

Outdoor Times



MARION COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION
YOURS TO DISCOVER

Volume 21, Issue 1

July 2009

Department Awarded Prestigious “Golden Oak” Award



Pictured left to right: Comm. Jim Payton, Dr. Lee Niblock, David Holmes, Comm. Charlie Stone, Comm. Barbara Fitos, Gina Peebles, Kathleen Patterson, Jim Couillard

mulches.

Recently the project was awarded the “Golden Oak” level of certification from the University of Florida – Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) and the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)

Florida Yards & Neighborhood (FYN) program. This is the highest level of certification available. To obtain certification a project must attain at least 36 points; this project received 71 total points.

A few key elements of this project include:

- Turf grass that does not require irrigation
- Reduces stormwater runoff through a series of

small basins

- Native plants that provide wildlife habitat
- Drought-tolerant, low maintenance plants
- Pest resistant plant material (no pesticides required)
- Mulch from renewable resources (not cypress mulch)
- 24-month release (very slow) fertilizer (less leaching through the soils)
- Highly efficient drip low volume irrigation system

For more information, or for a tour, please call the Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560. To learn more about the FYN program visit www.FloridaYards.org or contact Kathleen Patterson at the Marion County Extension Service at (353) 671-8400.

In 2008, the Marion County Board of County Commissioners authorized the Parks and Recreation Department to create a Marion-Friendly Landscape Project as a demonstration area for our citizens and visitors to see first hand how successful, and sustainable, a true Marion-Friendly landscape can be. This project includes stormwater management, low-volume irrigation, Marion-Friendly landscaping and environmentally friendly

USSSA Travel Ball Tournament

The Rotary Sportsplex attracts thousands of participants and spectators each year.

“This year the Sportsplex has been selected to host a Southeast Regional tournament for 7-8 year olds on July 16-19, bringing hundreds of players and their families to Marion County from Alabama, Florida,

Georgia, Louisiana, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee,” stated Jeff Salamone, Rotary Sportsplex Board (RSB) President.

“This tournament is a great opportunity for our Community,” added Harvey Van-deven, RSB member.

Thirty teams will face off during the six day tourna-

ment. The two winning teams will play in the Little League World Series.

The Rotary Sportsplex is located at 5220 SE Mari-camp Road in Ocala.



Outdoor Times is a monthly newsletter provided as a public service to park visitors and guests.

Any questions related to this publication may be directed to Gina Peebles, Acting Director, in writing at Marion County Parks and Recreation, 111 SE 25 Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471, by telephone at (352) 671-8560 or via e-mail at gina.peebles@marioncountyfl.org

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Outdoor Times

Birding Classes Now Available

Are you curious about the little brown bird in your bird feeder? Can you identify the hawk on the power pole at the end of your driveway? Are you wondering about the woodpecker living in the hole in your palm tree? Join us to learn about birds native to Marion County by participating in our three hour class that will give you the basics to enjoy the fastest

growing outdoor activity in North America...bird watching.

An August 29 class is offered from 9 a.m. until 12 noon at Brick City Adventure Park located at 1211 SE 22 Road in Ocala. The program is only \$10 per person or \$15 per couple. Pre-registration is required.

For additional information, or to pre-register, please

contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560 or stop by our office located at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala.



Park Partnership Applications Now Available

For 15 years, the Park Partnership Program has provided more than \$840,000 to non-profit groups interested in developing or upgrading recreation facilities for use by all the citizens of Marion County.

The Marion County Parks

and Recreation Department is now accepting applications through July 30, 2009 for the FY 09/10 Park Partnership Program.

Facilities eligible to receive grants include parks, school sites and MSTU's. Recipients will receive up to 50

percent in matching funds for their projects. A total of \$60,000 is available for the program this year.

Applications are available online at www.marioncountyfl.org/parks.htm.

For additional information, please contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560 or stop by our office located at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala.

Summer Park Explorers for Teens

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department is offering a "Summer Park Explorers" program for youth ages 12-16. The group will meet the first and third Friday of each month from June 19 until August 21.

Whether hiking a trail, kayaking or participating in a number of other outdoor activities, the Explorers will discover a park in Marion County, learning about the natural habitat and wildlife located there. Participants will depart from Brick City



Adventure Park at 8 a.m. and return to the park at 4 p.m.

The park is located at 1211

SE 22 Road in Ocala. The cost is only \$12 per outing. The program is limited in size and pre-registration is

required.

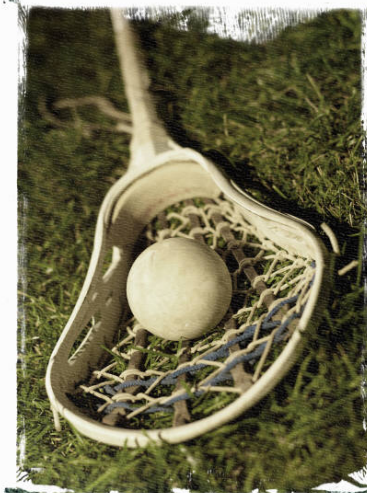
For additional information, or to pre-register, please contact the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department at (352) 671-8560 or stop by our office located at 111 SE 25 Avenue in Ocala.

Youth Lacrosse Clinic

The Marion County Parks and Recreation Department is sponsoring a "Youth Lacrosse Clinic" for boys and girls ages 6-12. The one day program will be held on Saturday, July 25 from 9 – 11 a.m. at Brick City Adventure Park, located at 1211 SE 22 Road in Ocala.

One of the fastest growing sports in North America, lacrosse is a team sport of Native American origin

played using a small ball and a "crosse" or long-handled racquet. Offensively, the object of the game is to use the



"crosse" to catch, carry and pass the ball into the opponent's goal. Defensively the object is to keep the opposing team from scoring and to dispossess them of the

ball through the use of stick checking and body contact or positioning. Participants will play with youth lacrosse sticks and a softer version of the ball.

The Clinic fee is only \$12 which includes a t-shirt and refreshments. Interested participants must pre-register.

Water-less...period

The recent rains have brought relief to our thirsty landscapes. Even though pastures and other un-irrigated landscapes may have adapted to drier conditions, they still depend on rainfall to survive. Yet some of our other landscapes have become adapted to frequent watering and have no appreciation of this rain thanks to automatic irrigation systems. This is where technology has created an "unsustainable" waste of water.

The primary goal of an automatic irrigation system is to provide *supplemental water* to your landscape, to make up the difference between what the landscape needs and what Mother Nature is providing. All too often this supplemental water becomes the only water the landscape receives, especially during long periods of no rainfall, when plants show their thirst the most.

Our water management districts are seeking to educate irrigation system

owner/operators about the waste of water generated by over-watering lawns. Over-watering can result in diseases, excessive new growth and a shallow root structure. Pesticides, fungicides, additional mowing and less drought tolerance are a few of the side effects borne from over-watering. Over-watering is also a waste of water. With the recent rain, very little irrigation should be needed to keep your landscape looking good.

Rain sensors are great devices which help eliminate over-watering by disabling the irrigation system after a certain level of rain has fallen.

Some advantages of installing a rain sensor:

- Conserves water
- Saves money
- Reduces wear and tear on the irrigation system
- Reduces disease

- Helps protect surface and groundwater by reducing the runoff and deep percolation that carries pollutants, such as fertilizers, into storm drains and groundwater.

Rain sensors can likely be added to your irrigation controller. If your controller is not set up to operate with a rain sensor, it is probably time to upgrade your controller. Newer controllers have flexibility in programming, water saving programs and simple adjustments for seasonal weather.

Costs associated with adding a rain sensor to your controller vary between \$75 and \$150 per controller/sensor. There are a few models that are wireless and do not require underground trenching or wiring, but they do cost more up front.

You are the best rain sensor. During rainy times, turn your controller off. Let the rain provide the water and then monitor your land-



scape for the signs of a lack of moisture. Water when your landscape tells you it needs it.

Toughening up your landscape by limiting the amount of supplemental water you provide will only make your landscape more tolerant of the drier months. In the long term, you'll save money on your water costs, waste less water and save the resources you currently spend on maintenance.



Outdoor Times

Calendar of Events

Date	Event	Location	Time
July 3	Summer Park Explorers	Brick City Adventure Park	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
July 10	Adult Kayak Outing	Ocklawaha River	9:30 a.m.
July 16 - 19	Southeast Regional Tournament	Rotary Sportsplex	
July 17	Summer Park Explorers	Brick City Adventure Park	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
July 18	Adult Kayak Outing	Silver River	9:30 a.m.
July 24	Library Picnic	Carney Island	10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
July 25	Youth Lacrosse Clinic	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 11 a.m.
July 30	Park Partnership Appl. Due	Parks and Recreation Office	5 p.m.
August 7	Summer Park Explorers	Brick City Adventure Park	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
August 8	Adult Kayak Outing	Withlacoochee River	9:30 a.m.
August 14	Adult Kayak Outing	Ocklawaha River	9:30 a.m.
August 21	Summer Park Explorers	Brick City Adventure Park	8 a.m. - 4 p.m.
August 22	Adult Kayak Outing	Ocklawaha River	9:30 a.m.
August 29	Birding Class	Brick City Adventure Park	9 a.m. - 12 noon
September 2	Home-School PE & Rec	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
	Home-School Art Program	Brick City Adventure Park	10 a.m. and 11:15 a.m.
September 4	Adult Kayak Outing	Rainbow River	9:30 a.m.
September 9	Adult Kayak Outing	Ocklawaha River	9:30 a.m.
September 12	Art Van-Go	Baseline Road Trailhead	10 a.m.
		Liberty Community Park	12 noon
		Wrigley Fields	2 p.m.
September 28	Park Explorers for Tweens/Teens TBD		8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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Ocala, FL 34471
(352) 671-8560
FAX (352) 671-8550



JULY IS RECREATION & PARKS MONTH

Celebrate Recreation & Parks Month. With this coupon, enjoy FREE admission for one vehicle (up to eight people) to:

KP Hole Park	Carney Island Area
Horseshoe Lake Park & Retreat	Ray Wayside (Ocala Boat Basin)

Not valid with any other offer, discount, group rate or pass purchase. Valid only July 18 and 19, 2009. Coupon required for each park.