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AUGUST 2026

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The midterms are coming soon. This coming November there will be national elections for Congress, for Florida Assembly and Senate, for judges, and local city officials.

August is Primary season. This is when each political party chooses one candidate to go on the November ballot.

Voting is a privilege. People in the past have died trying to be able to vote. It is something we need to take very seriously because we are electing leaders who determine our present and future circumstances. Politicians hold tremendous influence and power over us. I will never forget how important it was for me to vote in my first presidential election. At the time you had to be twenty-one to vote, and I made sure that I voted.

There are two things that bother me at this time of year. I don't understand why some people don't take the time to go and vote. It is not a priority for them, and they might feel that it doesn't make any difference who gets elected. It does make a difference. Secondly, some people don't research the candidates. If they did, we could avoid some big mistakes. We can't just be fooled by clever ads on social media or recommendations in the local newspaper. All these sources have agendas, and it might not be ours. Locally try to hear the candidate speak in person or go to their website and read about where they went to school and what experience they have for the position. Read between the lines of those fancy ads that are begging for your vote. Try to find the truth in all the negative statements about their opponents. You just want to hear what they hope to achieve by being elected to serve us in the office they are seeking.

Every two years it has been a tradition for the Tuscawilla HOA to sponsor a "Meet the Candidates Night". This year's event will be Thursday, September 17, at 7 pm at the Tuscawilla Country Club. You will have a chance to meet and hear the candidates who are running for two commission seats and for mayor. The incumbents and their challengers

will be invited to participate. The event will be recorded, and it will be available on our website.

We are now entering into this election season and all that energy that goes with it, both good and bad. Don't let your emotions be your guide. Rather look carefully at each candidate and try to assess their personality, their qualifications, and their sincerity. These people will be making important decisions as we hope to keep Winter Springs a wonderful place to live.

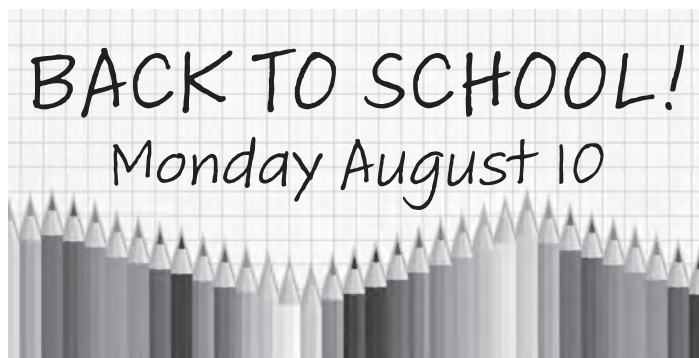
Regards,

**Dr. Kurt Miericke**

THOA President

Publisher, *Tuscawilla Today*

Email: THOAws20@gmail.com



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Do you or someone you know in Tuscawilla have a special hobby, unique profession or insightful travel experience that would be interesting for our readers? Has your community completed notable improvements or planned an important event? Let me know and we will be glad to include these news items in a future issue of Tuscawilla Today. Thank you, Kathy McCann. I can be contacted at: EditorKathyMcCann@gmail.com.

# SEMINOLE COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## STUDENT CALENDAR 2026-2027

Board Approved 5/13/2025

### Definition of Descriptions:

- **Schools Closed** – Teachers and students not in attendance; Educational Support Center open for business
- **Schools Closed for Students** – Students not in attendance; Teachers are working & Educational Support Center is open for business
- **School System Closed** – Teachers, students, and employees at Educational Support Center not in attendance

|            |                                                                               |                |                                                                               |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aug. 4-7   | Teacher Workdays                                                              | Jan. 6         | Classes Resume for Students/Start of 3rd Quarter/2nd Semester                 |
| Aug. 10    | First Day of Student Attendance – Start of 1st Quarter/1st Semester           | Jan. 18        | School System Closed                                                          |
| Sept. 7    | School System Closed                                                          | Feb. 15        | School System Closed                                                          |
| Oct. 9     | End of 1st Quarter                                                            | March 12       | End of 3rd Quarter                                                            |
| Oct. 12    | Schools Closed for Students/Teacher Workday/Student Make-up Day #3, if needed | March 15-19    | Schools Closed/Spring Break                                                   |
| Oct. 13    | Start of 2nd Quarter                                                          | March 22       | Schools Closed for Students/Teacher Workday/Student Make-up Day #4, if needed |
| Nov. 23-27 | Schools Closed                                                                | March 23       | Classes Resume - Start of 4th Quarter                                         |
| Nov. 26-27 | School System Closed                                                          | May 21, 24, 25 | Early Dismissal for Students                                                  |
| Dec. 16-18 | Early Dismissal for Students                                                  | May 25         | Last Day of Student Attendance/ End of 4th Quarter/2nd Semester               |
| Dec. 18    | End of 2nd Quarter/1st Semester                                               | May 26         | Teacher Workday-Post Planning/Student Make-up Day #5, if needed               |
| Dec. 21-31 | Schools Closed/Winter Break                                                   | May 27         | Teacher Workday-Post Planning                                                 |
| Jan. 1     | School System Closed                                                          |                |                                                                               |
| Jan. 4     | Schools Closed for Students/Teacher Workday/Student Make-up Day #2, if needed |                |                                                                               |
| Jan. 5     | Schools Closed for Students/Teacher Workday/Student Make-up Day #1, if needed |                |                                                                               |

## LOCK IT, TAKE THE KEYS AND PROTECT YOUR CAR

Winter Springs remains one of the safest communities in Central Florida, but even a safe city is not immune from vehicle theft and auto burglary. The encouraging news is that a few simple habits can dramatically reduce the opportunity for these crimes.

Recent local information, although not yet independently confirmed for the latest reporting period, indicates that vehicles stolen in Winter Springs had been left with the keys inside. Auto burglary also appears to be uncommon when a vehicle is properly locked. The message is simple: Most of these crimes are preventable.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration warns that vehicle theft is a dangerous and costly crime, but drivers can take practical steps to reduce their risk. Those precautions begin every time you park.

Close every window, lock every door and take your keys with you. Never leave a vehicle running while you step inside your home, a store or a restaurant, even if you expect to be gone for only a moment. Modern key fobs should not be left in cupholders, consoles or bags inside the vehicle.

Remove purses, wallets, firearms, electronics, shopping bags and other valuables. If an item must remain in the vehicle,

place it out of sight before reaching your destination. A visible bag may attract attention even when it contains nothing valuable.

Whenever possible, park in a well-lit and visible area. At home, use your garage if one is available and make sure the garage door is closed. Exterior lighting and properly positioned security cameras can provide additional protection, but they should support rather than replace the basic habit of locking your car.

Residents can also help the Winter Springs Police Department by remaining alert. Report suspicious behavior, including someone walking from vehicle to vehicle, pulling door handles or looking into parked cars. Do not confront the person. Contact police and provide a description, location and direction of travel. Call 911 if a crime is occurring or someone is in immediate danger.

Before going to bed, consider making the “9 p.m. routine” part of your evening: remove valuables, take your keys, lock your vehicle and close the garage door.

A locked car with the keys safely inside your home is a far less inviting target. Taking a few seconds to check your doors tonight could prevent a far more stressful morning tomorrow.

# EDITOR'S NOTES



This issue touches on several subjects that may seem very different: wastewater treatment, youth soccer, the City Charter, public safety, the return of school and the people working inside City Hall.

Yet each story has something in common. Each one, in its own way, is about the community our families call home.

## AN INVESTMENT BENEATH THE SURFACE

Most of us rarely think about wastewater infrastructure until something goes wrong. We turn on a faucet, water our lawns and expect the systems beneath our streets to work safely and reliably.

The construction of new wastewater treatment plants will bring some activity and occasional inconvenience to Tuscahill, but the long term result should be a stronger system, cleaner reclaimed water and greater protection for Howell Creek, Lake Jesup and the environment surrounding our neighborhoods.

It is a major undertaking and an investment in the community we will leave to future families.

## SOMETHING OUR YOUNG PEOPLE CAN BE PROUD OF

The story of the FKK boys soccer team is about much more than wins, losses or a trip to Colorado.

Many of these young players are our neighbors. They attend local schools, practice on familiar fields and are supported by parents making the same sacrifices made by youth sports families everywhere.

Their success reminds us that remarkable things often begin close to home and shows younger children what can happen when teammates work together and believe in one another.

## DECISIONS THAT OUTLAST THOSE WHO MAKE THEM

A City Charter may not sound exciting, but it establishes the rules under which important community decisions are made.

Those rules can influence how public land and conservation commitments are protected and how our community responds to future development pressures. Those choices can affect neighborhood character, traffic, the environment and the expectations families relied upon when making Winter Springs their home.

The Charter Review process asks residents to think beyond any one election and consider what protections should remain for future generations.

## SUPPORTING THE OFFICERS WHO SUPPORT US

Winter Springs has long benefited from a close relationship between residents and our Police Department. The new Winter Springs Police Foundation offers another way to strengthen that relationship.

For our families, public safety is personal. It is the confidence we feel when children walk to school, when we leave home for an evening or when an officer responds during a frightening moment.

The Foundation gives residents and businesses a way to support the officers who serve our community, including when an officer or family member faces an unexpected hardship.

## BACKPACKS, BUSES AND FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

The return of school changes the rhythm of Tuscahill almost overnight. Mornings become busier, school zones return and families again balance classes, activities and homework.

It is a good time to slow down, remain especially attentive near schools and bus stops, and give families a little extra patience as everyone settles into a new routine.

We have also included football schedules for Winter Springs and Oviedo high schools. Friday night football brings together students, families, bands, cheerleaders, teachers and neighbors. Attending a game is an enjoyable way to support our local schools.

## GETTING TO KNOW THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE WORK

Residents often hear the names of elected officials but may know far less about the professionals responsible for the City's daily operations.

Our new feature, "Meet the People Who Keep Winter Springs Running," will introduce members of the senior management team and explain the departments they lead.

These professionals oversee services touching our families every day, from public safety and parks to roads, utilities and financial management. We hope the feature

Continued on page 6

### FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*"People do not seem to realize that their opinion of the world is also a confession of their character."*

*— Often attributed to Ralph Waldo Emerson*

# SUPPORTING THOSE WHO PROTECT WINTER SPRINGS



My name is Dan Grieb. I am a former Winter Springs police officer and currently have the honor of serving as President of the Winter Springs Police Foundation.

Having served this community from both sides of the badge, I have seen firsthand how the role of law enforcement has changed. Today's officers are expected to be protectors, problem-solvers, counselors, community partners, and leaders—often during the most challenging moments in someone's life. The demands of the profession continue to grow, making it more important than ever that our officers know their community supports them.

The Winter Springs Police Foundation is focused on three primary areas.

First, we support officers and their families during times of unexpected hardship or personal need. Our officers are there for us when we call, and we want to ensure someone is there for them when they need help.

Second, we help provide specialized training, technology, and equipment that may not fit within the city's traditional operating budget. These investments help ensure our officers remain prepared, properly equipped, and able to serve our residents at the highest possible level.

Third, we work to help the Winter Springs Police Department recruit and retain outstanding officers. Winter Springs deserves the very best people protecting our neighborhoods, schools, businesses, and families. By investing in our officers and showing them how much they are valued, we can help keep exceptional law enforcement professionals right here in our community.

None of this would be possible without the city, the police department, local businesses, and our residents coming together collaboratively.

Winter Springs is one of the best cities to live in throughout Florida. We enjoy incredible parks, recreational and fitness opportunities, strong neighborhoods, and meaningful relationships between residents and local law enforcement. The Foundation is another way for us to build upon what already makes Winter Springs special.

This is truly a partnership between the police department and the community. By supporting our officers, we strengthen the entire community.

The Foundation is committed to being active and visible throughout Winter Springs. You will see us at city events, community gatherings, and upcoming fundraisers, including our Battle of the Paddle pickleball tournament. There will be many opportunities for residents, businesses, and community partners to volunteer, participate, sponsor events, and support our mission.

We also welcome opportunities to speak with neighborhood associations, homeowners association boards, local businesses, and civic organizations. If your organization would like to invite us to an upcoming meeting, we would be happy to share more about the Foundation, answer questions, and discuss ways we can work together.

To learn more, become involved, or explore sponsorship opportunities, please visit [winterspringspolicefoundation.org](http://winterspringspolicefoundation.org). You may also contact me directly at [info@winterspringspolicefoundation.org](mailto:info@winterspringspolicefoundation.org) or call 407-923-1122.

Together, we can support the officers who protect Winter Springs and continue making our city an even safer, stronger, and more connected place to call home.

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## EDITOR'S NOTES — CONTINUED FROM PG 5

makes City Hall feel less distant and helps residents know the people serving their community.

### CELEBRATING CLOSE TO HOME

The Fourth of July fireworks were tremendous fun and a wonderful reminder of how much we enjoy coming together. Seeing families, friends and neighbors gathered in celebration is one of the things that makes Winter Springs feel like home.

We are also pleased by the enthusiastic response to the Farmers Market at our own Trotwood Park. It has quickly become a welcoming place to shop, visit with neighbors and enjoy time outdoors close to home.

Sometimes the greatest value of community events is simply giving us another reason to slow down, say hello and spend time together.

We hope to see you at the Farmers Market!

**Katherine McCann**

Editor, *Tusawilla Today*

[editorkathymccann@gmail.com](mailto:editorkathymccann@gmail.com)

# YARD *of the month*

We were awestruck by the beautiful gardens at 694 Vistawilla Drive, home of Betsy and Trevor Huth. Tuscawilla residents since 1996, the Huths personally handle all their gardening, trimming, and lawn care.

When they are not working in the yard, Betsy and Trevor enjoy spending time on the nearby bike trail. They also appreciate the foresight of the Tuscawilla Beautification Committee and its lasting contribution to our community.



Pictured from left: Laura Leigh Wood, Betsy and Trevor Huth, and THOA President Kurt Miericke.



**THE TUSCAWILLA HOME OWNERS ASSOCIATION  
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THOA members and Winter Springs Residents to:

**MEET THE CANDIDATES NIGHT**

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## CELEBRATION OF FREEDOM SHINES THROUGH THE RAIN

For many years, the City of Winter Springs' annual Celebration of Freedom has brought neighbors together to enjoy an evening of patriotic fun, live entertainment and fireworks. This year, Mother Nature once again added a little suspense to the celebration.

Afternoon storms moved across the area on July 4, bringing heavy rain and delaying the scheduled opening of the event. Organizers and attendees watched the skies and waited patiently for conditions to improve. Fortunately, the weather began to clear, allowing the gates to open shortly before 8 p.m.

The late start did little to discourage the crowd. Families, friends and neighbors quickly made their way into the event grounds, many carrying lawn chairs, blankets and plenty of patriotic spirit. Red, white and blue could be seen everywhere as residents settled in for an abbreviated but memorable evening.

Once the celebration was underway, guests enjoyed a variety of food, games and live music. Children played, families visited with neighbors and the community made the most of every moment. After the afternoon rain, the cooler evening air provided a welcome setting for the festivities.

The clearing skies seemed especially fitting as Winter Springs joined communities across the nation in celebrating the 250th anniversary of American independence. Two and a half centuries after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, residents gathered to honor the freedoms, traditions and shared sense of community that continue to unite us.

The evening concluded with a wonderful fireworks display that filled the sky with brilliant color. Bursts of red, white, blue, gold and silver brought cheers from the crowd and created a memorable finale worthy of this historic Independence Day.

Although the rain may have changed the schedule, it could not dampen the spirit of Winter Springs. The patience and enthusiasm shown by those who attended helped turn an uncertain afternoon into a joyful community celebration.

The 2026 Celebration of Freedom was another reminder that even when the skies are cloudy, the spirit of our community continues to shine brightly. Thank you to the city employees, public safety personnel, performers, vendors and volunteers whose efforts helped make this special evening possible.

# TURNING A PAGE



After years of planning, engineering, difficult decisions and determined work, construction is beginning on Winter Springs' new East Wastewater Reclamation Facility.

The new plant will be constructed beside the existing facility at 1560 Winter Springs Boulevard, adjacent to Sam Smith Memorial Park. It is the first of two new wastewater plants planned for Winter Springs and represents one of the largest and most important infrastructure investments in the city's history.

Bringing a project of this size from planning to construction required years of engineering, financial preparation and cooperation. Through that work, the city secured tens of millions of dollars in grants, loan forgiveness and zero interest financing. Winter Springs is also using available cash reserves and very low interest loans to reduce borrowing costs and lessen the financial burden on residents. This careful combination of funding sources allowed the city to move forward with a modern facility designed to serve our community for generations.

**Today, the plans are complete, the funding is in place and construction is moving forward.**

Construction of the new East Plant is expected to take approximately 18 to 24 months. Throughout that

period, the existing plant must remain in operation and continue serving residents while the new facility is built beside it. Once the new plant has been completed, thoroughly tested and placed into service, the old facilities will be removed.

A project of this size will inevitably bring some growing pains to the Tuscawilla Country Club community. Residents should expect an increase in heavy truck traffic along Winter Springs Boulevard as construction materials and equipment are delivered to and removed from the site.

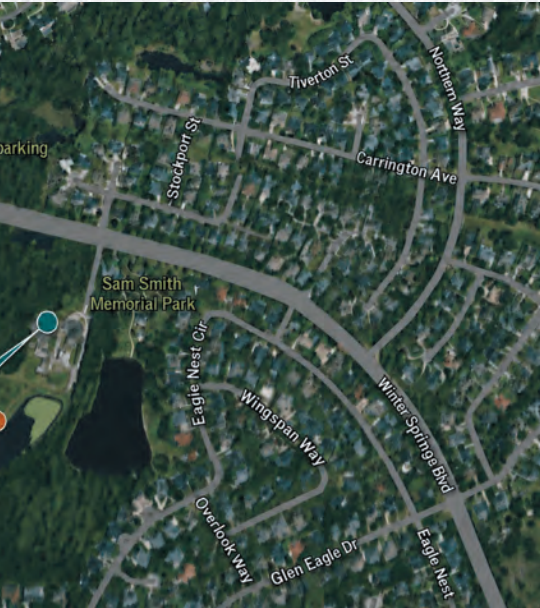
Winter Springs Boulevard will be the only road construction trucks are permitted to use to reach the plant.

The trucks will primarily travel to and from the Oviedo end of Winter Springs Boulevard, helping limit their movement through the western portion of Tuscawilla and surrounding neighborhood streets.

There may still be days when the additional traffic is noticeable, particularly for residents living near the plant and Sam Smith Memorial Park. The city and its contractors will work to manage construction activity as carefully as possible, but patience will be appreciated as this historic project moves forward.

**The temporary inconvenience will lead to substantial long term benefits.**

# FOR WINTER SPRINGS



The new plant will use modern equipment and treatment processes designed to operate more efficiently and less expensively than the aging facility it replaces. It should significantly reduce odors and provide a safer, quieter and more dependable wastewater system for our community.

Residents should also benefit from a more reliable supply of clean, safe reclaimed water for lawns, neighborhoods and public parks. Every gallon of reclaimed water used for irrigation is a gallon of drinking quality groundwater that does not have to be pumped from Florida's aquifer. In a growing state, where protecting our water supply becomes more important every year, that is a meaningful environmental benefit.

The new facility will also reduce the risk of wastewater problems and help protect the natural environment surrounding Tuscawilla. That includes nearby Howell Creek, where many residents live along or near its banks. Howell Creek is an important part of the local watershed and ultimately connects our community to Lake Jesup and the larger St. Johns River system.

Winter Springs cannot solve every environmental challenge facing these waterways, but we can accept responsibility for the part that belongs to us. Improving

wastewater treatment, reducing the possibility of spills and producing safe reclaimed water are meaningful steps toward protecting Howell Creek, Lake Jesup and the environment we all share.

It is important to remember that the plant is only one part of a much larger system. That system includes miles of pipes beneath our streets, lift stations that keep wastewater moving, the treatment process itself and the delivery of reclaimed water back into our community.

Most of this infrastructure operates quietly and out of sight. When it works properly, few people ever have reason to think about it. Yet it is essential to the health, safety and future of Winter Springs.

The months ahead will bring construction equipment, truck traffic and some understandable inconvenience. In the end, however,

Tuscawilla will have a cleaner, quieter, more efficient and more dependable facility serving our community for generations.

**We are not simply building a new plant. We are turning a page and investing in a safer, healthier and more sustainable future for Winter Springs.**

---

“The temporary inconvenience will lead to substantial long term benefits.”

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# MEET THE PEOPLE WHO KEEP WINTER SPRINGS RUNNING

## *Holly Queen, Finance Director*

Many of us are familiar with the services provided by the City of Winter Springs, but we may know less about the people responsible for delivering those services each day.

Beginning this month, Tuscaawilla Today will introduce readers to members of the City's leadership team. Each article will offer some personal insight into one of these individuals, explain the responsibilities of the department they lead and highlight the employees whose work helps keep our community running.

Our first profile features Holly Queen, Finance Director for the City of Winter Springs.

Most residents may not realize how many essential City services are supported by the Finance Department. Leading that team is Holly Queen.

As Finance Director, Holly is responsible for overseeing the City's accounting, financial reporting and annual budget process. Her department also manages debt, payroll and employee benefits, purchasing, contracts, treasury functions and accounts payable.

The department's responsibilities also extend directly to residents. Finance oversees meter services and utility



business services, including the customer service team that assists residents with utility accounts and billing questions.

According to the City's current budget, Holly leads a department of 17 full time employees, along with part time customer service support. Ten employees work in general finance operations, while seven serve in utility billing and customer service.

Holly previously served the City of Winter Springs as Controller. Before returning to the City in 2024, she worked as Financial Reporting Manager for the City of Orlando.

A Certified Public Accountant, Holly earned a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and a Master of Business Administration from the University of Central Florida.

While much of the Finance Department's work takes place behind the scenes, it touches nearly every service the City provides. From preparing the annual budget and safeguarding public funds to paying the City's bills and helping residents with their utility accounts, Holly and her team play an important role in keeping Winter Springs operating responsibly and efficiently.

## LOOK UP!

### AUGUST BRINGS A METEOR SHOWER

August in Florida usually means hot afternoons, surprise thunderstorms and the annual realization that stepping outside can feel a little like opening the door of an oven. But after the sun goes down, August also brings one of nature's most enjoyable shows: the Perseid meteor shower.

The Perseids are among the most popular meteor showers of the year. They occur when Earth passes through a trail of tiny particles left behind by Comet Swift-Tuttle. When those particles enter our atmosphere at tremendous speed, they burn up and create the bright streaks of light we commonly call shooting stars.

This year's shower will be active through much of August, with the best viewing expected overnight on August 12 and into the early morning hours of August 13. The timing is especially favorable in 2026 because

the peak occurs during a new moon. With little or no moonlight competing with the meteors, the sky should be darker and the show easier to see.

No telescope, binoculars or advanced knowledge of astronomy is required. Just find the darkest safe location you can, get comfortable and look up. Give your eyes about 20 to 30 minutes to adjust to the darkness. The hours after midnight and before dawn generally offer the best opportunity, although patient observers may spot meteors earlier in the evening.

Under perfectly dark rural skies, dozens of meteors may be visible in an hour. Here in Central Florida, neighborhood lights, clouds and our famously unpredictable August weather may reduce that number. Still, it only takes one bright meteor streaking across the sky to make the wait worthwhile.

So grab a lawn chair, bring some bug spray and invite the family outside. The show is free, parking is close and the performers have been rehearsing for thousands of years.

# FROM TUSCAWILLA TO THE NATIONAL STAGE



As the FIFA World Cup captured the attention of soccer fans around the globe this summer, a group of young players from Winter Springs was completing an impressive soccer journey of its own.

The Florida Kraze Krush 2010 National Premier League boys team, coached by Ray Foster, made club history by advancing to an out of state NPL Finals competition. Made up primarily of Winter Springs players, including many from Tuscahill, the team became a source of community pride.

The soccer year began in August and continued through May, with a break while many players competed for their high school teams. Balancing club soccer, schoolwork and family responsibilities required commitment. When the FKK season resumed, the players had to reconnect and quickly regain their rhythm.

Under Coach Foster's leadership, the team steadily improved. Players became more comfortable with one another, learned to trust their teammates and developed a stronger understanding of their roles. By the final weeks, everything began to come together.

The boys finished with an outstanding record of 25 wins, six losses and six draws. More importantly, they were playing their strongest soccer when it mattered most. They won their Florida NPL division and advanced through the postseason, earning the opportunity to represent Florida Kraze Krush at the NPL Finals in Colorado.

The national tournament brought together hundreds of teams from across the United States. FKK faced teams from Texas, Missouri and Illinois, gaining experience against strong youth soccer programs.

Although the boys did not advance beyond group play, they competed closely, including a three goal draw in their opening match and a narrow one goal loss in their final appearance. One opponent went on to win the national championship, demonstrating the high level of competition the local team faced.

The trip coincided with the closing rounds of the FIFA World Cup. Between activities, the boys watched matches together. For athletes competing in their own national tournament, sharing the excitement added another memorable dimension.

They discussed teams, players and pivotal moments while watching the game at its highest level. More importantly, they



enjoyed the matches as teammates. It was a fitting backdrop for a group that had spent the season learning many of the same lessons seen on the World Cup stage: preparation, trust, resilience and playing for one another.

The team selected two co captains, Colton B. and Dominic H. Colton attends Winter Springs High School, while Dominic attends Hagerty High School. Their leadership reflected the character of a team whose success was built not around one or two individuals, but around the collective effort of every player.

Each player contributed by scoring, defending, creating opportunities, supporting teammates or maintaining a positive attitude. The historic season was a complete team effort.

The team's success also required parents and families who transported players to practices, attended games and helped make the Colorado trip possible. Travel expenses were covered through support from participating families, the Florida Kraze Krush organization and donations from private businesses. Pointe Grand Communities was among the companies whose contributions helped the players take advantage of an opportunity they had worked all season to earn.

That support reflected something special about the journey. Although the players wore the Florida Kraze Krush uniform, they also represented Winter Springs, Tuscahill and the schools and neighborhoods that helped shape them.

The season ended in Colorado, but the team's story is not finished. Most players plan to remain together and return as a U 17 team, building on the experience, confidence and friendships developed during their historic run.

For young soccer players watching the World Cup, the world's biggest tournament can sometimes feel impossibly far away. Yet Coach Foster's team is a reminder that every soccer dream begins in a local park, on a neighborhood practice field and among teammates willing to work together.

The stadiums may be smaller and the crowds quieter, but the lessons are much the same: trust your teammates, represent your community with pride and keep working until the final whistle.

For the Florida Kraze Krush 2010 NPL boys, those lessons produced a championship season, a historic trip and memories that will remain long after the final game.





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# REVIEWING THE RULES THAT GUIDE WINTER SPRINGS

## *The Charter Review Committee*

The City Charter serves much like a constitution for Winter Springs. It establishes the structure of City government, the responsibilities of elected officials and the basic rules under which the City operates.

Our community was incorporated as the Village of North Orlando in 1959. Residents approved a new charter in 1972, when North Orlando became the City of Winter Springs. A comprehensive update was approved by voters in 2001.

Earlier this year, the City Commission established a seven-member Charter Review Committee made up entirely of volunteer residents. Each commissioner appointed one district resident, and the mayor appointed two residents at large.

The committee held its first official meeting on June 18. Its job is to review the Charter, ensure it remains consistent with state and federal laws and recommend possible amendments ahead of the 2028 election.

Much of the discussion has focused on the role of the mayor. Under the current Charter, the mayor presides over Commission meetings but generally votes only to break a tie. The mayor also holds other important responsibilities, including the authority to veto ordinances.

Some residents have questioned whether the mayor should vote on every matter. That is a reasonable subject for the committee to examine. Although unusual in Seminole County, information presented during the review indicates that approximately 85 Florida municipalities have mayors who do not ordinarily vote.

The discussion follows an unsuccessful attempt by the Florida Legislature to restructure the Winter Springs government from Tallahassee. The legislation would have made the mayor a regular voting member, reduced the number of commissioners from five to four and potentially expanded the authority of the office.

One provision would have allowed additional mayoral powers to be established by City ordinance. The mayor and two commissioners could have formed the majority needed to approve such an ordinance. This raised questions about how significantly the position might change beyond gaining a regular vote.

The original proposal circulated in Tallahassee did not require approval by Winter Springs voters. If enacted, it would have directly changed the City Charter through a special act of the Legislature, a historic departure that raised serious concerns about local control. Following public pushback, a referendum requirement was added. The revised bill ultimately died in a Florida House subcommittee in March.

The Charter Review Committee provides a more appropriate local forum. Its volunteers can study the system, listen to residents and decide whether changes should be recommended. If an amendment is recommended and the City Commission places it on the ballot, the final decision would rest with Winter Springs voters.

The current Mayor has also asked the committee to consider stronger protections for environmentally sensitive property. The proposal would require a supermajority before the City could sell or transfer land held for conservation or weaken a City-held conservation easement.

Similar protections have been requested before the City could annex property within the Seminole County Rural Boundary or extend City water or sewer service into the protected area. Providing utilities can open the door to more intensive development and can have much the same practical effect as annexation.

The committee's recommendations are advisory. Any proposed Charter amendment must be considered by the City Commission and approved by Winter Springs voters before taking effect.

At the committee's request, the August 20 meeting will focus on the powers and responsibilities of the mayor. Residents are encouraged to submit their views in writing or speak during Public Input. Each speaker will have up to three minutes to address the committee.

The August 20 meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. at Winter Springs City Hall. An additional meeting is scheduled for September 17 at the same time and location. The City Charter and answers to frequently asked questions are available on the City's website.



## 9/11 MEMORIAL CEREMONY

*Friday, September 11, 2026 from 8:30 – 9:00 am at the Winter Springs Police Department*

The City of Winter Springs invites you to join the Mayor, City Commission, and city staff for a 9/11 Memorial Ceremony honoring the 25-year remembrance of the events of September 11, 2001. This brief ceremony provides an opportunity for reflection, remembrance, and unity as we honor the lives lost and recognize the resilience of our nation, first responders, and families affected by the events of that day.

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# News At A Glance

## TUSCAWILLA WOMEN'S CLUB

The Tuscawilla Women's Club celebrated Independence Day in July with great food, entertaining games and plenty of patriotic spirit. Members arrived dressed in their best red, white and blue for the festive occasion.

The club's next meeting will be held Thursday, September 10, at 1 p.m. inside the Wedgewood Tennis Villas Clubhouse. The meeting will welcome the fall season and the beginning of a new club year. Everyone is invited, and members are encouraged to bring a friend.

The club's monthly Book Club and Lunch Bunch also continue to meet regularly. For more information, contact Anne Combs at (407) 761-5779.

## FAIRY NIGHT AT LEU GARDENS

Families are invited to step into an enchanted world during Fairy Night at Harry P. Leu Gardens on Friday, August 21, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Guests can search for hidden fairy doors, meet costumed fairies, create whimsical art and plant a fairy garden. Children and adults are encouraged to wear fairy-inspired attire. Food and refreshments will be available for purchase. *For more information: leugardens.org/Events/Calendar-of-Events/Fairy-Night-at-Leu-Gardens-1988196051912*

## SCIENCE CENTER OPENS AFTER HOURS FOR ADULTS

The Orlando Science Center will host Science Night Live on Saturday, August 22, from 8 to 11:30 p.m. The adults-only event allows guests to explore four floors of exhibits, participate in hands-on experiments, attend special demonstrations, view works by local artists and enjoy telescope tours of the night sky. Guests must be at least 18 and present identification. General admission is \$25, while Science Center members pay \$5. *For more information: osc.org/visit/events/science-night-live*

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

|          |                                                                                                 |
|----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Aug. 10  | City Commission meeting - City Hall - 6:30pm                                                    |
| Aug. 13  | Board of Trustees - City Hall - 5:30pm<br>THOA Board meeting - Wedgewood Tennis Villas - 7:00pm |
| Aug. 16  | Farmer's Market - Trotwood Park - 9:00am - 2:00pm                                               |
| Aug. 19  | Lighting and Beautification committee meeting - City Hall - 5:15pm                              |
| Aug. 20  | Charter Review Committee meeting - City Hall - 5:30pm                                           |
| Aug. 24  | City Commission meeting - City Hall - 6:30pm                                                    |
| Aug. 25  | Code Enforcement Board meeting - City Hall - 5:30pm                                             |
| Sept. 6  | Farmer's Market - Trotwood Park - 9:00 am - 2:00pm                                              |
| Sept. 11 | Memorial Ceremony for 9/11 - Police Department - 300 N. Moss rd - 8:30                          |

## THE CENTRAL FLORIDA ZOO

### Sunset at the Zoo

The Central Florida Zoo & Botanical Gardens will host Sunset at the Zoo on Friday, August 28, from 5 to 8 p.m. The evening will celebrate Native American and Alaska Native heritage through storytelling, cultural vendors, educational displays, hands-on activities and special animal experiences. Food and refreshments will also be available. Tickets are \$6 per person when purchased online or \$8 on the day of the event. *For more information: centralfloridazoo.org/event/sunset-august*

### New Giraffes Arrive at the Zoo

The Central Florida Zoo has welcomed two four-year-old female giraffes to its Sanford facility. The new arrivals, each approximately 13 feet tall, are settling into the rear portion of the giraffe habitat while Gage, the Zoo's male giraffe, remains in the main area. Zoo officials expect all three giraffes to share the habitat later this fall. Names have not yet been announced. Visitors may continue participating in daily giraffe feedings with Gage from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. *For more information: centralfloridazoo.org/news/central-florida-zoo-welcomes-two-female-giraffes*

## 2026 HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL

Winter Springs Bears & Oviedo Lions • Varsity Schedules

### WINTER SPRINGS BEARS

| DATE             | TIME      | OPPONENT                | NOTES    |
|------------------|-----------|-------------------------|----------|
| Fri., Aug. 21    | 7:00 p.m. | at Lake Howell          |          |
| Fri., Aug. 28    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Hagerty</b>          |          |
| Fri., Sept. 4    | 7:00 p.m. | at Melbourne            |          |
| Thurs., Sept. 10 | 7:00 p.m. | <b>New Smyrna Beach</b> | District |
| Fri., Sept. 18   | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Lyman</b>            |          |
| Fri., Oct. 2     | 7:30 p.m. | at Ridge Community      |          |
| Fri., Oct. 9     | 7:00 p.m. | at Bishop Moore         | District |
| Fri., Oct. 16    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Seabreeze</b>        | District |
| Thurs., Oct. 22  | 7:00 p.m. | at Deltona              | District |

### OVIEDO LIONS

| DATE             | TIME      | OPPONENT             | NOTES     |
|------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------|
| Fri., Aug. 14    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>University</b>    | Preseason |
| Fri., Aug. 21    | 7:00 p.m. | at Titusville        |           |
| Fri., Aug. 28    | 7:00 p.m. | at Lake Mary         |           |
| Fri., Sept. 4    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Lake Brantley</b> |           |
| Thurs., Sept. 10 | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Melbourne</b>     | District  |
| Fri., Sept. 18   | 7:00 p.m. | at Hagerty           |           |
| Fri., Sept. 25   | 7:00 p.m. | at East River        | District  |
| Fri., Oct. 9     | 7:00 p.m. | at Viera             | District  |
| Fri., Oct. 16    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Lyman</b>         | District  |
| Fri., Oct. 23    | 7:00 p.m. | at Lake Howell       | District  |
| Fri., Oct. 30    | 7:00 p.m. | <b>Seminole</b>      |           |

Home games appear in bold; "at" indicates an away game. Schedules are subject to change. Verify dates and times with the schools before attending.

Source: MaxPreps 2026–27 varsity schedules, accessed July 27, 2026.

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## COMMITTEES

### Membership Chairman/Committee

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## LIAISONS

Kurt Miericke with SR 417 issues.

Boards and committees are comprised

of both Board Members and volunteers

from the Community. If you wish to volunteer, please contact Kurt Miericke at 407-359-4077.

## CLUB PRESIDENTS

### Sunshine Garden Club:

Connie Nadrowski ..... 407-310-7316

### Tusawilla Women's Club:

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## ADDITIONS OR UPDATES TO PRIVATE HOAs AND CLUBS

You are responsible for providing updates/additions to your listing by the 15th of the month for the following months issue. E-mail them to [Lisa@cpponline.com](mailto:Lisa@cpponline.com). Please mark in the subject "THOA NL".

**We cannot take changes over the phone.**

"Tusawilla Today" is the official publication of the Tusawilla Homeowners' Association, P.O. Box 195666, Winter Springs, FL 32719-5666. Publisher is the Association President.

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Do to space, we only list Pres, VP, Sec & Treas.

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### ADVERTISING:

For rates and availability contact Lisa Kimbrough-Rodriguez at Creative Printing & Publishing, **407-302-9147** or [Lisa@cpponline.com](mailto:Lisa@cpponline.com). **Deadline for ads and payment** is the **15th of the month** for the following months issue. Ad rates are subject to change without notice.

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