of a new year is often seen as
a time of renewal and fresh beginnings, making
it the perfect time to embark on a new health or
fitness journey. As the calendar resets, it provides
a symbolic chance to evaluate past habits and
set new, meaningful goals. With this clean slate
ahead, many people find themselves motivated
to embrace change by improving their health.
Have you considered committing to a healthier
diet, incorporating regular exercise or focusing on
mental health? No matter what your objectives are,
the New Year presents an excellent opportunity
to set intentions. However, it's common to get
sidetracked in the process. To help you stay on
course, consider the following tips.

Cultivate a long-term mindset to prevent dis-
couragement along the way. Relying on quick

solutions like fad diets, miracle supplements or ex-
ercise gadgets promoted on social media typically
fails to produce lasting results. Instead, evaluate
changes you want to make and create a road map
with realistic milestones along the way. Achieving
these smaller goals will provide motivation as you
progress toward your larger objective. Document
this road map and review it frequently to keep your
goal fresh in your mind.

Start by making small adjustments to your life-
style. While a complete overhaul may be effective
for some, it often doesn't work for most people.
Consider introducing minor changes, such as try-
ing a new meal or snack each week to enhance
your meal options or taking a walk during your
lunch break if you have the time. Set aside time for
meal planning as well. Keep in mind that gradual
changes lead to long-term success. If something
isn't working for you, feel free to switch it up.
It's perfectly fine to assess your progress along
the way to see what is and is not working for you.

Always make the healthier choice the easier
choice. When you're preparing a meal, consider
cooking extra portions for lunch or freezing some
for a quick future meal. Prepare or portion out
snacks in advance, ensuring you have something
easy to grab as you head out the door or when
packing a lunch. Having convenient options avail-
able at home reduces the likelihood of opting for
fast food or other less healthy choices later in the
day.

Eliminate negative self-talk. Remember, no
single food choice can make or break your diet,
and one missed gym session won't dictate the
success of your fitness journey. A solid plan for
achieving your goals allows for slip-ups along the
way. Embrace the journey, forgive yourself for any
mistakes, and focus on making choices that align
with your objectives next time.

Any time of the year is a great time to make
a healthy change, but the New Year is often seen
as a fresh start. Take advantage of this moment to
set a meaningful goal. Discouragement is bound
to happen, but what's most important is that you
don't let a setback completely derail you from
achieving your goal. Though change can be chal-
lenging, with the right strategy and mindset, you
can make it happen.

~ Amanda Mahaleris, MS, RDN, LDN
Lighthearted Nutrition

Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine and Parrish Healthcare Form Strategic Partnership



Parrish Medical Group Director, Dr. Kevat Patel with Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine fourth year student, Elijah Ibadlit.

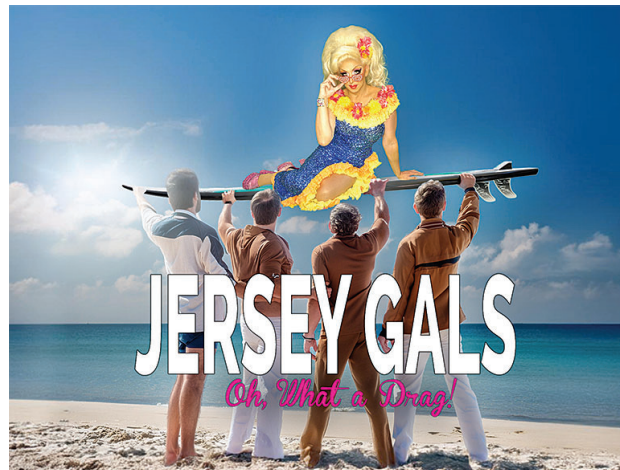
Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine and Parrish Healthcare are pleased to announce a new strategic partnership designed to provide clinical training and mentorship opportunities for Burrell's third- and fourth-year medical students. This collaboration will allow student doctors to gain essential, hands-on experience in various medical specialties under the supervision of Parrish Healthcare physicians.

"This partnership with Parrish Healthcare is a significant step in broadening our students' exposure to the clinical settings within Brevard County," said John Hummer, President of Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine. "By working alongside experienced healthcare professionals at Parrish Healthcare, our students will develop the skills and confidence they need to excel in their medical careers and provide exceptional patient care."

As part of this partnership, Parrish Healthcare physicians will serve as preceptors, guiding Burrell's student doctors through their clinical rotations. The students will gain experience across a variety of medical disciplines, from internal medicine to surgery, enhancing their education through direct patient interaction and the latest medical practices.

"Our partnership with Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine is a vital step in shaping the next generation of healthcare professionals," said George Mikitarian, President and CEO of Parrish Healthcare. "By providing future physicians with hands-on clinical training and mentorship, we're fostering a learning environment that prioritizes firsthand insights into the day-to-day responsibilities, challenges and rewards of the medical field. This collaboration not only strengthens the pipeline of highly skilled physicians, but also ensures that our community has access to the highest standard of medical expertise for years to come."

This collaboration aligns with Burrell's mission to deliver a community-based medical education that prepares students to meet the healthcare needs of diverse populations. For Parrish Healthcare, the partnership further supports its commitment to fostering medical education and improving patient outcomes through innovation and quality care.



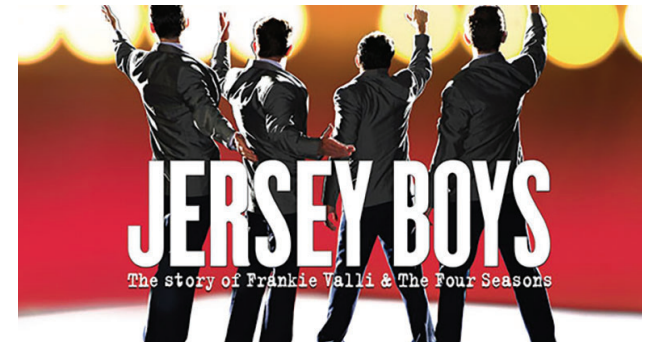
JERSEY GALS – OH, WHAT A DRAG! January 17 & 18 Rated R

Two nights only! Join us after Jersey Boys as the Queens visit the Jersey Shore!

In January at Stage 2 in Titusville

STAGE 2 is located in an outdoor, but covered pavilion. Performances will occur rain or shine. The gates are located at 316 South Palm Avenue and open 30 minutes before your show. Please dress and be prepared for the weather.

For show times, information or to purchase tickets, visit <https://titusvilleplayhouse.com/>.



JERSEY BOYS

JANUARY 10–FEBRUARY 23, 2025

They had a look, an attitude, and a sound like no other. Sure, they were born in Jersey. But they were made in America. Who knew four guys from New Jersey would turn the world upside down? With a unique sound that nobody had heard, but the radio couldn't get enough of, Jersey Boys is the Tony® Award-winning true-life musical of Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons. While their harmonies were perfect on stage, their offstage relationships were a very different story.



Titusville Playhouse 2024-25 Season

The Titusville Playhouse, Inc. is located within the Historic Emma Parrish Theatre, 301 Julia St., (corner of Hopkins Ave. - US1 southbound), providing professional quality entertainment on the Space Coast. The MainStage theatre includes a 150 seat orchestra section and a 124 seat Balcony Section. Balcony seats are only accessed by walking up a flight of stairs. THERE IS NO ELEVATOR.

Show times are Friday, Saturday and select Thursdays at 8:00 p.m., Sunday and select Saturdays at 2:00 p.m.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit <https://titusvilleplayhouse.com/> or call 321-268-1125. Season tickets are available.

Good Day!

~ by Maureen Rupe

Port St. John Regional Wastewater Facility?

December 3rd, 2024 County Commission Agenda Item 7632: Request from Space Florida to connect to the Merritt Island (Sykes Creek) wastewater system and the participation of Space Florida and State Agencies in a regional Port St. John wastewater treatment facility and force main (District 1 & 2).

I want to talk primarily about the regional Port St. John (PSJ) wastewater treatment facility and force main (District 1 & 2). Five years ago, I asked Senator Mayfield's office about information on a regional wastewater facility. I was told Port St. John was being looked at. I asked for more information when available. No one ever called me back. Others have mentioned TICO airport, but that doesn't look any better and that area is considered Titusville, not Port St. John.

But why Port St. John? I studied the length of Brevard County. PSJ is too developed, but the area east, north or south of Port St. John Parkway has large areas of undeveloped highlands that could hold something of this scale, especially if they are talking about bringing wastewater from both District 1 and District 2. That is the only area that works except given the distance involved to get to that location from the Space Centers, or from District 2. After crossing the Banana River and Indian River Lagoon, there's still a lot of large pipe required to get it to Port St. John Parkway.

As far as force mains: Sewer systems are made up of various parts that transport wastewater from homes and buildings to a facility for treatment. Wastewater initially travels through a pipe on an individual property before merging with neighboring properties' wastewater in a sewer main under a nearby street. There, wastewater travels through a system of pipes until it gets to a treatment plant. The easiest way to transfer wastewater is by gravity, where it flows till it gets to the treatment plant. If the plant is higher than the initial location, they must have force mains. Force mains rely on pumps or compressors to create the pressure to drive the wastewater up to higher elevations.

The area around PSJ Parkway is a much higher elevation than Cape Canaveral Space Force Station (CCSFS) or areas of District 2. The implications to PSJ are with us being right beside a huge

wastewater treatment facility, they most likely will want us to hook up to it, even though the areas west of the railroad tracks are not within the Indian River Lagoon Water Shed.

According to State Statute 381.00655: "Connection of existing onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems to central sewerage system; requirements," "...houses have to hook up to a public owned sewage system within 365 days of being notified that pipelines are available." The statute states, "A local government or water and sewer district responsible for the operation of a centralized sewer system under s.153.62 may grant a variance to an owner of a performance-based onsite sewage treatment and disposal system permitted by the department as long as the onsite system is functioning properly and satisfying the conditions of the operating permit, unless the location is an area of critical state concern. The local governing body of the jurisdiction in which the owner of the onsite sewage treatment and disposal system resides may provide that any connection fee charged under this section by an investor-owned sewerage system may be paid without interest in monthly installments over a period of time not to exceed 5 years from the date the sewerage system becomes available if it determines that the owner has demonstrated a financial hardship."

I have no idea how much this will cost with inflation, but I was told in years past to expect hookup costs to be \$10,000 to \$20,000. Since this is a Space Florida demand, I would hope the county would work with the state to have grants to cover at least some of the cost for hookup.

This whole County Commission agenda item came up from two letters that were received: one from Space Florida alone, and the other from Space Florida along with the Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Commerce, Florida Department of Education and Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Both letters were talking about the Sykes Creek Plant on North Merritt Island.

The first letter from Space Florida was asking to hook up wastewater from CCSFS, and the county replied the county shouldn't have to cover costs and that treatment plant was nearing capacity, as well as concerns whether CCSFS wastewater would be correct for going into a residential

wastewater treatment plant.

The second letter from Space Florida and all the various Florida Departments was not as polite, and went on about all the jobs and money the county receives from the state, and we had better change our tune or they would cut off large chunks of that funding.

The letter from the Florida Departments to the Brevard County Commission stated that Florida has given a lot of money in the past, along with creating many jobs at the Space Center and Space Force Station. However, funds for educating our space workforce was benefiting CCAFS companies, and other funds were from grants Brevard requested for improving the IRL.

The jobs may be in Brevard, but how many of those live in Orange or Volusia and not in Brevard County? Governor DeSantis did allocate \$100 million per year, but it was assumed to help the IRL, not that it had to be spent on getting wastewater from CCSFS. He should have stated that when it was given, not a year or so later in a nasty letter that we better treat their wastewater, as I'm sure these two projects and all the pipelines over or under the lagoon will cost a lot more than a couple of hundred million dollars. Letters are in the reference link below.

I attended the Lagoon Restoration Meeting on December 19th at the Eau Gallie Civic Center. It was excellent, with presentations by Virginia Barker, Director of Brevard County Natural Resources Department; Anthony Gubler, Environmental Specialist for Septic System Upgrades for the same Natural Resources Department; Olivia Escandell, Brevard Zoo Conservation Manager for Restore Our Shores; and Keith Winsten, CEO for East Coast Zoological Society of Florida, Future of Indian River Lagoon Conservation. The presenters covered a lot of information and there was even a Question-and-Answer Period with an extra panelist, Austin Fox, Florida Institute of Technology, Assistant Professor of Ocean Sciences.

There were also booths along the borders with flyers and more information. The most important information for this article is a 2030 mandate for all homes to be connected to sewer by that date or have an upgraded aerobic system installed, which is only for homes within the IRL watershed. For Port St. John, the watershed is primarily east of

the railroad tracks, so we need to fight to stay off sewer if they want us to connect, because it's adjacent to us in PSJ.

The 2030 mandate was only passed in the 2023 legislation. When the Regional Plant goes in somewhere near Port St. John, as I said earlier, state law requires any homes near enough to connect must connect within 12 months of being notified. Since the primary pipes will be force mains from CCSFS or District 2, it's harder to connect to a force main than a sewer main, so we need to keep the sewer mains away from the west side of the railroad.

I haven't even talked about the environmental implications from going under or over the Banana River and Indian River Lagoon. The pipes need to be above ground level and cross over the lagoon. If the pipes are buried, we will have too much trouble finding any future leaks. There will be too many miles of pipeline that could cause great harm to the Indian River Lagoon. I also hate to think what size of pipeline is required for traveling from the Space Force Station to the mainland, and the aesthetics would not be nice. I will bring back any information as I find it out.

Reference:

<https://brevardfl.legistar.com/Legislation-Detail.aspx?ID=7032100&GUID=53E276E7-E8C0-4B28-AF66-82CF4EA7DD3F&Options=&Search=>

Brevard a Bill of Rights Sanctuary County?

Another topic at the December 4 County Commission meeting was concerning Brevard becoming a Sanctuary County. The item was pulled, but there were a few people speaking for and against the issue. I do not like the proposal. I sent the following email to the County Commissioners on my thoughts:

"Dear Brevard County Commissioners;

I am concerned that the proposed Bill of Rights Sanctuary County ordinance might need more research before it could be implemented. Brevard County is unique in that we have several Federal entities, including Kennedy Space Center, Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Patrick Space Force Base, Melbourne International Airport, the International Port Canaveral, as well as the Canaveral National Seashore. All these locations have at least a few federal regulations involved.

Has Brevard County discussed this ordinance

with any of our federal organizations to discuss possible implications of this county ordinance? For example, the ordinance states it only applies to Brevard County agents, employees or officials. Are there any instances where County employees have to provide services on any of these locations, and if so, are there any required federal regulations that could become questionable to those employees? If I was in charge of any of these locations, I would be concerned that any Brevard County agents/employees may not follow federal guidelines.

For example, the Brevard County Sheriff's Office provides security services at Port Canaveral. The Sheriff is a state employee, but the Brevard County Deputies are County employees. I would question why I use the Brevard County Sheriff's Office for security under these circumstances.

Another example could be Canaveral National Seashore. I'm sure either Brevard County Sheriff's Office or Brevard County Fire Services could be called. Should Canaveral Seashore federal park allow the Sheriff's office to cover security if Brevard County is saying they may not follow federal regulations?

I believe there should be much more research into the impact of this ordinance on the county's interactions with any federal location, and a lot more interaction between the county and the leaders of these federal entities.

Thank you.

Maureen Rupe"

I believe "Sanctuary County" will come back before the Brevard County Commission, but I hope they do a lot more research before making the decision. I would hate that we could lose any federal grants/funds or lose any connections between the county and the federal locations or agencies due to this fanciful notion. If we do it with federal, we must do it with the state as they are just as bad, but I believe either is going too far. I will bring back the information as I find out.

Note: Collier County was the first of "Bill of Rights Sanctuary County." Florida Today reported on November 21: "Commissioners at the Nov. 12 meeting voted to draft an ordinance proclaiming Brevard free from "the commanding hand of the federal government" and declaring that the county will not comply with federal laws deemed unconstitutional."

Reference: <https://www.floridatoday.com/story/news/2024/12/03/brevard-wont-vote-on-bill-of-rights-sanctuary-county-ordinance-for-now/76706072007/>

Cheerio,

~ Maureen Rupe

rupe32927@gmail.com

Jess Parrish Medical Foundation Accepting Scholarship Applications for Students Pursuing Careers in Healthcare

Jess Parrish Medical Foundation (JPMF) has launched its 2025 scholarship application period and is now accepting applications from high school seniors and college undergraduate students who plan to pursue a career in a medical or healthcare field related to human health.

Scholarships will be awarded to graduating high school seniors and undergraduate students who reside in the Parrish Medical Center service area and are attending an accredited two or four-year college/university. Students must have a 3.0 grade point average or higher, based on a 4.0 scale.

Students who have been awarded a JPMF scholarship in previous years may reapply provided they are continuing in a medical/healthcare field and have maintained at least a 3.0 grade point average. Graduate students are not eligible to apply.

High school students who attend Astronaut High School, Space Coast Jr./Sr. High School and Titusville High School may obtain an application from the guidance office at their school. Other students may obtain an application by calling the Jess Parrish Medical Foundation at 321-269-4066 or by visiting parrishmedfoundation.com/scholarships.

The number and amount awarded for scholarships will be recommended by the Foundation's scholarship committee with final approval by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

The deadline for submitting applications is Friday, March 7, 2025. Scholarship award recipients will be announced in May 2025. To date, JPMF has awarded more than \$535,000 to 485 students, supporting future generations of healthcare professionals.

Rose's Room

~ Rose Padrick



Maybe?

The holiday season is behind us once again, I'm hoping each of you made it through with a happy heart and few scars. Most of us are looking forward to this new year that has been given to us with much trepidation and with good reason. Once again, we can make it through with a smile in our hearts and trust in something bigger than us. If you're reading this while you or a loved one is facing hardship or loss, please know you are not alone, that prayers are being sent every day.

Well, we made it...we have an eight-month grace period before the madness begins. I know eight months is stretching it because we start getting bombarded with THOSE advertisements in July, but my managing Christmas book starts in August.

I hate to sound like a grumpy old lady, (even though some of my offspring have named me the president of the club), but this year made me crazier than usual. I totally understand and totally support the concept that each generation should be and should do better than the one before, and I proudly declare each and every human running around with my DNA flowing through their cell nucleus-es has done so with gusto. I couldn't be prouder if I had invented sliced bread.

BUTTT... I can't help reminisce past Christmases. (Yeah, here we go with the old lady remembering.) When me and Fred Flintstone hung our stockings from the Guava tree, (we grew up in Florida - few fireplaces), they were filled with river grass if you had a hard year, (Florida, remember?), and walnuts, tangerines, tooth brushes and if you were really lucky, a couple of real (red and white) candy canes.

When I had five little balls of energy terrorizing the Christmas tree, someone came out with store-

bought mesh stockings filled with magic candy and a couple of small toys that had a two-day life span. The magic candy was made by the Magic Elf, which was why it mysteriously disappeared the moment a child's back was turned.

This year the newest members of the clan hung stockings on a real fake fireplace mantle, the TV shelf and bed posts. They were filled with ten dollar toys, multi-color and multi-flavor candy canes, (candy canes just should not taste like Starbursts!), and Walmart gift cards.

Back in the early and tough times, kids received only one Christmas gift and we were so grateful we never thought we were missing anything. My absolute favorite Christmas gifts were the ten comic books I received every year. I would grab them and my candy canes, head outside and climb so high in the huge pine tree that my brothers couldn't follow. I read and re-read the comics while they played with their new trucks below so they could be on the alert for a dropped candy cane. (Never happened.)

My darlings fared just a little better in the gift department. Their father and I were able to swing dolls, doll clothes, new PJs and one year, reconditioned used bicycles. I'm proud to say they were as grateful as if they received a pot of gold.

The newest generation in my family tree received play cars, new bicycles, beautiful new duds and most of Amazon's toy department. Again, I'm proud to say none are spoiled and are the pot of gold grateful.

Also, again the whole Christmas thing has become so terribly commercial, Christmas movies the whole month of July, black Friday advertisements in August and new cars being pushed so hard you would think they're coming to an end of their shelf life.

If I keep my nose to the grindstone and be very vigilant this first month of this brand-new year, I'll be copying birthdays and anniversaries from the old calendar to the new one. I will then be adding a note to remind each family member of the Real Reason For The Season beginning at the very first movie and continuing through to the next new year. I invite everyone to do the same - a journey of a thousand miles begins with but one step - and wouldn't it be wonderful if we could make just a tiny difference?

That it will drive my kids crazy is just a bonus.

Thank You! From FUMC

We would like to thank our OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2024 campaign supporters. We sent 112 gift boxes to needy children! First United Methodist Church of PSJ members supported in many ways: setting up for and accepting financial donations, sponsoring boxes, providing gifts for boxes, packing boxes and praying.

- Kline's Jewelry sponsored boxes.
- Publix Pharmacy donated bottles for fishing kits.
- Local Girl Scout Troop # 276 donated bracelet kits.
- Local Boy Scout troop # 370 donated fishing kits.

Thank you to Kline's Jewelry, Wildflower Beauty Collective, Enterprise Elementary and several individual community members for donating items to our Food Pantry.

And a big thank you for all who attended Light Up Port St. John. It was a beautiful evening that included elementary school kids' choirs singing, crafts, food, and, of course, the tree lighting. Congratulations go to Enterprise Elementary, who won the tree decorating contest.

Amvets Post 2415 Schedule



1-1 Sons of Amvets 2415 General Membership Meeting -1st Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. Commander Chuck Harrington, 321-208-7897.

1-8 General Membership Meeting- 2nd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m.
1-9 Amvets 2415 Ladies Auxiliary General Membership Meeting - 2nd Thursday of the month at 6 p.m. President Theresa Nikki Anderson, 321-208-7897.

1-11 Amvets Riders Chapter 2415 General Membership Meeting - 2nd Saturday of the month at 12 noon. Pres. Steve Carman, 321-446-3394.

1-11 Bike Night! 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. on the 2nd Saturday of the month at the Post.

Meat Shoot - 1st and 3rd Saturdays, 2-4 p.m.

Karaoke every Friday with Bone, 6-10 p.m.

Bingo Sundays 1-?

Post 2415 is located at 688 West Ave., (adjacent to Hwy. US 1), Port St. John. If you are a veteran and would like to visit the Post or would like more information about Amvets, contact Commander Larry Lonneville at 321-208-7897.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP SCHEDULE

Amputee Support Group of Titusville

Meets the second Tuesday monthly, 3-4:30 PM
Parrish Healthcare Center, Manatee Conference Room 5005
Port St. John Parkway, Port St. John
Contact Matthew Julian at 239-850-4117

A.W.A.K.E. Sleep Support Group

Meets the second Monday monthly, 6-7:30 PM
Parrish Healthcare Center, Manatee Conference Room 5005
Port St. John Parkway, Port St. John
Contact our Sleep Center team at 321-268-6408

Cancer and Survivor Support Group

Meets the third Wednesday monthly, 4-5:30 PM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Shannon Luker at 321-268-3544

Caring for Caregivers Support Group

Second and fourth Thursday monthly, 9:30-11:30 AM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Janet Rooks at 321-268-6800

Diabetes Support Group

Meets the second Monday monthly, 3-4:30 PM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Peggy McLaughlin at 321-268-6699

Early Steps Community Play Date

Meets the fourth Wednesday monthly, 9-10:30 AM
The Children's Center, 5650 South Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Mary Cancel at 321-292-1370

Fearless Café

Presented by St. Francis Reflections Life Stages Care and Parrish Medical Center.

Meets the first Wednesday monthly, 10-11 AM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Janet Rooks at 321-268-6800

Kidney Smart Class

Meets the last Thursday monthly, 1-2:30 PM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 N. Washington Ave., Titusville
Contact Jackie Torres at 321-383-1245

Mom's Support Group

Meets Mondays, 10-11 AM
The Children's Center, 5650 South Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Melinda at Melinda.Hodges@parrishmed.com

Stroke and Heart Failure Survivors Support Group

Meets the third Tuesday monthly, 2-4 PM
Heritage Hall, Parrish Health Village
931 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Contact Janet Rooks at 321-268-6800

Tools to Quit - Quit Smoking

Meets the last Tuesday monthly, 5:30-7:30 PM
Parrish Medical Center, Conference Room 6
951 North Washington Avenue, Titusville
Facilitated by Jennifer Wolowitz, Tobacco Free Florida
407-889-2292 ext. 102



Visit parrishhealthcare.com/events
for information and to register



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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Alcoholics Anonymous meets on **Sundays** at 5 p.m. **Women's AA** meets on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, 10 a.m. **Both AA Groups meet at St. Patrick's Church, 4797 Curtis Blvd.**

1-1 Happy New Year!

1-2 Hanukkah Ends

1-1 American Legion Auxiliary, Unit 359, General Membership Meeting on the 1st Wednesday of each month, 6 p.m. at the Post Home, 7260 S. US 1, just north of PSJ. Call President Valerie Helmer at 321-268-1632.

1-1 Sons of Amvets 2415 Meeting- 1st Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m. 688 West Ave., PSJ. Commander Chuck Harrington, 321-208-7897.

1-4 Bike Days at the Tiki, 1:00 - 5:00 PM

First Saturday of each month. 7260 S. US Hwy. 1, Bellwood, (just north of Port St. John), 321-268-1632. Contact Wayne Fowler, Events Coordinator, American Legion Riders Post 359 at 321-307-1450 or visit their website, alr359.org.

1-6 Epiphany

1-7 Orthodox Christmas

1-7 Compassionate Friends Support Group meets the first Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m. in Cocoa Beach at the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 525 Minuteman Cswy. west of A1A, Fellowship Hall. Call 610-7875 for info.

1-9 Amvets Ladies Auxiliary 2415 General Membership Meeting on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6 p.m. President Theresa N. Anderson. 321-208-7897.

1-10 Brevard Women's Connection meets at Space Coast Convention Center on Hwy. 520 from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m., 2nd Friday of each month. Call Pam at 321-752-6896 or e-mail bwc0020@gmail.com.

1-12 Multiple Sclerosis Self-Help Group meets on the 2nd Sunday each month (except Mother's Day & November), 2 p.m., Cocoa Library.

1-12 Word Weavers Space Coast, a critique group for Christian writers, meets the 2nd Sunday at 2 p.m. at the Central Brevard Library in Cocoa. Visitors are always welcome. Email angelgardnerwrites@gmail.com for info.

1-14 Orthodox New Year

1-15 American Legion Post 359 meets at the Post Home at 7260 S. US 1 in Bellwood, (2

miles north of PSJ), 6:00 p.m. All Legionnaires and new members are welcome. The Post meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Contact Commander Michelle Aaron at 321-289-2880 for more information.

1-20 Moonport Modelers RC Club meets at 6:30 p.m., 3rd Monday each month at the N. Brevard Library, 2121 S. Hopkins Ave., Titusville. For more info, call Wayne Mendez, 505-2361.

1-20 Martin Luther King Day

1-20 Presidential Inauguration

1-25 Veterans & First Responders Breakfast - Last Saturday of each month, 9:00 a.m. at Saint Patrick's Anglican Church, 4797 Curtis Blvd., Port St. John. This is open to all veterans, spouses of veterans and all first responders.

1-26 Lailat Al Miraj

1-28 Moonlight Quilters Guild meets at the First United Methodist Church, 206 S. Hopkins Ave., Titusville on the 4th Tuesday of each month (no meeting in April or December). Meet and greet refreshments at 6:00 p.m., meeting at 6:15 p.m., usually followed by show and tell or a guest speaker. Email Moonlight.Quilters@yahoo.com for more information.

1-29 Chinese New Year



Post 359 - American Legion

1-1 Auxiliary General Membership Meeting - 1st Wednesday of the month, 6 p.m.

1-4 Bike Days at the Tiki - 1st

Saturday of the month, 1 - 5 p.m. presented by American Legion Riders. Good food on the grill with Fixin's, \$10. Listen to live music, take part in drawings, 50/50. All proceeds to benefit veterans and veterans' families.

1-13 Sons of the Legion, 6 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of the month at the Post.

1-15 General Membership Meeting- 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m., 7260 S. US Hwy. 1, Bellwood, (just north of Port St. John), 321-268-1632.

1-19 American Legion Riders General Membership Meeting- 3rd Sunday of the month at 10:30 a.m. Call 2nd Vice Director Janice Anderson, Director, 321-210-6234 or visit our website,

alr359.org.

The Post is located at 7260 S. US Hwy. 1, Bellwood, (just north of Port St. John), or call 321-268-1632.

If you are a veteran and would like to visit the Post or would like more information about American Legion, contact Commander Michelle Aaron at 321-289-2880 for more information.

Congratulations to:

Brandi McGann is more lovely on the 1st.

Nathan Weimer turns **18** on the 1st.

Brandon Crissman turns **50** on the 1st.

Angie Crissman turns cuter on the 3rd.

Mack Grenet turns wilder on the 3rd.

Haley Higginbotham turns **25** on the 4th.

Karissa Smith turns **29** on the 4th.

Brittney Parks turns **32** on the 4th.

Craig Taylor turns **44** on the 4th.

Michelle Parks turns hotter on the 5th.

Lisa Sarivola parties wild on the 5th.

Tom Hunt turns crazier on the 5th.

Carl Anderson IV turns bolder on the 5th.

Luke Moser turns **13TEEN** on January 5th.

Joseph Warrick turns **10** on January 5th!

Lucha Hunt is the Queen on the 6th.

Natalee Prentis turns **31** on the 7th.

RaeLynn Weathers dances all night on the 12th.

Michael Cox turns **21** on the 14th.

Mark Walters turns **27** on the 16th.

Lanny Grenet gets spanked on the 16th.

Jack Woerner turns **28** on the 22nd.

Makylie Taylor turns **18** on the 24th.

Joe Casey turns wilder on the 25th.

Colten Lavis turns **14** on the 29th.

Brittanie Grenet turns prettier on the 31st.

Dylan Carmichael turns **19** on the 31st.

Jim & Maria O'Neill will celebrate their **59th** anniversary on January 16th.

Rob & Cheryl Wratchford celebrate their **42nd** anniversary on the 29th.

Chena & Joe Lessey celebrate **32** years on the 30th.

The Christmas Parade Committee for a Great Job on Dec. 21st. Well done, team!!

We have lots of room for more good news.

Email inputs to happenings1@att.net



NEW LIBRARY HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, 9 a.m.-6 p.m.; Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.; Wednesday, 12-8 p.m. and Sunday, 12-5 p.m. The Library will be closed on January 1 and January 20.

Adult Programs:

Paint Party with the Friends of the Port St. John Library. Saturday, January 4 from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.: Join the Friends of the Port St. John Public Library for a paint party every first Saturday of the month. During this class you will create custom wooden door hangers. Adults and teens ages 16+, \$40/per person. Payment is due at sign up. Deadline to register at the Reference Desk by Tuesday, December 31.

Community Support Advocate: Mondays January 6th from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. The community support advocate provides assistance with housing, SNAP, social security, healthcare and insurance, and senior resources.

Memory Kits. Brevard County Libraries is now offering Memory Kits available for check out at select locations. Memory Kits are specially designed activity kits that include resources and hands-on activities for persons living with dementia, Alzheimer's and other forms of cognitive impairment. Each kit includes curated materials such as interactive books, puzzles, arts and crafts, and guided discussion prompts for caregivers. Kits currently focus on three different themes: 1960s Nostalgia, Animals and the Great Outdoors.

Bookworms Book Club: Wednesday, January 15th at 6:30 p.m. Book discussion. See the reference desk for this month's selection and the next meeting date. This month the book club will be discussing Cinder by Marissa Meyer.

Port Readers Book Club: Wednesday, January 22 at 6:30 p.m.: This book club meets on the fourth Wednesday. January's featured book is No Country for Old Men by Cormac McCarthy. Books are available at the Reference Desk.

Family Programs:

Escape the Blizzard Escape Room: Come escape the blizzard at the Port St. John Library Winter Escape Room! Dates are Sunday Jan. 12, 3:00-4:30, Monday Jan. 13, 4:00-5:30 and Tues-

day Jan. 14, 4:00-5:30. We recommend groups of 4 people. Call ahead to reserve your 20-minute time slot.

Family Spice Club: January 17th 3:30 p.m. This is a family event. Come to the meeting to pick up a spice kit and share food, recipes and cooking adventures. Family Fun for the entire family.

Bats! by the Florida Bat Conservancy: Wednesday, January 22nd 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. Join us for a presentation courtesy of the Florida Bat Conservancy and special guest stars: real Floridian bats, about the importance of bats in the ecosystem, what this organization does for the community, and what you can do for your local bat population. All are welcome to attend this family-friendly event!

Game Day: Sundays, 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Join us every Sunday to meet other game enthusiasts for an afternoon of board, tabletop and card games in the main library area. Use one of the library-provided sets, or bring your own! All ages are welcome to this family-friendly event.

Youth Services

Sensory Sundays: Sundays, 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Every Sunday children can join the library staff for quiet time with sensory bins and activities. Sensory bin activities are exciting and engaging ways for kids to explore different textures, colors, and materials. Designed for children ages 6-12, these activities help develop fine motor skills, encourage imaginative play and offer a hands-on learning experience. This event requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

STEAM Activity Time: Tuesdays 4:30-5:30 p.m. STEAM time at the Port St. John public library is every Tuesday afternoon in the meeting room. Come build and make things with us! We will have activities centered around science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics. This event is for ages 6-11 and requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

Read Your Way to K: Babies: Fridays, 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. We invite babies, young toddlers and their caregivers to join us for an hour of stories, songs, and games. As they begin the journey toward kindergarten, reading and storytelling allow babies to discover speech patterns, new words, and language. Our fun and informal program is designed to enhance those skills. Baby story time is from 9:30 to 10:00 a.m. every Friday morning

in the meeting room. It is for babies ages three and under and requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

Read Your Way to K: Toddlers: Fridays, 10:30 to 11:00 a.m. We invite babies, young toddlers, and their caregivers to join us for an hour of stories, songs, and games. As they begin the journey toward kindergarten, reading and storytelling allow babies to discover speech patterns, new words, and language. Our fun and informal program is designed to enhance those skills. Toddler Story Time at the Port St. John public library is every Friday morning for ages 3 to 5 and requires parent or adult supervision at all times.

Teen Art League: Saturday, January 11th and 18th 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Teens ages 13 and up can join other creative minded individuals for some time to chill and work on your personal art projects. Various art supplies will be provided by the library, but you are welcome to bring your own supplies. Staff will have optional creative projects to work on if you need some inspiration!

Roots to Work Program Empowers Young Adults With Special Needs Through Agricultural Training

We are excited to announce the launch of Roots to Work, a program designed for young adults (ages 18 and older) with special needs who are eager to develop workplace skills in horticulture.

This 6-week course begins the first week of February (exact dates TBD) and combines classroom learning, hands-on training and field trips to provide participants with essential skills for independence and success in the workforce.

Program Highlights:

- Interactive Training: Weekly classes with a mix of classroom and practical, hands-on activities.
- Field Trips: Explore horticulture in action and gain real-world insights.
- Apprenticeship Opportunity: Participants who complete the program may have the chance to apprentice at a local nursery.

To register and learn more, please visit: <https://loom.ly/-2MvuPI>. If you have any questions, please call us at 321-633-1702 or email Brevard@IFAS.UFL.edu.



SLEEPY HOLLOW



Fruit From The Groves



THERE WILL BE A MEETING OF THE CANAVERAL GROVES HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION ON JANUARY 9TH AT 7 p.m., THE MEETING WILL BE

HELD AT BREVARD CHRISTIAN CHURCH ON GRISSOM PARKWAY.

There will be many important decisions made at this meeting, including decisions regarding the continuation of the Homeowners Association. The Canaveral Groves Homeowner's Association has been in existence for 45 plus years. However, due to the lack of support from the people who live in the Groves, we wonder if it's necessary to continue its existence.

There are over 500 homes in the Groves yet at meetings very few people show up. The dues are only \$15/year per household, which allows 2 votes. The dues pay for all of the necessary requirements of the State of Florida and other required expenses. No member receives any monetary compensation for anything they do.

In the past years, the Homeowners Association gave out scholarships and prizes to deserving students. Also, the Association paid to have the stage redone at Fairglen Elementary School to benefit the students. The Association has also donated to

other needy charities. Due to the lack of support, we have been unable to schedule pecan sales and Vidalia onion sales, which has extremely limited what the Association can do.

In the past at the meetings, we have brought in different groups and speakers on various subjects concerning issues regarding the Groves to talk to the attending members. Community forums have been held for people seeking elections in Brevard County.

Canaveral Groves Homeowners Association was set up as an informational social group, NOT to enforce any code enforcement rules against homeowners. That is the job of Brevard County Code Enforcement.

In the past year, the signs entering the Groves were replaced. That cost the Association, and members donated their time and skills to install them. After the recent storms, some of the members were out there checking on neighbors, assisting cleaning the streets of debris and reporting hazards to appropriate County services and utilities. This Association was started to make the Groves a better place to live. However, without support we cannot do this.

Ed Silva
President
Canaveral Groves Homeowners
Association

Farewell to an Extraordinary Educator and Dear Friend: Celebrating 27 Years of Dedication

As I bid farewell to my friend Dana Michell, a beloved educator who has touched the lives of countless students, colleagues and community members, it is impossible to fully capture the impact of her incredible 27-year career.

For nearly three decades, Dana Michell has been a pillar of excellence in education. Her passion for teaching and unwavering commitment to her students have set her apart as an educator who truly cares. Whether in the classroom, at extracurricular events, or through her volunteer work, she has always been there for others—guiding, inspiring and shaping the future of those around her.

She is known for fostering an environment of curiosity, respect and creativity where students not only learn academic lessons, but also life lessons that will stay with them long after they leave the classroom. Her patience, kindness and encouragement have created an atmosphere where every student feels seen and valued.

As she steps into this well-deserved retirement, we will undoubtedly feel the absence of her presence in our daily lives. But the legacy she leaves behind is one that will continue to inspire future generations of students and educators. The impact she has made on this school, its students and its community is immeasurable.

I love you, friend, and know you can't get away from me that easily. I know where you live.

~ Keri Weeks

Meet your neighbors and stay informed of Events & Community Happenings!

CANAVERAL GROVES HOMEOWNERS INC.

If you'd like to join and support our Homeowners' group, just cut out and fill out this form and mail with a check for \$15 to cover the current year's membership dues.
Mail to: CGHI, P.O. Box 675, Sharpes, FL 32959



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Parrish Medical Center Named to U.S. News & World Report 2025 Best Hospitals for Maternity Care

U.S. News & World Report, the global authority in hospital rankings and consumer advice, has named Parrish Medical Center as a 2025 High Performing Hospital for Maternity Care. This is the highest award a hospital can earn as part of U.S. News' Best Hospitals for Maternity Care annual study.

U.S. News began evaluating maternity care hospitals in 2021, rating hospitals that provide labor and delivery services and submit detailed data to the publication for analysis. Best Hospitals for Maternity Care assist expectant parents, in consultation with their prenatal care team, in making informed decisions about where to receive maternity services that best meets their family's needs.

Parrish Medical Center earned a High Performing designation in recognition of maternity care as measured by factors such as severe unexpected newborn complication rates, birthing-friendly practices and transparency on racial/ethnic disparities, among other measures.

"We are excited to be recognized by U.S. News & World Report as one of the Best Hospitals for Maternity Care," said George Mikitarian, Parrish Healthcare President and CEO. "This honor reflects our unwavering commitment to providing exceptional care for mothers and their families, ensuring every birth is a safe and memorable experience. Our dedicated team of Care Partners go above and beyond every day, and this recognition is a testament to their hard work and passion for excellence in maternal care."

"The hospitals recognized by U.S. News as Best Hospitals for Maternity Care showcase exceptional care for expectant parents," said Jennifer Winston, Ph.D., health data scientist at U.S. News. "These hospitals demonstrate significantly lower C-section rates and severe unexpected newborn complications compared to hospitals not recognized by U.S. News."

The U.S. News Best Hospitals for Maternity Care methodology is based entirely on objective measures of quality, such as C-section rates in lower-risk pregnancies, severe unexpected newborn complication rates, exclusive breast milk feeding rates, birthing-friendly practices and reporting on racial/ethnic disparities, among other measures.

For more information, visit Best Hospitals for Maternity Care and use #BestMaternityHospitals on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X. For more information on Parrish Medical Center and/or Parrish Healthcare, visit parrishhealthcare.com.

On the Road With Rose



Erna Nixon Park

1200 Evans Rd., West Melbourne, FL

brevardfl.gov/ParksAndRecreation/ParksByCity/ParksInWestMelbourne/ErnaNixon

321-952-4525

As we enter this new moment in time with fear and trepidation covering most of our beautiful world, we can only talk to whatever higher power we recognize and do our best to spread kindness and hope. If we have someone in our lives who is being touched by all the terribleness around us, we need to reach out with a hug and a prayer.

The holidays are over...some of us jumping for joy, some expelling a huge sigh of relief and others a little sad it passed so quickly. Whether you are dealing with little ones already tired of all those new (and expensive) toys, have teenagers ('nuff said), are empty nesters or 'simply seniors,' getting outside and enjoying all our little piece of paradise has to offer is good for what ails you. My most happy place has a view of the Banana River, but I am always open to discovering new hidden gems, and I found a great one this time.

The little bit of time it takes to get from P.S.J. to Erna Nixon Park is so very worth it. I admit to being less than attentive as I entered the park, and in trying to avoid a large black racer I rolled right past the first sign advising the only pets allowed are service dogs. While I did train my fur baby to be of great service to my disabled husband, he is not certified, so I could not enjoy the full experience this time, although I have enjoyed walking the whole boardwalk a couple of years ago.

It's a public park with the absolute best butterfly area I have ever seen. On the day my four-legged fellow adventurer and I visited, I was privileged to meet a volunteer watering the multiple raised native butterfly gardens. She was kind enough to point out various plants and which butterflies they attracted. Even though it was late in the year, I was able to spot several different colors and sizes. The raised beds are perfect height for curious little ones to see caterpillars, chrysalis and the finished product fluttering among the flowers. There are also many informational plaques scattered throughout this area and the whole park.

A covered pavilion area protects 8 picnic tables with several others scattered nearby. There are no BBQ grills, but it would be a great place to rest and enjoy a nice picnic lunch or dinner. As tempting as it is to throw a piece of bread to a begging animal, please don't. It swells in their stomach and the chemicals makes the animal sick. A couple of grapes or piece of apple is a much better choice.

There are also open areas backing up to shrub for little ones to run, explore and play tag, or imagine they are Seminole Indian, Daniel Boone or Ponce De Leon.

A small but very informational Nature Center houses exhibits of regional flora and fauna which helps to let you know what you're looking at while walking the 3,000 foot raised boardwalk. Just wandering around the pavilion and surrounding area I spotted squirrels, another small snake and a fat raccoon staring at me from a tall tree. Another visitor I spoke with took pictures of a gopher turtle, opossum, several species of lizards and various indigenous trees and shrubs. The ancient oaks and others are covered with beautiful Spanish Moss, air plants abound as do large and small ferns, including resurrection fern. You can finish the whole walk in less than an hour or spend all the time you want to take it all in.

This park is a perfect place to spend a wonderful afternoon with the family, learning and experiencing what old Florida is all about. When I choose to have a picnic lunch at a park, a stop for ice cream is essential. I enjoyed taking U.S. 1 all the way back just to enjoy the scenery usually passed over for the quickness of I-95. Really good soft serve can be found at several places.

Once again, please take only pictures and leave only footprints, I don't think sunscreen would be necessary, but insect repellent might be a good idea.

Port St. John/Canaveral Groves Business Directory

Important Phone Numbers

County Commissioner -	321-607-6901
Sheriff: Non-Emergency -	321-633-7162
Fire Station 26 (Port St. John)	321-633-2056
Emergency Operations Center	321-637-6670
Waste Management -	321-636-6894
SCAT Bus Information -	321-633-1878
Port St. John Library	321-633-1867
PSJ Community Center -	321-633-1904
Florida Power & Light -	321-723-7795
City of Cocoa Water Dept. -	321-433-8400
Parrish Healthcare Center	
Port St. John -	321-268-6868
Titusville -	321-268-6111
Atlantis Elementary School -	321-633-6143
Challenger 7 Elementary -	321-636-5801
Enterprise Elementary School	321-633-3434
Fairglen Elementary School -	321-631-1993
Space Coast Jr/Sr High School -	321-638-0750

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Monthly Tax Update

I want to take a moment and express my gratitude for your interest in reading my articles. Your time and engagement mean so much, and I hope the information I've provided has been helpful and engaging over the past year.

As we bid farewell to 2024 and welcome 2025, it's a perfect time to reflect on what's ahead and prepare for the year to come. With that in mind, let's focus on a few key points to ensure you're ready for the upcoming income tax filing season and beyond.

The start of the New Year is an excellent opportunity to ensure all your financial documents are in order. Whether it's organizing receipts, gathering forms or reviewing last year's tax return, taking these steps early can save time and reduce stress when filing your taxes.

I'm pleased to share that our dedicated tax personnel have been hard at work preparing for the 2025 tax season. Recently, our team completed 16 hours of intensive tax update training to provide clients with the most accurate and up-to-date tax planning and preparation services available.

We reviewed last year due to the hurricanes in Florida and find the due date to file tax returns, traditionally due in March and April, has been extended to May 1st, 2025. This extension allows for additional time to gather and review necessary documents. However, as usual, W-2s and 1099-NECs will be required to be distributed to employees and contractors by January 31st, 2025. You prepare these forms promptly, review them for accuracy, and this will help streamline the filing process and avoid the \$330 penalty for each omission.

Next, at the time of writing this article, a recent federal court order reporting companies are not currently required to file beneficial ownership information with FinCEN and are not subject to liability if they fail to do so by January 1st, 2025, while the order remains in force. However, the Department of Justice, acting on behalf of the Department of the Treasury, filed a Notice of Appeal on December 5, 2024 challenging this order. As it stands, reporting companies can continue to voluntarily submit BOI reports if they choose. I will provide updates on this matter as new information becomes available.

Now, let's take a moment to review changes

related to energy credits. The Inflation Reduction Act and related legislation has introduced or expanded several incentives designed to encourage investments in renewable energy and energy-efficient home improvements. These credits include the Residential Clean Energy Credit, which offers up to 30% of costs associated with solar panels, wind turbines and battery storage systems. The new applicable rates are as follows: for tax years 2022 to 2032, the percentage rate is 30% and future years the percentage will be reduced to zero beginning 2035. The Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit, which provides up to \$3,200 annually for qualifying improvements such as insulation, energy-efficient windows and HVAC systems. Those improvements can be made on the primary home and/or a "dwelling unit". A dwelling unit is defined as any property where the taxpayer can cook and sleep, and the property has a bathroom. As a result, a mobile home or a boat would qualify as a "dwelling unit," but only for AC, not for doors or windows. Ensuring you're aware of these opportunities can help you save significantly on your tax bill, while contributing to a more sustainable future. It is important to note, the Residential Clean Energy Credit is a nonrefundable credit, but it will carry over until you use all the credit in future years. On the other

hand, the Energy Efficient Home Improvement Credit is a nonrefundable credit, and you lose any excess credit to future tax years. More good tax stuff next month.

Remember, this is a very brief overview. It is your responsibility to discuss any tax and financial changes with your professional advisor for assistance in evaluating your situation. For details and specific assistance in applying the general information in this article, call us at your earliest convenience or contact your tax advisor.

Provided by Pedro L. Baldeon, E.A., 321-632-5726, a member of the National Society of Tax Professionals.

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Here we are in January and we start a new year with new expectations. Although we may tend to look backward, we have a unique opportunity to look forward. I don't know about you, but I will spend most of January worrying about New Year's resolutions I rarely keep and correcting the wrong year on all the documents and checks I write (yes, I still write checks).

For Christians worldwide, January is the

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beginning of the liturgical season of Epiphany. On Epiphany Day, January 6th we celebrate the Three Kings' arrival, who visit the baby Jesus in Bethlehem. Even though all our nativity sets show the Kings, or Magi, with the shepherds visiting the manger, we know because of the historical context of Matthew that the Kings, or Magi, arrived a while after the birth of Jesus. In the Anglican tradition, the Magi or Kings are Balthazar (from Arabia), Caspar (from India), and Melchior (from Persia) and the season of Epiphany goes from Epiphany Day (January 6th) to Shrove Tuesday or Fat Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday (March 5, 2025)). It's a wonderful time to put our spiritual resolutions in place before we enter Lent and the Easter season.

One of those resolutions might be to go to a

bible study or maybe take some time and read a different psalm each day to understand what God has planned for your life or to calm your stressful life. We have a wonderful Adult Teaching on Sundays between services that everyone in the community is welcome to attend. We meet in the parish hall from 9:00 to 9:40 a.m., with good coffee and thought-provoking conversation. The new study begins on Sunday, January 12th, but you can start anytime during the Epiphany season.

If you are looking for our regular service schedule: Sunday Communion Services – at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., Morning Prayer Services – Monday through Friday at 8:00 a.m. (on Facebook Live: (www.facebook.com/StPatspsj)), and Wednesday Communion Service – at 6:00 p.m. If you cannot attend in person, please watch us on

Facebook Live on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. (www.facebook.com/StPatspsj).

At our next Veteran's and First Responders Breakfast all Veterans, Spouses of Veterans, and First Responders are welcome. It will be Saturday, January 25th at 9:00 a.m. in the church parish hall which is the building just east of the main church. Please join us for great food and fellowship. If you can't join us in person, please pray for our active-duty soldiers, veterans, and first responders.

For more information or to see upcoming events please reach out to us or go to our website:

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