



PARKS AND RECREATION

MARION COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT YOURS TO DISCOVER

Outdoor Times

It Starts
in Parks

Volume 47, Issue 1

SEPTEMBER 2011

PARKS AND RECREATION TAKES HONORS

Gina Peebles

Inside this issue:

- Daydream. Be Lazy.** 2
- Your Vote Counts** 2
- Rotary Sportsplex:
A Tournament Destination** 3
- Ocala Shockers 14U
Bring Home State
Title** 3
- Marion County's
Own Throws out
Ceremonial Pitch** 3
- Calendar of Events** 4

The Florida Recreation and Parks Association (FRPA) recently recognized the Marion County Parks and Recreation Department and the City of Ocala Recreation and Parks Department for *The Fun Times* with a Media Excellence Award.

The Media Excellent Award recognizes individuals or agencies who have significantly contributed to the public's increased awareness and recognition of public parks, recreation and leisure services programs. This may be achieved through print media or audio visual/electronic media.

Since 2009, *The Fun Times* has promoted our great parks and many recreation activities, programs, and special events county-wide, and also serves to increase awareness and participation.

to a parks and recreation professional who has demonstrated throughout their career a special or unusual service to the Association and the parks, recreation, and leisure services profession.

Cathy was selected from candidates nominated from throughout our state. Throughout her 25 years as an FRPA member, she has served on many committees including the Community Center Interest Section, Professional Certification, Conference Site Selection Committee, Conference Committee, Financial Restructuring Committee, District Director and Region Director. Congratulations, Cathy for a job well done!

Finally, Administrative Manager, Leah Hoffman, was inducted as the FRPA President for the 2011-2012 year. With 30+ years in the parks and recreation profession, Leah was selected by state-wide ballot to represent FRPA at various regional meetings as well as the National Recreation and Park Association in her capacity as President.

The Fun Times is another collaborative effort between both agencies to provide recreation programming information to our citizens and demonstrates our continued commitment to working together to ensure the provision of effective and efficient parks and recreation services within our community," stated City Recreation and Parks Director, Kathy Crile. "*The Fun Times* is distributed through Marion County Utilities and Ocala Utility bills reaching more than 78,000 households each quarter."



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

Any questions related to this publication can be directed to Leah Hoffman, Administrative Manager, in writing at Marion County Parks and Recreation, 111 SE 25 Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471, by telephone at 352-671-8560 or via email at leah.hoffman@marioncountyfl.org

DAYDREAM. BE LAZY.

Jim Couillard



This past weekend in the Parade insert of our local paper, Detroit Free Press columnist Mitch Albom (author of *Tuesdays with Morrie*) wrote an article titled “The Joys of Summer” and discussed letting children be, well, children. The subtitle of the article

read: “Go ahead, kids. Lie in the grass. Study the clouds. Daydream. Be lazy. You have our permission.”

In today’s world telling someone to “be lazy” goes against our grain. With more than 26 percent of our nation’s youth considered obese, and inactivity lead-

ing to numerous health issues, encouraging our kids to be lazy feels wrong. However, Albom makes a great point, especially in our techno-laden society. We need to let kids be kids!

Feel free to read his [article](#) for yourself. It makes a lot of sense. However, he is not the first to pass along this advice; he just does it in a streamlined and joyful way.

Richard Louv authored *Last Child in the Woods* in 2005 with a subtitle of “Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder.” (My copy is hard to close and read due to the amount of dog-eared pages, notes and underlines.) Louv’s book has created a cult following of sorts (including me) who agree that our busy lifestyles, love of fast food and addictive digital toys are ruining our future generations. Louv explains how getting kids outdoors and re-

-connecting them with nature is a “drug-free nature cure for many modern ills” such as attention disorders, obesity and depression while also encouraging respect for nature. Louv makes the direct connection between the absence of nature in the lives of today’s wired generation and these all too common ailments.

So relax a little. Take some time to gaze at the clouds (or stars) and turn off your TV and computer. Avoid booking every hour, every minute of your daily schedule and take your kids to a local park to explore your surroundings. Leave the iPhone at home and turn-over some rocks. You’ll be surprised at how interested your kids will be and how much they will appreciate your undivided attention.

YOUR VOTE COUNTS

Barbra Hernandez

Love your Marion County parks? Then make it known across the United States and help Marion County Parks and Recreation bring home a national prize for one of its parks.

Parks and Recreation is inviting all county residents to vote in the “America is Your Park” na-

tional contest and help Brick City Adventure Park, the only recreational facility from Marion County in the competition, win up to \$100,000 in park improvement grants. The contest is being held for the second year as part of Coca-Cola Co.’s Live Positively initiative, which encourages people all over the nation to get active in local parks.

Grants will be awarded to the three parks that accumulate the most votes by Sept. 6, 2011. To vote, visit

www.livepositively.com and click on the “Get involved” tab. Citizens may vote multiple times.

Parks and Recreation staff selected Brick City Adventure Park for the competition, as it slated for future improvements. The park is located at 1211 SE 22nd Road, Ocala.

To learn more about this and other Marion County recreation areas, visit www.marioncountyfl.org/parks.htm or call 352-671-8560.



Extreme Adventure Campers rappel at the Brick City Adventure Park quarry.

ROTARY SPORTSPLEX: A TOURNAMENT DESTINATION

Leah Hoffman

The Rotary Sportsplex had a busy summer hosting 11 tournaments.

Babe Ruth President, Rich Lagasse, stated, "We had a great two months of baseball at the [Rotary] Sportsplex. Between the Cal Rip-

ken and Babe Ruth Leagues we had more than 130 teams visit Ocala."

These tournaments provided a conservative \$5 million estimated economic impact on our community, based on estimates provided by the

Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Fall Ball sign-ups will soon take place. For more information, or to register, contact Rich Lagasse at 352-239-0137.

OCALA SHOCKERS 14U BRING HOME STATE TITLE

Gina Peebles



Marion County can proudly boast about our talented female athletes. Early last month, the Ocala Shockers 14U girls fast pitch team brought home the 2011 All-Star Florida State Championship title from Ponte Vedra. Under the management of Christopher Bennett, Sr. and Coaches Carl Hickerson and Ric Thoresen, the girls outscored their opponents 30-3 with a perfect 4-

0 undefeated record.

That victory provided them a chance

at the national title in Virginia. In the quarter finals against North Carolina, they took the win 10-8, advancing them to the semifinals against Virginia. In the last inning, the girls won their slot to compete in the Championship game against Washington, NC. The team finished as runner ups in the Southeast Regional's 8-3 in the title game.

In recognition of their accomplishment, the girls received softballs at the Ocala City Council meeting on Aug. 2 and were publicly recognized at the **Downtown Summer Jams** on the Downtown Square on Aug. 19.

Congratulations to team members Kelly Bennett, Caley Chappel, Jessie Cyr, Megan Dickey, McKenna Geiselman, Morgan Lewis, Caeley Nix, Kim Owens, Katie Peters, Erin Thoresen, Morgan White and Staci Woodard for their accomplishment!

"Achievement,
A sense of Community,
Conservation of our Natural Treasures,
Bestows an Economic Impact,
Imparts Good Health,
Incorporates Heritage,
Respect for Nature,
Florida's Future... It Starts in Parks."

MARION COUNTY'S OWN THROWS OUT CEREMONIAL PITCH

Gina Peebles

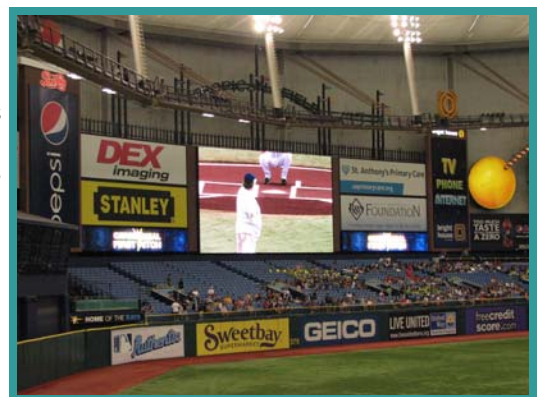
As President-Elect for the Florida Recreation and Park Association (FRPA), Administrative Manager, Leah Hoffman threw out the ceremonial first pitch at the Tampa Bay Rays vs. Kansas City Royals game on Aug. 11 for **FRPA Days with the Rays**.

Even with tens of thousands of spectators in attendance

(more than 2,000 of which were summer campers) and the knowledge that the game was nationally televised, Leah threw the ball with determination and grace.

Sheepishly, Leah stated, "it was a great day all around...I didn't embarrass myself too badly and got the ball to the plate. Jeff

Niemann pitched a great game and the Rays went on to win the game..."



Calendar of Events

Date	Time	Event	Location
Sep 7	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 10	9:30 am & 12:30 pm	Kayak 101 (ages 10 & up)	Carney Island
	10 am	Art Van Go	Baseline Road Trailhead
	Noon	Art Van Go	Liberty Community Park
	2 pm	Art Van Go	Wrigley Fields
Sep 12	7:00 pm	Adult Softball Organization Meeting	Wrigley Fields
Sep 13	9:30 am & 12:30 pm	Kayak 101 (Adult)	Carney Island
Sep 13	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
Sep 14	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 15	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Coehadjoe
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Coehadjoe
Sep 17	9 am - 2 pm	Basic Wild Caving (age 8+)	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 20	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
Sep 21	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 22	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Coehadjoe
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Coehadjoe
Sep 23	8:30 am	Kayak Outing	Rainbow River (KP Hole Park)
Sep 26	9 am - 2 pm	Outdoor Adventure for Home School	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 27	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Bellevue Sports Complex
Sep 28	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
	10 am - 10:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club ART (Ages 5-8)	Brick City Adventure Park
	11 am - 11:55 am	HPER Club PE (Ages 9-14)	Brick City Adventure Park
Sep 29	3:15 pm	Youth Beginning Tennis	Coehadjoe
	4:15 pm	Youth Advance Beginner Tennis	Coehadjoe

Please visit us online at http://www.marioncountyfl.org/Parks/Pr_default.aspx and click ONLINE SERVICES or call 352-671-8560 to pre-register or for more information.