



# COUNTY CONNECTION

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 5 • MAY 2014

## IN THIS ISSUE

Section	Page(s)
• Top Story	1
• Infographics	2
• Newsflash	3 - 6
• Employee Spotlight	6

### Marion County Commissioners

- David Moore, District 1
- Kathy Bryant, District 2
- Stan McClain, Vice Chair, District 3
- Carl Zalak III, Chairman, District 4
- Earl Arnett, District 5

### Marion County Administrator

Dr. Lee A. Niblock

### Find Marion County on:



<http://facebook.com/MarionCountyFlorida>  
<http://twitter.com/MarionCountyGov>



Scan the QR code with your smartphone to visit Marion County online.

## 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.

TOP STORY



# BUILDING SAFETY INTO YOUR HOME

By Stacie Causey, Marion County Office of Public Information

Functioning fixtures. Protected pools. Emergency evacuation plans. These are some of the things that may come to mind when thinking of safe homes and buildings. Indeed, steps to protect residential and commercial property – whether small or large – can better prepare us for the unexpected storm or flood, the frightening fire or the electrical hazard.

Every day, one Marion County department works with residents, builders and businesses alike to minimize risks and maximize safety for existing and new buildings in Marion County.

“Building safety codes and practices are incredibly necessary and serve as the foundation upon which healthy, secure homes and buildings are renovated and built,” said Marion County Building Safety Department Director David Galassi, who is also the county’s building official.

This month, the department is joining similar agencies worldwide in highlighting building safety topics by offering Marion County residents a **week-by-week guide** of individual steps they can take to create safer homes – and neighborhoods.



### WEEK ONE // May 5-11 *Keeping Fire in its Place*

Home fires are dangerous and costly, both in property and lives. The United States Fire Administration offers these tips you can use every day to prevent fires in your home:

**Smoke alarms** – Install working smoke alarms and test them periodically to make sure batteries are working properly.

**Escape plan** – Make sure everyone in your home practices two routes of escape from every room with a designated meeting place outside the home.



### WEEK TWO // May 12-18 *Helping Homeowners Weather the Storm*

• **Prepare** – Develop a family disaster plan that includes food and water

supplies for your family, including the four-legged members. Make copies of important documents such as insurance cards, the deed to your home and important phone numbers in case you can't recharge the cellphone for an extended period. Create a checklist of important tasks to complete before, during and after a disaster.

• **Review** your evacuation route and emergency shelter locations, as well as other evacuation options (such as staying with family or friends outside the anticipated impact zone).

• **Shelter** – Stay or leave according to the local authorities. The Federal Emergency Management Agency offers frequently asked questions on this topic at [www.fema.gov/faq](http://www.fema.gov/faq).



### WEEK THREE // May 19-25 *Surrounding Your Building with Safety*

Areas outside your home should be reviewed for possible hazards periodically to help prevent accidents.

**Pool** – Make sure all pedestrian gates are self-closing and self-latching. All other gates should be padlocked.

**Grill** – When grilling, have a fire extinguisher, a garden hose or at least four gallons of water close-by in case of a fire.



### WEEK FOUR // May 26-31 *Building a Brighter, More Efficient Tomorrow*

• Go green with ease by installing energy-efficient light bulbs and changing air filters frequently. No-cost actions

like turning off lights and unplugging electronics when not in use will also contribute to savings.

• If you are a Marion County Utilities customer, consider the department's rebates for updating older appliances to energy-efficient versions. Find out more at [www.marioncountyfl.org/utilities](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/utilities).

• Going green also focuses on healthier living. Low-cost additions such as a drip pan under the water heater, wire shelving and door mats at all doorways help reduce the amount of mold and dust collected in your home.

For more tips and information on building safety, as well as services provided by the M.C. building safety department (including permitting and contractor licensing) call 352-438-2400 or visit [www.marioncountyfl.org/building](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/building).

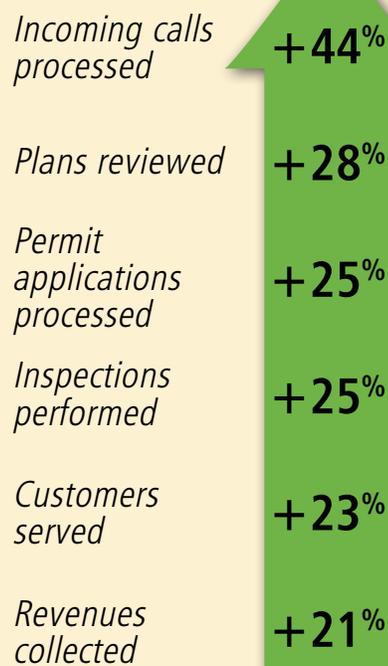
## TAKE AN INSIDE LOOK AT MARION COUNTY BUILDING SAFETY DURING INTERNATIONAL BUILDING SAFETY MONTH.



\*Numbers reported for March 2013-April 2014.

## BUILDING SAFETY *by the numbers*

Within the past year, the Building Safety department has seen increases in many daily aspects of customer service. Take a quick look at how activities at this department have spiked up in just one year.



\*Figures compared for FY 12/13 and 13/14, as of April 2014.

# NEWSFLASH

## Firefighters bring One-Stop Water Safety Shop to the Paddock Mall on **May 17**

Learn life-saving tips and register to win a **free** swim lesson package

By Jessica Greene, Marion County Fire Rescue



### Pursue these three "P"s

**T**his month, residents can learn life-saving water safety tips and gather information about local swim lesson providers - all while tackling their summer shopping lists.

**The "Prepare. Protect. Prevent." Water Safety Exhibit, conducted by Marion County Fire Rescue and Ocala Fire Rescue, takes place 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on May 17 at the Ocala Paddock Mall.**

Representatives from local swim lesson providers and water-related vendors will share information about their products and services in the mall's main atrium in front of Macy's.

There will be some action, too. Firefighters will demonstrate how to save a life with hands-only CPR, and participants will be able to practice this technique on life-like mannequins. **Those who attend the demonstrations may also enter a drawing to win a free swim lesson package.**

To find out more information on how to be a part of this event, contact Marion County Fire Rescue at 352-291-8000.

According to the Florida Department of Health, in Florida alone enough children under the age of 5 drown each year to fill three to four preschool classrooms. **The "Prepare. Protect. Prevent." campaign aims to guard residents against this statistic by focusing on the three "P"s of water safety: preparing, protecting and preventing.**

**PREPARE:** Adults can prepare themselves by learning basic CPR skills and prepare their children by enrolling them in swimming lessons. Hands-only CPR is simple to learn, easy to remember and proven to save lives.

**PROTECT:** Protect against drowning through supervision, pool alarms and pool fences. Other precautions that can be taken to protect against the short time frame in which a drowning can take place include:

- Making sure pools and spas are enclosed on four sides with a fence that's at least five feet high with self-closing and latching gates.

- Having anti-entrapment covers on all pool and spa drains.

- Having a phone near the pool for emergency use.

**PREVENT:** Preparing and protecting lead to the third "P" – prevention. By providing parents and guardians easy access to drown-prevention resources and hands-only CPR instruction, MCFR and OFR hope to prevent future drownings.

The National Fire Protection Agency provides these additional water safety tips:

- Children should always swim under the supervision of a grown-up. Every child over the age of 3 should have swimming lessons.
- Children using air-filled swimming aids should always be supervised by an adult within arm's reach.

# Keep summertime boredom AT BAY

By Elaine Delorio McClain, Marion County Office of Public Information

Summer vacation! Backpacks and book reports are only memories and the sunshiny outdoors beckons with adventure and fun. However, if there's one thing that's just as certain as summertime afternoon thunderstorms, it's that the no-school induced euphoria is soon replaced by droll, tiresome boredom. Luckily, Marion County departments have the tools in the form of camp opportunities for you to keep summertime boredom at bay.

## Firewise Nature Camps (Parks and Recreation)

June 9-Aug. 8, 2014 | Monday-Friday  
8 a.m.-5 p.m. (before-and-after care: 7:30-8 a.m. and 5-6 p.m. included in fee).  
Ages 6-12  
\$95 per week (Nine weekly sessions, each on a different nature-related topic).  
Registration: Opened April 1.  
More info or to register:  
[www.marioncountyfl.org/parks](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/parks) or 352-671-8560.

## Summer mini-camps at Fort McCoy and Greenway Elementary Schools (Parks and Recreation)

June 16-July 17 | Monday-Thursday  
8 a.m.-2 p.m.  
Ages 6-12  
\$15 per week or \$35 for five weeks.  
Registration: opened April 21.  
More info or to register:  
[www.marioncountyfl.org/parks](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/parks) or 352-671-8560.

## Camp McPhun (Parks and Recreation)

June 16-Aug. 1, 2014 | Monday-Friday  
8 a.m.-5 p.m. (before-and-after care: 7:30-8 a.m. and 5-5:30 p.m. included in fee).  
Ages 6-12  
\$95 per week (seven weekly sessions, fee includes weekly field trips).  
Registration: Opens May 2.  
More info or to register:  
[www.marioncountyfl.org/parks](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/parks) or 352-671-8560.



## Marion Sprouts Summer Camp (Marion County UF/IFAS Extension Service and Master Gardeners)

June 23-27, 2014  
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.  
Ages 8-14  
\$75  
Registration deadline: May 16.  
More info or to register: 352-671-8400.

## Recreation Specialty Camps (Parks and Recreation)

Archery Camp, Kayak/Paddleboard Camp,  
Fish Camp  
Multiple sessions and age groups.  
Registration: Opened April 1.  
More info or to register:  
[www.marioncountyfl.org/parks](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/parks) or 352-671-8560.



## Calendar of Events

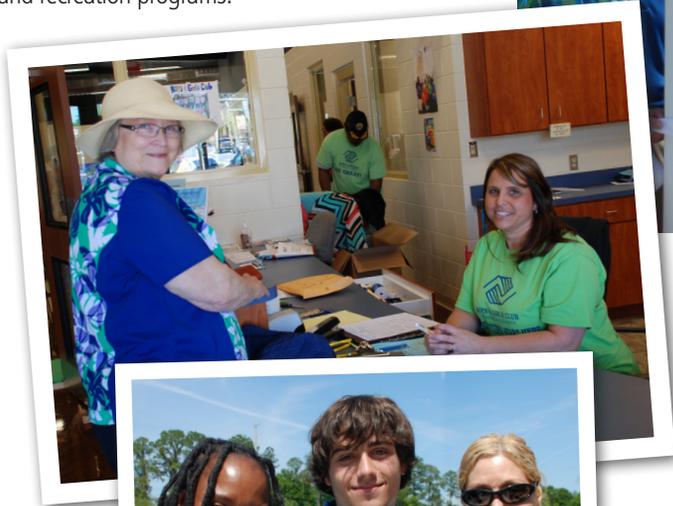
Find out what events are coming up  
in Marion County – check the online  
[calendar of events!](#)

PROGRAM  
PORTRAITS

# Dunnellon Boys & Girls Club Ribbon-cutting Ceremony

By Barbra Hernández, APR, Marion County Office of Public Information

Marion County commissioners and Marion County Community Services joined dozens of residents, local agencies and businesses last month to cut ribbon on the Dunnellon Boys & Girls Club's new facility. Commissioner Kathy Bryant offered congratulatory remarks during the ceremony and highlighted the various community partners who came together, along with financial support of a community development block grant of \$852,242, to build the center. The building is expected to serve anywhere from 80-100 children between the ages of 6-18 with after-school tutoring, education and recreation programs.



**Did you know?** Each year, Marion County receives funding from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for affordable housing and community development projects. These funds are used through local nonprofit agencies for projects, such as the Boys and Girls Club, that benefit low- and moderate-income households or areas. Other local agencies that have benefited from these funds include: Arnette House, ARC Marion, Interfaith Emergency Services, Literacy Council, Habitat for Humanity and Senior Services. For more information, visit [www.marioncountyfl.org/communityservices](http://www.marioncountyfl.org/communityservices).

**KAREN  
ROBINSON**

SENIOR SERVICE  
REPRESENTATIVE;  
BUILDING SAFETY



Compiled by Stacie Causey, Marion County Office of Public Information

EMPLOYEE  
SPOTLIGHT

**When did you start with Marion County?** November 1989.

**What have been your positions while employed with Marion County?** Permit Technician, Service Representative IV and Senior Service Representative (all positions have been within Building Safety.)

**What led you to your current career or position, and what made you interested in working in your field?** I previously worked as a construction loan processor with California Federal Bank and also worked with a small home improvement contractor. I found the construction field complex and challenging.

**Are you from Marion County originally? If you've lived other places, where have you lived?** I am originally from Rutland, Vermont-born and raised. I moved to Warner Robins, GA, for six years, and then eventually moved to Ocala, FL, where I have lived since 1985.

**What's your favorite or most rewarding part of your job?** Sharing and educating the citizens, contractors and employees about the building industry codes, statutes and ordinances.

**What is your typical day, week or month like?** The building industry is very active at this time, so a typical day would consist of assisting customers via phone calls, emails, e-permits and faxes, as well as in-person. Needless to say, the phrase "never a dull moment" applies to this department!

**What would you like residents to know about your department or position?** That the purpose of our department is to protect the life, safety and welfare of the public by enforcing building codes, statutes and ordinances.

**Tell us a little about your home life (kids, pets, etc.)** I have been married to my husband, Larry, for almost 29 years. We have two daughters and five grandchildren who live in Tampa, FL. We had our very first home built back in 2008 and have enjoyed it tremendously. The other "kids" in our lives are our two four-legged kids. Sophie is a Yorkie/Dachshund cross affectionately known to us as a "Dorkie" and Baylea is a red, long-haired dachshund. They are the most entertaining and joyful creatures!

**Do you have a special quote/saying/motto that has special meaning to you? If so, what is it?** "Nothing we learn in this world is ever wasted." -Eleanor Roosevelt.

**COUNTY COMMISSION APPROVES BAN ON UNATTENDED DOG TETHERING**

By Elaine Delorio McClain, Marion County Office of Public Information

Marion County Commissioners in April approved a revision to the county animal ordinance relating to dog tethering by a vote of 3-2, with commissioners Arnett and McClain dissenting. The ordinance, approved during a regularly-scheduled board meeting, bans unattended tethering of dogs, with an exception for performing a 30-minute temporary task, and with a further exemption that the ordinance does not apply to dogs on working farms.

Previously, the county's ordinance allowed the unattended tethering of dogs, provided the tether met certain safety requirements and the dog had access to food, water and shelter. The new language requires an owner to be outside with the dog if it's tethered, except for a 30-minute time frame in which the owner can go inside to complete a temporary task. The safety requirements for temporary tethering remain in place.

In August 2013, the Board of County Commissioners appointed a Blue Ribbon Task Force to study the topic of dog tethering. The task force (composed of appointees from each of the commissioners, as well as the Marion County Animal Services director and the Humane Society of Marion County executive director) presented its findings before the board on Feb. 4, 2014. At the March 18, 2014 board meeting, the commission directed the county attorney to prepare a draft ordinance based on the task force recommendations for discussion at the public hearing scheduled for the April 1, 2014 commission meeting.

**Just the basics:**

Dogs cannot be tethered outside without supervision. The owner or responsible person must be outdoors with and in visible range of the tethered dog. [Click here](#) to get all the details.

