



# COUNTY CONNECTION

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 11 • NOVEMBER 2014

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 Kathy Bryant, District 2  
 Stan McClain, Vice Chair, District 3  
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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.



# THE Best OF THE YEAR

TOP STORY

### Your local government's top stories in 2013-14

By Barbra Hernández, APR

**W**hat do 500 people, a dog named Nika and the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion have in common? They all played central roles among some of Marion County's biggest news and stories of fiscal year 2013-14.

Read below and on page 2 some of the top achievements of your local county government between Oct. 1, 2013-Sept. 30, 2014; then, turn to pages 3 and 4 for a "By the Numbers" wrap-up of services provided by county departments.



## Hundreds rally for our patriots

The hot June weather did not keep approximately 500 county residents, leaders and elected officials from showing up to a community rally in support of siting a state veterans' nursing home in Marion. The proposed location, a shovel-ready site within On Top of the World Communities, remains an ideal option for future site proposal efforts.



## A dog's 1,000-mile journey sees happy ending

Using microchip technology, Marion County Animal Services reunited a missing toy fox terrier named Nika with her owner - more than two years after she went missing from her owner's New York home. Her owner, Giuseppe DiBella, traveled to Ocala in October to pick up his long-lost furry friend and thank the staff who initially contacted him about his dog being found more than a thousand miles away.

[Click here for a short video tour of the top stories alongside Chairman Zalak.](#)

## Board holds line on taxes for 2014-15 countywide budget

In a unanimous vote in September, the Marion County Commission adopted the countywide budget and a millage rate of 3.90 mills for the 2014-2015 fiscal year - the same as in fiscal year 2013-14. All other non-countywide millage rates remain at their existing levels, with the exception of the MSTU for law enforcement. This MSTU saw a 0.26 mill increase which enabled the Marion County Sheriff's Office aviation and fugitive units to remain funded.



## Agriculture hub gets boost

The County Commission and Marion County UF/IFAS Extension Service achieved the Florida Legislature's allocation of \$750,000 to initiate phase III of the Southeastern Livestock Pavilion Master Plan, which calls for development of the north end of the property, including covering the north roping arena and adding a 100-stall barn. The pavilion is an arterial complex for one of Florida's vital industries, agriculture, and is estimated to generate at least \$11 million in economic activity each year.



## Utilities welcomes new facilities, customers

Marion County Utilities cut ribbon on its newly-expanded Oak Run Wastewater Reclamation Facility in May, delivering the latest installment in the department's larger regionalization effort in southwestern Marion. The goals? Protect local water resources, increase cost efficiency and support economic development. The department also welcomed former Windstream Utilities clients to its customer base and moved to a more customer-friendly location in Belleview earlier this year.



## New jobs saw and turn their way into Marion

More than two dozen, full-time jobs are expected to drill benefits into the local economy with the anticipated arrival of Just in Time Machining, LLC. The company is a full-service, family-owned computer numerical control (CNC) shop based out of Rochester, New York. The company is proposing to occupy an existing facility and will invest a minimum of \$300,000 in capital funding for renovations and new equipment; it has also committed to create up to 25 new, full-time jobs with an average annual salary of \$37,000.

## Our community hits a homerun at Rotary Sportsplex

Marion County Parks and Recreation and the Ocala/Marion County Visitors and Convention Bureau welcomed approximately 2,700 players, families and spectators in the summer for the 14U Cal Ripken World Series. The results? A zealous local team (Ocala Speed) that made it to the World Championship game and \$1.9 million in estimated economic benefit to Marion County.



**County services delivered**  
 Turn to pages 3 and 4 for a county services wrap-up expanded infographic.

# FY 13-14

Marion County, Florida

## Fiscal year wrap-up

\*Does not include all departments.



**Fire Rescue**  
responded to

**65,696**  
fire & EMS calls.

### Animal Services



**2,674** animals adopted

**6,277** pets spayed/neutered

**10,239** animal control cases worked



Procurement Services saved the county **\$1,545,668** through solicitations and negotiations.

Marion County UF/IFAS Extension Service staff taught

**20,802**

class participants.



Number of library items checked out:

**1,211,059**

by **219,124** library card holders



Building Safety issued

**16,022 permits**

nearly **3,000** more than last year.

FY 12-13

FY 13-14



### Fleet Management

Reduced CO2 emissions by

**1.3 million pounds**, and

saved **\$116,602** in fuel and maintenance costs

via **26 CNG** vehicles.



**\$10,165,000**

Total estimated economic output by the **Marion County Airport**  
Up from about \$4 million in 2010

**14,513** participants attended **Parks and Recreation's** programs.



**Visitors and Convention Bureau**

**15.07** million social media impressions  
**96,212** website visits

**Public Safety Communications received**

**442,298 calls**

including emergency and non-emergency calls

### Office of the County Engineer



**476,000** sq. feet of pavement patched

**4,000** traffic signs replaced

**MSTU** helped resurface 42 miles of subdivision roads.

**Growth Services** assisted 63,364 customers.

**3,720 tons**

recycled at Marion County Solid Waste recycling centers



### Facilities Management



**\$40,200 per month**

Average energy cost-savings by using solar hot water panels, heat recovery systems and other energy-efficient improvements



Southeastern Livestock Pavilion complex hosted **200,000** people at **350** events.

**Veterans Services** assisted in obtaining **\$14,778,846** in new benefits for veterans and their families.



Ocala-Marion County Veterans Memorial Park:

**4,284** visitors

**475,000** gallons of water per day



Water saved by irrigating 5 golf courses with reclaimed water from **Marion County Utilities**

# NEWSFLASH

## Change these three on Nov. 2

By Barbra Hernández, APR

Daylight saving time ends on Sunday, Nov. 2, and Marion County reminds residents and businesses to change the following three on that day:

### 1 Clocks:

Reset all clocks back one hour.



### 2 Batteries:

Change the batteries on all smoke alarms. These devices can save lives during fire emergencies and must be maintained regularly to ensure proper functioning.



### 3 Irrigation schedules:

Adjust irrigation timers to water only once per week. Odd-numbered addresses may irrigate on Saturdays, even-numbered addresses may irrigate on Sundays and non-residential properties may irrigate on Tuesdays.



## Thanksgiving Safety Tips

By Jessica Greene

More home fires involving cooking equipment occur on Thanksgiving than on any other day of the year across the United States, and many more emergency calls are placed on this holiday due to kitchen injuries. This Thanksgiving, take note of Marion County Fire Rescue's **top three safety tips** for a safe holiday with friends and family:



1. Stay at home while cooking your turkey and check on it frequently.
2. Frying a turkey can be a gratifying experience; it can also be disastrous. Make sure your bird is completely thawed before placing it in the deep fryer, partial thawing could cause oil splatters. Check out [additional tips](#) for safe turkey frying.
3. When preparing for your Thanksgiving Day meal, add "check smoke alarms" to your "To Do" list. It only takes a moment and will protect what can't be replaced – friends and family.

## Mark your calendar for scheduled holiday closures

### NOVEMBER 2014

Tuesday, Nov. 11 – We salute and thank our nation's patriots on Veterans Day and always.

Thursday, Nov. 27  
Friday, Nov. 28



### DECEMBER 2014

Thursday, Dec. 25  
Friday, Dec. 26

### JANUARY 2015

Thursday, Jan. 1  
Friday, Jan. 2

## Calendar of Events

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

