

# ARCADIA THE COMMUNITY

JULY 25, 2024



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## Local

### COUNCIL CONSIDERS

# S.R. 31 ROUTE AND R2P2 DESIGN CONCEPTS



**CAROL MAHLER**  
Independent Contractor  
carolmahler22acl@gmail.com  
Photos provided

The Council asked City Attorney T.J. Wohl to draft a resolution to encourage the Florida Department of Transportation to choose "Route J" that extends State Road 31 north on Canal St. and intersects with Turner Ave. near the south border of the Municipal Golf Course. Local resident David Stevenson offered to develop the 70-80 acres he owns between Turner and Canal St., behind the Winn Dixie shopping center as a "town center" concept to annex into the City. He will ensure "quality economic activities" on his property that in five to ten years will be a \$30-\$40 million tax base that will make "Arcadia all it could be." Bill Hackney supported Stevenson's proposal saying it would build "the economic viability of the City."

Stevenson described the "town center" concept he has planned for the 70-80 acres he owns between Turner Ave. and the proposed "Route J" of the S.R. 31 extension that will make a \$30-40 million tax base for the City.

The Council accepted and approved the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Recovery and Resiliency Partnership Project (R2P2) report and authorized R2P2 staff to share the report at a community event. R2P2 is free technical assistance to a community impacted by a major disaster declaration. Wes Michaels, Director of SMM Landscape Architects in New Orleans, spoke through a virtual connection to present the report's seven design concepts.

To alleviate "nuisance flooding," the "Downtown Green Infrastructure Plan" has permeable parking parallel to the curbs and new street trees for shade.

At the intersection of N. Monroe and N. Polk avenues and W. Whidden St., the "Arcadia Civic

SEE DESIGN PAGE 8 >>



DESOTO COUNTY SPORTS

PAGE 4



GET YOUR PUBLIX WEEKLY ADS INSIDE!

## GOVERNMENT MEETING SCHEDULE

### CITY

CITY COUNCIL MEETINGS OCCUR THE 1ST AND 3RD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH UNLESS OTHERWISE SPECIFIED

Margaret Way Building  
23 N. Polk Ave., Arcadia, FL 34266

<b>AUG 8</b>	<b>DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS</b> DISTRICT-WIDE OPEN HOUSE NIGHT
THUR 5P-7P	All Schools
<b>AUG 12</b>	<b>DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOLS</b> FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL
MON	All Schools
<b>AUG 13</b>	<b>DESOTO COUNTY</b> BUDGET WORKSHOP III
TUE 1P	Administration Building 201 E. Oak Street, Suite 103 Arcadia, FL 34266

Active dates and times are subject to change.  
County: <http://desotobocc.com/calendar>  
City: <https://arcadia-fl.gov/events/>

## Realtor Showcase

See page 11

## DESOTO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE ARREST REPORT

See page 13

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SALES / OFFICE MANAGER: Angie Duckett | CREATIVE DIR / AD DESIGN: Jackie Bierman | OPS / PRODUCT DESIGN: Jonathan Bruch



# HARWOOD TO PRESENT THE “DESOTO COUNTY PUBLIC CAPITAL REPORT”



**CAROL MAHLER**  
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Photos provided

Founder of The Harwood Institute, Rich Harwood will share the main points of the “DeSoto County Public Capital Report” from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Thurs., Aug. 1 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center, 2250 NE Roan St., in Arcadia. Dinner will be served 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., and the keynote presentation will begin at 6:30 p.m. Register online at <https://bit.ly/Rich-Harwood-Keynote>.

In addition, small groups focused on a particular topic will discuss the report and “actionable steps” on July 31 and Aug. 1 at the Turner Center. Register at <https://bit.ly/Report-Roundtable-Signup>. For assistance with registration for the keynote or roundtable events or for more information, call or text Cheri Coryea at 941-713-3899.

Harwood, John Conroy, Michael Prihoda, and Oluwagbemiga Dasylyva wrote “DeSoto County Coming Together: Unleashing the Community’s Potential” based on comments, data, and observations compiled from 24 community conversations, 36 leadership interviews, and 12 introductory roundtables held in our community this year. The report was prepared by The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation in partnership with The Patterson Foundation.

“At The Patterson Foundation . . . we believe in the power of collective action to bring about positive change, and we are dedicated to supporting efforts that strengthen community bonds and uplift common goals,” Debra M. Jacobs, President/CEO, and Cheri R. Coryea, Aspirations to Actions Consultant, wrote. “This mission resonates deeply with the aspirations of DeSoto County”



President and Founder of the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, Rich Harwood has “been recruited to solve some of the most difficult problems of our time, including being called into Newtown, Connecticut, after the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School.” Meet him on his third visit to our community on Aug. 1 at the Turner Agri-Civic Center.

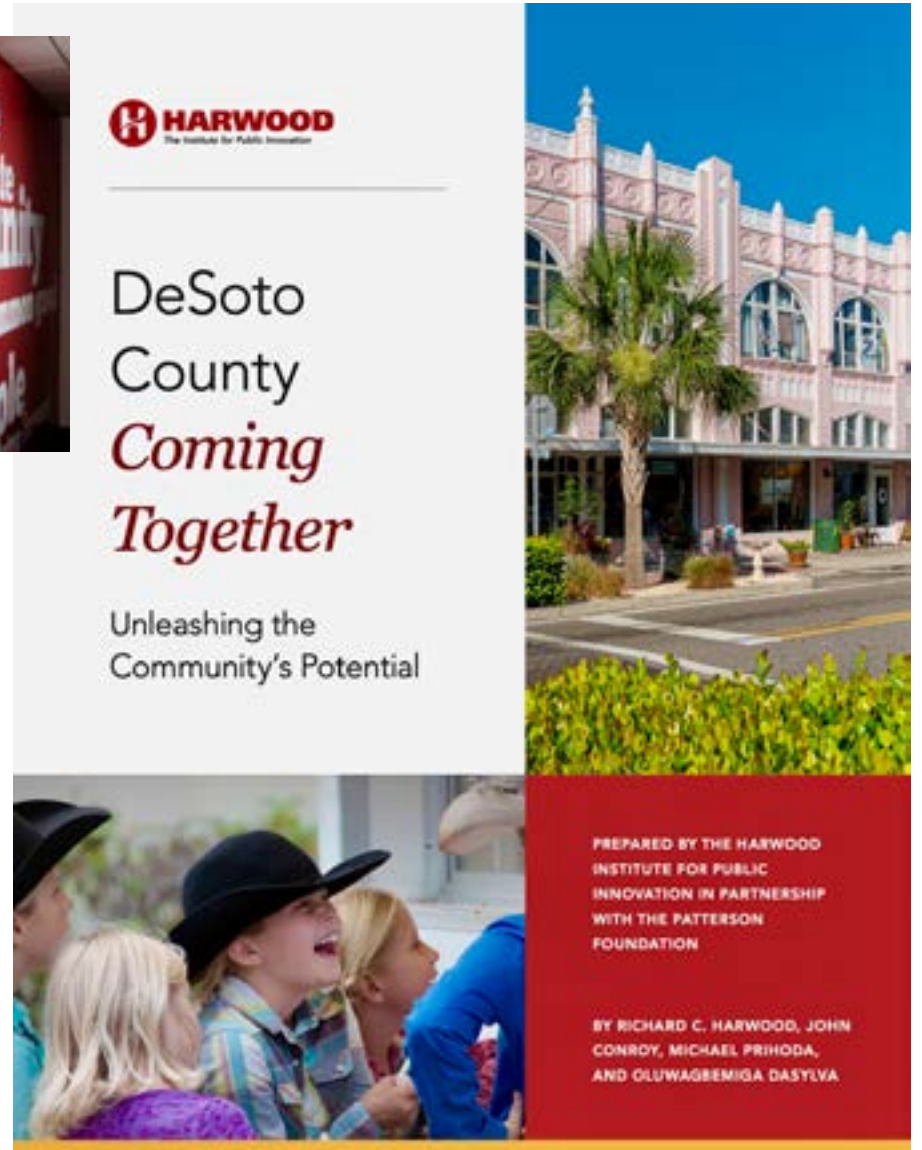
(check out [thepattersonfoundation.org](http://thepattersonfoundation.org)).

The report is only one step of the DeSoto County Ahead Initiative To Catalyze Community-Led Change that will “generate community-led change by taking action on key issues that matter to people; and strengthen DeSoto County’s civic culture so the community can accelerate and deepen progress.” More opportunities and assistance are planned through 2026.

The “DeSoto County Public Capital Report” . . . “doesn’t prescribe specific solutions to meet particular challenges,” Harwood wrote. “Instead, it seeks to illuminate a path forward that enables people across the community to bridge divides, generate shared purpose, and discover ways to move forward together.”

The report has three main sections.

- In the “Our Voices” section (pp. 11-22), people “describe how they see and experience the community alongside their hope and concerns about the future.”
- The “DeSoto County’s Public Capital” element (pp. 24-53) “reflects on what it takes for



The Harwood Institute, in partnership with The Patterson Foundation, will release the report, “DeSoto County Coming Together: Unleashing the Community’s Potential” . . . “to help the community better understand how people across the county see and experience life and how the community can strengthen its civic culture.”

the community to work together effectively.”

- The “Building the Community’s Civic Strength” component (pp. 55-60) “offers key recommendations for [our community] to invest in and develop its civic capacities alongside a frame for how to think about creating sustainable change.”

An innovator, author, and speaker, Richard C. Harwood has “devoted his career to revitalizing the nation’s hardest-hit communities, transforming

the world’s largest organizations, and reconnecting institutions to society.” He has written six books as well as articles and reports, such as “Civic Virus: Why Polarization Is A Misdiagnosis.”

The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation is a “nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that for over 35 years has equipped people, organizations, communities, and networks with the tools to bridge divides, create a culture of shared responsibility, and make community a common enterprise” ([thearwoodinstitute.org](http://thearwoodinstitute.org)).

## BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES TRUE WORSHIPERS

**AMANDA REUTER**

Chaplain, US Army Reserve  
DeSoto Ministerial Association

In Bob Kauflin’s work, True Worshipers (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2015), he discusses the theme of functionality in God’s church. True worshipers are to function like a “well-oiled machine” because they have been doing it for over 2,000 years. Right??? Well, Kauflin notes, “people hear what we sing with our voices, but God hears what we sing with our hearts.” Well-oiled or not, true worshipers are a work-in-progress and Kauflin provides hope in his chapter on perseverance.

Kauflin explains the meaning of encountering God when worshipers truly worship. Whether they are going

through the motions or “faking it until they make” or enveloped in the Holy Spirit, true worshipers will experience God. God is faithful. He will meet with his people. The prophet Jeremiah tells the exiles, “You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). This promise is echoed by Jesus Christ in John’s gospel. He says, “If you continue in my word, you are really my disciples. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). When true worshipers encounter God they are experiencing the fullness of God. Kauflin notes the work of that holiest Spirit when true worshipers rendezvous with God. Kauflin states, “The Holy Spirit’s primary aim is to glorify Jesus

by making us more like him.” True worshipers have a family resemblance to Jesus Christ.

True worshipers have a heavenly family reunion in mind. Kauflin’s chapter on anticipation of eternity brings excitement. I may not come to the same conclusion as Kauflin of what Heaven will be like, but it will be nonetheless exciting. “In heaven we won’t have to hope any more,” Kauflin states. True worshipers will have their hope fully satisfied in heaven. The importance of how true worshipers are to live their lives on this earthly plane is addressed. Everything true worshipers do is reflective of God. Kauflin finishes his book with the chapter on True Worshipers Anticipate. He then gives

example after example of ways in which a true worshiper is to behave and interact with God while on earth. “Our decisions reflect our worship,” Kauflin notes. True worshipers operate in a manner that mirrors their love for God.

Functioning as a true worshiper, as a part of a family to a faithful God, is the essence of Kauflin’s work. He nods back to Calvin’s “great end of our existence” being counted among true worshipers of God. True worshipers honor God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength (Matthew 22:37-40; Luke 10:27). The functioning true worshiper will have her life, work, ministry, and relationships redesigned for God’s glory.



# SFSC DENTAL ASSISTING GRADUATES HONORED AT PINNING CEREMONY



After completing the 11-month Career Certificate program in Dental Assisting, graduates can work as certified dental assistants by passing the Dental Assisting National Board

Examination (DANB) and qualify for the Expanded Functions Dental Assisting Certification as well as Orthodontic Assistant Certification.  
For information about SFSC's

Dental Education programs, contact Danielle Ochoa, Health Sciences advisor, at 863-784-7027 or by email at healthsciences@southflorida.edu.

AVON PARK, Fla. – July 11, 2024 – South Florida State College (SFSC) honored 11 graduates of its Dental Assisting program in a pinning ceremony in the SFSC University Center on the Highlands Campus in Avon Park on Thursday, July 11. Dental Assisting graduates receiving their pins were: Kamesha Brown, Jessica Bruno-Alvarado, Kristal Lyn Deery, Celestina Fajardo, Jennifer Alexandra Lopez, Galilea Moreno Carrola, Graciela Munoz Yates, Marisol Paz, Alana Denae Snell, Briana Stewart, and Ta'Hira Amani Williams.

The graduates earned their Career Certificate in Dental Assisting, received their Expanded Functions Dental Assisting Certification, and their Orthodontic Assistant Certification.



The 11 Dental Assisting Graduates

## DeSoto County Ahead

An initiative of THE PATTERSON FOUNDATION

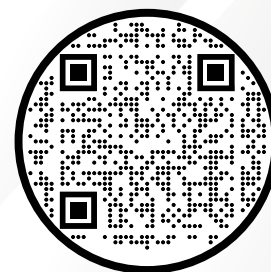
### Rich Harwood to present the DeSoto County Public Capital Report

The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation and its researchers have compiled all comments, data, and observations from the 24 community conversations, 36 leadership interviews, and 12 introductory roundtables held in DeSoto County this year and are ready to share them with the community.

**ALL ARE WELCOME**

**ROUNDTABLE SIGNUP**

<https://bit.ly/Report-Roundtable-Signup>



**RICH HARWOOD KEYNOTE**

<https://bit.ly/Rich-Harwood-Keynote>

**Roundtables**

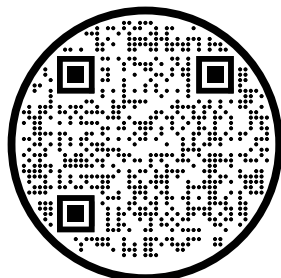
Small groups will discuss the report and actionable steps at the Turner Center.

**July 31**

- 8:45a – 10:00a Healthcare (Turner Center)
- 10:45a – 12:00p Nonprofits (Turner Center)
- 1:00p – 2:15p Business | Economic Development | Rotary (Turner Center)
- 3:00p – 4:15p Community Leaders (Turner Center)
- 5:00p – 6:15p Spanish Speakers (Casa San Juan Bosco)
- 6:00p – 7:15p Educators (Turner Center)

**August 1**

- 10:30a – 11:45a Faith-based (Turner Center)
- 12:45p – 2:00p DeSoto Catalytic Community Guides (Turner Center)
- 2:45p – 4:00p Foundations | Funders (Turner Center)



**August 1**

**Keynote and Dinner | 5:30p – 7:30p**

Rich Harwood, founder of The Harwood Institute, will share the main points of the DeSoto County Public Capital Report.

- Q&A session
- Hard Copy Report Available
- Dinner 5:30p to 6:15p
- Keynote 6:30p

**Questions? Contact Cheri Coryea, at [ccoryea@thepattersonfoundation.org](mailto:ccoryea@thepattersonfoundation.org) or call or text (941) 713-3899**







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• DESOTO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD (PRS)



# DESOTO BASKETBALL CAMP 2024



**DARREL NICKLOW JR.**

*Sports Contributor  
Photos provided*

The DeSoto Basketball Camp was a resounding success, attracting a talented group of athletes. The camp focused on teaching essential basketball fundamentals, covering everything from dribbling to shooting jump shots. It was a valuable experience for the young athletes who participated.

We extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed, including our sponsor, LT. Troy Carrillo, who generously provided the shirts. Coach Nicklow also wishes to thank the community for their unwavering support of his efforts to nurture local talent.





# MISS DESOTO 12U SOFTBALL CHAMPS!



Miss DeSoto Fastpitch 12U Heat Travel Softball Team came home as first place champions on July 1, 2024. They played a great game making DeSoto Proud.

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# COUNCIL SETS TENTATIVE MILLAGE RATE OF 7.9000



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 carolmahler22acl@gmail.com  
 Photos provided

At the July 16 meeting, the Council adopted a tentative millage rate of 7.9000, so they may not raise—but may lower—the rate when they set the final millage rate at 5:01 p.m. on Tues., Sept. 3.

On July 11, Council members—except for Mike Hall—met for a workshop about the proposed 2025 budget of about \$53 million based on that millage rate. They agreed that no other budget workshops were needed.

City Administrator Terry Stewart said that the Council members have been “wise stewards of the public’s money.” He is also proud of the work that the staff has done in the past nine years.

In addition to the following budget breakdown, Council members requested money to replace the dais chairs and carpet in the Margaret Way Building’s council chambers and to build an aircraft wash rack at the municipal airport. Council Member Judy Wertz-Strickland suggested shifting the City Mobile Home Park to spaces for recreational vehicles only.

The proposed 2025 budget has a payroll increase of 5% which will raise the lowest-paid position to \$15.10 per

hour, in compliance with the “Raise the Wage Act” requiring the minimum wage to be raised to \$15.00 per hour by Sept. 30, 2025. Additional payroll changes are two part-time upgraded to full-time positions; a new facilities maintenance position; increased pay for increased job responsibilities for one position; and a shift of departments for “a couple of positions.” Also included are \$15% and 10% increases, respectively, in Health and Liability insurances, plus a higher rate for worker compensation insurance.

General Fund Revenue includes about \$2.5 million in property taxes, \$1.2 million in federal grants; about a million each in state grants, state-shared revenue, and utility services; and about a half million dollars each of sales and use taxes, electricity franchise fees, and golf-course/pro shop income; and more than and nearly a quarter million dollars in public safety revenue and fund balance, respectively.

The \$9.4 million General Fund expenses are about \$3 million each for General Government, Public Safety, and Streets and Parks. The latter includes about \$1 million in Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Small County Outreach Project (SCOP) funds for the two phases of 12th Avenue construction and nearly \$1 million in expenses for the Golf

Course/Pro Shop.

The \$8.7 million Capital Fund revenues are \$4.7 million Community Development Block Grant Mitigation (CDBG MIT) for stormwater, \$1.1 million fund balance, \$1 million in surtax revenue; nearly a half-million-dollar Historic Preservation Grant each for Old City Hall and Speer Center, and an additional YMCA half-million-dollar grant for the latter, plus a \$200,000.00 Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Florida Recreation Development Assistance Program (FRDAP) grant for McSwain Park.

Capital Fund expenses include \$4.9 million for the stormwater capital improvement project; nearly \$1 million each for the historic City Hall and Speer Center capital improvement projects construction as well as Streets projects including \$750,000.00 in street paving; \$1.3 million parks projects, including nearly \$1 million for the Speer Center and a quarter million for McSwain Park renovations.

The Water/Sewer Fund Revenues are \$3.4 million in water fees, \$2.3 million in sewer fees, and a fund balance of \$2.4 million in addition to grant funds: \$11 million Phase 2B Sewer Collection Construction, \$7 million Phase 1B Water System Construction, \$3.5 million Waste Water Treatment Plant Design and Existing

Plant Modification plus more than a quarter million dollars Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The \$29.9 million Water/Sewer Enterprise Fund expenses include the following:

Water Treatment Plant: \$2 million, Waste Water Treatment Plant: \$6.4 million, Utility Billing: \$600,000.00, Water Systems: \$1.3 million, Sewer Systems: \$760,000.00, Water/Sewer Projects: \$10.8 million of Phase 2B Sewer Collection and \$7 million Phase 1B Water System construction plus the 12th Ave. utility project of nearly a half million dollars.

Airport Fund Revenues of \$3.4 million dollars are \$2.5 million in grants of \$700,000.00 Taxiway B construction, \$170,000.00 each for Jet A Fuel Tank and Airport State Lighting; and \$1.5 million for Ramp Expansion design; plus \$874,000.00 in other revenues. Airport expenses are more than three-quarter million dollars in operating expenses and \$2.5 million in capital outlay.

Solid waste revenues are \$1.6 million including \$1.1 million in garbage fees and a fund balance of not quite half a million dollars. Solid Waste expenses are more than a half million dollars each in personnel and operating expenses and nearly a quarter million in capital outlay.

## SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

# GOES LIVE WITH ELLUCIAN BANNER SAAS



*Transformative enterprise resource planning solution optimizes technology infrastructure at one of Florida’s top public colleges*

RESTON, Va. and AVON PARK, Fla. - July 18, 2024 - Ellucian, the leading higher education technology solutions provider, today announced that South Florida State College (SFSC) has gone live with Ellucian Banner SaaS, a powerful Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform, which is designed specifically for higher education and that delivers comprehensive student, HR, finance, and financial aid management solutions. SFSC joins more than 2,000 Ellucian customers around the globe using the Ellucian SaaS Platform.

SFSC has partnered with Ellucian to modernize and consolidate its technology infrastructure to drive operational efficiency and improve student outcomes. The Ellucian SaaS Platform with Banner, integrated with Ellucian Degree Works, Insights, and Experience, now supports enhanced academic planning for the institution’s more than 5,000 students. Powering data-driven decision-making for SFSC leaders and elevating the experience for students and employees, the platform will advance the institution’s operations,

improve student outcomes, and drive local workforce development.

“Ellucian is committed to delivering technology that powers higher education so institutions can empower student success,” said Laura Ipsen, president and CEO, Ellucian. “We’re proud to partner with SFSC as they modernize operations and accelerate outcomes to support their students. Moving to the Ellucian SaaS Platform with Banner empowers SFSC with timely data for better decision-making and improved team efficiency.”

“South Florida State College’s migration to the Ellucian SaaS Platform with Banner from our on-premise platform has provided us with a robust, secure solution that supports the anytime/anywhere access expectation for students, faculty, and staff,” said Peter Elliott, vice president, administrative services, SFSC. “Our partnership with Ellucian has maximized and modernized the technology and staff resources available for our business operations and provides more focused support for faculty to drive student success.”

For more information on Ellucian solutions, visit: [ellucian.com/solutions/all-products](https://ellucian.com/solutions/all-products).



### ABOUT SOUTH FLORIDA STATE COLLEGE

South Florida State College (SFSC) is a comprehensive, open-access, higher education institution dedicated to providing a student-centered environment focused on learning and personal enrichment through quality programs and services. At its campuses in DeSoto, Hardee, and Highlands counties and through its online presence, the College offers certificates, associate degrees, and bachelor’s degrees that lead to the continued success of its graduates and a variety of opportunities for the educational, cultural, and economic advancement of the service district. SFSC is one of the 28 institutions of the Florida College System.

### ABOUT ELLUCIAN

Ellucian powers innovation for higher education, partnering with more than 2,900 customers across 50 countries, serving 22 million students. Fueled by decades of experience with a singular focus on the unique needs of learning institutions, the Ellucian platform features best-in-class SaaS capabilities and delivers insights needed now and into the future. These solutions and services span the entire student lifecycle, including data-rich tools for student recruitment, enrollment, and retention to workforce analytics, fundraising, and alumni engagement. Ellucian’s innovative solutions, vast ecosystem of partners and user community of more than 45,000 provides best practices leading to greater institutional success and achieving better student outcomes.



# SARASOTA GUN SHOW

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### AUGUST 10<sup>TH</sup> & 11<sup>TH</sup>

SATURDAY 9AM-5PM & SUNDAY 9AM-3PM

#### UPCOMING

### PUNTA GORDA

AUG. 17<sup>TH</sup> & 18<sup>TH</sup>

CHARLOTTE HARBOR EVENT CENTER

75 TAYLOR ST.

SAT 9AM-5PM & SUN 9AM-3PM

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# GUN SHOW



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## DESIGN

FROM PAGE 1 >>

League Park” will provide a walking loop trail with rain gardens to clean the water before it flows into Jordan Branch.

The Smith-Brown Recreation Complex/Louis C. Anderson, Sr., Park on “Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr.” will feature improved walking trails with exercise stations plus a new pavilion and new bridge across the creek.

Across the railroad tracks from Morgan Park, where the old wastewater treatment plant was located, the “Wetland Eco Park” will have trails and boardwalks plus an educational/ observation area.

The “Tree of Knowledge Park” will have a community pavilion with solar panels on the roof plus permeable parking places and a linear path parallel to—and screened with trees from—southbound U.S. Highway 17.

The “Park Connectivity Plan” will link Morgan Park and the new Wetland Eco Park/Oak Ridge Cemetery with the park on MLK Jr. Drive, Brewer Park, and Jim Space/Storybook Park. In addition, the Morgan Park Greenway will connect Morgan/DeSoto Veterans Memorial Park along Hickory and then Oak St. to the Tree of Knowledge and McSwain Parks.

A Parking Garage Study was also included and shows the number of downtown parcels that could accommodate a garage for 250+ vehicles—three, 100-150 vehicles—five, and less than 100 vehicles—two.

### IN OTHER BUSINESS

The Council approved and executed the grant agreement with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) to purchase 70 acres on NW Livingston to use as a waste water spray field. Although the FDEP grant is \$1.5 million, the City signed a contract with Land South DeSoto for \$1.12 million.

The City awarded the Invitation For Bid (IFB) 2024-04 for Resurfacing, Restoration and Rehabilitation of Streets at \$885,290.96 to Ajax Paving Industries of Florida, LLC, the lowest, most responsible, most responsive bidder. Preferred Materials, Inc., and Superior Asphalt, Inc., also submitted bids. After reviewing the three offers, George F. Young’s Project Engineer recommended the award to Ajax.

### COMMENTS FROM DEPARTMENTS

Assistant City Marshal Gary Evans reported that “Operation Slow Down”—a project of the U.S. Dept. of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (nhtsa.



At the request of Council Member Luis Velasco, David Stevenson gave a presentation on potential new routes to extend State Road (S.R. 31) north of Arcadia.

After Stevenson’s presentation, the Council asked City Attorney T.J. Wohl to draft a resolution endorsing “Route J,” the proposed alignment and extension on Canal St. and N. Turner Ave.

gov)—is underway in Arcadia as well in other cities in Florida, Alabama, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

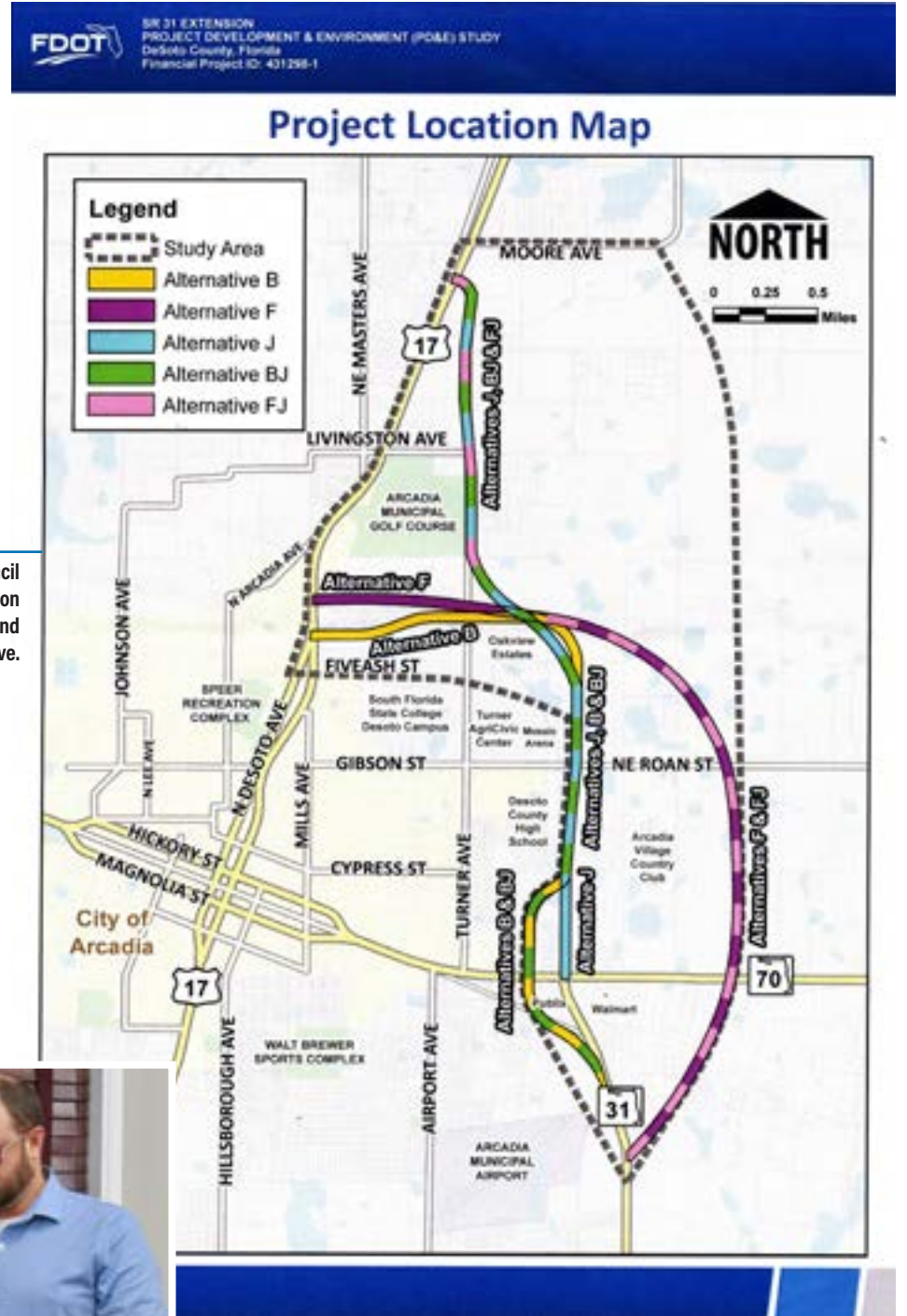
City Attorney T.J. Wohl noted that two properties are under contract for acquisition, and the one on Jordan Ave. needed extra work to clear the title.

When the Council was questioned about tarping the roof—and/or foreclosing on—the Verandah House, 305 W. Oak St., Deputy Mayor Keith Keene asked Wohl to explain the situation. He noted a high first mortgage plus code enforcement liens. “We have been trying to find solutions,” he said. The City did pay to temporarily secure the roof and windows.

The Council is working on “potential avenues of relief” and even if the situation is not discussed at every meeting, Wohl said, “It is on the minds of the Council.”

Code Enforcement Director Carl McQuay announced that 76 of the 80 cases and 44 of the 63 cases opened, respectively, in June and July, were closed. At present, he has 206 open cases and 11 on the agenda for a Special Master hearing scheduled for Aug. 1.

Assistant City Administrator Beth Carsten said that she gave a tour of old City Hall to three contractors who want to bid on the restoration project before the Aug. 19 deadline.



Drew Parker with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 4 in Atlanta introduced the Recovery and Resiliency Partnership Project (R2P2) report that included the conceptual design for seven projects.



### Arcadia Civic League Park PROPOSED DESIGN PERSPECTIVE

One of the Recovery and Resiliency Partnership Project (R2P2) Design Concepts is for the Arcadia Civic League Park across the street from the DeSoto County Historical Society’s John Morgan Ingraham House Museum as well as the Howard and Velma Melton Historical Research Library. The Nocatee Baptist Church’s bell tower cupola will serve as the center piece of the park and a loop trail.



The Council appointed Deborah Clifton—a lifelong resident of the City with bachelor’s and master’s degrees in psychology—to the Planning and Zoning Board.

A real estate broker with a Masters Degree in International Real Estate from Florida International University (FIU), Antonio Rosado was appointed to the Planning and Zoning Board by the Council.



Denita Browning with the YMCA asked forgiveness for holding a food give-away in the Speer Center parking lot without a special event permit. She reported that 1,000-1,200 children’s meals—plus 100 family meals—were distributed. The Council approved the special event permit for three more food give-aways from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. on July 23 and 30 as well as Aug. 6.

Chelsea Palmer told the Council about attending the recent Main Street Conference and how much she enjoyed she learning about historic preservation.

The Council did not choose Linda Lupino although she had submitted her application to serve on the Planning and Zoning Board well before the other candidates.



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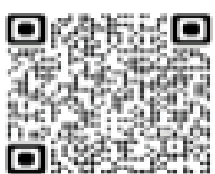
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## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Requesting Public Comment

Arcadia-DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity (DeSoto Habitat) is requesting public comment about DeSoto Habitat's application for a "Section 533 Housing Preservation" grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The grant will be used to repair homes of low to very-low income families in rural DeSoto County, Florida. This project involves the rehabilitation of one to twenty homes in rural DeSoto County, Florida. Typical DeSoto Habitat projects could include roof replacement, bathroom repair, kitchen repair, window repair, flooring replacement, safety issues, etc. All comments should be sent to Jennifer Bowser, Arcadia-DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity, P.O. Box 2096, Arcadia, FL 34265 by July 27, 2024.

## PUBLIC NOTICE

### Requesting Public Comment

Arcadia-DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity (DeSoto Habitat) is requesting public comment about DeSoto Habitat's application for a "Section 533 Housing Preservation/ 2022 Presidentially Declared Disaster Areas" grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The grant will be used to repair Hurricane Ian storm-damaged homes of low to very-low income families in rural DeSoto County, Florida. This project involves the rehabilitation of one to five homes in rural DeSoto County, Florida. Typical DeSoto Habitat projects could include roof replacement, interior and external repair, window and door replacement, flooring replacement, safety issues, etc. All comments should be sent to Jennifer Bowser, Arcadia-DeSoto County Habitat for Humanity, P.O. Box 2096, Arcadia, FL 34265 by July 27, 2024.



E = MC<sup>2</sup>

ELI'S WESTERN WEAR ANNUAL

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# DESOTO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE



ARREST REPORT | 7/12/24 - 7/18/24

**Jessica Elizabeth Degoede:**  
 Drugs-Possess - Cntrl Sub Wo Prescription, Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

**Marvin Lee Dennis:**  
 Possession Of Weapon - Or Ammo By Convicted Fla Felon (X2), Drugs-Possess - Cntrl Sub Wo Prescription (X3), Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use, Marijuana-Possess - Not More Than 20 Grams, Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence, Failure To Appear - Written Promise To Appear (X5)

**Sasha Demaris Higgins:**  
 Failure To Appear - Written Promise To Appear

**Macedonio Ramirez-Hernandez:**  
 Sex Asslt - Sex Bat 18 Yr Or Older By Prsn 18 Yr Or Old

**David Allen Hodges:**  
 Drug Equip-Possess - And Or Use

**Amanda Ester Zuniga:**  
 Indecent Exposure - In Public

**Eugene James Hoffer:**  
 Resist Officer - Obstruct Wo Violence

**Benjamin Roy Jackson:**  
 Prob Violation

*Information on this report is provided for informational purposes only from the public Inmate Records of the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office. While every effort is made to ensure that the posted information is accurate, it may contain factual or other errors. Arrest information may not reflect the current information. An arrest does not mean that the individual has been convicted of a crime. The information on this report should not be relied upon for any type of legal action. Unauthorized or illegal use of the information is strictly prohibited.*



## OBITUARIES



### TAMMY COOPER WARD



Tammy Cooper Ward passed away in Georgia on July 16, 2024 at the age of 57. She was born December 13, 1966 in Punta Gorda, Florida. She graduated from Atlantic High School in Delray Beach in 1985.

She was a member of Capel Baptist Church in Cairo, Georgia.

She enjoyed sewing cross stitch and photography and loved spending time with her family. Tammy will be remembered as a strong, loving and caring wife, mother, grandmother, sister and daughter. She always wore a smile that could brighten anyone's day.

Tammy is survived by her loving husband of over 23 years Gene Ward, her mother Nancy Atkins Cooper from Okeechobee, Florida and children Timothy Ward from Weirton, West Virginia, Christopher Ward (Samantha) from Trinity, Alabama, Tabitha Armstrong (Drew) from Melbourne, Florida, Kathleen Stine (Blake) from St. Cloud, Florida,

Travis Cornelius (Jessica) from Palm Bay, Florida, and Brittany Ward from Cairo, Georgia. Siblings William Driggers (Kelli) from Metter, Georgia, Gordon Cooper (Jennifer) from Metter, Georgia, Elaine Oates Denton (Chris) from Dade City, Florida, Tammie Ward Crawford (Billy) from Okeechobee, Florida and Anne Marie from Arcadia, Florida, along with nine grandchildren Garrett, Owen, Bailey, Delan, Dean, Henry all from Melbourne, Florida, Nathan from St. Cloud, Florida, Jayden and Celestia from Trinity, Alabama, nieces and nephews Joshua and Braden Driggers, Kaia and Chloe Cooper, Andrew, Emilee and Isabella Denton, Tyler and Shane Crawford from Okeechobee,

Florida.

She is preceded in death by her father William Earl Oates, Stepfather Gordon "Bubba" Cooper, and brother aVisitation will be Tuesday, July 23, 2024 at 10am at Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Home in Arcadia, Florida. A service will follow at 11am with Pastor Ellis Cross officiating. The burial will be at Joshua Creek.

**Online condolences can be made at [www.pongerkaysgrady.com](http://www.pongerkaysgrady.com) Ponger-Kays-Grady Funeral Homes & Cremation Services have been entrusted with the arrangements.**

### JESSIE MONTINE "MONTIE" BEELES



Jessie Montine "Monti" Beeles, aged 80, passed away peacefully on July 16, 2024. Born on December

26, 1943, in Labelle, Florida, to Jesse and Mabel McClelland. Monti led a full and vibrant life filled with love, dedication, and kindness.

Monti spent 25 years as a cherished member of the Walmart team in Arcadia. Known for her warm smile and helpful nature, she made a lasting impact on both her colleagues and the customers she served. She retired in 2010, leaving behind many fond memories and lifelong friends.

A devoted member of North Hillsborough Baptist Church, Monti found great joy in her faith and her church community. She cherished spending time with

her family, creating a lifetime of beautiful memories filled with love and laughter. Monti's caring and generous spirit touched everyone who knew her, and she will be deeply missed by all.

Monti is preceded in death by her beloved husband, Walter Dale Beeles; her parents, Jesse McClelland and Mabel Newberry; and her brother, Byron Rogers. She is survived by her children, Tami and Bryon Jewell, Walter Deland and Kristin Beeles, and Stacy and Steve Rickard; her sister Donna Rogers and brother Wayne Rogers; her grandchildren, Ryan and Tony Rader, Holly Jones, Sloan and Kenny Eldell,

Steven and Cheyenne Jewell, Corey Callahan, Zackery and Jillian Beeles, Shelby and Bo Bianco, Kimberly Cooley, and Joshua Rickard; and her 20 great-grandchildren. Monti also leaves behind numerous nieces, nephews, and a great deal of friends.

Monti's legacy of love, compassion, and faith will continue to live on in the hearts of her family and friends.

**A memorial service will be held on August 3, 2024, at 11 AM at North Hillsborough Baptist Church.**

**Our Father,  
 who art in heaven,  
 Hallowed be thy Name.  
 Thy Kingdom come.  
 Thy will be done in earth,  
 As it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day,  
 our daily bread.  
 And forgive us  
 our trespasses,  
 As we forgive them that  
 trespass against us.**

**And lead us not  
 into temptation,  
 But deliver us from evil.  
 For thine is the kingdom,  
 The power, and the glory,  
 For ever and ever. Amen.**

*While I Breathe I Hope*



# GOODWILL MANASOTA EXPANDS VETERANS SERVICES PROGRAM IN ARCADIA



*Nonprofit organization now holding weekly office hours, seeking to connect with veterans in DeSoto County*

DESOTO COUNTY, FL – While many veterans face challenges in their transition from the military back into civilian life – ranging from difficulties translating military experience to domestic workplaces to health challenges and injuries suffered during their service as well as mental health conditions – they also bring so much back with them. The military spends billions of dollars educating and training service members during their careers. They may not come out of their service with a traditional degree but the education they have received can be much more in-depth and practical. From day one, service members are instilled with leadership skills as well. According to U.S. Census data, there are approximately 1,980 veterans in DeSoto County. Of those, nearly 780 are from the Vietnam War era and more than 670 are from the Gulf War era. To assist veterans in DeSoto County, Goodwill Manasota is now holding weekly office hours – on Thursdays, from 9 a.m.-4:30 p.m. – at the Goodwill Community Resource Center in Arcadia (1701 E. Oak St.). Previously, Veterans Services team members were available through appointment only. Program leaders are hoping that a regular presence will raise awareness of and attract more veterans to the facility for free career services, networking opportunities, and referrals to other needed social services. “We want to help veterans translate their skills and experience into civilian lingo and to help local employers understand that, when they invest in a veteran, they are gaining a valuable asset,” said Veterans Services program manager Todd Hughes. “It may be true that some of these veterans have



Goodwill’s Veterans Services program team members (from l-r) Ryan Garner, Randy Wright, program manager Todd Hughes, and Richard Burger. Courtesy photo/Goodwill Manasota

some hidden wounds, such as PTSD. However, this should be seen as a sign of strength rather than weakness: they survived some traumatic events that only add more value to who they are and prove they are able to function under stress and come out the other side victorious. This is a trait many employers would love to have on their team!” As Goodwill starts to serve more veterans and the community becomes more aware of the organization’s presence and offerings, some of the programs Hughes would like to see in Arcadia include: a full range of career services, including resume and interview skills training, job search assistance and the identification of veteran-friendly employers; Lutz Buddy Up, a networking program that brings veterans together for conversation and

camaraderie; weekly coffee socials; and more. “When we bring veterans together, bonds and a support system are created that help them to feel less alone and more likely to access the services they need to get on the path to physical and mental health,” Hughes said. Goodwill’s Veterans Services program was created in 2013 to help veterans reintegrate into their families, communities and jobs. The program – which is staffed by veterans – provides comprehensive case management and vocational services, networking opportunities, and assistance in navigating the wide array of available social service programs. An important focus of Goodwill’s veterans program is to provide career development and upskilling opportunities for veterans, in order for them to be able to bolster

their job prospects and earn more money. For more information about Goodwill’s Veterans Services program, visit [experiencegoodwill.org/veteransservices](http://experiencegoodwill.org/veteransservices).

### ABOUT GOODWILL MANASOTA

Goodwill Manasota is an industry-leading 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that changes lives through the power of work. With philanthropic donations and revenue generated by the sales of donated goods, Goodwill is able to assist people with disabilities, veterans, seniors, and those with other barriers to employment by providing jobs, job skills training, and free career services. For more information or for a listing of locations, visit [www.experiencegoodwill.org](http://www.experiencegoodwill.org) or call 941-355-2721.

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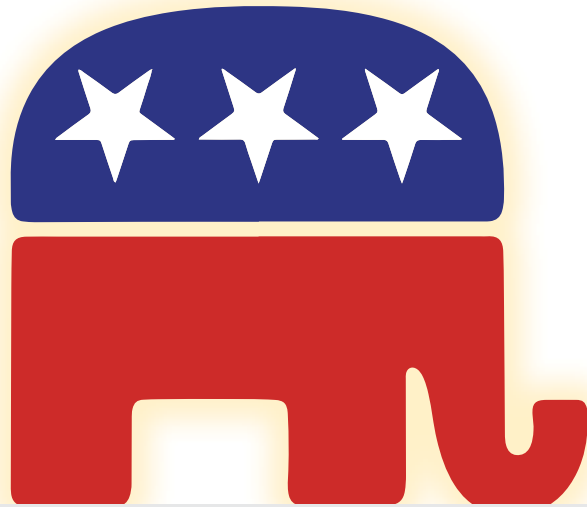
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# MEET & GREET

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**SATURDAY**  
**AUGUST 3**  
**2024**

**11:00AM - 2:00PM**  
**ARCADIA AMERICAN LEGION**  
**VETERAN'S PARK**

**REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED**

**EARLY VOTING STARTS AUGUST 5, 2024**  
**REPUBLICANS VOTE ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2024**  
**PRIMARY VOTERS TO DECIDE OFFICE HOLDERS**

<p><b>FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES DISTRICT 76</b></p> <p>Steven Ceracche Vanessa Oliver</p>	<p><b>BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS DISTRICT 1</b></p> <p>Michael Allbritton Jerod Gross</p>	<p><b>U.S. SENATOR</b></p> <p>Rick Scott <i>(or an office representative)</i></p>	
<p><b>SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS</b></p> <p>Sheri Ross Debbie Wertz</p>	<p><b>SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS</b></p> <p>Bobby Bennett</p>	<p><b>SHERIFF</b></p> <p>James "Jim" Potter <i>(unopposed)</i></p>	<p><b>TAX COLLECTOR</b></p> <p>Susan Pooley</p>

