



News Happening Around Town

June 2021 Newsletter



City of Ocala
Office of the Mayor

Message from the Mayor



“As an Ocala native, I deeply care about what happens in our city. The people and places that make up this town are an important part of our community. Serving as your mayor for 10 years is both an honor and a privilege and I remain committed to staying connected to our citizens. My hope is that through this monthly newsletter, you will see the continuous progress of our city as we work together to make this city a great place to live, play and prosper.”

Calendar | Upcoming Events

4
July

Freedom Run
Veterans Memorial
Park
7 a.m.

6
July

City Council
Meeting
City Hall
5 p.m.

20
July

City Council
Meeting
City Hall
5 p.m.

31
July

Mary Sue Rich
Scholarship Golf
Tournament
Ocala Golf Club
8 a.m.

Updates from the Police Department

25 Years of Service

Captain Sandra Duryea began her career at OPD in 1996. She was assigned to the community policing bureau and later served as a field training officer. She also served as a detective in major crimes and worked undercover in the drug unit. In 2002, she was promoted to sergeant and served in supervisory positions in community policing, property crime investigations, economic and sex crimes, intelligence unit, accreditation, resource development, mobile field force team, and as a field training sergeant. In 2017, Sandra was promoted to lieutenant, where she worked as the community policing bureau watch commander and was the technical services lieutenant. This year, Sandra was promoted to captain, and currently serves as the resource development captain. Thank you, Sandra, for everything you've done. We appreciate all the work you've done for the City and the Ocala Police Department.



Pictured: City Manager Sandra Wilson, Captain Sandra Duryea and Mayor Kent Guinn

Officers Positively Impact Youth

On June 12, Officer Mason Demary and Officer Trainee Natawi Chin were driving through Sutton Place Apartments and, as they were leaving, Officer Demary heard a child's voice yelling, "I want to say hi to the police!" and saw a little boy running up to their patrol car carrying two bags of Takis chips. The officers pulled over and got out of the car to talk to the boy. The boy told them that he wants to be a police officer just like them. They gave

him some stuffed animals and OPD sticker badges. They couldn't stay long but promised to return.

The next day, Officer Demary, Trainee Chin, Officer Pfeifer, Trainee McCoy and Officer Boley all went to the apartment complex and made contact with the boy and his mom. The officers had gifts, including some of the boy's favorite Takis snacks. His mother said that her son loves police and that his uncle is an officer for Gainesville Police Department.



Officers Maleske and Livengood recently attended a graduation party at Parkside Gardens to celebrate with a young man named Michael. Congratulations on an outstanding achievement!!

From Around the Community

Helping Those in Need

On June 2, across the street from Interfaith, Chief Balken and I came across a man and a woman who were both guilty of trespassing and public lodging. Rather than arresting them, we had an honest conversation. We learned the lady was from Knoxville, Tennessee, and the gentleman was from Bell Glade. They just wanted to go home. We called the man's mother, who was excited to learn her son was coming home. We also called the woman's stepbrother who was equally excited his sister was coming home. Members of the City's Office of Homeless Prevention were on site. We

checked to make sure the two had no outstanding warrants, which they didn't, and we purchased bus tickets for them to go back home. It's amazing what can happen when we have an honest conversation with people who want help.

Kat Cammack Visit



Representative Kat Cammack recently came by City Hall, and we had a great meeting discussing potential opportunities in Ocala. I'm looking forward to continuing this partnership and appreciate her support of Ocala and Marion County.

Hot Wheels

Hot Wheels received his official Mayor's Recognition at a recent City Council meeting on June 15. Hot

Wheels attended the meeting along with his human companions from the Humane Society of Marion County.

If you'll recall from our last newsletter, Hot Wheels was found and brought to the Humane Society with severe injuries, and he no longer has no use of his back legs and has to wear doggy diapers. However, this pup still has a bright spirit. With his wheelchair, he is able to run and play. He earned his name by zooming around the Human Society parking lot, taking off like a race car driver. We wish him a healthy and happy life with a permanent, loving family that will see all the positive qualities he has to offer. If you or anyone you know is interested in adopting Hot Wheels, please contact the Humane Society of Marion County at 352-873-7387.



National Boys and Girls Club Week

The week of June 21 -25 is National Boys and Girls Club Week. This week shines a spotlight on the caring youth development professionals and the kids and teens they mentor every day in clubs across the country and on U.S. military installations. On June 21, I was happy to attend one of the planned events for the Marion County club. I got to speak about Ocala and my responsibilities to the City as mayor, as well as read books to the kids

and take part in a “mentoring moment.” Thank you, Boys and Girls Club of Marion, for having me!

Juneteenth

Thank you to everyone who came out to support Ocala’s first Juneteenth celebration. We had so many community members come together to help put on the event and make it a success. Known as ‘Freedom Day’ this outdoor festival commemorated the emancipation of enslaved people in the United States and serves as an educational reminder surrounding the importance of this day. Stay up to date for next year by following [Ocala Juneteenth Celebration](#) on Facebook.



Fourth of July

As Fourth of July approaches, I just wanted to take a moment to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday. As we gather together with friends and family to celebrate our nation’s independence, let us never take for granted all the many blessings we enjoy in our country.

Proclamations

A proclamation is a formal public statement issued by a person of authority, dealing with matters of great importance or offering recognition to a person or organization. If you or your organization is interested in working with the Mayor’s office to receive recognition, please contact Fazillete Gonzalez at (352)401-3977.

Recent Proclamations

Zero Hour Life Center - Grand Opening

Problems stemming from substance use disorder continue to be prevalent in every state in the nation, but there is hope that we can overcome this epidemic if more people with substance use disorders are given access to peer recovery support through recovery community organizations. Removing the barriers to treatment and peer recovery support improves community welfare and provides a renewed outlook on life for those who struggle with substance use or mental health disorders and for their family and friends. Recovery from substance use disorder is possible and treatment is effective, but challenges arise in identifying affected people and bringing them into treatment due to inadequate insurance coverage and shrinking state funding for treatment programs. From 2010 to 2017, drug-related deaths more than doubled in Marion County. Between January and August 2020, 139 people lost their life to an overdose. Of 1,700 Floridians, 70% of those who were having mental health and substance use issues felt like they could not or should not get help.

Substance use disorders take an enormous toll for many in our community. However, people in or seeking recovery are not alone. Entire families are breaking the cycle and stigma of addiction as they embrace recovery through peer recovery support programs and peer recovery coaching services. To help the recovery community fight back, Zero Hour Life Center connects individuals suffering with a substance use disorder or mental health disorder to peer recovery support and services within Marion County and surrounding counties. Therefore, I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, do hereby proclaim the grand opening of Zero Hour Life Center the Recovery Community Organization in Ocala and call upon the people of Ocala to welcome this organization supporting recovery in our community.

United States Army's 246th Birthday

The United States Army's Birthday is a day for the Army, soldiers, veterans, and their families to celebrate the day on which the first United States Army, known as the Continental Army, was formed. This day falls on June 14 every year and has been observed since the 1970s to acknowledge the vital contributions of the United States Army members and to develop and enhance the esprit de corps.

The Congress of the United States established the First Continental Army on June 14, 1775, because there was a severe need for professionally trained soldiers to combat the British. The original order from Congress allowed for 10 companies of riflemen to be created and then two days later, an Adjutant General's Corps, Corps of Engineers, Finance Corps, and Quartermaster Corps were created. The first full regiment of Regular Army Infantry was not formed until June of 1784, and this initial Regular Army Infantry was called the 3rd Infantry Regiment.

Today, the proud men and women of the United States Army, which is the largest branch of the U.S. military with over one million soldiers on duty and an additional 800,000 Reserve and National Guard members, continue to provide peace and security for all of us. Therefore, I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, do hereby proclaim Monday, June 14, 2021 as the UNITED STATES ARMY'S 246TH BIRTHDAY in Ocala and urge all citizens, soldiers, veterans and their families to join me in celebrating this momentous occasion and to express our gratitude to the military for their resilience, for the integral part they play in keeping peace around the world, and for their service to our country.

Opioid and Amnesty Information

The Ocala Police Department (OPD) has multiple protocols in place to help alleviate addiction in our community.

All field officers are equipped with Narcan® to aid during a response to a possible opioid overdose call. Narcan® is an FDA approved nasal spray that counteracts the life-threatening effects of an opioid emergency or overdose. OPD's Opioid Amnesty Program continues to be a prominent factor in the reduction of overdose deaths and crime throughout Marion County. If someone is struggling with addiction and needs assistance, upon request by the individual, an Ocala Police Officer will transport them to a local health treatment facility, free of charge. The officer will also take and properly destroy any drugs and/or drug paraphernalia surrendered to them by the individual without the fear of arrest for possession of those items. The goal of the Amnesty Program is to encourage individuals to seek treatment without the barriers of cost or arrest. It is the belief of OPD that together, as a community, we can combat this crisis.

OPD Numbers* 2021 Year to Date

Overdoses (OD)	140
OD Deaths	23
Narcan® Saves	59
Amnesty Program	
Total Participants	387
2021 Participants	56

*Numbers are as-of this writing and are subject to change.

About the Mayor

Kent Guinn assumed the office of Mayor in December 2011 after serving the City of Ocala for 12 years as the Councilman representing District 4. Mayor Guinn is in the financial services business and is a representative of the Guardian Life Insurance Company of America as well as owner of the firm Guinn & Company, LLC.

For the past 29 years he has served on the Board of the Children's Home Society Mid-Florida Division which covers North Central Florida. He served on the CHS State Board of Directors for 26 years. CHS is a 112-year-old not for profit child welfare agency in the State of Florida. Mayor Guinn was adopted through CHS.

Mayor Guinn is a 5th generation Ocalan. His family has been in Ocala since 1850. He and his wife Sandra have been married for 39 years and have two sons.

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