



# COUNTY CONNECTION

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### Marion County Commissioners

- Mike Amsden, District 1
- Kathy Bryant, Vice Chair, District 2
- Stan McClain, District 3
- Carl Zalak III, District 4
- Charlie Stone, Chair, District 5

### Marion County Administrator

Dr. Lee A. Niblock

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**TOP STORY**

## COMMISSION DELIVERS LONG-TERM SOLID WASTE SOLUTION



By Christy Jergens, Marion County Office of Public Information

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners held an important vote in December – one that ended a disposal debate that has spanned several commissions. On Dec. 20, 2011, commissioners unanimously approved (4-0) a contract with A.C.M.S. Inc. to fund and dispose of waste at A.C.M.S.'s Bushnell (Sumter County) landfill. Commissioner Kathy Bryant was absent from the meeting but also expressed her support for the project through a letter to the board chairman.

Through the agreement, the county agreed to pay \$20 million for 2.5 million tons of disposal capacity in A.C.M.S.'s landfill at a guaranteed rate of eight dollars per ton. The A.C.M.S. site is projected to provide enough space to accommodate approximately 20 years' worth of Marion County waste, depending on the amount disposed each year. When combined with the remaining capacity at the county's Baseline landfill, this move is expected to meet county disposal needs for more than 30 years.

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### MISSION STATEMENT

Marion County provides professional and resourceful public services for our citizens through strategic planning and cost-effective implementation of county initiatives, generating positive results that set the standard for quality local government.

“Meeting Needs by Exceeding Expectations”

**TOP  
 STORY**



**BEHIND  
 THE  
 SCENES**

**Marion County  
 Zoning Division**

*By Sam Martsof, Marion County Growth Management Department (Zoning Division), and Barbra Hernández, Marion County Office of Public Information*

“This is a positive step forward to solving an issue that has been an ongoing concern for the citizens for a very long time.”

— Commission Chairman Charlie Stone

The Sumter location addresses several of the disposal concerns expressed in previous commission discussions on solid waste topics, such as overall cost effectiveness, close proximity to Marion County and sufficient capacity to provide long-term disposal for county residential waste.

“This is a positive step forward to solving an issue that has been an ongoing concern for the citizens for a very long time,” said Commission Chairman Charlie Stone. “I am grateful for the support of the commission, staff and concerned citizens for their input.”

District Four Commissioner Carl Zalak III discussed the impact of the agreement on citizen disposal fees and overall solid waste costs.

“This agreement will allow us to be good stewards of our tax dollars and keep residential disposal fees low,” Zalak said. “It will save us, at a bare minimum, \$60 million in solid waste costs.”

The county also has a number of security provisions in the contract if any problems should occur with the company’s performance of the agreement. For example, there are safeguards built into the contract that would enable Marion County to take over operation of the landfill should A.C.M.S. default in its obligations.

A.C.M.S. anticipates beginning construction for the landfill this winter. Construction is expected to last approximately one year, after which the county would be able to use the site for disposal.

You need to move your mother-in-law to your property but don’t know if you can build another residence on your land. Your child wants to raise a pig for 4-H, but you’re not sure if your land is properly classified to accommodate livestock. You need to place signage in front of your business but want to obtain the proper location and size specifications for it. Not sure who to call? It might be a good idea to start with Marion County Growth Management’s Zoning Division.

The Zoning Division is the go-to office for anyone looking to ensure proper use and development of their land. Whether you want to site a building, livestock operation, sign or anything in between, the county’s zoning staffers will have the information you need to take the appropriate – and permitted – steps.

“Zoning staff are often the initial county contact a customer has regarding their property, project or development,” said Senior Zoning Technician Jon Harvey. “We work to see that the customer has a complete understanding of what is going to be required of them in terms of site planning, development and permitting.” The goal: to ensure land is used and developed in ways that safeguard the public health, safety and quality of life of all who live and work in Marion County.

To accomplish that mission, the Zoning Division focuses on helping citizens understand the special characteristics



of their land as outlined in the county’s Land Development Code. The code is the guiding document for development in Marion County. So, for example, someone who owns land within a flood plain may need to pay closer attention to details such as their property’s elevation. Meanwhile, a business owner who wants to remove trees adjacent to his operation may have to look into tree preservation or buffer zone requirements.

While zoning consultations may range from something as simple as obtaining the legal description of a property to as comprehensive as requiring a land use change, one thing’s for sure – you’ll always land on the right spot when reaching out to the Marion County Zoning Division with questions about the use of your property.

To contact the Marion County Zoning Division, call 352-438-2675 or visit [www.marioncountyfl.org/zoning.htm](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/zoning.htm).

**Marion County Zoning Division**

**Address:**  
 Marion County Growth Management  
 2710 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470

**Phone:** 352-438-2675

**Hours:** Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

**Website:**  
[www.marioncountyfl.org/zoning.htm](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/zoning.htm)

**Commission zoning meetings:**  
 Third Tuesday of every month at 2 p.m.  
 McPherson Governmental Complex Auditorium  
 601 SE 25th Ave., Ocala, FL 34471

# NEWSFLASH

## Marion County Public Library System spotlights African-American literature

By Barbra Hernández, Marion County Office of Public Information

**M**arion County Public Library System patrons will join more than a million readers this month in the 23rd national tribute to African-American literature and writing during Black History Month. Will you be one of them?

If you're available on Feb. 4, consider heading to the Headquarters-Ocala branch (2720 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala) from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. for the Public Library System's annual "African-American Read-in," complete with guest appearances and read-in sessions with local volunteer leaders, readers and performers. A second read-in will take place Saturday, Feb. 25, from 2-4 p.m. at Freedom Public Library (5870 SW 95th St., Ocala).

If, on the other hand, you can't attend a read-in session or would rather celebrate with a book in your hands, library staff offers below its top 10 book selections to enjoy this month. Check them out from your favorite library branch.

- **"Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster" by Michael Eric Dyson**  
A revealing look at what Hurricane Katrina brought to light about race and poverty in America.
- **"If I Can Cook/You Know God Can" by Ntozake Shange**  
Conversations about the history of black cuisine – part tribute and part recipe guide for the chefs who wonder about the origins of dishes that have been served on their family tables for generations.
- **"Quilting the Black-Eyed Pea: Poems and Not Quite Poems" by Nikki Giovanni**  
Covering subjects ranging from Harry Potter to modern black society, these works are filled with a fluid rhythm that expresses both happiness and frustration with today's world.
- **"I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" by Maya Angelou**  
Young Maya is sent to live with her grandmother in Arkansas where she learns a great deal from the woman and the tight knit community around them. These lessons help her endure great hardships later in life after Maya is assaulted by a man many times her age.

- **"Before You Suffocate Your Own Fool Self" by Danielle Evans**

A collection of short stories that speak to minorities of their life experiences with relatable characters and situations.

- **"Waiting to Exhale" by Terry McMillan**

Four independent women use their friendship to support themselves in their search for the perfect mate.

- **"The Color Purple" by Alice Walker**

Follow the path of two sisters who are separated by distance, tragedy and time as they communicate through letters, struggling to hold on to the hope that they will one day be together again.

- **"Bucking the Sarge" by Christopher Paul Curtis**

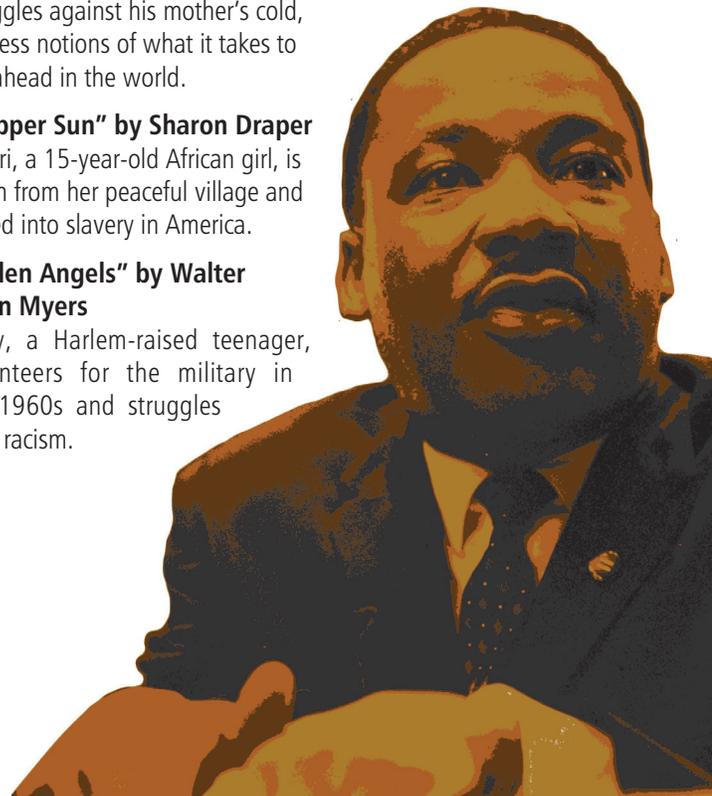
Luther, a 15-year-old in Flint, Mich., struggles against his mother's cold, ruthless notions of what it takes to get ahead in the world.

- **"Copper Sun" by Sharon Draper**

Amari, a 15-year-old African girl, is taken from her peaceful village and forced into slavery in America.

- **"Fallen Angels" by Walter Dean Myers**

Perry, a Harlem-raised teenager, volunteers for the military in the 1960s and struggles with racism.



# Focus on fostering

By Elaine Delorio, Marion County Office of Public Information



**D**id you know you can help care for some of the smallest, youngest and most helpless animals in Marion County? By becoming a foster parent to a cat or dog that's too young or sick to be placed for adoption, you can give that animal a second chance at a happy ending.

Staff will welcome you to the program once you submit your application (available at the Marion County Animal Center, located along Baseline Road) and confirm you meet all the requirements, including ensuring your own animals are current on their rabies vaccines and county licenses. Foster families are responsible for keeping the animals inside their home and providing food, water and lots of love. Animal Services will provide vaccinations and health checks as needed. Call 352-671-8700 or visit the Animal Center for more information.



**Q:** How do I get a copy of a birth or death certificate?

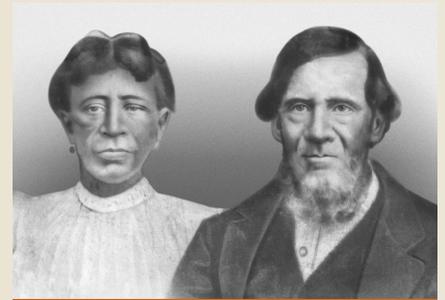
**A:** The Marion County branch of the state Health Department can assist you with both of those. For more information, visit [http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdMarion/services/vital\\_stats.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/chdMarion/services/vital_stats.html).

# Parks and Recreation

## LOOKS INTO LOCAL PARKS HISTORY

By Barbra Hernández, Marion County Office of Public Information

The earliest recorded baseball games at Orange Lake Community Park took place in 1918. The land encompassed by W.H. Willoughby Park once belonged to a farmer and preacher from Alabama. County parks are rich in history, and a Marion County department wants to preserve as much of it as possible.



Willis Henry and Odelia Willoughby

Marion County Parks and Recreation is inviting residents to assist in its collection of historical park information and photographs by sharing any little known fact or visual about a county park. If you know why a park was given a certain name, treasure an old photograph of a park or have just about any other historical information on a county park, please contact Marion County Parks and Recreation Director Gina Peebles at 352-671-8560 or [gina.peebles@marioncountyfl.org](mailto:gina.peebles@marioncountyfl.org) to share your story.

Learn more about Marion County Parks and Recreation at [www.marioncountyfl.org/parks.htm](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/parks.htm).

## Marion County Master Gardeners' Spring festival

Saturday, March 10  
8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday, March 11  
9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**UF/IFAS Marion County Extension Service**  
**(2232 NE Jacksonville Road)**  
**352-671-8400**



**The area's largest  
all-in-one plant sale and  
gardening expo!**

**Click  
here!**



# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

**JANET 'JAN' STEVENS** ■ ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ASSISTANT  
GROWTH MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT  
(ZONING DIVISION)

*Compiled by Barbra Hernández, Marion County Office of Public Information*

**When did you start with Marion County?** Sept. 28, 1987.

**Are you from here originally?** No, I moved here from Elkhart, Ind. in 1963.

**What led you to your current career or position?** While working for the City of Ocala (City Manager's Office), I was involved in the preparation of the city council agenda. I was hired at the county to take on the task in the Board of County Commissioners' office.

**What's your favorite or most rewarding part of your job?** I really like all phases of my job here in Zoning. It also helps to work with a great group of employees!

**What is your typical day, week or month like?** My monthly duties include: processing

zoning changes, special use permit requests and variances, preparing legal advertising notices, recording and transcribing Zoning Commission and Board of Adjustment meeting minutes, preparing the zoning portion of the Board of County Commissioners meeting agenda, preparing letters advising applicants of the results of their zoning requests and recording results in the computer data files. Also, I process payroll, order office supplies, document and monitor budget expenditures, prepare monthly activity reports...and, I know I've forgotten something. Then, I start all over again!

**What would you like for the average resident to know about your department or position?** Our zoning supervisors and employees are very knowledgeable and are

conscientious about taking the time necessary to help everyone who calls or comes into our office.

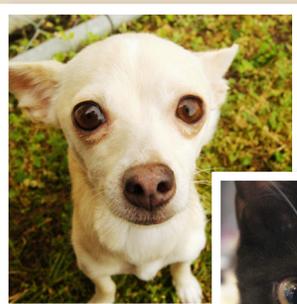
**What would people be surprised to know about you?** I used to be an evidence technician with the Ocala Police Department.

**What's the oddest job you've ever had?** I was a soda jerk at a drugstore when I was 16.

**What are your hobbies/interests?** I love doing yard work – even mowing (but only in my own yard). I also love spending time with my family.

# PETS OF THE MONTH

*By Elaine Delorio, Marion County Office of Public Information*



**Tot**  
(A066266)



**Jackson**  
(A066558)

**Jackson (A066558)** - This 3-month-old ball of fur and fun named Jackson wants to roll right into your heart. He's already litter trained and gets along with kids of all ages, as well as other cats, so he's perfect for any family. Take Jackson home today!

**Tot (A066266)** - It was just a few days after New Years when a good Samaritan brought this skinny 10-month-old stray Chihuahua to the Animal Center. Now, just a few weeks later, little Tot is ready to start the New Year off right this time and is hoping for a forever family to adopt her. If you think you could welcome all 5.2 pounds of this little pup into your home, come visit her today!

The adoption fee for Jackson (A066558) or Tot (A066266) is only \$40 and includes their spay/neuter surgeries, county licenses, current vaccinations and microchips. Call Marion County Animal Services at 352-671-8700 for more information or visit the department Tuesday-Friday from 10 a.m.-5:30 p.m. or Saturday from 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

## Calendar of Events

Find out what events are coming up in Marion County. Check the online calendar of events.

