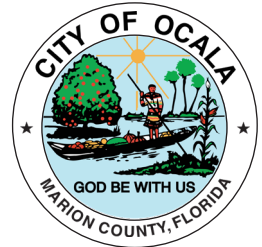




News Happening Around Town

July 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

1
Aug.

**Cal Ripken
Tournament
Kick-off Parade
Downtown Square
4 - 6 p.m.**

3
Aug.

**City Council
Meeting
City Hall
5 p.m.**

**17
Aug.**

**City Council
Meeting
City Hall
5 p.m.**

**4
Sept.**

**Recovery Walk
Brick City Park
3 - 8 p.m.**

Updates from the Police Department

Youth Police Academy



OPD's Youth Police Academy is a week-long experience where kids learn what law enforcement is all about. These 18 cadets had the chance to tour the police department headquarters, get behind the wheel of a police car, meet a police K-9, and engage with many real-world police officers. The program also provides physical training

exercises and a course in leadership. It was a pleasure having them. Great job, cadets!



U.S./Mexican Border Visit

Ocala Police Chief Mike Balken recently joined Congresswoman Kat Cammack on a trip to the U.S./Mexican border to gain insights on the current border crisis.

The ongoing opioid epidemic in our community is the reason for Chief Balken's participation in this trip. Since 2018, OPD responded to over 900 overdose incidents which resulted in the deaths of nearly 140 citizens. Fighting the opioid epidemic here in Ocala costs tens of thousands of dollars and thousands of manpower hours.

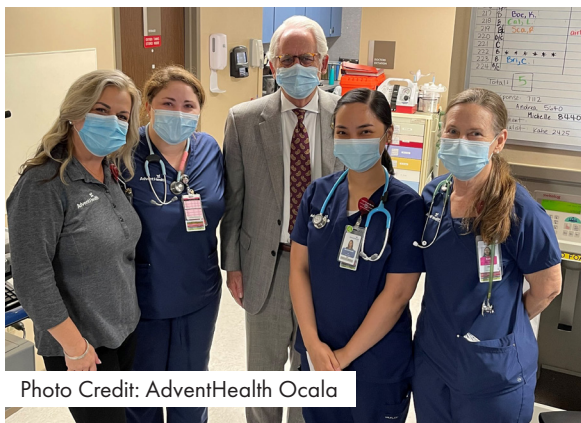
Investigations show that the heroin and fentanyl responsible for these

overdose deaths is entering the United States directly from Mexico. The issues along the southern border are directly affecting Ocala and OPD's ability to provide the level of services that citizens are accustomed to. These issues threaten the safety and well-being of our citizens.

"Having a better understanding of how and why this is occurring at such an alarming rate should help us better allocate resources and develop investigative techniques to more effectively disrupt the flow of drugs into our community," Chief Balken stated.

From Around the Community

Thank You AdventHealth Ocala



I recently had the chance to go back and thank the nurses who helped care for me during my stay in the hospital with COVID-19. Thanks to great care from the nurses and a monoclonal infusion, I'm back to my mayoral duties. Monoclonal antibodies are proteins that mimic the immune system's ability

to fight the virus. This treatment is given within the first 10 days a person tests positive for COVID-19, to those who are at high risk for progressing to a severe case*. When I did it, after about three hours I felt like a million dollars. I encourage everyone who qualifies to receive that treatment to take advantage. If I would have had it early on after my diagnosis, I don't think I would have had near, if any, the problems I did. I'll always be grateful to the AdventHealth nursing staff, my "angels in 606," as I like to call them.

*via www.adventhealth.com/coronavirus-resource-hub

Cal Ripken Baseball Tournament

Ocala once again has the opportunity to host the Cal Ripken Rookie (8-year-old) World Series. This tournament includes 10-12 of the best teams from across the U.S. As in years past, the week of the tournament features games and events that I hope our community will go out and support:

- **Sunday, August 1 | 4 - 6 p.m. | Downtown Square** (weather permitting)
 - » Opening Ceremonies Parade
- **Monday, August 2 | Event Times Vary | Rotary Sportsplex**
 - » Salute to Service games. These games are played to honor all current and former military men and women in attendance who will each be invited out to the field before the game and given a Babe Ruth military challenge coin. The

National Anthem will be sang by US Navy Petty Officer Steven Powell who has performed the national anthem at many famous sporting events including MLB, NFL and NASCAR.

- **Tuesday-Friday, August 3-6 | Game Times Vary | Rotary Sportsplex**
 - » Tournament play
- **Saturday August 7 | Time TBD | Rotary Sportsplex**
 - » Championship Game and Closing Ceremonies

For more information visit the [Cal Ripken Facebook page](#).

Rescue an Animal, Save a Life

The Humane Society of Marion County has a variety of dogs and cats available for adoption, including our favorite speedy pup Hot Wheels. There are many benefits to adopting a rescue animal: saving a dog's life, prior house-training, fighting against puppy mills and paying less and getting a screened/vaccinated animal. If you're interested in adding a furry friend to your family, check out the animals for adoption at the [Humane Society's website](#).

Recovery Walk 2021

Join Zero Hour Life Center Sept. 4 at Brick City Park, 3 - 8 p.m. for a recovery walk in honor of September being National Recovery Month. Walk for recovery. Walk to remember those lost to overdose. For more information visit www.zerohourlifecenter.org or call 352-765-4943.

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

Recreation and Parks Month

Parks and recreation programs are an integral part of communities throughout the country, including the City of Ocala. Our parks and recreation facilities are vitally important to establishing and maintaining quality of life in our communities, ensuring the health of all citizens and contributing to the economic and environmental well-being of a community and region. Parks and recreation programs build healthy, active communities that aid in the prevention of chronic disease, provide therapeutic recreation services for those who are mentally or physically disabled, and improve the mental and emotional

health of all citizens. They also increase a community's economic prosperity through increased property values, expansion of the local tax base, increased tourism, attraction and retention of businesses and crime reduction.

Parks and natural recreation areas improve air and water quality, protect groundwater, prevent flooding, provide vegetative buffers to development, produce a habitat for wildlife, ensure the ecological beauty of our community, and provide a place for children and adults to connect with nature and recreate outdoors. The City of Ocala recognizes the benefits derived from parks and recreation resources. Therefore I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala do hereby proclaim the month of July 2021 in the City of Ocala as RECREATION AND PARKS MONTH.



Ocala Recreation and Parks Director, Preston Pooser and Mayor Guinn

Critical Services Month

Critical services are defined as those immediate and secondary needs impacting our community's most vulnerable individuals and the organizations that support them. The COVID-19 pandemic brought to the forefront the need for coordinated critical services funding in our community, and in June 2020, the community lead funding agencies of the City of Ocala, Marion County, Marion County Hospital District, the Community Foundation for Ocala / Marion County and the United Way of Marion County joined forces to form the Critical Services Committee.

The Critical Services Committee created a centralized register of all 2020 funding distributed to organizations that support the community's most vulnerable by lead funding agencies. This committee worked to improve coordination efforts, reduce duplication of services and provide more efficient and effective emergency funding mechanisms. The Critical Services Committee continues to educate nonprofits, assess where gaps in coverage exist and assist nonprofit agencies in meeting the needs of our community's most vulnerable. Therefore I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City Ocala, do hereby proclaim the month of July 2021, as CRITICAL SERVICES MONTH in the City of Ocala, and I encourage residents to recognize the valuable work being done by the Critical Services Committee to ensure during emergencies, essential needs of community citizens are met.

Constitution Week

It is the privilege and duty of all Americans to commemorate the 234th anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America with appropriate ceremonies and activities. It is fitting and proper to accord official recognition to this magnificent document and its memorable anniversary and to the patriotic celebrations that will commemorate it. The Ocala Chapter, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution, is organizing local activities to commemorate this special observance.

Therefore I, Kent Guinn, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Mayor of the City of Ocala, do hereby proclaim September 17-23, 2021, as CONSTITUTION WEEK in Ocala and urge all citizens to study the Constitution and reflect on the privilege of being an American with all the rights and responsibilities which that privilege involves.

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)	173
OD Deaths	28
Narcan® Saves	74
Amnesty Program	
Total Participants	395
2021 Participants	64

*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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