



Newcomers

A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO
THE ZEPHYRHILLS NEWS



Guide

JANUARY 2024



As a resident or visitor, we invite you to visit *The Zephyrhills News* for a complimentary copy of our 112-year old weekly publication upon your arrival. As an informative resource of local news, events and activities, our goal is to bring you community connection and promote the values of local businesses eager to serve you.

Why Buy From

Jim Browne AUTOMOTIVE

CHEVROLET • BUICK • GMC • CHRYSLER • JEEP • DODGE • RAM
DADE CITY

- ★ All-time online reputation score of 4.7 out of 5.0 Stars with over 5,500 online reviews.
- ★ Over 750 New & Used vehicles available
- ★ Guaranteed Market Value for Your Trade In.
- ★ Nationwide Lifetime Warranty
- ★ Recipient of the Customer First Award for Excellence
- ★ Certified Collision Center on US 301 between Dade City & Zephyrhills



Remember that's Jim Browne with an "E"

Shop online at **JimBrowneAuto.com**





Welcome Back

The Zephyrhills News graciously welcomes back our winter visitors returning from places up north in the United States, Canada and elsewhere.

This special section is published annually to provide you with updates on primary news, events and various changes within the city and surrounding areas you might have missed while you were away.

We are now three years into the return of somewhat normalcy following the unfortunate affects of the coronavirus pandemic. Local businesses have picked up and numerous activities have resumed within the city, as well as the surrounding areas.

Here are some of the top stories we ran in *The Zephyrhills News* while many of you were gone:

As is the case for many developed municipalities in a state that keeps growing and growing, Zephyrhills has experienced its share of expansion and welcomed new businesses and facilities.

Renovations for Zephyr Park and Hercules Park, the latter of which has gone from being owned by the city to the school district and back to the city, finally have master plans. The 12-acre park where the Hercules Powder Company once stood had its groundbreaking in December.

Another notable development featured a symbolic ribbon-cutting for the new Zephyrhills VA Clinic off Eiland Boulevard. That long-awaited 14,000-square foot facility provides needed services to U.S. veterans and was a collaborative effort between state legislators, city and county officials and developers.

Aside from various housing developments within and just outside the city are ongoing projects such as sidewalk improvements, wastewater and airport expansions and upgrades.

On a related note, a rebranding campaign got under way to emphasize the City of Pure Water and the city's millage rate of 6.25 was set for fiscal 2023-24.

In local politics, two familiar people switched to different roles within the city. With Gene Whitfield stepping down as the mayor, Melonie Bahr Monson, formerly the executive director of the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce, won an election for that vacancy. Plus, Steve Spina was elected to the city council after having twice been the city manager.

The city's police force expanded with six new officers sworn in by Chief Derek Brewer. They were: Juanita Gonzalez, Karly Crews, Colton Nelson, Mariah Hamilton, Phillip Martin and Paul Gonzalez.

As for fun local events, Pigz in Z'hills celebrated its 13th year. The annual barbecue and blues festival is the signature event for the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce, which doled out its annual awards and installed new officers at a banquet themed: It happened on 5th Avenue.

In neighboring Dade City, the Pioneer Florida Museum and Village continued to host events like the Raising Cane and Moonshine Festival. The Founder's Day Parade returned to downtown following a two-year hiatus and was changed to an evening event.

Other noteworthy downtown events included the annual Christmas Parade and a downtown block party for Fire Prevention Week.

The Zephyrhills News extended its longstanding place in the community by celebrating its 112th anniversary. Publisher/editor Jan Linville continues to focus on the best local news coverage. Reporters Steve Lee, Andy Warrenner and Susan Slater bring you that information every week.

Sales manager Theresa LeBlanc helps advertisers promote their businesses and products. Elizabeth Sancel is the graphic artist, Josephine Light and Wendy McElroy are our receptionists, Cindy DeMatteo is the accounting manager and James Bannon oversees circulation.

13th year for Pigz in Z'hills



Left: There were long lines at some of the booths throughout the festival.



Right: Romeo Foster turns ribs on a grill at the Smoke Shack Barbecue station.

Annual barbecue and blues festival is the signature event for the Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce

By STEVE LEE
Jan. 19, 2023

Of all the events and activities put on by the Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce, none are more popular than Pigz in Z'hills. The 13th annual barbecue and blues festival took place Friday and Saturday at the city's venue, adjacent to the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport.

Despite a bit of chilly weather, crowds came out for the chamber's signature event, which raises funds for youth and educational programs.

"The cold air was a welcome change for everyone, especially paired with the warm sun," said chamber president Vicki Wiggins, who is the first head of the chamber to help organize the event after former president Melonie Monson did so for the previous eight years. "Overall, feedback has been positive and those in attendance really enjoyed the day and the music."

This actually marked the second year back for the event, which was skipped in 2021 due, in part, to the coronavirus pandemic. Traditionally held in January, last year's festival took place in March in a move to accommodate a sanctioned state barbecue competition.

"January is our traditional time of year to hold the Pigz in Z'hills Festival and it's a great way to start the year off for both our permanent and visiting residents," Wiggins said. "Fewer events in neighboring areas helps bring in great vendors and blues talent."

As for the future of the festival, it most likely will continue its January tradition.

"We will likely keep the event in January since it is the kick-off to festival season," Wiggins said. "In fact, one of our festival guests was so excited that this was her first festival of the year, and she was having a blast."

While there was no sanctioned barbecue competition this year, there was a KidZ Grillin' competition. Five pit masters mentored 30 boys and girls with the top finishers, listed from first through 10th, as follows: Eli Edgeman, Michaela Martinez, Brock Jarrett, Keelyn Boyd, tie between Aspen Bahr and Noah Ringeisen, Brayden Fey, Zhi Anna Harris, Preston Pineo

and Gabe Kline. Also on the grounds a cornhole tournament took place, just northeast of the stage, for a sixth straight year. In all, 16 teams competed, marking a slight decrease from last year's numbers.

"I think the weather kind of kept people away," said Ryan Schwartzkopf, the tournament director and owner of Tampa Bay Cornhole.

Schwartzkopf said he puts on about 60 tourneys a year statewide. While there are quite a few in the west central Florida region tourneys have taken place as far away as Miami, Jacksonville and the panhandle.

"We love this festival," he said. "Any time you can run a tournament with a festival, there's nothing better."

That sentiment was shared by Lamar Marshall, the owner of Smoke Shack BBQ in Columbus, Ohio who has shown up for all of the Pigz in Z'hills festivals.

"The sun," said Marshall, citing the primary draw for coming to Zephyrhills each year.

Under a tent near the stage was Monson, with a banner advertising her run for mayor. Gene Whitfield, the city's long-time mayor is stepping down this year with Monson and Nick Deford, pastor of the First Church of the Nazarene of Zephyrhills, announcing their candidacy so far. Both are political newcomers.

"I've talked about it for years. When Gene was ready to retire I decided to step in," Monson said of her intentions. "With the chamber I've been an ambassador for this city for the past eight years, so I feel like I've got the experience and the know-how."



Above: Among the 30 boys and girls to compete in the KidZ Grillin' contest, these kids finished in the top 10.

Wesley Chapel
WCTG
Theater Group Presents
BROADWAY
THROUGH THE DECADES:
GOLDEN ERA

January 20th 2024
Dinner Starts - 5:30pm • Show Starts - 7:00pm

\$50 GENERAL ADMISSION - DINNER INCLUDED
Tickets available at www.wesleychapeltheatergroup.org, or at
Lions Club of Zephyrhills
5827 Dean Dairy Road, Zephyrhills, FL 33541

WesleyChapelTheaterGroup

PRINT SHACK
of the Nature Coast Inc.

Florida Lifestyle

#1 Rule: STAY COOL!

\$1.00 OFF 20 or 30 lb. Cylinder Installation Present coupon. Expires 2-29-24. ZNEWS	\$5.00 OFF 29-Point A/C Maintenance Check Present coupon. Expires 2-29-24. ZNEWS
\$100.00 OFF on any Central A/C Installation Present coupon. Expires 2-29-24. ZNEWS	\$10.00 OFF a Service Call Present coupon. Expires 2-29-24. ZNEWS

BAHR'S
Since 1988
813-782-5013
Family Owned & Operated
Lenny Bahr & Kevin Bahr

PROANE GAS AND A/C INC.
Lic. CAC043948

Rinnai. Franklin
DAIKIN FIT

FREE Extended Labor Warranties available on New Qualified High Efficiency A/C Units

TOTAL COUPON DISCOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$200

ZEPHYRHILLS
4441 Allen Road
(813) 782-5013
M-F 8am-5pm; Sat 8am-noon

SALES • SERVICE • PARTS
www.bahrspropanegasandac.com

DADE CITY
15229 U.S. Hwy. 301
(352) 567-7678
M-F 9am-4pm

Zephyrhills *jump right in* **Welcome Back!**

5335 8TH STREET • ZEPHYRHILLS • (813) 780-0000

Melonie Bahr Monson - Mayor
William (Billy) Poe, Jr. - City Manager

ZEPHYRHILLS CITY COUNCIL
Lance A. Smith - Council President
Kenneth Burgess - Council Vice President
Jodi Wilkeson - Councilwoman
Charles E. Proctor - Councilman
Steven F. Spina, PhD - Councilman

Animal Services (Pasco County)	813-929-1212
Building/Code Enforcement	813-780-0020
Fire Department (Pasco County)	Non-Emergency 813-929-2750
	Emergency 911
Library	813-780-0064
Main Street	813-780-1414
Planning/Zoning	813-780-0002
Police Department	Non-Emergency 813-780-0050
	Emergency 911
Public Works (Fleet, Parks, Sanitation and Streets)	813-780-0022
Utilities	813-780-0029
Utility Billing Questions	813-780-0015



Cane and moonshine highlight festival



Left: Visitors were treated to a demonstration on cane syrup making.

Right: Jeanene Arrington-Fisher made hoecakes over a fire as people waited in line for the tasty treats.

STEVE LEE



Pioneer Florida Museum's first event of 2023 is the Raising Cane and Moonshine Festival

By STEVE LEE
Jan. 19, 2023

As always, the first event of the year at Pioneer Florida Museum was the Raising Cane and Moonshine Festival. Of course, the most popular area was the barn at the northwest corner of the grounds where sugar cane syrup is traditionally boiled.

The Southern Syrup-makers tasting competition, in which visitors sample the syrup and vote for their favorites, highlighted last Saturday's event. And the perfect food to put the syrup on were the hoecakes, made of corn and cooked over a fire by members of Not A Clue Adventures near the cane mill.

"I doubled everything from last year. More people came out," said Jeanene Arrington-Fisher, lead guide and owner of Not A Clue Adventures.

Items she went through included eight pounds of corn meal mix, four pounds of coffee and two large cans of pork and beans. While several people waited in line for more of those items, Arrington-Fisher said, "Everyone was so nice."

"I've had those cakes before," said Plant City's Angela Pestana, who along with her husband George has come to several festivals in the past. "They're delicious."

There are, however, a few new twists. Moonshine, which was added last year, returns

and the Cosmic Riot Fire Dancers made their debut at the festival.

"We were just looking for something extra to bring more people in," Stephanie Black, executive director for the museum and village, said of adding moonshine to the event. "We've tried different things over the years and we just decided we would try it because we have a moonshine display (near the general store on the main walkway). It was very successful, so we're looking for another great day."

As for the fire dancers, they worked for several years with the Royal Caribbean Cruise Line and most recently were featured on the television show, So You Think You Can Dance.

Moonshine was added this year with an appearance by master distiller Alfredo Pena, who spoke to visitors at the gazebo. Pena, better known as the Cuban Cowboy, appeared on The Discovery Channel's series, Moonshiners Master Distiller, and won the competition.

The Tarpon Springs Distillery also was represented. Members of that distillery served small portions to crowds that waited in line for a taste.

"That'll warm you up," said Jonathan Durham, dressed in a heavy, long coat on the brisk day.

Other food served up included pulled pork, yellow rice and black beans. There also were vendors in tents and trucks doling out baked goods, French fries, chili, burgers and more.

Pena was not the only speaker. Others spoke about sugar cane, relaying the history and process of making the sweet liquid, at the Mabel Jordan Barn.

Down near the sugar caning area was Mike Peacock, an instructor with Molly's Hatchet in Zephyrhills. He lined people up in tandems as they tried their hands at axe throwing against wooden boards with bullseyes.



Above: Sugar Cane is stacked and ready to run through the machine before grinding.

At one point, Michael McDowell of Lakeland and Jim Padel of Winter Springs took turns throwing axes. Not surprisingly, Padel, who has thrown axes in the past, wound up hitting more targets and making the axe stick in the wood more often than McDowell.

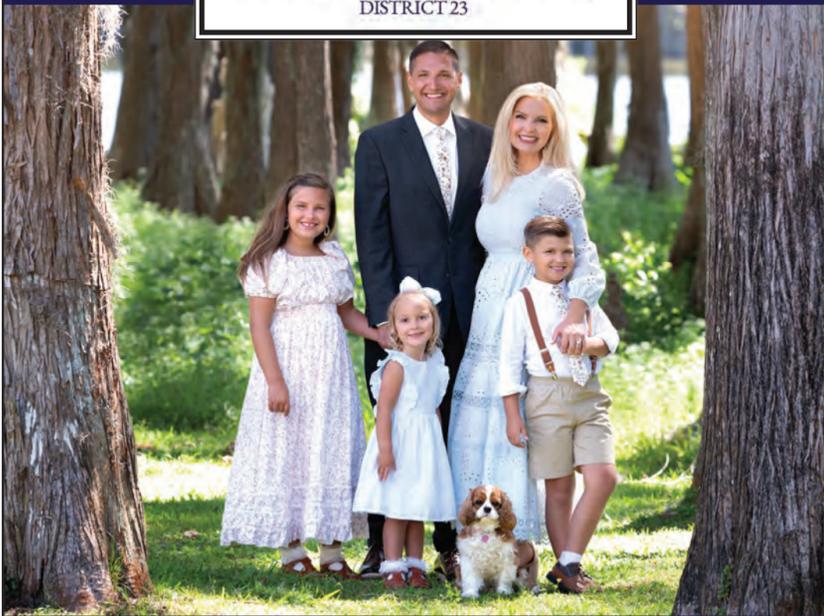
"It's getting a chance to do something you don't do all the time," said Padel, adding that he tries it about once a year.

There was musical entertainment as well with Gearing Up Band playing at the Gazebo. Plus, the Barking Dogs played old-time music.

Next up at the museum and village is a re-enactment of the 1864 Hernando County Raid, a Florida Civil War Living History event on Jan. 28.

Welcome Back to the Sunshine State!

DANNY BURGESS
FOR STATE SENATE
DISTRICT 23



HUSBAND. FATHER. SOLDIER. LEADER.

www.DannyBurgessFL.com

DannyBurgessFL DannyBurgessFL

Political advertisement paid for and approved by Danny Burgess, Republican for State Senate, District 23



ZEPHYRHILLS Classic Car Auction
www.zhillsclassiccarauction.com & AUTO EVENT

Car Corral & Swap Meet
February 15-17, 2024

Classic Car Auction
February 17, 2024 • 10:00 AM
Classic Car Show
HOSTED BY RONNIE SETSER
February 17, 2024 • 10:00 AM

Admission: \$10 / \$8 for Military Kids 12 and under Free

Thank You to Our Sponsors:

Walmart Health

INTERESTED IN BEING A VENDOR?

ACE HANDYMAN SERVICES

DENNIS REALTY

CALL JOE @ 813-312-4009

CONSIGNORS & BIDDERS CALL 727-233-9799

Check us out on Facebook • www.zhillsclassiccarauction.com



Founder's Day Parade changed to an evening event



Above: Zephyrhills Little League ballplayers are always a part of the local downtown parades.

Right: The Zephyrhills News crew, consisting of family and friends, threw beads and candy from the float that was part of the Founder's Day Parade.



Right: The parade's grand marshal, Zephyrhills High's Senior Class President Caitlyn Eudy, rode in the parade with Tatem Chase of the school's National Honor Society.

STEVE LEE



Left: The Zephyrhills Airport Cadet Squadron-Civil Air Patrol marched with a large American flag.

First celebration of city's incorporation following a two-year hiatus makes for a festive Saturday

By STEVE LEE
March 9, 2023

A longstanding tradition that began in 1911 united the community with a bevy of activities on Saturday. The 112th Founders' Day celebration, a Main Street Zephyrhills event highlighted by an evening parade for a change, took place downtown.

It marked the first parade to recognize the city's incorporation after a two-year hiatus.

Last year's parade and downtown celebration were eliminated due to a scheduling conflict with the Pigz n' Zhills Barbecue and Blues Festival, which is organized annually by the Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce. The 2021 traditional event did not take place due to restrictions put in place during the coronavirus pandemic.

Either way, the downtown festival and parade were revived and people seemed glad about that. Like Lori Murphy and her boyfriend Randy Grelick, snowbirds from Ontario who winter in Zephyrhills and have been to their

share of downtown activities.

"We love this little square," Murphy said after dancing with Grelick to songs played by Time Travelers at the Eiland Bandstand. "We came down early enough for the Christmas Parade this year."

Main Street, or 5th Avenue, was filled with people walking up and down before the parade made its way along the downtown route. Young and old alike, from near and far, visited shops along the street and stopped at various vendor booths.

"It's special because it's community; it's a hometown experience," said Erin Beasley, executive director for Main Street Zephyrhills. "People come out and value where they live. It's nice to be a part of that."

Jaylene Herrera, social media intern with Main Street Zephyrhills, recorded the downtown activities. In all, Beasley said there were 55 vendors along the downtown streets with 35 floats or groups taking part in the parade. Longtime emcee Greg First was replaced by Matthew Page, who using a microphone introduced the floats and groups as they came down Main Street. Page is a history teacher who coaches cross country and track at Zephyrhills High.

"Honestly, I was kind of shocked," he said of being requested to emcee the parade. "This is cool. It's a great opportunity."

Judges for the parade were familiar to many

local residents. Historical buff and local author Madonna Wise was joined on a makeshift stage along the roadside near the town square by Erica Freeman, a board member of the Zephyrhills Historical Association, and Amanda Eskelund of Babcock Furniture.

Among the floats was *The Zephyrhills News* one, which marks the first time the weekly newspaper had a float in the parade since 2013.

"It was fun to be part of the parade once again," said Jan Linville, publisher of the oldest weekly newspaper in the state. "We're all excited about joining the community in celebrating Zephyrhills' birthday."

Joining Linville on the float behind a truck driven by circulation manager Jim Bannon were several employees, relatives and friends. Included were: Jeffrey Hawes, Lauren Whitley,

Theresa and Shane LeBlanc, along with their granddaughter Aalayah, Susan Slater, Josephine Light, Stacie Hartwig, as well as Ashley, Bonnie and Lucy Creebbaum.

That float ranked among the top award winners by the judges. It got the Best Business award. Best of Show went to Kids Corner.

The other winners included: Best Theme, West Zephyrhills Elementary; Best Costume, Zephyrhills Little League; Best Walking Unit, Zephyrhills High Marching Band; Best Vehicles, Zephyrhills Sanitation and Utilities; and Best Club, Civil Air Patrol.

Earlier in the afternoon, aside from the booths downtown, the Zephyrhills Historical Museum hosted an open House at the Depot Museum off South Avenue.

Proud to be Different

With over 40 years of experience, our passion for helping families and uniquely caring about the life you wish to remember is the heart of Whitfield Funeral Home.

OUR FUNERAL HOME PROVIDES:
Traditional Funerals • Cremation Services • Transfers North
Veterans Internment and Cremation Plans
Preplanning and Prefunding Arrangements

WHITFIELD
FUNERAL HOME & CREMATION SERVICES
5008 GALL BLVD., ZEPHYRHILLS
813.783.9900

Gene Whitfield, LFD
Ernestine Whitfield
Tim Whitfield
Amy Whitfield, LFD
Kylie, Jake, Delanie,
Sadie Grace and Sawyer

SECURE YOUR SPOT AND FIND YOUR SUNNIER SIDE AT ONE OF OUR AMAZING 55+ RESORTS

SUN OUTDOORS™

ZEPHYRHILLS

NEW HOME SALES • PRE-OWNED HOME SALES
VACATION RENTALS • RV SITES up to 40 ft.

MORE SOCIALIZING

- Pickleball • Shuffleboard
- Volleyball • Outings
- Pool • Horseshoes • Library
- Crafting • Bingo • Game Nights
- Live Music and MORE!

Enjoy warm hospitality and small-town charm at one of our resorts located in historic Zephyrhills. Surrounded by more than just sunshine, our ideal location is centrally located with a short drive to Hillsborough State Park, Tampa, beaches and the attractions of Orlando without having to pay the high prices of staying there.

PETS WELCOME!

EXCLUSIVE RV SITE UPGRADES*

- Landscaping for outdoor ambiance
- Full concrete pad for easy setup
- A driveway and patio for your comfort
- Handy shed for additional storage needs

SOUTHERN CHARM
SUN RV COMMUNITIES™
37811 Chancey Rd.
Zephyrhills
813-783-3477

SETTLER'S REST
SUN RV COMMUNITIES™
37549 Chancey Rd.
Zephyrhills
813-782-2003

SWEETWATER
SUN RV COMMUNITIES™
37647 Chancey Rd.
Zephyrhills
813-788-7513

Representative Randy Maggard

Florida House of Representatives, District 54

Creekside Center
35358 SR 54 Zephyrhills
Florida 33541
(813) 780-0667
(813) 780-0669 Fax
randy.maggard@myfloridahouse.gov



The Groves hosts Thrive Over 55 Expo



Above: AdventHealth, which has hospitals in Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley Chapel, had one of several booths related to the medical field.



Right: There were plenty of tables and booths for people to check out.

STEVE LEE

Informative sessions at B&B Theater in the Wesley Chapel retail center go over well with local seniors

By STEVE LEE
March 13, 2023

will be headed back to her home in Indiana — spoke highly of how much information they gained.

“It was very nice,” Delmar said. “There was a lot of information.”

For her part, Wiles liked the fact that an expo offers such a wealth of information for different things all in one location at one time frame.

“It saves you a lot of trips,” she said. “We enjoyed it a lot. They offered a lot of information and a lot of free stuff.”

Added Dawn Carlson of Zephyrhills, “I think (the expo is) a real good idea, especially for people who don’t know where to go to find just a regular doctor.”

Among the numerous booths and tables for various products and services were several in the medical field. That included a representative from the Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa, various health and insurance providers, along with AdventHealth with hospitals in Zephyrhills, Dade City and Wesley Chapel.

Greeting people at a table for Del Webb, a 55 and over active adult community in Land O’ Lakes, were company representatives Courtney Bardes and Renee Gatian.

“It’s definitely an advantage from a marketing aspect,” Bardes said of the expo’s concept.

“It’s just to get our name out there and about what we do,” Gatian added.

The expo was right up the alley for Luxury Bath Technologies with Heather Smith saying, “We do nothing but community outreach like



Above: There was plenty of room for visitors to walk around and check out booths and tables in the theater’s lobby.

The message was abundantly clear for a recent community event at the B&B Theater at The Groves. The Thrive Over 55 Senior Expo afforded visitors with plenty of tools and information, not to mention goodie bags, to do just that — thrive.

The April 5 event, held in the morning at one of the largest shopping centers in the Wesley Chapel area lured people from Zephyrhills, Dade City, Wesley Chapel and Land O’ Lakes, not to mention outlying areas in northern Hillsborough and Hernando counties.

The primary objective was to provide resources and information from businesses throughout the local communities for those 55 and older. Breakfast and lunch were served as well at the free event.

After attending the expo, two sisters — Betty Wiles, a snowbird from Ohio who spends her winters in Zephyrhills, and Sue Delmar, who also spends her winters in Zephyrhills but soon

this.”

While most people heard about the expo through social media or other outlets, Margaret Guriel and her friend Donna Duren, both from New Tampa, were simply out shopping at The Groves when a passerby informed them about it.

“This is wonderful,” Guriel said. “It’s not often that you see a movie theater with all kinds of information booths for seniors. Plus, we got our morning coffee.”

“Too bad they didn’t have this more often,” Duren said. “A lot of people I know would come to these things if they had them all the time.”

Checking people in at the door were three

members — president Barbara Bird, along with Patti Griffing and Nancy Tokarz — of the American Legion Post 108 Ladies Auxiliary.

The post is new and located in Land O’ Lakes with the expo being one of the first events members of that group took part in. Bill Jaxheimer, vice commander of Post 108, was there as well.

Asked what people leaving the theater thought of the expo, Tokarz responded, “They seem very happy and grateful. They’re going out with bags of goodies. The vendors seem happy too.”

Apples to Apples...
the difference is **Sweet!**

THE VALUE OF WORKING WITH Clifton & Lewis Insurance

... an INDEPENDENT INSURANCE AGENCY

WE GIVE YOU A CHOICE — Partnering with 26 insurance companies gives us the ability to provide you with a variety of coverage options, price points and make sure your adequately covered.

LICENSED EXPERTS — We will explain the complexities of insurance in simple terms, helping you make smart decisions.

LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED — We have no voicemail menus! We’re just real people! We will take the time to listen and understand your needs. Whether you’re adding a teenage driver to your policy or looking to cover a retirement property, we are here to help you through all of the changes in your life.

PROVIDING SERVICE LEVELS MOST COMPANIES’ ONLY DREAM OF — We pride ourselves in building long-term “relationships”. People never forget how you made them feel. At Clifton & Lewis, we are dedicated to turning a must-do task into a no stress, reassuring experience with the peace-of-mind protection you deserve.

WE LOVE TO INSURE MOBILE HOMES!
AUTOMOTIVE • MOTORCYCLE • HOME • RV’S
COMMERCIAL • GOLF CARTS • BOATS

Two Convenient Locations

ZEPHYRHILLS

38336 5th Avenue • 813-452-5382

DADE CITY

14507 7th Street • 352-521-3893

Email: Cynde@CliftonLewisIns.com

Need a *Spiritual Uplift?*

Enchanted Triple Moon Metaphysical Store

EVOLVE FOR INNER PEACE...

Visit Our New, Expanded Showroom Today!
Candles • Herbs • Jewelry • Stones • Crystals
Gems • Essential Oils • Incense • Salt Lamps
Books • Smudging Supplies • and so much more!

INTUITIVE READINGS CLASSES
Oracles
Tarot
Medium

Annette Brooks
Owner

Cami
Laura

813-355-4795
38449 COUNTY ROAD 54 EAST
ZEPHYRHILLS, FL 33542
(ACROSS FROM ZHS SOFTBALL FIELD)
Hours: Tue. - Sat. 10am - 6pm; Sunday 12pm - 5pm

TREASURED FRIENDS GIFT SHOP

Home Decor ... Garden Flags ... Jewelry
Fashion Accessories

Designer Greeting Cards 50% OFF* ... Everyday and Seasonal
*see store for details

12329 HIGHWAY 301, DADE CITY • 352-437-4866
Located next to Big John’s Janitorial Supplies



Melonie Monson and Steve Spina win municipal elections



Left: Mike Prenderville and newly elected councilman Steve Spina sit alongside one another at a booth for the Zephyrhills Noon Rotary Club during the recent Music & Motorcycles event in downtown Zephyrhills.

STEVE LEE



Right: Newly elected city councilman Steve Spina (second from right in front row) and Melonie Monson, the city's new mayor (in dark hair, glasses and black sweater two seats to Spina's right) attended a rebranding meeting in council chambers at city hall.



Above: Melonie Monson, shown with her mother Edna by her side, celebrates after being voted in as the new mayor.

Monson replaces former mayor Gene Whitfield and Steve Spina defeats incumbent Alan Knight for a city council seat

By STEVE LEE
April 20, 2023

Zephyrhills welcomed a new mayor and a city councilman after last week's municipal elections that featured five candidates overall. The Alice Hall Community Center polling location stayed open until 7 p.m. on April 11 to allow local residents to cast their ballots.

Melonie Bahr Monson won among three candidates vying for mayor while Alan Knight lost his Council Seat 2 to Steve Spina, formerly a two-time city manager. The mayor's race included challengers Nick Deford, a local pastor, and businessman Martin Harm. Spina and Knight, the incumbent, sought the council seat.

Monson garnered 59 percent of the votes, well ahead of Deford's 32 percent and Harm's nine. Spina tallied 61 percent of the vote compared to Knight's 39. Knight, who had been in the Pasco County School District for 35 years as a teacher and coach, has resided in Zephyrhills for more than 50 years.

Bob Winters, president of the Zephyrhills Volunteer Fire Rescue Association and a community leader who sold Winters' Mobile Home Park in 2020, was among many locals who attended the recent debates at the community center in Zephyrhills.

On the council result, he said, "We couldn't have gone bad with Steve or coach. It was a win-win there."

As for the mayor's race, Winters noted that Monson, formerly the executive director of the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce, was an ideal candidate.

"I think she's extremely qualified," he said. "She can walk into that job very well. I think she's ideal. She's really involved."

For her part, seeking the role of mayor is something Monson said has been in the works for the past 10 years.

"I actually started joking with my grand-

kids about 10 years ago," she said. "I knew that, five years ago, when (Whitfield) retired that I would do it. The stars aligned."

Monson chose to have her election night celebration at the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis & Wellness Center off Simons Road.

"It was so great," she said of celebrating the results there on election night. "We wanted to have it there so I could show off the venue."

Surrounded by family and friends, excluding her late father Ron Bahr who passed away in 2020, Monson shared an observation from that night: "I don't think I've seen my mom (Edna Bahr) smile so much in years."

Spina celebrated on election night at the Silverado Golf and Country Club. He is a resident of Silver Oaks.

"It feels good," he said. Monson plans to meet soon with Whitfield "to find out all the ins and outs," she said, adding, "The things I've done for the past 10 years have prepared me for this."

Spina, who is very well familiar with the

city and its inner workings as a longtime administrator, will now seat in the row of council members. He had semi-retired, serving part of last year as an interim city manager in Temple Terrace.

Still, being up there with council members will give Spina a different perspective, which he is looking forward to.

"It will be a lot different. You're looking at things at kind of a different level," Spina said while manning a Zephyrhills Noon Rotary booth last Saturday at the Music & Motorcycles event sponsored by Main Street Zephyrhills. "Running was an experience. I've never done that before. That was totally different."

Spina said he "felt good" about his chances of winning the council seat. "I was out there. The best part was talking to people and hearing what they had to say."

Welcome Back



New Patients Welcome!

From Cleanings and Fillings to Crowns, Dentures and Implants, we have the skills and expertise to improve and maintain your oral health.

Quality Care For All Your Dental Needs

Denture Repair and Reline Service
Call (813) 788-0451 today! There's no need to travel to Tampa or Lakeland for an emergency dental care provider.

CareCredit® Patient Payment Plans



Matthew S. Bryington D.M.D., M.S. 37153 STATE ROAD 54 ZEPHYRHILLS, FL 33542
GENERAL & IMPLANT DENTISTRY (813) 788-0451



Welcome Back

There is no better time of year to count our blessings. We count ourselves fortunate to have so many valued customers and welcome you back to the Sunshine State.

SPECIALIZING IN CLEANING

Tile & Grout • Furniture & Upholstery • Carpet • Stain Removal
Smoke & Pet Odor Elimination and More!

FOR A BEFORE & AFTER PROFESSIONAL FRESHEN UP...

Kleen Karpet

"Delivering an unparalleled level of clean since 1992"



CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE QUOTE!
(813) 783-2686



\$10 Adults

Free Entertainment Daily
Thrilling Midway Rides
Tasty Fair Food
Livestock Shows and More!

\$5 Kids (ages 6 to 12)

FREE PARKING

36722 CR 52 • Dade City
(352) 567-6678

PascoCountyFair.com



City hall swamped for parks and recreation meeting



Above: A panoramic view of the council chambers reveals a packed house for Thursday's meeting.

Council chambers were full to the gills for a meeting discussing Zephyr Park renovations

By ANDY WARRENER
May 4, 2023

It was standing room only last Thursday for the Zephyrhills Parks & Recreation meeting to discuss proposals and concept design for Zephyr Park. If there's a way to engage the public in Zephyrhills, set a meeting to discuss options for improving parks in the community. There was not a seat to be had in the house. Residents, city officials and journalists crammed the council chambers.

In a dose of irony, newly-elected Mayor Melonie Monson Bahr and councilman Steve Spina were present at the meeting. The throngs of people that came out for the meeting, stayed at home during the election. A dismal, embarrassing reality, 9.86 percent of the voting electorate even bothered to cast a ballot for the new municipal positions. Nevertheless, the community was out and it was engaged on Thursday night.

The meeting began as most city meetings do, with a call to order, an invocation and pledge of allegiance. It then jumped headlong into the concept plan for Zephyr Park. The project is a CRA project and CRA Director Gail Hamilton made some of the opening comments. Talk

about renovating the park emerged back in May of 2016 when an initial open house was held to float ideas and garner public feedback. In 2018, a concept master plan was developed for the 34-acre site. Since then, the CRA has tapped an engineer and collated dozens if not hundreds of responses from the public that have helped shape the decisions going into the project.

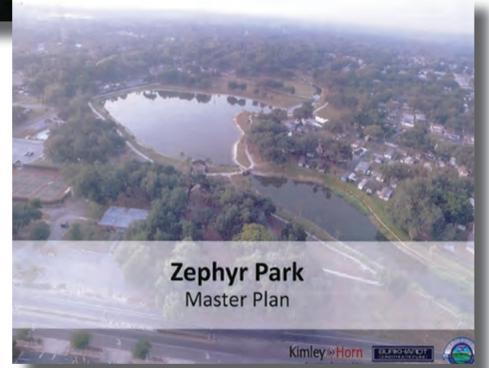
Some interesting statistics that emerged were: the majority of people (35-38 percent) visit the park once a month, 40 percent bring a dog with them when they visit, 68 percent stay at the park between 30 and 90 minutes, 63 percent use the park for walking and/or exercise, the top amenities people wanted to see with the renovation were better bathrooms and more trees. Some more results of the survey highlighted that people want biking options, better handicap access, boating/paddling options. There were results based on what style of amenities people would prefer. They seemed to be in favor of more modern than traditional playground equipment (42 to 24 percent). They seemed in favor of an integrated splash pad (highest percentage of 51); integrated being a number of features all integrated into the water system. All sorts of other options were presented, like what types of pavilions people liked, which types of shade structures they preferred, which types of boating options were preferred.

Once the presentation was finished, it was time for the public to make their voices heard. Zephyrhills City Manager William Poe Jr. jumped in front of the comment section stipulating that one - the tennis courts weren't moving and two - the veterans memorial wasn't going anywhere. This had already been stated twice in the meeting. Poe would make it a third time.



Above: A map of the proposed plan for Zephyr Park.

Right: An areial veiw of Zephyr Park.



Naturally, the first few residents that came up to speak bemoaned the tennis courts and the veterans memorial moving.

"This is the first of many meetings regarding what we want to see in our park," Hamilton said.

There were, however, some meaningful contributions to the discussion. Committee member Norman Scheurman noted that there were limited options for high and middle school-aged children in the park.

Erica Freeman brought up a salient point that upkeep is a present problem and that whatever changes were made, the city would need to adequately staff the park to maintain it. Both maintenance and high/middle school amenities were echoed throughout the meeting.

"We don't maintain what we have now," Freeman said.

Wendy Henderson brought up the notion of a community garden.

Michelle Guard brought up the problem of homeless people populating and disturbing the peace at the park. Her demand for better police presence in the park was also echoed by other members of the community.

"They (homeless) are troublemakers and something needs to be done," Guard said. "I've seen policemen down there twice in the last year-and-a-half."

Each resident that waited their turn got their two minutes before the committee, the CRA and several members of city council. If nothing else, it was a great moment of residents getting together for something.

It is also, as Hamilton said, one of many meetings on the subject.



Dedicated Expertise for Your Whole Health

When you need lifesaving, life-changing, or everyday care, AdventHealth is here with nationally recognized expertise and a connected network of convenient locations to help you feel whole.®

Find an AdventHealth location close to you at [AdventHealthPasco.com](https://www.AdventHealthPasco.com).





Zephyrhills VA Clinic hosts ribbon-cutting



Above: The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place in front of the new Veterans' Administration Clinic on Eiland Boulevard.



Right: Dignitaries on stage stand for the pledge of allegiance.



Below: The Marine Corps League Color Guard 708, a chapter out of Spring Hill, gets ready to kick off Saturday's ceremony.

Right: Among the longtime veterans happy to attend the ceremony were George Bishop, who is in a wheelchair and served two tours in Vietnam, and Major General James Hartsell, executive director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Long-awaited 14,000-square-foot building off Eiland Boulevard provides needed services to local U.S. veterans

By STEVE LEE
May 11, 2023

At long last, the new Veterans' Administration Clinic in Zephyrhills, which had a groundbreaking ceremony in June of 2019, is targeted for a May 16 opening. A symbolic ribbon-cutting took place last Saturday at the 14,000-square-foot facility at 37827 Eiland Blvd.

Taking place on the same day that so many people around the world tuned into the historical coronation of King Charles III at Buckingham Palace, one of the speakers at Saturday's local event offered a different perspective that was well-received.

"If I get a choice of being at a ribbon-cutting for our veterans or at a coronation, I'll be at a ribbon-cutting for our veterans all day," said Joe Battle, James A. Haley Veteran's Hospital's former director, who thanked the community for its unwavering support and added that veter-

ans are "sacred."

Scheduled to be the keynote speaker, congressman Gus Bilirakis, who pushed strongly for federal funding to get the clinic built, was unable to attend due to the recent passing of his brother. Dr. Emmanuel Bilirakis worked at the VA Clinic in New Port Richey.

Instead, David K. Dunning JAHVH's executive director, read a few words on the behalf of the congressman, a staunch advocate of veterans.

"This truly represents a huge win for the local veteran community that has been waiting for years," Dunning read Bilirakis' words. "I am so proud that we can open the doors to this facility. Many services that veterans need are now under one roof."

"We care about the veterans and our nation," said Major General James S. "Hammer" Hartsell, executive director of the Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Among the numerous services provided to veterans at the new facility, which replaces the old outpatient clinic off U.S. 301, are audiology, physical therapy, podiatry, a pharmacy, women's health, telehealth and others. There also will be additional rooms for patient exams and mental health.

Ron Oakley, a Pasco County Commissioner serving the east side of the county, noted the need for hospitals and veterans' clinics, which include a recently opened facility in New Port

STEVE LEE



Richey with work under way on another one in Lakeland.

"As we become more and more of a premier county we have to have these services for our seniors and our veterans," he said.

"We owe (veterans) much, but mostly we owe them a place in our hearts," added David Isaacs, director of the Veteran Integrated Services, Network.

The Marine Corps League Color Guard's 708 chapter from Spring Hill kicked off the ceremony before chaplain Roosevelt Hanna put the new facility in proper perspective.

"We claim this place as healing ground; physically, spiritually and emotionally," he said.

Of the color guard members, Terrence Dunne earned special praise during the ceremony. He is a Vietnam Veteran with five purple hearts and a bronze star.

Another veteran, 74-year-old George Bishop who is wheelchair-bound and had a career in the Air Force, passed out pamphlets before the ceremony.

"I'm proud to be a part of this," said Bishop, who did two tours in Vietnam and one in Thailand.

Several local officials were in attendance, including city manager Billy Poe, newly elected mayor Melonie Monson-Bahr, city councilman Ken Burgess and Steve Spina, the former city manager recently elected to a city council seat.

"To have this type of facility in Zephyrhills is huge for our community," said Poe, whose later father William spent 42 years in the Army Reserves.

In all, there are 1.5 million veterans in Florida. The new facility will primarily serve veterans in east Pasco.

NEW HOPE BAPTIST CHURCH

New Hope Baptist Church is a Bible-centered Christian fellowship dedicated to offering the living hope of the resurrected Christ to despairing hearts! (1 Peter 1:3)

(813) 782-6592



Where to find us:
3514 Allen Road
Zephyrhills, FL 33541
contact@mynewhopebc.com
http://www.mynewhopebc.com



Risen

EASTER CANTATA
A MUSICAL OF WORSHIP & PRAISE
Sunday, March 31st
10:45 a.m.

First Baptist Church / Pastor Rob McKinney
38300 FIFTH AVENUE • ZEPHYRHILLS • (813) 782-5574

**Find Community.
Find Support.
Find Peace.**

Come join us!

ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH

...CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF MINISTRY IN ZEPHYRHILLS

FATHER ALLAN TUPA, Pastor • MSGR. CESAR PETILLA, Parochial Vicar
DEACON DAVID CARDONA, Parish Deacon

MASS SCHEDULE } MONDAY – FRIDAY: 8:00 a.m.
SATURDAY: 4:00 p.m.
SUNDAY: 7:00 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

HOLY HOUR (Adoration & Confession): **Saturday at 8:00 a.m.**

38710 5th Avenue, Downtown Zephyrhills 33542
(Corner of 16th St. & 5th Avenue)
www.stjosephzephyrhills.org • 813-782-2813



Our Savior Lutheran Church, LCMS
Serving Christ for 75 Years!

5626 20th Street
Zephyrhills, FL
33542
813-782-1369

REV. TOD A. SHOUSE
PASTOR

WORSHIP SERVICE:

SUNDAY 10:00 A.M. (LIVE STREAM)

facebook.com/OurSaviorLutheranChurchOfZephyrhillsFL

LENTEN / EASTER SCHEDULE:

Ash Wednesday, February 14 5:30 p.m.
Mid-Week Lenten Services, Wed., February 21, 28, & March 6, 13, 20 5:30 p.m.
Palm Sunday, March 24 10:00 a.m.
Maundy Thursday, March 28 6:00 p.m.
Good Friday, March 29 6:00 p.m.
Easter Sunrise, March 31 7:00 a.m. / Easter Celebration Service 10:00 a.m.

JOIN US ON:

January 27 – Community Block Party 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
DJ, Live Music, Classic Cars, Food Truck, Arts & Craft Vendors,
Bake Sale, Blood Mobile & more!
February 10, 2024 – Annual Yard Sale 8:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.

oursaviorlutheranzephyrhills.org • ochurch@tampabay.rr.com



Elks and JROTC celebrate Flag Day



Left: JROTC folds the flag 13 times as The Meaning of the Thirteen Folds is read.



Right: Zephyrhills VFW Post 8154 Honor Guard with Rod Rehig playing Taps.

Zephyrhills Elks honor the American Flag during a ceremony held at the lodge

By SUSAN SLATER
June 22, 2023

The annual services of the Zephyrhills Elks commemorating the birth of the American Flag was held June 14, Flag Day. The ceremony opened with changing colors while the JROTC, led by Sergeant Smith, posted colors and the Zephyrhills VFW Post 8154 Honor Guard conducted their rifle salute and played "Taps."

The Meaning of the 13 Folds of the Flag was read by Elks Lodge Exalted Ruler, Marie Vesta while the JROTC folded the flag. Each fold has a symbolic meaning of life, remembrance, tribute, and loyalty. The folded flag takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, reminding us of the soldiers who served under General George Washington and the Sailors and Marines, who fought to preserve the rights, privileges and freedoms we enjoy today.

Vesta opened the ceremony by singing the "Star Spangled Banner."

"The purpose of this ceremony is to honor our country's flag, to celebrate the anniversary of its birth, and to recall the achievements attained beneath its folds. Elks are Americans who are intensely patriotic," said Vesta.

"The fraternal organization aims 'To inculcate the principles of charity, justice, brotherly love, and fidelity; to promote the welfare and happiness of mankind; to uphold our country and its laws; and to quicken the spirit of American patriotism,'" added Esteemed Leading

Knight Dwayne Galliant, who read the significance of the flag.

The chaplain then lead a prayer blessing the flag and the people of the United States. "It has been an ensign of freedom, liberty and opportunity and may this service bring to each of us a sense of loyalty to our country and enable us to be better patriots."

Elks member, Steve Impson then read the history of the flag while the JROTC posted seven various versions of U.S. flags. "The evolution of the American Flag marks the progression of the government of the American People."

Various flags were placed from the Pine Tree Flag to the flag of today. Impson explained their origins and use as each flag was placed, Barry Oliver ran various fitting songs in the background.

Following, everyone stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

"The Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks is the first and only fraternal body to require formal observance of Flag Day," said Vesta. "This Order is distinctively American."

All stood and sang "God Bless America."

After the conclusion of the song, Doe Kennard read "Response" which is a story of America. "This is the about the heritage of the people of the United States. What our troops have achieved under the stars and stripes is our history representing the free world."

Guest speaker former Zephyrhills Mayor Cliff McDuffie followed. He is a U.S. Army Veteran and man of many accomplishments. McDuffie opened by talking about people's heritage in other lands and why they came to the USA.

"They were raised under one flag. Why did they leave? For their freedom. One thing the flag stands for and forever will stand for is freedom." McDuffie read Red Skelton's Pledge of



Left: JROTC Commander Sergeant Major Mitchell Risner, First Sergeant Max First, First Sergeant Richard Guterrez and Corporal Joshua Fasulo stand at attention waiting to post colors.

STEVE LEE

Allegiance, which provided a meaning of every word in the pledge.

Guest Speaker, Cliff Moffett, president of the Zephyrhills Museum of Military History and U.S. Navy Veteran, shared a story about the meaning of the flag to others. When in port in Japan, a couple approached him and expressed how seeing the American Flag was comforting for them. "They felt safe," said Moffett.

He also spoke about welcoming home the

veterans from Honor Flight 144. The oldest on the flight was a WWII veteran, 98 years old. "In 2005, it was all WWII Veterans. WWII vets are passing on the torch to the Vietnam Vets to carry," said Moffett.

Vesta closed with the following words, "In closing, let us rededicate ourselves to the Flag of the United States of America. Now please join me for a light lunch."

OUR PRACTICE IS YOUR SOLUTION

"A full-service Law Firm with dedicated attorneys combining over 100 years of legal experience who get results."

Madonna Law Group
Formerly, Mander Law Group

David J. Murphy
Daniel L. Dwyer
William C. Anderson
Bobbi Madonna

AUTOMOBILE ACCIDENTS • PERSONAL INJURY • WRONGFUL DEATH
DUI • CRIMINAL LAW • DIVORCE & CHILD CUSTODY • REAL ESTATE
BUSINESS • PROBATE • WILLS • POWER OF ATTORNEYS

www.madonnalawgroup.com
14217 3rd Street, Dade City, FL 33525 • (352) 567-0411

Anchors Away!

Visit Our
**NEW EXPANDED
20,000 SQ. FT.
SHOWROOM**
Offering ...

**MORE CHOICES!
MORE STYLES!
MORE SIZES!**

0% INTEREST FINANCING* UP TO 18 MOS.

Coastal Furniture & Mattress
LIVING • DINING • BEDROOM • ADJUSTABLE BEDS • MATTRESSES
ROCKER RECLINERS • PATIO FURNITURE • PICTURES • WALL DÉCOR
ACCESSORIES AND SO MUCH MORE!

SAME BIG LOTS PLAZA • NEXT TO ACE HARDWARE
4826 ALLEN ROAD • ZEPHYRHILLS • OFF S.R. 54 WEST

813-395-5920
ACCEPTED HERE PROMOTIONAL FINANCING AVAILABLE*
*With approved credit. See store for details. HOURS: MON. - SAT. 9AM-6PM

Take Your Cabinets Far Beyond Simple Storage!

STATEWIDE Custom Cabinets
Since 1972, three generations of skilled cabinetmakers providing quality second to none!

Visit our showroom to see our large selection of cabinetry and countertop samples that accommodate every budget and style.

FREE In-Home Measurement & Design Consultation!

KITCHEN & BATH • RESIDENTIAL / COMMERCIAL

Kitchen Cabinet Distributors

- Wood & Laminate Cabinets
- Many Cabinet Door Selections
- Countertops: Quartz, Granite & Laminate

38535 PALM GROVE DRIVE • ZEPHYRHILLS
Off Highway 301, Southside of Zephyrhills

www.swcustomcabinets.com • 813-788-3856



City council meeting swears in new ZPD officers, codifies moratorium

New ZPD patrol officers, from left to right, Juanita Gonzalez, Karly Crews, Colton Nelson, Chief Derek Brewer, Mariah Hamilton, Philip Martin and Paul Gonzales, respectively, were sworn in on Monday.

Photo Courtesy of City of Zephyrhills



Monday's city council meeting saw six new ZPD officers sworn in and further solidified the development moratorium

By ANDY WARRENER
June 29, 2023

A packed council chambers played host to six new patrol officers being sworn in on Monday. Friends and family crowded in to witness their loved ones take the oath administered by Zephyrhills Police Chief Derek Brewer. Officers Juanita Gonzalez, Karly Crews, Colton Nelson, Mariah Hamilton, Philip Martin and Paul Gonzalez became part of ZPD.

There were five items in the Consent Agenda. The items were bundled together and passed 4-0. Item 2.1 approved minutes from the May 8 meeting.

Item 2.2 approved a consultant work assignment with Jacobs Engineering for Runway 1-19 at the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport. The item approved a \$70,000 contribution from the city, together with a FDOT Aviation Grant of \$250,000. The city's share is budgeted in the FY 2022-23 Budget.

Item 2.3 approved the purchase of a new water division vehicle, a 2007 Chevy pickup truck. The cost of the new truck is \$78,098.

Item 2.4 picked up on an emergency item from the last meeting that addresses sewer issues at the Zephyrhills Police Station by asking council to approve building a new lift station in the amount of \$114,839. Being an unexpected expense, funds must be drawn from the city's General Fund Contingency. This requires council's approval.

Item 2.5 renewed an agreement with Duke Energy for use of a portion of Taxiway B at the

airport as a staging area for their disaster response. The agreement, the Zephyrhills Airport Storm Staging Site Agreement expires on Aug. 1. The item renewed that agreement for the next three years.

In Business Items, the one item on everyone's mind was the Residential Moratorium passed on the first reading at the last meeting. There was a great deal of discussion at the last meeting regarding the moratorium and thus discussion on Monday was limited.

The moratorium is now set for 12 months and applies to residential developments over 1-acre for annexations, land use modifications, rezoning, major PUD development amendments, conditional uses and variances. There was one minor change to the moratorium since the first reading. It allowed for two projects that are currently in Pasco County but are serviced by the city. The result is actually a net gain of 100,000 gallons per day as the developments have their own water capacity.

"It doesn't obligate us to approve these types of agreements but it allows us to consider them," City of Zephyrhills Attorney Matthew Maggard said.

The notion of the city being on the hook to service developments in Pasco County emerged but that was quickly dismissed by Zephyrhills City Manager William Poe Jr.

"We are sending a message that if these developments in Pasco County want to be serviced by the city, they need to bring their (water) capacity with them," Poe said. The item passed 4-0.

In the City Attorney's Report, Item 4.1 was a first reading of a backyard chicken ordinance. The proposed ordinance allows backyard

chickens to be raised, kept, maintained, harbored in zoning district ER, R1, R2 and R3. It allows for a maximum of four chickens. The ordinance establishes that chickens shall be protected from the elements and kept in a secure enclosure at all times, except during sunrise and sunset. The property where the chickens are kept shall have a six-foot high fence. The coop itself shall have at least four-square feet of space per chicken but shall not exceed 150 square feet. Coops shall be located in backyards, be kept neat and sanitary at all times. Stored feed shall be kept in a rodent and predator proof container and backyard chickens shall be kept for personal use only. While the ordinance does codify, the item was only in its first reading, keeping backyard chickens. It may very well address the free roaming chickens that forage near city hall.

The notion of creating a lot of work for code enforcement was brought up as well.

Councilman Ken Burgess noted that the ordinance does not preclude existing rules for HOAs regarding chickens.

After some debate, Councilman Steve Spina noting that it was "counter productive" and Burgess noting that it had, "unintended consequences." The notion that it might bring more chickens into the city limits rather than reduce the number was a convincing factor and the motion failed.

In the City manager's Report, Item 5.1 was a presentation by Wharton-Smith and Kimley Horn regarding Hercules Park. The approved design for the park came in over budget and city staff have been working with the construction manager (Wharton-Smith) and design consultant (Kimley Horn) on finding cost-saving options for the park.

Concern over the cost of these amenities was expressed from the dais. Juanmiguel Gorut of Wharton-Smith spoke about how his firm is looking at cost-saving measures in an itemized fashion, challenging each vendor to see if they could come back with more cost-effective ways of executing the designs.

Council members went through seven items and took or left them, ultimately cutting costs in the amount of roughly \$800,000. Poe mentioned that American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding would be available for use at the park. Poe also mentioned that the park groundbreaking may commence as soon as this December. It was a non-action item, Poe just looking to move in the direction discussed. There was consensus at the dais as far as what they were taking and leaving.

Item 5.2 was a Utility Capacity Agreement with Wire Ranch Investors. The firm owns a 24.16-acre property on U.S. 301 and plans to develop the property with 329 residential apartments. The extant agreement requires payment of 50 percent of total capacity fees within 30 days of the effective date. That amount is \$582,330. The present water and sewer capacity fee is \$3,540 per apartment unit. The agreement is binding for five years and can be assigned to future purchasers of the property. The item was approved 4-0.

Keeping your pet on the path to wellness.

LOW COST SPAY & NEUTER WELLNESS & VACCINES

Surgery by Appointment:
Drop off time 8am
Clinic Hours: 9:30am - 2:00pm

EXPRESS VACCINATION
Zephyrhills - Tuesday
Wesley Chapel - Friday

WELLNESS CLINIC / VACCINATION
Zephyrhills
Mon., Wed., Thurs., Fri., Sat.
Wesley Chapel
Mon., Tues., Wed., Thur.

Grooming Available at Both Locations



Est. 2010

"Dedicated to providing a high quality, high volume spay and neuter program that meets or exceeds current veterinary standards of care."



ZEPHYRHILLS
Mon.-Sat. 8am-5pm
37815 SR 54 West
(3/4 mile W. of Zephyr Park)
(813) 779-7000

WESLEY CHAPEL
Mon.-Fri. 8am-5pm
33931 SR 54 West
(2 buildings W. of Pasco County Library)
(813) 524-6400

www.plannedpethoodpasco.com

LOW-COST ULTRASOUNDS Available in WESLEY CHAPEL by Appointment

WANT THE BODY YOU ONCE HAD?



Call The Highly Trained, Certified Professionals at **Reutimann Collision Repair**

FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED • PROFESSIONAL, HONEST WORK
WRITTEN LIFETIME WARRANTY ON ALL WORKMANSHIP & PAINT!



TWO LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU!

Dade City 14343 8th Street 352-437-3200
Zephyrhills 37529 Tall Pines Dr. 813-782-4152



www.ReutimannCollision.com

- Auto Body Repair & Painting Services
- Restoration Services
- Computerized Laser Measuring
- Uni-body & Full Frame Straightening
- Major Fleet Service
- 24/7 Towing Service
- Pick up and Drop-Off Service
- We work with most insurance companies

Open: Monday - Friday
7:45am - 5:30pm



Reclaimed water and Zephyrhills's water woes



Far left: Some of the reclaimed water piping and where it extends to city residents.

Left: The purple signs and pipes around the city indicate the use of reclaimed water in the area



Right: More reclaimed water pipe layout in the city.

Photos Courtesy of City of Zephyrhills

New sources of potable water are high on the city's priority list, while only a minimal amount of reclaimed water is piped to residents

By ANDY WARRENER
July 13, 2023

Providing water to residents is the big issue facing Zephyrhills as unprecedented growth engulfs the city. The city produces plenty of reclaimed water. Can reclaimed water be an answer? The city produces 1.676 million gallons of reclaimed water per day in 2021. Could this abundance of reclaimed water augment the rising use of potable water?

The short answer is yes but just how much remains a complex question. First, reclaimed water has limited uses. Obviously it cannot replace potable water. Yet, it can and does find use in landscape and lawn irrigation, a major draw on current potable water.

Second, the infrastructure to distribute reclaimed water to residents in the city, while growing, is still in a skeletal state. Last and probably most significant, is that the city uses its reclaimed water to offset its own draws from both the Hillsborough and Withlacoochee River basins.

Let's dissect these three obstacles. Currently, uses for reclaimed water are limited to lawn and landscape irrigation. Nearby municipalities, the City of Tampa in particular, have floated what have been called "toilet to tap" ideas.

The monicker is mildly hyperbolic as Tampa's proposal included sending treated wastewater or reclaimed water back into the Hillsborough River, a primary source of eventual potable water for Tampa residents that would be diluted and again treated. It would not go directly into the city's potable water supply lines.

Naturally, this proposal has met with vociferous opposition and the effort is currently stalled as the city looks to alternative sources to supply its potable water demands. Barring the notion of returning reclaimed water to a potable water source, reclaimed water use will be limited to lawns and landscaping.

One benefit of Zephyrhills residents using reclaimed water is its reduced cost. Reclaimed water goes for 18 cents per 1,000 gallons for properties over one acre in size. That rate is 32 cents per 1,000 gallons for property under one acre. Potable water currently goes for \$5.49 per 1,000 gallons and is set at an "inclined" rate that goes up based on usage. The cost difference is stark.

One of the main issues is getting that water to residents who would like to use it. Reclaimed water lines were down in Zephyrhills prior to Zephyrhills Utilities Director John Bostic, who took over the post in 2013. The pink/purple pipe network has grown under Bostic.

Currently, Abbott Square and Abbott Park are slated to get reclaimed water. Abbott Square still needs the pipes extended to it and Abbott Park already has the pipes going in.

The City of Zephyrhills uses reclaimed water at its city parks, schools and at Krusen Field as well as on the municipal golf course. If you see those purple/pink pipes near a large park or development, it's almost certain that reclaimed water is being used there.

The sticking point is extending access to residents. It's no small task. Laying new pipes in a tight residential area is difficult, even prohibitive in some cases. It is not financially expedient to run reclaimed water pipes to a couple of residents in a neighborhood but there are possibilities.

"If 20 people on a street want reclaimed water, then maybe it becomes economically viable to install infrastructure," Bostic said.

What the city currently does is they offer opportunities for residents to band together to get the pipes to their homes. Recently, the city used an old tap water extension to pipe reclaimed water to residents along Fort King Road.

An example, not necessarily pertaining to the Fort King project but representative of how it can work, is that if 10 residents in a neighborhood want reclaimed water, the city will hold a \$30,000 bond that is paid by the residents in increments of \$3,000 each. As residents come online with the reclaimed water, they pay that \$3,000 until the bond is met. As more people tap into the reclaimed water lines in that area, rebates are issued to residents that put up the initial \$3,000. So a rate payer could eventually recoup their investment.

The last and perhaps most significant obstacle is that the city uses reclaimed water to offset their draws of potable water from both the Hillsborough and Withlacoochee River basins. Zephyrhills has four wells that draw from the Hillsborough River Basin at the rate of 1.5 million gallons per day and three wells in the Withlacoochee River Basin that also draw 1.5 million gallons per day. The Hillsborough Basin is what's known as a Water Use Caution Area as it directly affects the greater Tampa Bay area.

Zephyrhills in 2021, produced 1.676 million gallons of reclaimed water per day but they were required to return 1.316 million gallons to the Floridan Aquifer through a process called Rapid Infiltration Basins or RIBs. This is done at the water treatment plant near the airport. For 2021, that left just 360,000 gallons per day for other uses.

The idea behind the RIBs is to return water flow to the aquifer so that other municipalities can continue to draw from it. Municipalities can use potable or reclaimed water but reclaimed

water is the obvious choice. Zephyrhills is trying to shift its dependence on the Hillsborough Basin toward other sources as the demands for RIBs within that basin are high.

The models for how much water needs to be put back into the basin against what is drawn out were compiled by Jones Edmunds for the City of Zephyrhills and were included in their 2020 Water Use Permit with the SouthWest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD). This model is designed to, "not affect other permittees in the district." The Withlacoochee Basin, which is connected to the Hillsborough Basin and does affect it, has a much lower rate of RIBs.

"In the next few years, we hope to open a new well in the Withlacoochee Basin," Bostic said.

So is reclaimed water the panacea to solving the city's water woes? Not presently, no. However, as the city diverts its dependence away from the Hillsborough Basin, the amount of reclaimed water they must return to the aquifer will diminish and there will always be more reclaimed water available as growth continues, even as city council enacts measures to curb that growth.

Bostic also has aims on taking over agricultural wells that may not be in use in Pasco County. There are other options like drilling a deep well directly into the aquifer and possibly getting a permit from Tampa Bay Water but those options are considered costly and less attainable. So there is light at the end of the purple pipe.

Celebrating Life
— ONE FAMILY AT A TIME —
Traditional Local Burial
Graveside Services
Memorial Services • Pre-Planning
Cremation
(East Pasco's Only Locally Owned On-site Cremator)
"Our Family Serving Yours"
HODGES FAMILY
Funeral Home
Family Owned & Operated

DADE CITY 352-567-6100 11441 Highway 301 Dade City, FL 33525	ZEPHYRHILLS 813-788-6100 36327 State Road 54 Zephyrhills, FL 33541
--	--

CHAPEL HILL GARDENS • FLORAL MEMORY GARDENS
11531 Hwy 301, Dade City, FL 33525 • 352-567-5571
www.hodgesfuneralhome.com

PIONEER FLORIDA MUSEUM & VILLAGE
PRESERVING FLORIDA'S HISTORY

...Travel Through Florida's History

VISIT OUR GIFT SHOP for an exciting variety of old-fashioned Children's toys, commemorative souvenirs such as: t-shirts, hats, mugs, novelty candies and Florida inspired books.

OPEN TUESDAY - SATURDAY DURING REGULAR MUSEUM HOURS.

UPCOMING 2024 EVENTS

Feb. 3 Farm Festival and Quilt Show .. 10 am - 4 pm with Southern Draft Horse PullNoon
Local Quilters on Display, Quilts & Supplies Sale, Pulled Pork Dinners with yellow rice and black beans - \$12.00

March 1 Cracker Cowboy Dinner6pm
Grab your best hat, dust off your boots, and join us under the stars! Fundraising Dinner with Kenzie Wheeler performing (as seen on The Voice) Tickets start at \$100, VIP packages/tables available.

March 2 Cracker Cowboy Day10 am - 4 pm
Florida Cowboys: Roping, Board Branding, Cracker Cattle/Horses, Cowboy Poetry. Free cowboy hats for the first 100 children to visit the petting zoo!

March 16 Jelly Bean Fling10 am - 4 pm
Spring Festival with vendors, great food, live entertainment & children's activities. Egg Hunt, Easter Bunny, Geared Up Band and the Barking Dogs Old Time Music.

EVENT INFORMATION:
Admission: \$10 adults / \$5.00 students
Children under 5 - FREE / Free Parking
• No Coolers or Outside Food
• Lawn Chairs Permitted
• No Pets, Service Dogs Only.

(352) 567-0262
15602 Pioneer Museum Road, Dade City, FL 33523
(1 mile North of Downtown Dade City, off U.S. Hwy. 301)
www.pioneerfloridamuseum.org



Chamber presents: It Happened on 5th Avenue



Left: Winners of the night stand proudly with their awards.



Above: The hall was packed with many people from the local businesses and dignitaries in Zephyrhills.

SUSAN SLATER

Right: Senator Danny Burgess Master of Ceremonies for the evening spread humor throughout the night.



Left: Senator Danny Burgess performs the installation of the Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Officers.

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce holds annual membership appreciation banquet and installation of officers

By SUSAN SLATER
Sept. 21, 2023

The Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce 62nd Awards Banquet held at St. Joseph's Parish Community on Fifth Avenue began with Vicki Wiggins, CEO/president of the chamber welcoming everyone. She set a welcoming pace for the evening.

"We are awarding Oscars to the businesses that came together," said Wiggins. Wiggins made mention of Light the Grill, Randy and Daniel Light, who cooked the delicious food, installation of new officers, the awards, live auction, dessert dash and raffles.

Wiggins introduced Senator Danny Burgess who was the Master of Ceremonies for the evening presenting the Oscars.

"I am glad to be back here in Zephyrhills. This is where I went to church," said Burgess. "I got Surpee's at the 7-Eleven and I dreamed of having an office on Fifth Avenue. Now, here I am with my own office downtown as a senator."

Mike Murrill, CEO of AdventHealth Zephyrhills, performed the invocation and everyone was led in the "Pledge of Allegiance."

Murrill talked about family and coming from Georgia to Zephyrhills. "AdventHealth has been in Zephyrhills for 40 years and Dade City for 50 years," said Murrill. "We have 1600 employees bringing health to our community."

"Tonight, we have live auction items, raffle items, and more," said Burgess. He went on to name some of the producers of tonight's events; Kevin Bahr, Bahr's Propane Gas and AC, Randy Maggard, and the staff for their assistance in making this night shine. Film crews included the businesses of Spectrum Diversity, Healing Hearts Café and Kendall Deford the Handyman.

Burgess dedicated a moment of silence to those who have passed and made very meaningful contributions to the community; Charles Waller, Dennis Alphonso, George Luca, Everett Rigsby and Nelson Ryman, whose granddaughter gave a heartfelt tribute.

"Nelson Ryman was never stopped by a challenge, always had a positive outlook and refused to quit," said Kelli Ryman, Nelson's granddaughter. "He was that people magnet."

Next came the dessert dash, always a big hit. The highest bidding table dashed to the dessert table for first choice of all the amazing desserts. Proceeds from the dessert dash bids went to the East Pasco Chamber Foundation Scholarship fund.

The awards were well deserved. The Diamond Award for Best Non-Profit went to the

Thomas Promise Foundation. Dr. Randy Stovall presented the Member of the Year Award to director Sam Abrahani. Ambassador of the Year Award went to Vicki Glisson. This award is voted on by the staff and board members. Citizen of the Year Award went to Kimberly Miller McCullough, of the parks and recreation department.

Small Business of the Year went to the Gentleman's Quarters and Best Large Business of the year went to the business showing the best corporate leadership and the winner was Chick-fil-A.

Leadership, Government Economic Development award was presented to Zephyrhills Mayor Melanie Monson who has enriched the community with her excitement and blessed feelings for being a part of a magical community.

A basket of cheer was raffled off and donated back by Sam Abrahani, the winner. Many

items were battled over with high dollars to go toward the scholarship fund.

A watch was donated by Boyd Jewelry and Zephyrhills City Manager, Billy Poe walked around the room to model it for all the guests to see. Other items auctioned off were salt room sessions, dinner for two and some Fitness. Burgess held up a racquet and said, "These racquets have Bluetooth." A beautiful charcuterie was donated as well as Captain Mike Wells Fishing Trip for four hours on the seas of West Pasco.

Raffle items donated by many local businesses included massage items, food, wine, coffees, bowling, barbecue package and more.

Burgess ended the night with the installation of the next year's Greater Zephyrhills Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors and Officers.

Premier STORAGE

... A Convenient & Secure Storage Experience

MAKE A RISK-FREE RESERVATION TO LOCK IN YOUR LOW RATE!

PREMIER STORAGE ONE

38841 County Road 54 E.
Zephyrhills, FL 33542
813.782.6854

PREMIER STORAGE TOO

37625 State Road 54 West
Zephyrhills, FL 33542
813.285.5823

ALLEN ROAD MINI STORAGE

4740 Allen Road
Zephyrhills, FL 33541
813.788.7825

ASK ABOUT OUR SPECIALS TODAY!

Meet Kale:

Your new best friend with benefits.

Rich in nutrients and delicious in flavor!

VITAMIN K, VITAMIN C, VITAMIN A,
POTASSIUM, ANTIOXIDANTS

KALE JUICE RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 5 large kale leaves
- 1 apple
- 1-2 large cucumbers
- 1 inch ginger (peeled)
- 1 lemon (peeled)
- 1-2 large ribs celery

WE HAVE EVERYTHING YOU NEED FOR JUICING

GINGER ROOT • SPINACH • CELERY • BEETS • CARROTS • KALE

Full line of Citrus, Honey and

REDUCED ITEMS ON SALE DAILY!

Shannon's

FARM FRESH PRODUCE

"Offering the largest selection of farm-fresh vegetables, fruit and seasonal produce in East Pasco"

813-782-9455

Fresh Salads by Maritza

starting at \$2.99

- Plant City Strawberries
- Fresh Bread Available on Friday and Saturday!
- Indoor/Outdoor Plants

OPEN 6 DAYS! Mon. - Sat. 8am - 6pm; CLOSED SUNDAYS

LOCATED ON DEAN DAIRY & EILAND BLVD. (S.R. 54 WEST BYPASS) ZEPHYRHILLS

Welcome to the Sunshine State!

Our exceptional designs are guaranteed to meet all local and State of Florida Building Codes and will comply to wind code designs for your specific area.

Depend on our skills and 30 years experience to create unique ideas for spaces ranging from 1,000 sq.ft. to well over 12,000 sq.ft.

- Custom new homes, renovations and additions
- Custom wood decks
- Garage and storage buildings
- Pole barns, horse stables

CALL TODAY FOR A PERSONAL CONSULTATION!

352-523-2077

www.randywatsondesigns.com

YOUR HOME IS YOUR MOST VALUABLE ASSET

WORK WITH SOMEONE YOU TRUST!

You can trust us to help the Do-It-Yourselfer!

From screen rooms & carports to home remodeling projects and new home construction, we're committed to helping our customers with quality products and honesty!

IMPROVE YOUR HOME

SAVE MONEY • SOLVE PROBLEMS

Family owned and operated since 1984

6154 FORT KING RD. • ZEPHYRHILLS • 813-788-7308

Community turns out for a block party at the fire station



Left: Pasco County Fire Cadets helped the children in and out of the bounce house during the block party at the fire station.



Above: Children love sitting on the 1927 fire truck acquired from St. Petersburg.



Right: Firefighter Zach Freda shows Nasyah Davis how to put out a fire with a fire extinguisher.



Right: Officer Jonathan Rose educates Oliver Young, 3, and his parents on pedestrian and bike safety.

Pasco County Fire Rescue Station in downtown Zephyrhills kicks off Fire Prevention Week with a block party

By SUSAN SLATER
Oct. 12, 2023

Pasco County Fire Rescue Station 25 begins Fire Prevention Week with a block party for the community at the station on 6th Avenue to help raise awareness about fire safety. The campaign for fire safety is "Cooking safety starts with you." Cooking is very much a part of our daily lives, so we forget the simple tasks of preventing fires in the home.

Lisa Brekke and Dragang Peters, public educator initiators from the Community Risk Reduction Division and event coordinators wanted to bring fire safety awareness to the public with the assistance of Antwon Gildon, director of Main Street Events.

"We are here to promote fire prevention," said Brekke. "We opened up the fire station to the community so they can see what we do."

Justin Wehle and Larry Helsel demonstrate fire prevention methods. One device is the Knox Box. "Hang it on your front door and place your

house key inside," said firefighter Wehle. "Only Pasco Fire Rescue has the key to the box. It will work on all boxes." The keys are kept on the engine. A code is needed to access the key to the Knox Boxes. The lock box logs removal and return of the key for further safety precautions. "Each key is specific to each county," added Wehle.

Firefighter Cody Little helped the children into the fire truck. "It's a block party to bring the community out to see the fire trucks," said Chambers. "We are showing special apparatus, and we have our cadets and volunteers assisting."

Brelynn Hacker and Dustin Hacker climbed into the fire truck with the help of Little. "It was fun to go into the truck. I loved it," said Dustin. "I have not been in a fire truck since I had an asthma attack. The firemen that came in the fire truck carried me out to the truck and took me to the hospital. They helped me."

The block party had many activities such as a bounce house, fire station tours, Touch-a-Truck, fire safety demonstrations, free food, and the police community truck. Suncoast Safe Kids was on hand to give away free bicycle helmets to the kids; each adjusted properly for each child's head.

Zephyrhills Police Officer Jonathan Rose showed up in the Zephyrhills Police Department's Community Truck. It was originally the fire rescue's vehicle. "We acquired it and set it up with an Xbox, PlayStation, music, and barbecue grill to evoke human nature to get to know

the police officers," said Rose, who was educating the community on bike and pedestrian safety.

"A lot of the same laws for cars apply when walking and, on bicycle," said Rose. "We educate the parents, too, so they can educate their children." Following the law and obeying all traffic signs applies to bike and pedestrian safety. Be seen, Be safe! Wear bright clothing or protective gear at night.

The children got lessons from firefighters, Zach Freda and Greg Panzer on how to put out a fire with a fire extinguisher simulator. "This simulator shows all levels of fire and different sizes," said Freda. "Fire starts, pull the alarm, grab the extinguisher and see how long it took for to put the fire out."

Nasyah Davis, 3, put out a full fire in 29.5 seconds. "I put out the fire," said Nasyah. "I sprayed it."

The face painting tent was nonstop all day. The Majorette Dance Team from the Zephyrhills High School was painting Spiderman faces, unicorns, cats and other characters on the children. "We are out helping the community," said Marlydia Lawrence, one of the majorettes.

The Pasco Fire Rescue's first event for fire safety was an amazing success. The community was out in full force enjoying the educational part of it as well as the fun in the bounce houses.

For more information on fire prevention, you can go to the National Fire Prevention Association at www.nfpa.com.

SUSAN SLATER

home sweet home!

winter

NEED TO SCHEDULE TOWING, TRANSPORT OR RECOVERY SERVICES?

CALL TODAY
813-973-1330
24 Hours a Day / 7 Days a Week

ATLAS TOWING SERVICE INC.

SERVICING: Wesley Chapel Zephyrhills • Dade City • Lutz New Tampa • San Antonio

30115 SR 54 West • Wesley Chapel, FL 33543
Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8am-5pm

NOW OPEN IN ZEPHYRHILLS!

Just Pull It!

Pull your tooth today for **Only \$180.00*** in **ONE VISIT!**

LOWER THAN CO-PAY ON MOST INSURANCE PLANS!

Don't let agonizing pain keep you down!

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Panoramic X-ray (D0330)
- Evaluation by our Licensed on-site Dentist (D0140)
- Anesthetic & routine extraction (D7140)

*Cost per tooth. Wisdom teeth fee \$220 per tooth (D7210)

CALL (352) 833-7855 • 37806 Medical Arts Ct. • Zephyrhills, 33541

ENJOY A TOP-SHELF EXPERIENCE

at Robby's Liquor

FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED

OFFERING YOUR FAVORITE LABELS FOR LESS! **ZEPHYRHILLS**

Everyday low prices on Smirnoff • Bacardi • Crown • Jack • Captain Morgan • Jim Beam **AND MORE!**

35+ MICRO CRAFT BEERS

WE SELL Lottery

Monday - Thursday ... 8am-9pm
Friday - Saturday... 8am - 11pm
Sunday 11am - 8pm

5046 GALL BLVD. Next to Domino's Pizza
813-782-7878

36548 SR 54 WEST
In Shopping Center Behind Amcot
813-83-8380

KEG ORDERS AVAILABLE

OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK

Zephyrhills

COMMUNITY PHARMACY

FREE DELIVERY Every Day

YOUR HOMETOWN PHARMACY WITH WORLD CLASS SERVICE

Come in and Meet Your Trusted Pharmacist **SAM**

Rapid Antigen & RT-PCR COVID TESTING

Walk-ins Welcome!

Various Vaccinations Offered!

OPEN 7 DAYS

Monday-Friday 8am-8pm
Saturday 9am-4pm
Sunday 10am-3pm

www.zephyrhillspharmacy.com

6242 GALL BLVD., ZEPHYRHILLS 33542
(Across the street from Kaufman Eye Institute)

We Accept Most Major Insurances

813-395-6161

⊕



Jump On In to the City of Pure Water

Visual Direction



Left: Two of the advertising/promotional pieces that were developed by North Star to highlight different amenities in Zephyrhills.

Right: A look at the new Zephyrhills logo affixed to different things like signage, printed material and apparel.



A recent rebranding campaign foreshadows the direction and aesthetic the City of Zephyrhills is headed

By ANDY WARRENER
Oct. 19, 2023

It's no secret that the City of Zephyrhills is in transition. The sleepy east Pasco County enclave is now not only the most populous city in Pasco County, it's growing by leaps and bounds. As city planners, council members and citizens try to direct and define the future of Zephyrhills, a rebranding effort, courtesy of North Star Branding + Marketing is underway and city hall wants to get the word out. "We've always been known as the City of Pure Water," Zephyrhills City Manager William Poe Jr. said. "But we're more than that." The city and the bottled spring water have become synonymous over the years, even as the city faces challenges to providing potable water to its burgeoning population. Yet, even the traditional city seal belies much more than water. The parachutist on the logo denotes one of the top skydiving drop zones in the world. The hills swept with a "zephyr" rolling in the background of the logo make a case for being more than just bottled water. Even now, as improvements to Main Street, a calendar full of events, public park developments and a flood of retailers add to the character of Zephyrhills, some changes are certainly in order. Starting last summer (2022), the City of Zephyrhills contracted with North Star Branding + Marketing to revamp the look, the vibe,

the color palate, the tagline, the logo, the rebranding of the City of Zephyrhills. The concept of a rebranding or a Community Identity Initiative almost didn't happen. Poe was attending an annual convention of city managers back in the Summer of 2021, when he was first exposed to North Star. "They (North Star) was a presenter at the convention," Poe said. "They had recently finished a project with Johnson City in Tennessee." Poe was impressed with the presentation and later even reached out to city staff from Johnson City and they spoke glowingly of North Star and their rebranding. Poe was so impressed he tried to forge a piggyback deal with Newport News, Virginia. Piggyback deals are often made between municipalities to save costs. While there is no tangible material like bricks and rebar and concrete in a rebranding, the concept saves time with research and contract writing and yes even saves money. It didn't work out. Poe brought it to council in late 2021 and council demurred. At the time, the city had a vacant Public Information Officer (PIO) position and council members just felt as though they weren't ready. The effort however, didn't die on the council chamber floor. By February of 2022, current PIO Kevin Weiss was hired and council put out a Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Dozens of firms downloaded the RFQ, 10 responded and the RFQ selection committee consisting of: Weiss, Gail Hamilton, Shane LeBlanc, Rodney Corriveau, Tyler Williams and Karen Miller, interviewed five firms. "Personally, I thought North Star was above and beyond (the other firms)," Weiss said. "They really stood out in interviews, they had glowing recommendations from other communities, their sole focus was on towns and cities and they'd conducted over 200 rebrandings in more

than 40 states. They stood out." North Star got the nod and the roughly \$68,000 contract. "They jumped right in pretty quickly," Poe said. "It started with driving North Star reps around to see our ballfields, parks, tennis center, schools." Next, North Star held a series of community meetings where stakeholders, educators, community and business leaders and even students were invited to share their input. "We had realtors, department heads, YMCA staff, reps from AdventHealth that were surveyed," Weiss said. "In meetings, they (North Star) met with members of the historical society. It was a diverse group across the board." Next up was North Star's "walk and talk" where they literally walked the streets of Zephyrhills interviewing residents. They asked some simple questions about what people thought of Zephyrhills. What were their impressions? What were the city's assets? What were its flaws? From there, they developed a digital community survey. The survey was 20 questions and took respondents between 10 and 15 minutes to complete. There were over 1,000 responses. That does not sound like a huge number. It isn't but in comparison to response rates in other cities where North Star conducted them, it was actually quite high. "North Star said that (Zephyrhills) had a higher response rate than most communities they work with," Weiss said. "They usually expect a one or two percent response rate (based on population) and we got close to a five percent response rate." From there, North Star began to generate options, designs, templates. They weren't going to force feed their results and products. They wanted to dialogue with city staff and community members in order to tweak their designs. "It wasn't just a, 'here's your logo' and 'see yah,'" Weiss said. North Star had multiple meetings with a creative committee consisting of: Vicky Wiggins, Weiss, Poe, Hamilton, Pascal Collard, Antoine Gildon and Jodi Wilkeson, where ideas were floated back and forth.

"We didn't settle on the first things we saw," Poe said. "There was a lot of back and forth. We all had to get on the same page - the chamber, Main Street, city staff." So what did the city get for its \$68,000? It's actually a bit more than you think. First, the logo. The "Z" was an easy choice. There is only one other municipality in the State of Florida that starts with a "z", that of Zolfo Springs. The three waves in the center of the "z" represent, blue - the sky, green - the hills and teal - water. Next was the tagline or strapline, "jump right in." This of course, pays credence to water but it also encourages people to jump in to the Zephyrhills experience. Third was a color palate to use with any number of things like: the website look, fleet vehicles, city stationary/business cards, street signs, trash bins, signage, even t-shirts. Even the word, "Zephyrhills" has two of the 10 colors in the color scheme. "Zephyr" is blue, while "Hills" is teal. "You'll be able to look at the sign for a city park and know that it is a Zephyrhills park," Poe said. The city will have to implement the designs, logo and tagline at their own expense but North Star laid out a framework, a template if you will, for these things to evolve. All told the process took about a year and a half. And the city is not quite done with North Star, either. "If there's something we need in the future, they (North Star) will work with us," Weiss said. Weiss and Poe were certainly happy with what North Star provided. "For what they (North Star) did, the price was extremely reasonable," Poe said. While the roll out of the designs is already underway, the implementation will be gradual. The city is not going to suddenly take down all the street signs or decal up all its fleet vehicles. These things will be implemented over time and will gradually form what Weiss called a, "cohesiveness of municipal services." Yet, as Zephyrhills steps boldly into the second quarter of the 21st Century, it will have a new look, one that incorporates and addresses the many facets that make up the not-so-sleepy anymore town. "We still represent the City of Pure Water," Poe said. "It's just, we're more than that."

INCREASED RECYCLING WILL REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF HOUSEHOLD WASTE GOING INTO YOUR Z-CART.

REDUCE RE-USE & RECYCLE

NOTHING Bigger than a Cat Litter Container

- NO** Plastic Bags
- NO** Milk or Juice Cartons
- NO** Tanglers
- NO** Trashed or Bagged Recycling
- NO** Styrofoam
- NO** Glass

NO GLASS RECYCLING REMINDER.

WHY NO GLASS? When glass breaks it becomes a contaminant to the materials in the overall recycling stream.

Zephyrhills
jump right in

For questions, please email us at: pubworks@ci.zephyrhills.fl.us or call our office at **813-780-0022**

JIM CRANDELL

Golf Cart Sales & Service

Specializing in Custom & Remanufactured Carts
Gas • Electric • EFI • Scooters • Accessories • Enclosed Trailers

INVENTORY BLOWOUT SALE

SAVE! SAVE! SAVE!

GOLF CART WHEEL LOCKS IN STOCK!

PRE-OWNED GAS & ELECTRIC GOLF CARTS

Starting at **\$3,450**

YAMAHA EZGO Club Car

REMAN. YAMAHA QUIET TECH GAS & ELECTRIC CARTS

Starting at **\$10,950**

YAMAHA

For all of my Dog Show Friends, take your...

2024 CRICKET RX-5

Rugged & Tough
RX-3
Collapsible & Fun!
ESV
Compact 2-seater
Starting at **\$6,450**

2023 JCRV MOBILITY SCOOTERS

Collapsible and ready for golf!
Up to 30 mph
ONLY 2 LEFT!
\$4,950

NEW 2022 VIVID EV
6-Passenger
VIVID EV

\$13,950

COMPLETE SERVICE & PARTS

0% Financing* for **24 months** on all 2013 and newer **GOLF CARTS**

WE WILL BEAT ANY COMPETITOR PRICING!

10634 NORTH U.S. HIGHWAY 301 • DADE CITY, FL 33525
(ACROSS FROM SONNY'S APPLIANCES)

OPEN 6 DAYS: M-F 8:30am-5pm; Sat. 8:30am-2pm
813-779-3333 or 813-629-3333

*With approved credit.



Hercules Park groundbreaking where history meets the future



Left: City council members, Wharton Smith employees and Zephyrhills City Manager Billy Poe, Public Works Director Shane LeBlanc and Commissioner Oakley break ground for the new Hercules Park.



Right: Former mayor Cliff McDuffie, Zephyrhills Mayor Melonie Bahr Munson and former mayor Gene Whitfield all attended the groundbreaking for the new Hercules Park.

Local dignitaries and city officials broke ground on the 12-acre park where Hercules Powder Company once stood

By SUSAN SLATER
Nov. 30, 2023

What was once the Hercules Powder Company Camp No. 39 established in 1946, will now become the site of a very progressive park for the community of Zephyrhills. Several city officials, dignitaries, Zephyrhills Police, Wharton Smith Company Construction Group employees and citizens from the community joined together for a groundbreaking ceremony for this new project in the Zephyrhills community.

When Hercules Powder Company occupied the 80 acres of land, there were 60 to 70 company built prefabricated homes. The homes were occupied by employees of the company who rented the homes for \$4 per room a month. Hercules employed more employees than any other employer in the area.

When asked what it was like to live here, Celia Dobson Paul, who lived on this land from birth until she was 10 years old, said, "You know how children say that it feels like Christmas every day? Well, that is what this community was

like. We never had to worry about crime or being snatched up. It was a true community." Betsy Dobson, who was also in attendance, lived in the community from birth to the age of four. Mae McKenzie Pickett also lived in the Hercules Powder Company Camp.

After Hercules Powder Company occupied the site, "The land was sold for \$120,000 and a handshake between Harry Morton, superintendent of Hercules Powder Company and Chester Taylor, Superintendent of the Zephyrhills School District," according to Jerry Morton, son of Harry Morton, who attended the groundbreaking. "It is very nice to see they are going to do something positive with the land."

"After the land was sold, the schoolboard opened the Hercules Aquatic Center," said Erica Freeman of the Zephyrhills Historical Society.

Many people in Zephyrhills still talk about the community pool which closed approximately in 2010. "The property still had walking trails and a playground until 2018," said Freeman.

The groundbreaking ceremony will signify the commencement of construction for the 12-acre park located adjacent to Zephyrhills High and Woodland Elementary schools.

"The event marks a significant milestone in the development of a communal space that promises to enhance the quality of life for Zephyrhills residents and visitors alike," said Kevin Weiss, public information office.

The ceremony opened with Zephyrhills City Manager, Billy Poe speaking. "I would like to thank the city council and numerous city staff for their speedy progress with this project."



Left: Celia Dobson Paul, Mae McKenzie Pickett and Betty Dobson lived at the Hercules Powder Company Camp when they were very young. They shared stories of the community.

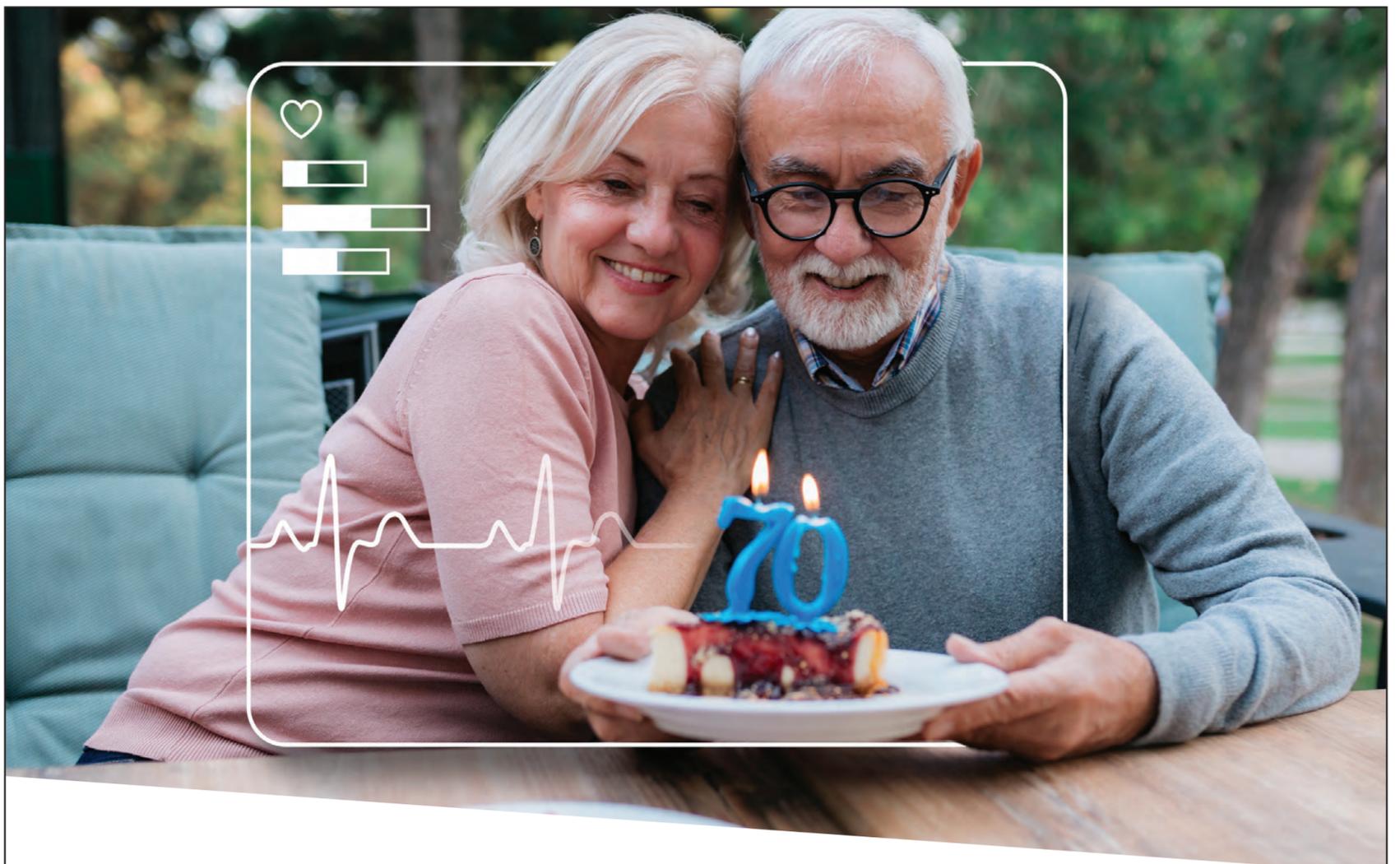
The park is designed to be a hub for community engagement, recreations, and natural beauty. It will feature walking and bicycle trails, a nature-based playground, a sheltered picnic area, an open playfield, splashpad and restrooms.

Zephyrhills Mayor Melonie Bahr Monson spoke next. "I feel the rich history that served the community well. This park was truly a community park with citizen input. I helped design it when I was a citizen. I started my input then."

Commissioner Ron Oakley went on to say how grateful and proud he was of this project and the City of Zephyrhills. "There is lots of history in this park. Since the last census, Zephyrhills is the largest city in Pasco County. I am grateful for the people coming to the city," said

Oakley. "We are also going to have a large bakery nearby creating 600 more jobs in the city."

The event consisted of a board that all attendees could sign. It will be kept on the premises for the duration of the construction of the park. The park is slated to open in December of 2024, marking the City of Zephyrhills first newly built park in over forty years. Wharton Smith gave away back packs with goodies inside. And there was a ceremonial shovel groundbreaking with the City of Zephyrhills Council, Department of Public Works and employees of the Wharton Smith Company Construction Group. Attendees were able to stay and learn more about the park's design and vision. For more information you can follow the City of Zephyrhills on Facebook and their website.



Primary care for all of your vital signs

Our primary care providers know there's more to your health than numbers on a medical chart. That's why we personalize your care in a way that's centered around your life — so you can enjoy all the vital moments of your life.

Online Scheduling. Same-day appointments. Extended Hours.
Virtual Visits. Over 25 local primary care locations.

Find a physician
📞 813-544-4761 🌐 AHMG Tampa Bay.com

Advent Health
Medical Group



Ongoing projects benefit city

Below: A map details plans for the new building and extension at the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport.



Above: People flocked to the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis Center for its third-year anniversary this fall.



Hercules Park finally moves forward with sidewalk improvements, wastewater and airport expansion in the works

By STEVE LEE
Dec. 28, 2023

City officials are quite busy these days, with some coming to fruition soon while others are just getting under way.

As the year wound down, city manager Billy Poe mentioned a few of those specific plans and designs. So did Shane LeBlanc, the city's public works director, who is monitoring two ongoing efforts in Hercules Park and a sidewalk project.

Hercules is a major endeavor that has been years in the making with the property going from the city to the Pasco School District and back to being owned by the city once more. A groundbreaking took place in early December.

"It's been a long time coming and it's going to be a jewel in our park system," LeBlanc said.

Poe shared that sentiment, saying, "I think it's been a long time coming. There have been a lot of possibilities for (the property). I'm lucky

to be in this seat when the project is pushed forward."

Poe and his family grew up in Zephyrhills and recalls spending some time there.

"I remember the park being there," adding he did not swim at that pool, which served the public as well as provided a home base for the Zephyrhills High boys and girls swimming teams. "I was a little bit older then."

The park, which encompasses nearly 13 acres and once had a city pool that has since been demolished and filled over, is a \$7.4 million project. A groundbreaking took place in early January and the perimeter has been marked for construction to begin with plans to open in January of 2025.

Upon completion the park will entail a state of the art splash pad, shelters, rest rooms, a fitness trail, parking and other park amenities.

As for the \$1.9 million sidewalk project, improvements and additions are being made primarily around four local schools — Zephyrhills High and Stewart Middle, along with Woodland Elementary and West Zephyrhills Elementary.

"It's for safer routes to schools for the kids," said LeBlanc, noting that the project has been ongoing since the summer of 2023 and is about a year out from completion.

Aside from the Hercules and sidewalk plans other projects are in the works in the fast-growing city and surrounding areas of east Pasco County.

Expansion of a section of the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport, upgrades on the city's

Subject Property

- 72.52 Acres (mol)
- Chancey Road and 6th Avenue
- Adjacent to the Zephyrhills Municipal Airport (current city limits)
- County Future Land Use of IL and Zoning of AC

Page 61 of 141

wastewater system and a redesign of the city's yard for public works utilities out by the airport are also under way.

"When pilots land they'll have a new building to go to," Poe said, adding that pavement will be added to the area for small planes.

As for the wastewater plans, which amount to nearly \$6 million, Poe described it as "the non-sexy project. No one sees it but it needs (upgrades and improvements)."

Down the line will be a redesign of Zephyr Park with that project beginning sometime in late 2024 or early 2025, Poe said.

One project that recently celebrated its third

anniversary is the Sarah Vande Berg Tennis Center. In November, that facility hosted the pickleball portion of the Florida Senior Games for the second straight year. Tournaments and clinics for other sports like tennis and padel also take place at the center, named after the late Zephyrhills High standout tennis player.

"They're doing what they said it was designed to do," Poe said of founders and workers at the tennis center off Simons Road, adjacent to the Silverado Golf and Country Club. "They're bringing people in and that's bringing additional dollars into the community."

PASSIONATELY PURSUING

JUSTICE FOR THE INJURED

Choose The Right Team To Fight For Your Rights.

CIVIL TRIAL PRACTICE • FREE CONSULTATION

Every victim deserves justice. For us, it's just that simple. That's why our firm has spent over 35 years assisting clients in all types of cases. We'll stand by you every step of the way, fighting for the compensation you deserve.

- CAR & MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENTS
- TRUCK ACCIDENTS
- BOAT INJURIES
- JET SKI ACCIDENTS
- TRIP AND FALL INJURIES
- SERIOUS INJURIES
- WRONGFUL DEATH

HUDGINS

— LAW FIRM —

TREATING CLIENTS LIKE FAMILY SINCE 1985

Kenneth A. Minio, Esq. and Drew Ben Hudgins, Esq.

38453 5th Ave., Downtown Zephyrhills • 800-950-5534 • HudginsLawFirm.net

GOOD FOOD, GOOD SPORTS™

Every Neighborhood Should Have One!

DINE-IN • TAKE OUT • CATERING

Big Screen TVs • Party Room

Full Liquor Bars • Free Wifi • Kids Zone

we've been waiting for you!

CHOOSE FROM A DIVERSE SELECTION FROM OUR BEER GARDEN

Wednesday Dang Yo Trivia from 7-9pm

Thursday Karaoke 8pm-midnight
\$5.00 Drink Specials all night!
Ladies Night 50% OFF select Drafts & House Wine

Saturday Live Music 7:30-11:30pm

Whiskey Bar • Wine/Spirits • Premium Cigars

Downtown Dade City
17136 7th Street
352-567-4136

Zephyrhills
7833 Gall Blvd.
813-780-7717

Sun - Thurs 11am-10pm
Wed - Sat 11am-11pm

37916 Pasco Ave.
Downtown Dade City
352-437-4887

Wed.-Thurs. 2pm - 1am
Saturday 12pm - 1am
Sunday 12pm - 11pm

@dadecitytaphousespirits

