

# Citizens for Ponce Inlet NEWSLETTER



*Improving the Quality of Life in the Town of Ponce Inlet*



Ponce Inlet is and will be a residential haven for those persons who value nature, quiet, and privacy.

## A Heartful Thank You and Farewell



We want to give a huge shout-out and heartfelt congratulations to our dedicated refuse collector, Fred, at Waste Pro, as he announces his well-deserved retirement! See page 26.

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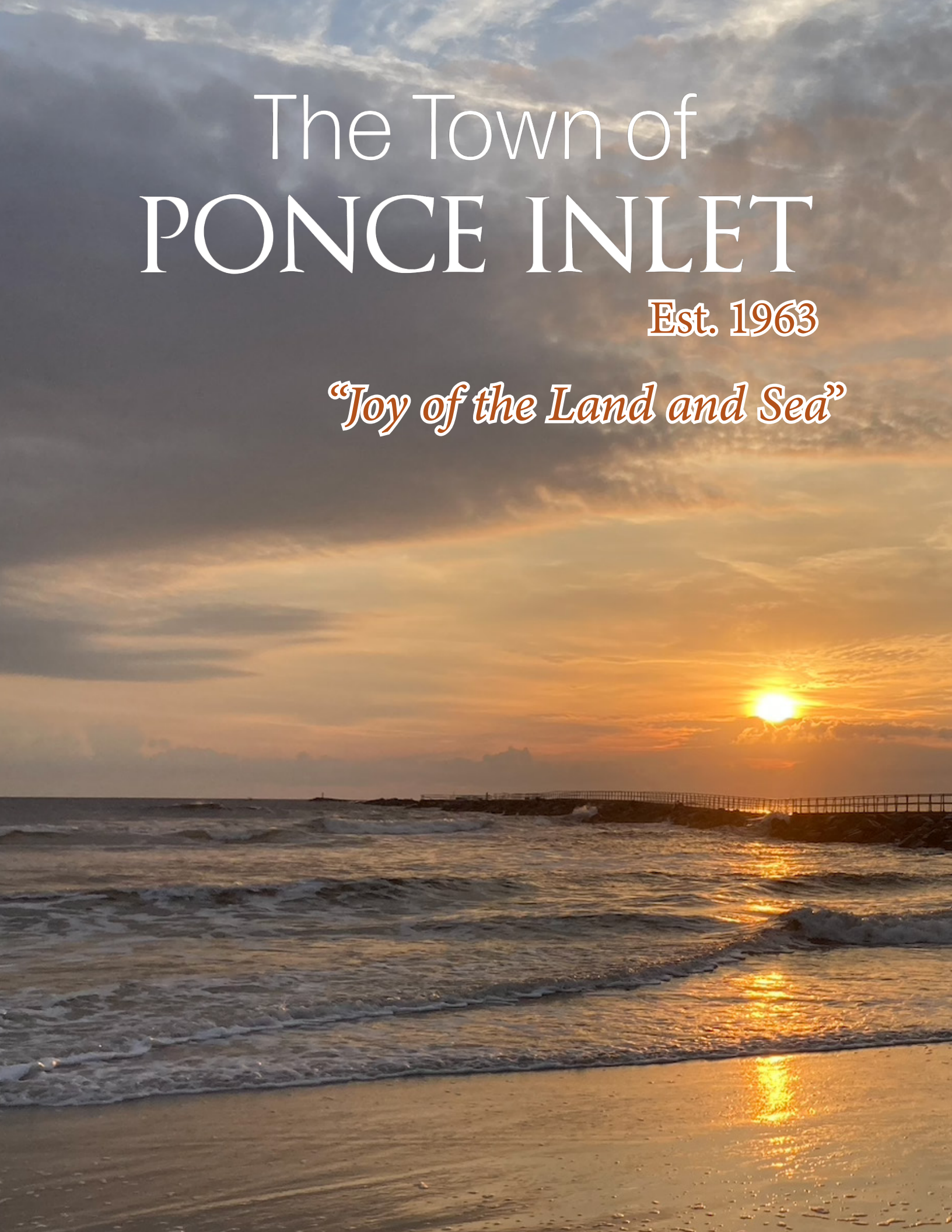




# The Town of PONCE INLET

Est. 1963

*“Joy of the Land and Sea”*





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# A Moment with the Mayor

As we welcome a new year, I hope each of you enjoyed a joyful and restorative holiday season surrounded by family, friends, and the close-knit spirit that makes Ponce Inlet such a special place to call home. January offers a moment for both reflection and renewal—an opportunity to celebrate what we have accomplished together and to look with determination toward the future we continue to build as one community.

The year 2025 was a period of meaningful achievement and steady progress for Ponce Inlet. Our community successfully completed major hurricane recovery operations, securing nearly all eligible reimbursements from FEMA and insurance carriers related to Hurricane Ian. We also advanced the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' dredging and beach restoration project by collaborating with fifty beachfront property owners for temporary construction easements. This partnership exemplifies the community spirit that defines us and ensures the long-term protection of our cherished coastline.

Infrastructure improvements remained a top priority. Considerable progress was made on engineering and permitting for the town's septic-to-sewer conversion project—a vital investment in water quality and environmental preservation. Our Public Works Department completed installation of stormwater one-way “flap valves” to prevent river water from backing up into low-lying streets during King tides and storm surges, a project that will significantly reduce flooding and enhance neighborhood resilience.



Lois Paritsky

Our commitment to fiscal responsibility continues to yield strong results. The Town secured a \$30,000 appropriation to fund a new fire station generator and maintained our Class 5 Community Rating System designation, which provides residents with a 25 percent discount on flood insurance premiums. The Finance Department once again achieved a perfect financial audit—our ninth consecutive year—and we once again received state funds to strengthen our cybersecurity framework through substantial software and systems upgrades.

Equally important, our public safety personnel — both the Fire Department and the Police Department — continue to ensure that Ponce Inlet remains a safe and secure community for all. Their professionalism, training, and unwavering commitment to duty exemplify the very best of public service and contribute greatly to the peace of mind we all enjoy as residents.



These accomplishments would not have been possible without the dedication of our residents, local businesses, volunteers, and municipal staff. Your engagement, service, and pride in our town define Ponce Inlet's success. As we embark on the year ahead, I am inspired by the spirit of collaboration that unites us and confident in our shared ability to overcome challenges and seize opportunities that lie before us.

I invite you to join me at the **State of the Town Address** on **February 4, 2026**, at **6:00 p.m.** at the **Ponce Inlet Community Center**. There, I will share highlights from 2025, and our staff will present strategic priorities for 2026 and beyond.

## Florida League of Cities 2026 Legislative Action Days January 26-28

Each year, during the legislative session, city officials from across the state gather in Tallahassee for Legislative Action Days. This event offers a great opportunity for these officials to build relationships with their legislators and to experience the legislative process firsthand.



Volusia League of Cities members with Representative Gentry, Mayor Paritsky, and Town Manager Disher



Karen Allen - Volusia League of Cities Executive Director, Senator Wright, and Mayor Paritsky



Representative Tramont, Mayor Paritsky, and Town Manager Disher

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lois A. Paritsky".

Lois A. Paritsky  
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# SHERIFF'S SPOTLIGHT

Hello, Ponce Inlet!

Effective law enforcement service is all about partnership and communication. I'm pleased to report that the Volusia Sheriff's Office has a wide range of public safety resources available to the Ponce Inlet Police Department, which does an outstanding job protecting your town.

I'll start with one of the most visible tools we offer: Our Air One helicopters, which performed almost 1,000 flights last year, including 96 medical calls and 113 assists on law enforcement apprehensions. Our highly trained pilots, medics, flight officers, and maintenance crew provide an essential service to every resident of Volusia County. I personally know of cases where lives and limbs have been saved thanks to a quick transport on Air One to a trauma center. We operate the countywide police, fire, and EMS dispatch service, which accounted for about 325,000 911 calls and texts last year, plus another 280,000 non-emergency calls. That's an average of 890 emergency 911s and 767 non-emergencies per day. To help free up more personnel to answer the most urgent 911 calls, we have deployed a cutting-edge A.I. system to help route non-emergency calls to the right department. It handled 121,604 of those calls from August to December, and the results were excellent.

Let me tell you: I'm the first to get frustrated with an automated customer service menu on the phone, but this new A.I. system is nothing like that. So many callers dial our non-emergency line because they just don't know who else to contact about an issue. This does a great job handling that call volume. Even if someone calls the non-emergency line with an emergency, this system can detect certain keywords and even a tone of panic in the caller's voice and route the call to a 911 dispatcher instead.



Crime is low in Ponce Inlet, but we have incredible investigative tools and technology available to your department if the need arises. VSO made 10,717 arrests countywide in 2025 with an overall 80 percent case clearance rate, far exceeding national averages in every category. That included almost 250 arrests by narcotics detectives, who recovered enough fentanyl for about 1.2 million doses last year alone.

Our new in-house ballistics lab is tied to the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network and has slashed the time it takes to process and match shell casings and guns. With advanced training from experts in the field, our Financial Crimes Unit recovered about \$1.2 million for scam victims in 2025.

To sum it all up: We're here to help, we love the Town of Ponce Inlet, and we greatly appreciate the partnership with your town leaders and police department!

-Sheriff Mike Chitwood

**VOLUSIA**  
★★★★★★★★★★★★  
**SHERIFF**  
MICHAEL J. CHITWOOD



# COUNTY CORNER

Hello once again, everyone—

This is your Volusia County Councilman, Matt Reinhart, with the next installment of our quarterly newsletter. I'm excited to share some updates, new initiatives, and important news from around our great county.

## Volusia County Newsletters

I'm pleased to announce that Volusia County has launched **two new public newsletters** to help keep residents better informed.

- One focuses on **flood and stormwater management**
- and the other one highlights **coastal and environmental initiatives**.

Both can be accessed on the County's website under the "**Newsletters**" tab.

## New Partnership: Pediatric E-Bike Trauma Simulation

We recently launched an innovative partnership between **Deltona Fire Rescue and Arnold Palmer Hospital for Children**.

Volusia County's **Emergency Medical Administration Division** hosted a **pediatric e-bike trauma simulation** at Deltona Fire Station 65 (2983 Howland Blvd). The exercise strengthened emergency responder skills while raising awareness about e-bike safety and the growing number of children using them.

The event included:

- Immediate medical response demonstrations
- Air and ground patient transport
- Remarks from trauma physicians, fire and EMS leaders, and emergency medical directors



I would like to also mention that I am currently working with the Volusia Sheriff's Office to enhance the county's ordinance on E-bikes and their use on our beaches. Hopefully we can get better control over their use.

## VoTran: 50 Years of Service

Our county's transit system, **VoTran**, is celebrating its **50th anniversary!** As part of the celebration, VoTran has unveiled a **new logo** and announced exciting updates:

- The **Gold Service** is now renamed **VoAccess**.
- A **new on-demand service, VoRide**, is now available in West Volusia.

VoRide replaces some fixed-route services in areas with lower ridership, using **mini-vans** for flexible, cost-effective transportation. Riders can transfer to VoTran routes for longer trips.



## VoRide Expansion

We're expanding VoRide to the **east side** of the county, including **Ormond Beach (north of Granada), New Smyrna Beach, Edgewater, and Oak Hill**. Public meetings will be held to gather community input before service begins.



## Volusia Innovation Hub

Volusia County has introduced the new **Volusia Innovation Hub**, replacing the former UCF Business Incubator program, creating significant **taxpayer savings** while keeping innovation local.

This transformative initiative is designed to be the **region's premier destination for entrepreneurship, innovation, and business growth**. The Hub will support everyone from tech startups and scaling companies to international businesses seeking a U.S. base.

## Public Works: Exceeding Standards

While the **American Society of Civil Engineers** requires canal and ditch inspections every three years, Volusia County goes above and beyond, performing these inspections **three times each year**, plus additional checks before every major storm event.

Also, with the assistance of the **Transform 386 Program**, we will be working with many local municipalities, including Ponce Inlet, on more robust infrastructure upgrades to assist with flooding issues. For example, County Council just approved **Transform 386** funding for Ponce Inlet to purchase property to enhance certain retention areas.

## Daytona Beach International Airport (DAB)

Exciting things are happening at DAB!

- **Wings for All Program:** In partnership with **The Arc of Volusia** and **Breeze Airways**, this program helps individuals with autism or developmental disabilities and their families **practice the airport experience**, reducing travel anxiety while training airport and airline staff.

- **JetBlue Arrived December 4, 2025:** JetBlue joins our airline lineup, offering **two daily nonstop flights** to New York (JFK) and Boston (BOS).

- **Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program:** DAB is now part of this **global initiative** that helps travelers with hidden disabilities receive appropriate support discreetly. Complimentary sunflower lanyards, pins, and ID cards are available at information desks and Airport Control.

These programs reaffirm DAB's commitment to an **inclusive and exceptional travel experience** for all passengers.



## Volusia County Charter Review Commission

The **Charter Review Commission** has officially begun its work. Required once every ten years, this citizen-led group reviews our **Home Rule Charter** and proposes any recommended amendments for voter consideration in the next general election.

Volusia's Home Rule Charter, first approved in **1970**, made our county the **first in Florida** to adopt home rule powers under the 1968 State Constitution. It established the **Council/Manager** form of government we use today—balancing legislative oversight with professional administration.

## Senate Bill 180 (2025)

Recently signed into law, **Florida Senate Bill 180 (SB 180)** introduces several changes affecting local governments during declared States of Emergency. It **temporarily preempts** local authorities from adopting new or more restrictive land development regulations for one year following a hurricane's landfall.



While the intent is understandable, this law presents challenges for local governments like ours that need flexibility to respond to unique community needs.

## **Volusia County Coastal Division: New Dog Beach**

At the County Council meeting on **October 7th**, the Council approved moving forward with an ordinance to add a **second dog beach location**. On **November 4th**, the measure passed **unanimously**.

The new designated dog-friendly area will span **1.7 miles**, from **Williams Boulevard** to the **Seabreeze Boulevard approach**.

## **Second Chance Initiative**

In the previous newsletters, I have been sharing the exciting news about my “**Second Chance Initiative**.” With a unanimous vote by my colleagues, the infrastructure for the inmate farm has now begun. We will have approximately 2 acres of row crops starting the first of the year. In approximately 5–6 months, staff will bring back to council my phase 2 idea of egg-laying hens. The inmate farm as well as the other projects that have already begun, such as virtual welding for male and female inmates, hydroponics, barber training for male inmates, cosmetology training for female inmates, forklift training, small engine repair, concrete training, FDOT Flagger training, landscape maintenance & food service. There are already plans set to start a sewing program, warehouse management, irrigation, and K-9 therapy dog training.

Education and counseling are also important factors for reentry. We have a GED program as well as domestic violence counseling, drug & alcohol counseling, Life Skills I & II (for resumes, job applications, letter writing, references, personal finance, networking, and interviewing skills),

anger management counseling, OSHA certifications, and the WRAP program (Wellness Recovery Action Plan).

As I mentioned in the previous County Updates, my purpose for this initiative was to reduce the recidivism rate and train the inmate population in skills they can utilize once released from incarceration. We are already seeing positive results from this program. An example of this is just a few months ago the inmate population for Volusia County Corrections was almost 1400 inmates. This month, the count is just over 1100 inmates. The average cost to house an inmate in Volusia County in 2024 was \$110.95 per day, per inmate. That same per diem rate for 2025 is \$100.55.

## **Closing Message**

As always, thank you for taking the time to stay informed and involved. Together, we continue to make Volusia County a wonderful place to live, work, and play.

Warm regards,

Matt Reinhart

Volusia County Council Vice Chair

District 2 Representative

[mreinhardt@volusia.org](mailto:mreinhardt@volusia.org)



# THE TALK OF TALLAHASSEE



## A Message from Representative Chase Tramont

The 2026 Florida Legislative session began January 13th and runs for 60 days. This session, House Speaker Daniel Perez leads a Republican majority House with a strong emphasis on fiscal responsibility and bold reforms addressing affordability, driving economic growth, and enhancing public safety.

As your representative for District 30, including the wonderful town of Ponce Inlet, I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve you. My aide, Julie Watts, who is a Ponce Inlet resident, and I are committed to working on your behalf every day.

I remain focused on fiscal responsibility and addressing affordability challenges, including meaningful property tax reform, lowering health care costs, and reducing insurance rates. I proudly serve on the Judicial Legislative Auditing Committee, Select Property Tax Subcommittee, Economic Infrastructure Subcommittee, Health Care Budget, Health Care Facilities and Systems, Housing, and Agriculture and Tourism and serve as the Commerce Committee Whip, where I advocate for strong conservative principles.

Property tax reform is a priority this session with the goal of one proposal on the ballot. Several constitutional amendment proposals are advancing to provide relief to homeowners, potentially appearing on the November 2026 ballot. I am steadfast in tackling stormwater management, infrastructure improvements, and key appropriations for our district, particularly Ponce Inlet.

Your input as constituents remains invaluable, as it directly shapes our work and improves outcomes.

To stay informed on legislative activity and bills that matter to you, I recommend these excellent resources:

[Flhouse.gov](https://flhouse.gov) [Flsenate.gov](https://flsenate.gov)  
[TheFloridaChannel.org](https://TheFloridaChannel.org)

There you can watch meetings, track bills, read bill analyses, and more.

Please feel free to contact me at [Chase.Tramont@flhouse.gov](mailto:Chase.Tramont@flhouse.gov) or our office at 386-278-1640.

The Lead Aide can be reached at [Julie.Watts@flhouse.gov](mailto:Julie.Watts@flhouse.gov).

A special note: Legislative Aide Duncan DeMarsh is proudly serving in the Army National Guard and is currently deployed for the year. Please keep him and his fellow service members in your prayers for a safe return.

Thank you again for your trust and support. It means a great deal.

Sincerely,

Representative Chase Tramont





### **A Message from Senator Tom A. Wright**

As we move into 2026, I want to thank the residents of Ponce Inlet for your continued engagement and support as the new Legislative Session gets underway. The early weeks of the session have been productive, and I am encouraged by the direction of discussions taking place in Tallahassee.

This session is off to a strong start with a clear focus on public safety, responsible growth, and protecting the quality of life that makes our coastal communities so special. As Chair of the Senate Committee on Military and Veterans Affairs, Space, and Domestic Security, I am proud to continue advocating for Florida's service members, veterans, and the Space Coast's vital role in our state and national security.

I remain especially committed to ensuring that coastal communities like Ponce Inlet have a strong voice when it comes to infrastructure, resiliency, and environmental stewardship. Whether it is supporting first responders, addressing transportation needs, or safeguarding our waterways and shoreline, these priorities are front and center as the budget process and policy discussions continue.

One of my top priorities for this session is Senate Bill 356, relating to Utility Terrain Vehicles (UTVs), often referred to as

side-by-sides. The purpose of SB 356 is straightforward: it creates a safe, structured path for local communities to opt-in to allowing UTVs on certain roads, with clear rules and accountability. Importantly, this is about bringing order and safety to something that is already happening across Florida, UTVs being operated on streets illegally or with out-of-state plates, so law enforcement has clearer tools to regulate and enforce responsible use.

SB 356 sets commonsense safeguards, including requirements tied to licensed operation, vehicle standards, and insurance, and it keeps decision-making local by limiting eligible roadways and allowing counties and cities to adopt stricter rules when needed. It also preserves safety authority for the state where appropriate.

As always, I believe the best outcomes are achieved through collaboration. I am grateful for the partnership of local leaders, residents, and community organizations who help shape the issues I bring to Tallahassee. Your input is invaluable and directly influences the work I do on your behalf.

I look forward to keeping you updated as the 2026 Legislative Session progresses and to continuing our work together to protect and strengthen Ponce Inlet and the greater Volusia County community.

As always, it is my honor to serve as your Senator for District 8. Please never hesitate to reach out to my office with any questions, concerns, or ideas. Your input helps guide the work I do every day on your behalf. My office can be reached at 386-304-7630, or email me at [wright.tom@flsenate.gov](mailto:wright.tom@flsenate.gov).

Until next time—stay safe, stay engaged, and stay informed.

Sincerely,

Senator Tom A. Wright

District 08

# WORD FROM WASHINGTON

## Congressman Cory Mills:

I am honored to serve Florida's Seventh Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives during the 119th Congress.

It was a privilege for me to host a coffee chat with local veterans, creating an open space to listen, connect, and say thank you to the men and women who have worn the uniform and put their lives on the line for this nation. These conversations matter, because the best policy starts by hearing directly from those who have served.

We discussed key issues impacting veterans and military families, including access to Veterans Affairs services, healthcare, and benefits. I'm grateful for the honest feedback, thoughtful questions, and continued commitment these veterans show to our community.



My office helped return \$87,089,279.00 to constituents across Florida's 7th District by resolving issues with federal agencies and ensuring families received the benefits and resources they were owed.



## Funds Returned by Agency:

- \$51.9 million – Social Security Administration
- \$18.4 million – Department of Veterans Affairs
- \$6.4 million – Small Business Administration
- \$3.8 million – Office of Personnel Management
- \$2.5 million – Internal Revenue Service
- \$1.1 million – U.S. Department of the Treasury
- \$609,000 – Federal Emergency Management Agency
- \$99,000 – Department of Homeland Security

In total, my team successfully resolved **5,247 constituent cases**, assisting seniors, veterans, small business owners, disaster survivors, federal retirees, and working families who needed answers and action from Washington.

I have strived to promote policies that stimulate economic growth, reduce unnecessary spending and worked to advance policies that spur economic



growth, cut wasteful spending, and restore American energy independence. This year, I supported H.R. 1, a major pro-growth, pro-family tax package with real benefits for hardworking Floridians.

According to the Tax Foundation's analysis, families in 7th district stand to receive significant tax relief under H.R. 1:

- Seminole County—Average tax cut: \$3,717
- Volusia County—Average tax cut: \$3,063

Other highlights include a major investment in Florida's rural healthcare system included in the Fiscal Year 2026 funding package as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill, delivering nearly \$210 million to strengthen access to care for rural communities across our state. Florida is home to more than 1.2 million rural residents, many of whom face persistent challenges accessing timely, affordable, and high-quality healthcare. The Fiscal Year 2026 funding, totaling \$209,938,195 for Florida, is designed to help modernize and stabilize rural health systems while expanding innovative care delivery models that meet patients where they are.

The House of Representatives advanced key Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations bills, including Commerce, Justice, Science; Energy and Water Development; and Interior and Environment, marking a major step toward restoring fiscal discipline and putting an end to years of Biden-era wasteful policies. The bill now heads to the Senate.

These bills refocus Washington on what truly matters to Floridians: public safety, strong infrastructure, secure water systems, and responsible stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Instead of funding radical agendas

that drive up energy costs and undermine law enforcement, House Republicans are delivering real, local results.

I'm especially proud to share that I have secured significant community project funding for Florida's 7th District, delivering targeted investments that strengthen public safety, modernize infrastructure, and protect our environment, without reckless spending.

## Public Safety Investments

Keeping our communities safe will always be one of my top priorities. Through the FY26 Commerce, Justice, Science Appropriations bill, I secured funding to support law enforcement, first responders, and public safety training across Seminole County and beyond:

- \$1.9 million for Seminole County Sheriff's Office radio upgrades
- \$529,000 for Altamonte Springs Police Department technology improvements
- \$500,000 for Oviedo Police Department training and equipment
- \$400,000 for Seminole County juvenile crisis response initiatives
- \$350,000 for Seminole State College criminal justice training
- \$500,000 for SMART prevention and public safety education programs

These investments ensure our officers have the tools, training, and technology they need to keep Florida families safe.

## Infrastructure & Environmental Projects

Florida's future depends on resilient infrastructure and responsible

environmental stewardship. Through the FY26 Interior and Environment Appropriations bill, I secured funding for critical water and infrastructure improvements across the district while also pushing back on overreach from Washington bureaucrats:

- \$1.28 million to restore Sweetwater Creek in Oviedo
- \$1.25 million for septic-to-sewer upgrades in Seminole County
- \$1 million for water main replacement in Winter Springs
- \$640,000 for reclaimed water expansion in Winter Springs
- \$750,000 for water main replacement in Lake Helen

Congressman Mills was honored to be hosted by American Legion Post 243 to present Vietnam-era veterans with a congressional pin to recognize and honor their service.



My team and I are here to assist you with anything from scheduling a U.S. Capitol tour to helping with federal agencies. To ensure you are up to date with everything I am doing in Florida's Seventh and D.C., subscribe to my weekly e-newsletter at [mills.house.gov](https://mills.house.gov).

It's an honor to serve.  
Rep. Cory Mills (FL-07)

CONGRESSMAN  
**CORY MILLS**  
HONORED TO SERVE FLORIDA'S 7TH DISTRICT

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## From the Town Manager, Mike Disher

As we welcome 2026, it's a natural time to reflect on the Town's recent accomplishments and look ahead. Over the past year, Ponce Inlet continued to build on recovery efforts following Hurricane Milton while strengthening preparedness and resiliency for future storms. Key work included the construction of one-way "flap valves" on Old Carriage Road, Anchor Drive, and Front Street to prevent storm surge from backflowing into low-lying streets; the installation of emergency backup generators at the Community Center, Fire Station, and Public Works; the completion of 1,000 feet of "living shoreline" at Ponce Preserve; the purchase of two undeveloped properties on South Turn Circle for future stormwater improvements; and the much-needed maintenance of drainage swales on S. Atlantic Avenue and S. Peninsula Drive.

Additional Town accomplishments included extending the 25-year cell tower lease with New Cingular Wireless; amending code regulations related to Land Acquisition Fund expenditures, utility billing disputes, and rental permits; replacing the Town's 20+ year-old backhoe; authorizing a weekly Farmer's Market at the Ponce Inlet Community Center; expediting disaster assistance through the Florida Department of Emergency Management's F-ROC program; transitioning to a Special Magistrate for code enforcement; partnering with HomeServe to provide service line warranties for residential property owners; and achieving a clean financial audit for the ninth consecutive year.

The current fiscal year budget continues to emphasize resiliency, with investments in the completion of the Adaptation Action Plan and improvements to the Town's flood



insurance rating. Looking ahead through 2026, Town Council priorities include extending sewer service to remaining unserved areas, completing the design of the S. Peninsula Drive sidewalk widening, replacing Building "B" at the Public Works facility, and establishing a stormwater utility fund.

It is our privilege to serve the community and help maintain what makes Ponce Inlet such a special place to call home. On behalf of all Town employees, we wish you a safe, happy, and productive 2026.

### Your Town's Budget: What You Need to Know

The Town operates on a fiscal year from October 1 through September 30 and is required by Florida law to adopt a balanced budget each year. The Town Council sets the annual millage rate after considering projected revenues, community priorities, and rising costs, with the Truth in Millage (TRIM) process ensuring transparency and public involvement.

Budget planning is a year-round effort, beginning early in the calendar year with input from departments, advisory boards, the Town Council, and residents. Multiple public workshops and hearings are held before the final budget and tax rate are adopted in September.

Once adopted, the Town’s finances are reviewed annually by an independent auditor to ensure compliance with government financial regulations and sound fiscal management practices. Reports for the past three audited years can be found at: <https://www.ponce-inlet.org/509/Auditors-Reports>. The FY 24/25 audit will be presented to the Town Council in April 2026.

This process is designed to be open, thoughtful, and responsive, ensuring that community needs are met while maintaining strong financial stewardship. The entire process is outlined in the table below. You can also review the budget documents, reports, Q&A, and meeting minutes for the past three years at <https://www.ponce-inlet.org/519/Budget>. We will be putting together this same type of information for FY 26/27, so be sure to check back regularly.

Approximate Date	Activity
October-December	Audit of prior fiscal year begins. Majority of property tax revenue is received in December.
January	<b>ESAB</b> meets to review preliminary budget ideas from Police, Fire, and Public Works. <b>CSB</b> begins to review budget ideas for parks, recreation, and the historical museum. Property Appraiser provides the Prior-Year Final Tax Roll.
March	<b>ESAB</b> meets to review, prioritize, and recommend capital expenditures from Police, Fire, and Public Works. <b>CSB</b> provides its budget recommendations.
April	Departments send budget requests to Town Manager, including personnel changes, capital purchases, operating budgets, and revenue projections. Auditor presents prior-year financial statements and audit to <b>Town Council</b> .
May	Department heads meet with Town Manager to review budget proposals. HR receives annual employee health and insurance benefits proposal from broker.
June	Property Appraiser provides the Preliminary Tax Roll. Mid-year budget adjustment resolution presented at June <b>Town Council</b> meeting. 1st budget workshop with <b>Town Council</b> . Includes discussion of reserves, revenue and expense assumptions, Board recommendations, and the 5-year CIP. HR receives Florida Retirement System (FRS) rate updates from the FL Dept. of Management Services.
July 1st	<b>Day 1</b> of 100-day deadline to adopt budget, per Florida Statutes. Property Appraiser certifies the final taxable value. 2nd <b>Town Council</b> workshop to review the initial Draft Budget. <b>Town Council</b> adopts Proposed Millage Rate (max millage rate cap).
August	<b>Day 55.</b> The Property Appraiser mails the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes (TRIM notice) to all property owners. HR receives final property/liability insurance rates from insurance broker.
September	<b>Days 65-80.</b> The <b>Town Council</b> holds 1 <sup>st</sup> public hearing on the Tentative Millage Rate and Final Budget. <b>Days 80-100.</b> The <b>Town Council</b> advertises and holds 2 <sup>nd</sup> public hearing to adopt the Final Millage Rate and Final Budget.
October	<b>Day 101.</b> New Fiscal Year begins.

## Ponce Inlet Employee of the Year: Firefighter Jeff Lord



Congratulations to Firefighter Jeff Lord on being selected as the Town of Ponce Inlet’s Employee of the Year, in recognition of his exceptional dedication, leadership, and commitment to service within the Ponce Inlet Fire-Rescue Department. With more than 24 years of prior fire service experience, Firefighter Lord made an immediate and lasting impact upon joining the department. He took the initiative to modernize the EMS inventory and supply system, improving efficiency, accuracy, and accountability. He also played a key role in ensuring Quint 78 was fully equipped and mission-ready and restructured the Vector Check-It system to enhance truck inspections and operational reliability across the department.

Firefighter Lord is widely recognized for his commitment to training and safety. As a certified Aerial Operations Instructor, he voluntarily trained and certified the entire department, strengthening operational readiness and personnel safety. He is also the department’s only member with advanced hazardous materials certifications and regularly shares his expertise to better prepare staff for complex emergency situations.

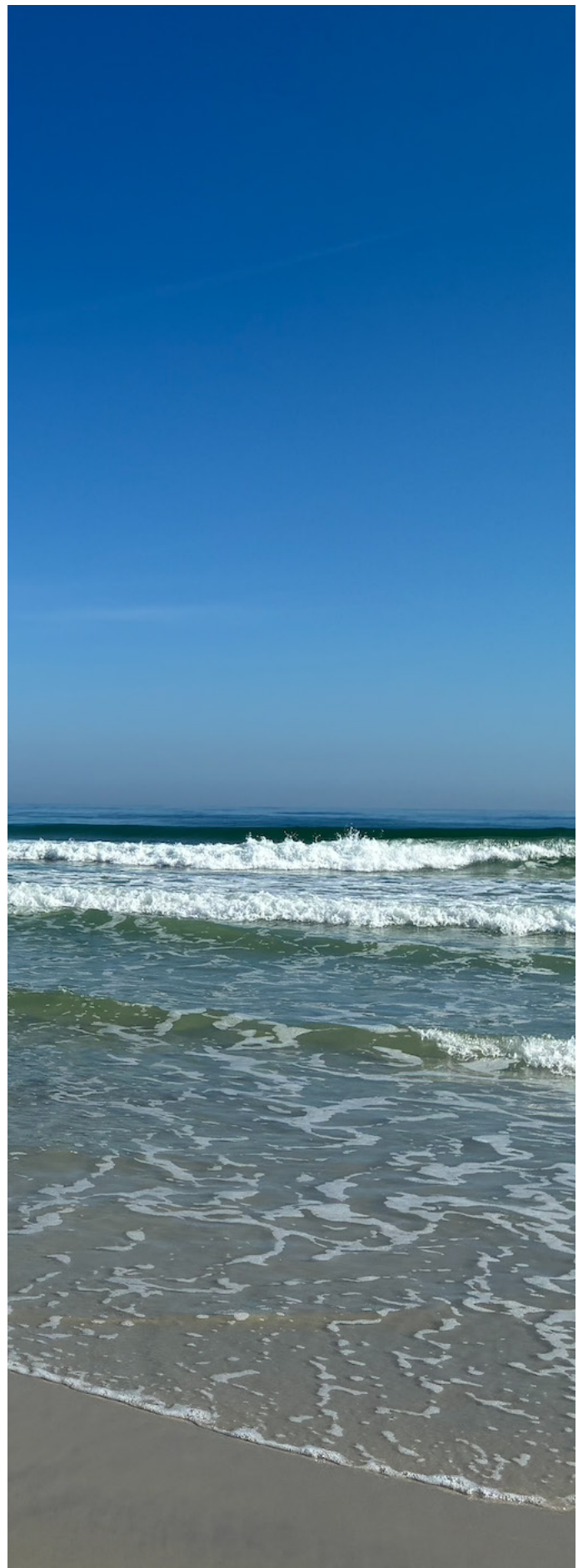


Beyond his technical contributions, Firefighter Lord is known for his strong work ethic and selfless approach. He routinely arrives early to assist fellow firefighters during shift changes and has personally donated equipment to support departmental readiness. His professionalism, initiative, and dedication exemplify the values of service and excellence that make him truly deserving of this recognition.

## Keep up with what's happening in your Town

The Town seeks to inform and engage residents on many subjects in a number of ways. In addition to “meet-and-greets” and Town Hall meetings, we also provide a substantial amount of information on the Town website ([www.ponce-inlet.org](http://www.ponce-inlet.org)), Facebook and Nextdoor social media accounts, e-mail notifications, and utility bills. You can also contact us directly for any specific information you may seek, and we'll be happy to assist.

For emergency information, we suggest signing up for the Town's Code Red emergency phone call alert system by texting “PonceAlerts” to 99411 or by calling the fire department at 386-322-6720. We use this phone alert system very sparingly, as it is meant only for emergency notifications and will not burden you with unwanted calls.



# From Police Chief Jeff Glazier



## Accreditation

The Ponce Inlet Police Department is the smallest department in the State of Florida to be fully accredited. An accreditation program has long been recognized as a means of maintaining the highest standards of professionalism. Accreditation increases the law enforcement agency’s ability to prevent and control crime through more effective and efficient delivery of law enforcement services to the community it serves.

The accreditation standards provide norms against which agency performance can be measured and monitored over time. The agency is compelled to operate within specific guidelines. It is accountable to the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation. The agency must stay in compliance with the standards set forth by the Commission to retain its accreditation.

## Live 911

2025 saw the implementation of new programs in the Ponce Inlet Police Department, including “Live 911.” In emergency response, every second matters. The Ponce Inlet Police Department is now live streaming 911 emergency calls directly to police officers on patrol.

When a 911 call comes in, Live911 sends it out simultaneously to first responders. Officers can see the location of the caller on a map and move in the direction of the incident—giving them a head start and allowing them to develop a response plan while driving to a call for service. All the while, first responders are hearing the interactions between the caller and the call taker, including answers to questions, first-hand descriptions, emotional tones, and background noise on the scene. Live911 improves response times and increases situational awareness like never before.

## 2025 by the Numbers:

Traffic Stops
2,480
Physical Arrests
38
Dispatched 911 Calls
541
Average Response Time
3 minutes and 11 seconds



## Did you Know?

The Ponce Inlet Police Department handles all animal control calls. Whether it's a pesky pelican, a rabid raccoon, or a slithery snake. Ponce Inlet police officers will respond to handle the situation. Below is a picture of Sergeant D. Rudd responding to an injured seabird.



## Ponce Partners

The Ponce Inlet Police Department is looking for more “Ponce Partners.” This program is designed to be a safety net for those who have severe health problems, live alone, or are in the early stages of cognitive decline. Any resident can become a member by completing a short request form.

When you become a Ponce Partner, you simply agree to contact the Police Department by phone each day before noon. If we do not hear from you, we call you to ensure you are ok. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we send an Officer out to check on your well-being. This program is set up to ensure our most vulnerable citizens have some form of communication each day. This program has been successful in rescuing several residents who had fallen and were unable to contact anyone for help.

We have a great relationship with our “Ponce Partners” and look forward to their morning calls. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining this program, please contact the Police Department at 386-236-2160 or [download the online application \(PDF\)](#) from our website.





## From Public Safety Director and Fire Chief Dan Scales



As winter settles in, the Ponce Inlet Fire Department continues working behind the scenes to strengthen services, improve readiness, and support our community year-round. While the season may be quieter for visitors, it remains an active and productive time for the department.

### Accreditation and Professional Excellence

The department continues progressing through the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) accreditation process, a nationally recognized program that evaluates fire departments against industry best practices. This work reflects a long-term commitment to accountability, operational excellence, and continuous improvement—ensuring residents receive the highest level of service possible.

In addition to accreditation efforts, the department maintained a strong focus on ISO preparation and operational improvement, including pre-fire planning, documentation, training, and response readiness. These efforts supported the Town's recent Insurance Services Office (ISO) review. In December, the Ponce Inlet Fire Department improved its Public Protection Classification from a Class 3 to a Class 2. Only about six percent of fire

departments nationwide achieve a Class 2 rating or better. This accomplishment reflects the department's dedication to excellence and provides long-term insurance benefits for residents and businesses throughout the community.

### Training, Staffing and Readiness

The winter months provide valuable opportunities for focused training, equipment checks, and documentation review. Recently, the Ponce Inlet Fire Rescue Department conducted hands-on vehicle extrication training designed to better protect residents and visitors during traffic accidents.

Under the direction of Training Officer Lieutenant Steven Tornelli, three vehicles—one for each shift—were obtained to allow firefighters to train in realistic, real-world conditions. Using actual damaged vehicles gives crews the opportunity to practice critical rescue skills, including vehicle stabilization, patient protection, and safe removal techniques, all while working as a coordinated team.

Ongoing training such as this is a key part of Ponce Inlet Fire Rescue's commitment to continuous improvement. By regularly practicing complex rescue scenarios, firefighters refine their skills, stay current with best practices, and ensure they are prepared to respond when emergencies occur. This dedication helps ensure that when help is needed, residents and visitors can trust that Ponce Inlet Fire Rescue personnel are ready, capable, and focused on providing the highest level of service.





## From Planning and Development Director Darren Lear



### South Peninsula Sidewalk Update

Survey work along S. Peninsula Drive began in August 2024 as the first step in the sidewalk widening project, followed by the initiation of design by Volusia County. The Town received 60% of the plans in September 2025 and 90% of the plans in November 2025, with comments provided back to County staff at each stage. The County expects to finalize 100% design plans by early 2026.

The following is a tentative timeline outlining anticipated project milestones over the next two years:

#### 2026:

- **January-February** – One-on-one meetings with individual property owners to address site-specific construction issues.
- **March** – Public Open House for all residents to be held at Ponce Inlet Town Hall or Community Center.
- **April** – Joint meeting of Cultural Services Board and Essential Services Advisory Board to review the project plans.

- **May** – Town Council meeting to present the final 100% design plans for Council review prior to contract bidding. This presentation will summarize public input received during the neighborhood meetings and outline next steps for project implementation.
- **July** – Construction bid package sent to the Town and FDOT for review and comments.
- **September** – Advertisement for construction and CEI bids.
- **October** – Construction and CEI bids opening.

#### 2027:

- **February** – Construction contract executed.
- **March** – Construction starts.
- **October** – Construction finished.

### Resiliency Update - Adaptation Plan

The Town's planning consultant, Brizaga Inc., has been diligently working on the Adaptation Plan since the end of June 2025. This initiative is funded through a \$50,000 grant from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) under the Resilient Florida program and aligns with the Town Council's goals for the Planning Division. The Adaptation Plan will identify Adaptation Action Areas to help prioritize investment and will feature conceptual designs, planning-level engineering cost estimates for priority projects, and potential funding sources.

The consultant held a public workshop on January 29, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers, which was open to all residents. Public input will be incorporated into the draft plan document prior to its presentation to the Planning Board and Town Council. Any additional feedback received at those meetings will be addressed in the final Adaptation Plan.

The Adaptation Plan is a continuation of Town's resiliency planning efforts that began in 2021 with the Vulnerability Assessment and Watershed Master Plan. The Adaptation Plan will serve as a long-term guide for strategic investments and will help strengthen community resilience over the next 10 to 30 years.

## Disaster Risk Reduction Areas

Volusia County has received \$328.9 million in HUD Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds to support Transform386, a long-term recovery initiative following Hurricanes Ian, Nicole, and Milton. Through Transform386, residents in jurisdictions that have adopted the buyout resolution may be eligible if they live within the 100-year floodplain or in designated Disaster Risk Reduction Areas (DRRAs), which prioritize properties with a high risk of repeated flooding.

# TRANSFORM386

STRENGTHENING VOLUSIA'S FUTURE

The Town of Ponce Inlet has submitted five proposed DRRAs to Volusia County for residents living outside the 100-year floodplain. These areas were identified using post-hurricane damage assessment mapping and flood-prone focus areas outlined in the Town's Watershed Master Plan.

The five DRRAs submitted are as follows:

1. Old Carriage Road and Anchor Drive
2. Riverglen Boulevard Area
3. Oceanside Village Subdivision (Calumet Drive to Inlet Harbor Road)
4. Bay Harbour Drive to Beach Street
5. Riverfront Area (Ocean Way Drive to Sailfish Drive)

Residents located within these DRRAs may be eligible for Transform386 CDBG-DR grant funding to support the voluntary buyout of properties that have been repeatedly impacted by flooding. Volusia County anticipates completing its review and approval of the proposed DRRAs in early 2026. Once approved, the DRRA database will be available on the County's website. The Town of Ponce Inlet will also provide a link on the Town's website for easy access.

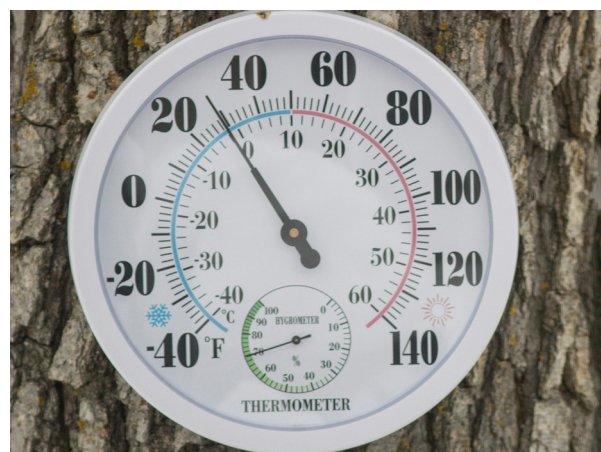
## Getting Your Landscape Ready for Cold Weather

### Prior to a Freeze

Be prepared to move tender potted plants to warmer, sheltered areas if frost or freezing temperatures are forecasted in your region. Take stock of your plant covers and frost blankets ahead of time to ensure you're ready when the need arises.

Providing proper care throughout the year helps plants better withstand cold weather. Healthy plants are more resilient to cold temperatures and recover from damage more quickly.

Avoid fertilizing cold-sensitive plants in late fall or winter, as fertilizer promotes new growth that is especially vulnerable to cold injury. Similarly, delay pruning until spring, as freshly pruned plants are more prone to cold damage.







### Protecting Your Plants from the Cold

Florida's winter temperatures can be erratic, so it's important to monitor the forecast and prepare to safeguard your plants.

- **Covering Plants:** During a hard freeze, cover plants completely, ensuring the cover extends to the soil to trap ground heat. For extra warmth, consider placing an electric light bulb (not LED) under the cover, ensuring safety precautions are taken.
- **Wrapping Larger Plants:** For cold-sensitive plants that are too large to cover fully, wrap their trunks with several layers of cloth or newspaper for protection.
- **Removing Covers:** Once temperatures rise above freezing, remove covers promptly to prevent overheating or moisture buildup.

### Avoiding Risky Cold-Protection Methods

While gardeners use various techniques to protect plants, some methods can be impractical or even harmful. For example, overhead irrigation is effective on farms where irrigation systems are designed to run continuously from before the freeze until hours after temperatures rise. However, using a home irrigation system wastes water and can lead to heavy ice formation that damages plants.

### Caring for Cold-Damaged Plants

If your plants suffer from cold damage despite your efforts, resist the urge to prune immediately. Wait until spring, as cold-injured plants will often sprout below the damaged areas, allowing you to clearly see where pruning is needed.

With careful planning and proper techniques, you can protect your plants and help them recover from winter weather challenges.





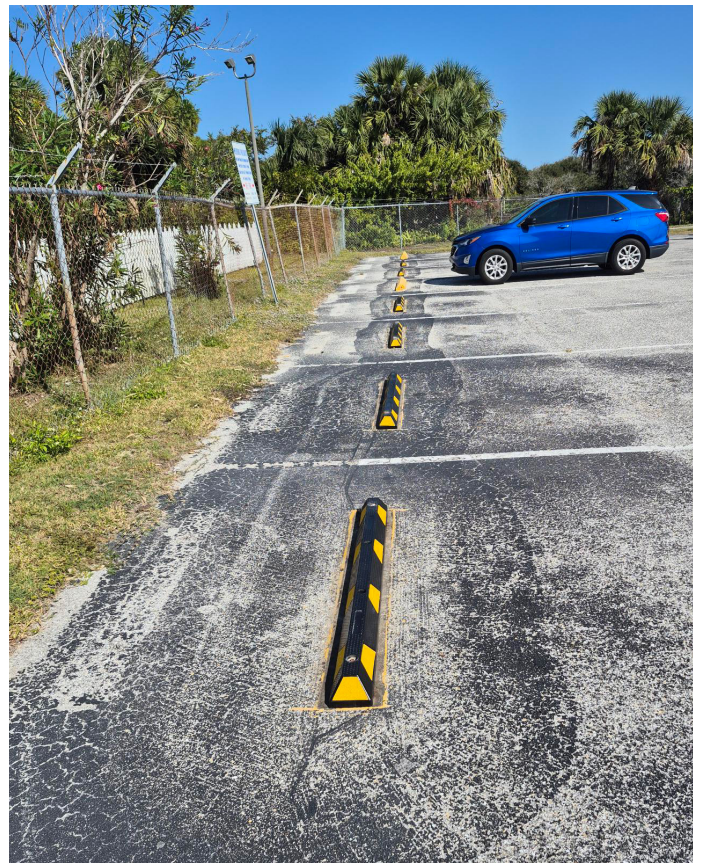
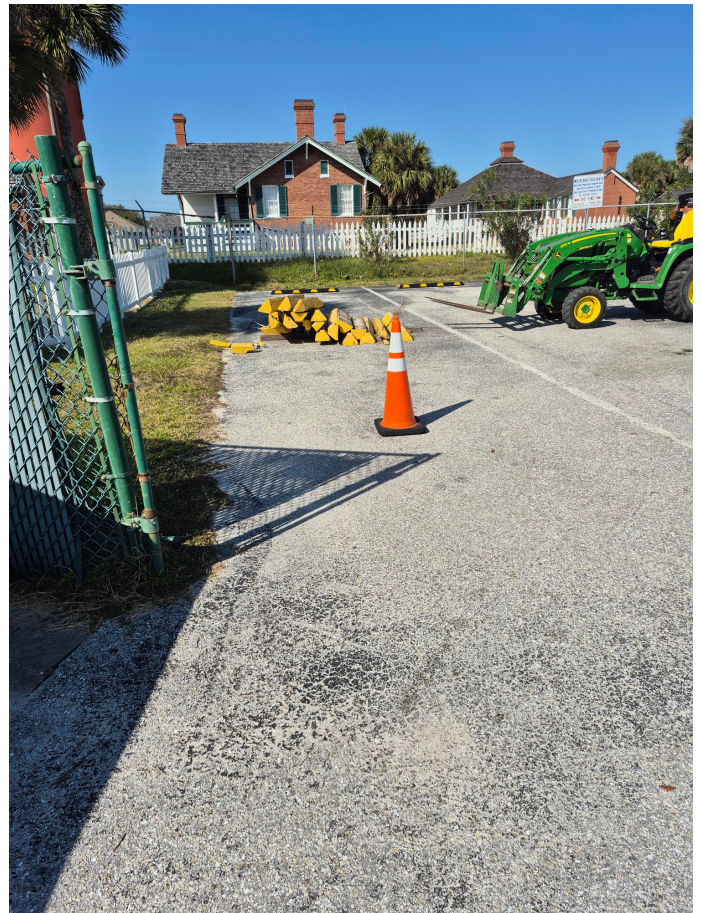
## From Interim Public Works Director Steve Dunlap



The following projects highlight Public Works' continued commitment to maintaining the safety, functionality, and appearance of our town. Through routine maintenance, roadway improvements, and proactive drainage work, Public Works remains dedicated to preserving public assets and enhancing the quality of life for residents and visitors. We appreciate the community's continued support as we work to maintain and improve the Town's infrastructure.

### **Routine Maintenance & Facility Improvements**

Public Works recently completed the replacement of worn and damaged parking lot wheel stops at the Town's boat ramp parking lot. This maintenance was necessary to improve safety, accessibility, and the overall condition of this heavily used facility. In addition, Public Works removed old mulch and re-mulched the entire dog park, providing a cleaner, refreshed appearance and improving the overall experience for pets and their owners.







As part of ongoing maintenance efforts, resurfacing of the tennis court, pickleball courts, and basketball court is planned in the coming months. These improvements will help extend the life of the courts and ensure they remain safe and enjoyable for public use.

## Roadway Improvements

Public Works will be installing road base aprons at the intersections of Sailfish Drive with Beach Street and South Peninsula Drive to address ongoing roadway deterioration. Poor drainage conditions combined with turning traffic have caused repeated damage to Sailfish Drive that requires frequent maintenance. The installation of road base aprons will help stabilize these intersections and reduce the need for continual grading and repairs.

## Stormwater & Swale Maintenance

Proactive stormwater maintenance remains a priority. Public Works will continue swale maintenance throughout Town, with the next project scheduled along South Peninsula Drive and within the Harbor Village area. This work is intended to improve roadway drainage and prevent standing water following rain events, helping to reduce localized flooding concerns.





# Thank You and Farewell to Fred at Waste Pro!

We want to give a huge shout-out and heartfelt congratulations to our dedicated refuse collector, Fred, at Waste Pro, as he announces his well-deserved retirement after an astonishing 48 years of service—including the past 17 years with Waste Pro!

Rain or shine, Fred has kept Ponce Inlet clean and beautiful with unwavering commitment, braving heat and tricky pickups while greeting residents with a warm smile and wave. His hard work and positive attitude have enriched our community—we're grateful for his service.

Thank you, Fred, for all you've done—we wish you a relaxing and joyful retirement!

As Fred retires, we're excited to announce that Trai will be stepping in as the new route driver, along with his colleague Willie, to continue the excellent service our community relies on.





# Garbage & Yard Waste Guidelines for Ponce Inlet Residents

## Pickup Schedule:

- **Garbage:** Collected twice a week on Monday and Thursday.
- **Recycling:** Collected once a week on Tuesday.
- **Yard Waste:** Collected once a week on Wednesday.

## Garbage Container Rules

- **Place All Garbage in Containers:** Put both moist and dry garbage into garbage cans or containers for pickup. Please no loose bags at the curbside.
- **Clean Up Spills:** Pick up and place any spilled garbage—caused by dogs, cats, raccoons, wind, or people—back into cans or containers.
- **Position Containers for Easy Access:** Set garbage cans and containers where collection crews can easily reach them.



## Yard Waste Disposal Tips

- **Pile Yard Waste Neatly:** Stack grass, leaves, small twigs, branches, and yard trimmings on the pavement or next to the street line for easy handling.
- **Keep Streets and Gutters Clear:** Avoid piling yard waste in the street or gutter to prevent it from washing away.

- **Protect Stormwater Drains:** Do not block stormwater drains with yard waste.
- **Cut Large Branches:** Trim large branches into pieces no longer than 4 feet and weighing no more than 40 pounds.

## Yard Waste does NOT include:

- Treated Lumber
- Rocks
- Soil
- Waste generated by tree surgeons or arborist services

**Yard debris co-mingled with non-organic material will not be collected.**

**Contractor Responsibility:** If a contractor is hired for vegetation trimming or removal, they are responsible for removing and disposing of the waste, not the town's waste service.

**Waste Pro** handles all garbage, yard waste, and recycling removal for single-family residences in Ponce Inlet.

- **Customer Service:** Residents can contact Waste Pro for inquiries, comments, or to report issues with trash services at 386-788-8890 or visit the website at <https://www.wasteprousa.com/office/daytona-beach/>

## Special Note for Condo/Multi-Family Residents

Residents in condos or multi-family units need to contact their condo association for specific pickup details, as Waste Pro's services outlined here apply only to single-family homes.

**Town Ordinance:** [Click Here](#)

## **From Cultural Services Manager, Jackie Alex**



### **Celebrating a Year of Impact and Stewardship in 2025**

As 2025 ends, the department reflects on another productive year marked by strong community participation, expanded programming, and meaningful progress in environmental stewardship. Through collaboration with volunteers, partners, and Town leadership, we continued to enhance recreational opportunities, education, and conservation efforts across our parks and preserves.

The Department, with invaluable participation from the community of volunteers, hosted a total of 30 programs and events with nearly 1,200 total attendees. The programs were designed to educate, connect, and engage residents of all ages. A key focus this year was expanding offerings for both youth and senior audiences, resulting in the successful establishment of six new programs tailored specifically to these age groups. These initiatives helped ensure our programs remain inclusive, accessible, and responsive to community needs.

The department also coordinated 18 events within the town, including six Town-hosted events and six events that received co-sponsorship approval from Town Council. The department sincerely thanks our volunteers, partners, and residents whose support made this work possible. The year's accomplishments reflect a shared commitment to community, education, and preservation.

### **Volunteers Making a Lasting Difference**

Volunteers once again played a critical role in preserving and enhancing our natural spaces. A focused volunteer workday at Timucuan Oaks targeted the removal of invasive arrowhead vine, helping restore native habitat and improve overall ecosystem health. Volunteer efforts also supported major conservation initiatives, including assistance with planting smooth cordgrass as part of the Ponce Preserve Living Shoreline project, which enhances shoreline stability and resilience while providing valuable habitat.

### **Progress in Invasive Species Management and Education**

Significant strides were made in invasive species control with the release of a new air potato beetle that targets bulbils at the base of the vine. By stopping the spread at its source, this method improves effectiveness compared to prior beetle releases and represents an important advancement in long-term management. Environmental education also expanded through the coordination of a self-guided native plant tour at Ponce Preserve, highlighting more than 60 native species along the trails. This project, made possible through volunteer dedication and donations, continues to provide visitors with an accessible and engaging way to learn about Florida's native plants.



## Special Events

There are numerous special events taking place in Ponce Inlet throughout the year. To determine if your event requires a Special Event permit, please review the Special Event regulations in [Chapter 51 of the Town's Code of Ordinances](#). All questions can be directed to Jackie Alex at [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 322-6703.

## Upcoming Events & Programs

Below is a list of the Town's upcoming events. Please continue to visit the Town of Ponce Inlet website and Facebook page for additional details. For all events, please contact Jackie with any questions at [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)322-6703.

## Events for February:

### Lecture Series—Volusia County's Artificial Reef Program

Learn about the artificial reefs that have been strategically introduced to waters surrounding Volusia County and how they have become vital to our marine ecosystems. Presented by Chad Macfie, Manager of the Marine Science Center.

**Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 11AM**

Town Council Chamber

Town Hall, 4300 South Atlantic Avenue.

**Free;** RSVP by 1/31 is required. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408.



### Resin at the Museum – Make a Wave

Create a beach-themed resin collage with sea treasure! Your ocean-inspired masterpiece will make a great home decoration or gift for a friend. No experience is necessary, and all materials are provided. Recommended for ages 12+.

**Friday, February 13, 2026, at 11:00 AM**

Ponce Inlet Historical Museum

143 Beach Street, meet outside on the lawn.

**\$15 per participant;** Space is limited to 8 participants. Pre-payment required at Town Hall by 2/6. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408 for more information.



### Pet Rock Painting

Fun for all ages! Join us in the park any time between 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM to paint and decorate a few rocks to take home.

**Saturday, February 21, 2026, 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free;** RSVP by 2/14 required. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408.



## Cocoa Bill Historic Marker Dedication Ceremony

Learn about the life of Cocoa Bill Williams and the early days of Ponce Park as we celebrate the beloved local fishing guide with the unveiling of a historic marker.

**Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 1:00 PM**

Ponce Inlet Historical Museum  
143 Beach Street

**Free;** no RSVP required. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408.



## Events for March:

### Scavenger Hunt at the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Recommended for parents and children age 2 and up.

**Saturday, March 7, 2026, at 10:30 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 2/28 required. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408.

### Turtle Talk

Join us at the Marine Science Center to learn all about sea turtles, their habitats, and how we can protect them through conservation efforts. Stepping onto the Marine Science Center's Turtle Terrace will also allow participants to see where hatchling and adult sea turtles are rehabilitated before being returned to the wild.

**Wednesday, March 11, 2026, at 9:00 AM**

Marine Science Center

100 Lighthouse Drive

**Free;** RSVP by 3/4 required. Space is limited to 20 people. Contact Julie at [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-761-2408.





## Fauna of Florida

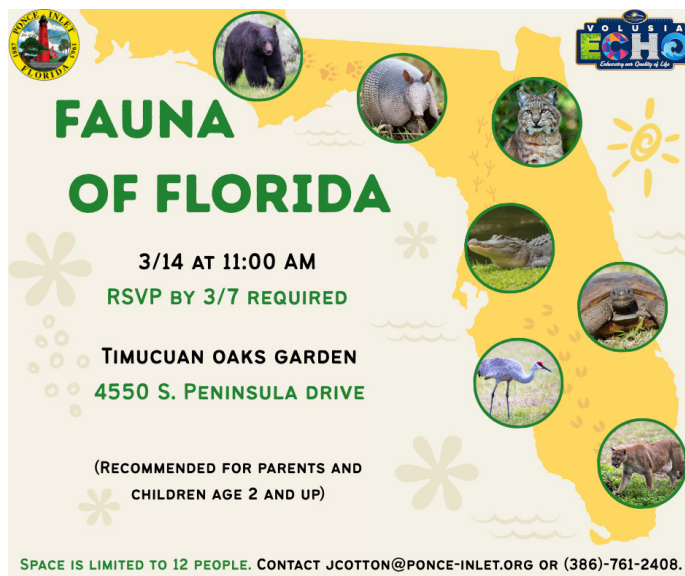
Kids can learn all about Florida's animals and how they interact in the natural ecosystem. Find out about food webs, native vs. invasive species, and more! Recommended for parents and children age 2 and up.

**Saturday, March 14, 2026, at 11:00 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 3/7 required. Space is limited to 12 people. Contact Julie at: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.



## Resin at the Museum—Fun with Florals

Create a floral-themed resin collage with flowers and other plants! Your spring-inspired masterpiece will make a great home decoration or gift for a friend. No experience is necessary, and all materials are provided. Recommended for ages 12+.

**Saturday, March 28, 2026, at 11:00 AM**

Ponce Inlet Historical Museum

143 Beach Street, meet outside on the lawn.

**\$15 per participant;** Space is limited to 8 participants. Pre-payment required at Town Hall by 3/20. Contact Julie at: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.



## Events for April:

### Children's Easter Egg Hunt Party

The egg hunt begins promptly at 10:00 AM. Ages will be divided into groups. After the egg hunt, get your picture with the bunny and check out the petting zoo. Be sure to bring your basket!

**Saturday, April 4, 2026, 10AM - 11AM**

Kay & Ayres Davies Lighthouse Park

4931 S. Peninsula Drive

**Free;** no RSVP required. Contact Jackie at [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-322-6703 for more information.



## Guided Hike—Birds of Florida

Join us for a guided hike through Ponce Preserve with Joan Tague, President of the Halifax River Audubon Society, as we learn about birds in Florida and their migration patterns.

**Friday, April 10, 2026, at 9:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., meet in the parking lot.

**Free;** RSVP by 4/4 required. Contact Julie at: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.

## BIRDS OF FLORIDA

GUIDED HIKE WITH THE HALIFAX RIVER AUDUBON



**4/10 AT 9:00 AM**  
RSVP BY 4/4 REQUIRED

**PONCE PRESERVE**  
4401 S. PENINSULA DR.



CONTACT 386-761-2408 OR  
[JCOTTON@PONCE-INLET.ORG](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org)

## Ponce Preserves the Planet

Family fun, food, crafts, and art vendors celebrating Earth Day. The event and parking will be at Ponce Preserve.

**Saturday, April 18, 2026, at 10:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Drive

**Free;** no RSVP required. Contact Jackie at [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386)-322-6703 for more information.

## Ponce Preserves the Planet



**April 18th 10am-1pm**

*Ponce Inlet's Earth Day celebration!  
Free activities for the whole family!*

 **PONCE PRESERVE**  
4401 S. PENINSULA DR.

 **MORE INFORMATION:**  
(386) 322-6703



## Scavenger Hunt at the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Recommended for parents and children age 2 and up.

**Saturday, April 25, 2026, at 10:30 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 4/18 required. Contact Julie at: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.

## Events for May:

### Native Plant Garden Tour

Participate in a guided tour of the Marine Science Center's native plant garden! We will learn about the importance of Florida's native plants and their positive impact on our ecosystems. Presented by Chad Macfie, Manager of the Marine Science Center.

**Saturday, May 2, 2026, at 9:30 AM**

Marine Science Center

100 Lighthouse Drive

**Free;** RSVP by 4/25 required. Contact Julie at: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.





## Scavenger Hunt at the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Recommended for parents and children age 2 and up.

**Saturday, May 23, 2026, at 10:30 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Drive

**Free;** RSVP by 5/16 required. Contact Julie at: [j cotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:j cotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

### Mermaids and Manatees in May

Learn about the historic connection between mermaids and manatees, play a game, and create a craft! Recommended for parents and children age 2 and up.

**Saturday, May 16, 2026, at 9:00 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

Free; RSVP by 5/9 required. Contact Julie at: [j cotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:j cotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408.



### Programs & Special Events

The Cultural Services Department is currently seeking dedicated and passionate individuals to volunteer during programs and special events throughout the year! Volunteering is a wonderful way to contribute your skills, knowledge, and time to help shape the future of our community. If you would like to join us as a volunteer for any of the programs above, please contact our Cultural Services Coordinator at (386) 761-2408 or email [j cotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:j cotton@ponce-inlet.org).

**\* Volunteer Application is required.\***



# Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum

by Zach Hopple



2025 brought a lot of activity and amazing experiences to the programs department of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum. Over the hundreds of guided tours, dozens of onsite events, and multitude of outreaches, thousands of enthusiastic guests were able to participate in the educational offerings put on by the lighthouse's volunteers and staff.

The culmination programming of the annual calendar brought together two of America's favorite topics: Baseball and Christmas. On November 15th, baseball fans from across the country descended on the quaint town of Ponce Inlet to recognize the 50th anniversary of the 1975 Cincinnati Reds World Championship team. Representatives from the Cincinnati Reds, the Hall of Fame, and the local affiliate, the Daytona Tortugas were amongst the many people that enjoyed riveting presentations and witnessed the unveiling of the newest exhibit at the Constance D Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum, the aptly named when we're hot...we're Reds hot. Through a partnership with the Cincinnati Reds Hall of Fame and Museum, this temporary exhibit is on display for over a year.

The other major offering by the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse took place on Saturday, December 6th, as guests and members kicked off the holiday season with Tunes at the Tower, a special presentation by the Daytona Beach Concert Band. The sounds of the season filled the air, and the festive mood radiated throughout the grounds.



As the calendar now turns to 2026, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse programs department looks for an even bigger year with regularly scheduled guided tours of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and the Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum. Within the first few months of the year, the lighthouse has several educational offerings for guests.

On Wednesday, February 11th, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse will host one of its most popular days on the calendar, Museum at Night. During this annual event, the lighthouse will remain open past the normal hours of operation to welcome the Museum of Arts and Sciences Planetarium staff onto the grounds. Guests will enjoy stargazing through the Cassegrain telescopes, climbing the lighthouse, and



seeing fascinating laser shows by MOAS Curator of Science Seth Mayo, as well as completing a number of educational activities. The event will begin at 5:00pm and conclude at 8:00pm. All Volusia County teachers and students will receive free admission during the event hours with proper I.D.

On Saturday, March 21st, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse will again host historic sites and organizations from across the state with its annual Florida Heritage Day event. Historic presentations, children's activities, and wonderful programs from institutions honoring the rich history of Florida will excite guests of all ages. Beginning at 10:00am and lasting until 3:00pm, this event brings a rich diversity of groups together to celebrate. This event will bring even more meaning in 2026, as America continues its 250th anniversary as a nation and the 180th anniversary of Florida statehood. Historical societies and presenters will be announced regularly, so make sure to follow the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse social media accounts and event website for upcoming announcements and details to the event.

## Volunteer Opportunities

The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum are always looking for enthusiastic new volunteers to assist in a variety of ways. From giving tours to leading workshops to assisting the curatorial staff to bring new artifacts and exhibits to the public, volunteerism helps to enable all aspects of the lighthouse. For more information on volunteering, please contact Programs Manager Zach Hopple at [education@ponceinlet.org](mailto:education@ponceinlet.org) or via telephone at 386-761-1821.





EXPLORE THE STARS AT  
THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE!

## MUSEUM AT NIGHT

February 11, 2026

5 PM-8 PM

Climb the Lighthouse and explore the wonders of night sky through MOAS Cassegrain reflector telescopes!

Participate in the Lighthouse's newest program The Science of Light and learn how lighthouse lenses work.

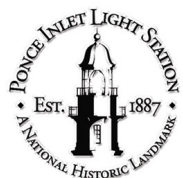
Admission: \$6.95 for Adults,  
\$1.95 for children 11 and under.

Feb 16, 2024

Teacher & Student  
Appreciation Night

5:00 pm - 8:00 pm

\* Teachers & Students  
Admitted Free with  
Valid I.D.



PONCE INLET  
LIGHTHOUSE  
& MUSEUM

PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE  
4931 S. PENINSULA DR.  
PONCE INLET, FL 32127  
386-761-1821 EXT. 18

MOAS  
MUSEUM OF ARTS & SCIENCES





The Ponce Inlet Community Center, located at 4670 S. Peninsula Drive, had another busy season welcoming and hosting residents and visitors alike.

December was especially festive with the Community Center serving as the backdrop for a variety of holiday events: the Christmas Tree Festival organized by the Friends of the Marine Science Center; Breakfast with Santa was led by the Veterans Association, and the wonderful, free concert was provided by The Many Horns of Christmas. Winter will see the Community Center continuing to offer social events for Ponce Inlet residents.

On January 14th, we held the annual Soup and Salad night. The Dinner Dance will entertain residents on Friday, February 20th, and the Irish Night will return on Saturday, March 14th.

Did you know that the Ponce Inlet Community Center is one of the top all-inclusive, “do-it-yourself” rental venues in the area? It is available for hourly and daily rentals and is popular for weddings, birthday parties, bridal showers, and celebrations of life. For more information on rental pricing and availability, please visit <https://picommunitycenter.com/rentals/>.

Ponce Inlet residents and first responders enjoy a 15% discount.

In addition to special events, the Community Center hosts a variety of weekly activities, including exercise classes and club meetings. Sundays are particularly active with the Farmers Market from 9AM until 2PM and Salty Church’s service beginning at 10:30AM.

The Community Center office is open Monday through Friday from 9AM until 12PM—come by, borrow a book from the lending library, take an exercise class, join a club, or volunteer. Watch the marquee, visit the website, <https://picommunitycenter.com>, check the Ponce Inlet Community Center Facebook page, give us a call (386-760-0615), or stop by the office for more information.

We hope to see you at the Ponce Inlet Community Center!





by Kevin Kirsch

Hello Ponce Inlet Corvette enthusiasts! I hope you all enjoyed a fantastic holiday season filled with joy and relaxation.

The Ponce Inlet Corvette Club wrapped up 2025 with some truly memorable events in the final quarter. We kicked things off with our “Trunk or Treat” gathering at New Smyrna Beach Chevrolet—what a sight! Nearly a thousand kids showed up in their most creative Halloween costumes, turning the lot into a vibrant sea of fun and laughter. Our members also made a big impact with Toys for Tots at NSB Chevrolet, spreading holiday cheer and making the season brighter for local families.

We kept the excitement rolling with the lively Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade, plus thrilling road trips to Myrtle Beach and Charlotte for top-notch Corvette shows. It was a quarter packed with camaraderie, stunning cars, and unforgettable moments!

Now, let's rev up for 2026! If you're a proud Ponce Inlet Corvette owner (and I know there are plenty of you out there), mark your calendars and join us at the One Daytona Corvette Show. Compete for amazing gift baskets, a thrilling 50/50 raffle, and those coveted trophies—your Corvette deserves the spotlight, and trust me, it's looking for a chance to shine!

**New Date: Saturday, April 25, 2026**

Don't miss out—sign up today and let's make this event epic!



1. PRE-REGISTRATION ONLY
2. 185 CAR LIMIT
3. Flier [Click here.](#)
4. Registration Form (Download, Print, Mail) [Click here.](#)
4. Hotel Information [Click here.](#)
5. Contact Information
  - Jeff Bernatovich: 315-436-1500  
[apexvette@aol.com](mailto:apexvette@aol.com)
  - Mike Wasson: 573-418-1216  
[mwasson@michaelswasson.com](mailto:mwasson@michaelswasson.com)
6. NO CREDIT CARDS please

Thanks for reading and Fins Up!

Kevin









# PONCE INLET CORVETTE CLUB



*18th Annual  
Event!*

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25th, 2026**

**10am - 3pm Rain or Shine**

**Raffle / Silent Auction / 50/50 proceeds donated to local charities**

**Pre-Registration Only...185 Corvette Limit  
Saturday, April 25th, 2026**

ONE **DAYTONA**

Across from Daytona International Speedway

HOST HOTEL: **THE DAYTONA**  
HOTEL

1870 Victory Circle  
Daytona Beach, FL  
386-323-9777

## AWARDS

**BEST OF SHOW • PRESIDENT'S CHOICE**

**TOP 11 PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS**

**1st, 2nd, 3rd AWARDS FOR JUDGED CLASSES**

**\$200 PARTICIPATING CLUB DRAWING 8**

**CARS REGISTERED TO BE ELIGIBLE**

**Gates open at 7am...Show 10am to 3pm**





# Garden Club of Ponce Inlet

by Deb Smith-Ehmann



We hope you had a lovely holiday and New Year's celebrations! The Garden Club has had a very busy season beginning with our 1st membership meeting of our 44th year on September 24th. It was wonderful welcoming back all of our members. Our membership has grown over the past 4 months, bringing our total membership number to 93, and we look forward to welcoming even more new members throughout the year.

At our October 22nd membership meeting we had our 1st speaker of the year. Barbara Davis introduced our guest speaker, Chad Macfie with the Marine Science Center, to discuss "Recent Improvements to the Facility." Quite a lively discussion, and many questions were answered.



Our 1st Beautification Winner of the year was chosen by Lea Hicks, Jen Mascola, and Ann Marie Waters, of our beautification committee. The winner was one of our very own members, Pat Dancsecs' son and daughter-in-law, Mike and Susan Dancsecs. If you get a chance, please take the opportunity to go and see their beautifully landscaped property at 52 Bay Harbour Drive.

In October the Garden Club participated in the Towns' Children's Halloween Party held on Friday, October 24th, at Lighthouse Park. Many thanks go to Ginger Van Rensselaer and her friend Dave Castiglioni, who handed out candy for the 2nd year in a row to all the families and children who came out for this annual town event.



Our Annual Arts, Crafts, and Plant Show was sold out and held on October 10th and 11th. The rain did put a crunch on things, but vendors were happy with their business in spite of the weather. Our member volunteers were in full support of everything needed for a successful event. Set up and tear down, manage the plant show booth, and assist with vendor needs. The bake sale donations were abundant; many thanks to Linda Hall for organizing.

In November, we welcomed Danny Young, of Young Bear Environmental-Edgewater. Danny's Topic: By Yards and Waves: Introduction to Living Shorelines. Danny can be reached at [dyoung@ybeconsulting.com](mailto:dyoung@ybeconsulting.com). His knowledge of plants and native species to support birds, bees, and butterflies was abundant; we didn't want to stop asking questions.

December was a very busy but fun and festive month for our club. The month began with the Garden Club participating in the 3rd Annual Marine Science Center Christmas Tree Festival, which was held on December 6th and 7th. A special thanks goes to our members Lynn Willits, Lyn Hibbert, Helen Lynch, Wendy Fritze, and Susan Vanderbeek, who participated in the design and decorating of our Christmas tree entry for the tree festival.



Our club also participated in the 15th Annual Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade on December 6th. The overall theme for the parade was "It's a Cowboy HoHoHo Christmas Parade." Several of our members participated in this holiday event as walkers, banner bearers, and dancers. Loads of thanks go to our members Dave and Sunny Duecker for everything they did to bring our theme to life. Our members who participated clearly had a lot of fun representing our club and were awarded 2nd place overall in the competition. YeeHaa! We would like to thank Heather Johnson, Ginger Van Rensselaer, Susan Vanderbeek, Louise Buscemi, Geri Seidenfaden, Lynn Willits, and Linda Finley. I hope you all had a chance to get out and view the parade and thoroughly enjoyed our Garden Club members putting on their cowboy hats!





In December our club had the pleasure of selecting the winner of the Garden Club of Ponce Inlet's Holiday Lighting Contest. This award is presented annually to a Ponce Inlet residential home and/or a condo or local business selected by our Garden Club beautification committee, Ann Marie Waters, Lea Hicks, and Tammy Gentry. This year's residential award went to George and Yvonne Milesch at 38 Loggerhead Ct. As you can see from the photos below, their festive display was especially creative.







Also, we hope you had the chance to attend our member Heather Johnson's concert. Heather produced and conducted "The Many Horns of Christmas." This special French horn event was held on December 21st at 7PM. So impressive! Thank you, Heather, for sharing your talents with our community!



Finally, on December 17th, we had our annual Holiday Party. Everyone enjoyed this meeting where we were able to sit back and socialize with fellow members and enjoy the abundance of favorite dishes everyone brought in to share for lunch. Members also participated in some mild competition and seasonal trivia, playing some entertaining holiday games. We look forward to seeing everyone in the new year!





# **Ponce Inlet Lions Club We Serve**

**By Nancy Epps, President**



Lions were highly visible at the annual state convention of the Florida Affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB). More than a dozen Florida Lions attended, either as dual members of both the NFB and Lions Clubs or as non-NFB volunteers. This included board member Dennis Dulniak and his new bride, Toni, who is also a Lion, both of whom served as volunteer speakers. Dennis presented on the district's vision and hearing services during the general assembly. He and Toni also participated as guest speakers for the NFB's Deaf/Blind Division. As a retired audiologist, Toni brought valuable expertise to the discussions.

Overall, their involvement made for a productive meeting, and everyone agreed that this partnership should continue and expand.

That leads me to a topic I don't cover often enough. In 2025, Lions celebrated the 100th anniversary of Helen Keller's speech at a Lions convention, where she urged Lions to commit to preventing blindness, and we accepted the challenge to become "Knights of the Blind." Not long after, she encouraged us to extend our efforts to include hearing issues as well. Please drop off any used hearing aids in the eyeglass donation box located between the firehouse and the PICC.

We are developing plans to refurbish the eyeglass donation box, so please let me know if you'd like to help.

As I've mentioned before, Lions Clubs International (LCI) has several global initiatives, including environmental efforts. The big blue clothing collection container in the parking lot at the PICC—between the Community Center and the firehouse—has been permanently removed. The new process involves dropping off your approved donations during weekend farmers' market hours, when a Lion will accept them in the annex for pickup by the clothing recyclers.

For more information, please contact a Lion or call Nancy Epps at 386-795-2310.

Please support all our fundraisers so we can continue providing essential services, including eye exams, eye surgeries, vision testing, eyeglasses, hearing aid exams, hearing aids, retina screening, diabetes screening, the Florida Lions Eye Bank, the Conklin Davis Center for the Visually Impaired, and more. The Ponce Inlet Lions Club has become deeply involved in providing eye exams, eyeglass placements, and eye surgeries for those who could not afford them without Lions' assistance.



# CLEAN OUT FOR A CAUSE



## PONCE INLET LIONS CLUB FOUNDATION CLOTHING DRIVE FUNDRAISER



Help us raise funds for **PI Community** by contributing your gently used items. You're keeping them out of our local landfills. Every item will be responsibly recycled and given a second life!

Questions: **386 795 2310**

### ITEMS WE ACCEPT

Clothing  
Shoes  
Accessories  
Linens



**DROP OFF AT PONCE INLET  
FARMERS MARKET 9AM to 12PM**



**Every Sunday Feb 1<sup>st</sup> - March 1<sup>st</sup>**



# Ponce Inlet Veterans Memorial Association

by Mark Oebbecke



We had a very busy time this quarter. First and foremost, the expansion of the memorial is continuing to proceed. The Walls of Remembrance are up and were a great backdrop to the Veterans Day ceremony. The ceremony was well attended, and a special addition to the ceremony was a bagpiper who made the ceremony even more memorable.

Although we had hoped to dedicate the Walls of Remembrance that day, we were delayed by some process issues which have been addressed. We are now moving forward with the dedication planned for Memorial Day.

December 6th brought numerous activities, which have become a favorite of our veterans and Town residents. The morning started with Breakfast with Santa. About 150 adults and kids enjoyed a special breakfast with all the kids getting a Christmas treat and special toppings on their pancakes. Having Santa and Mrs. Claus in attendance to chat with the kids (and some adults) just added to the special morning.



Later that day we had our annual Christmas Parade. Mother Nature wasn't too kind to us with drenching rain (a first in our history), but everyone persevered. We had over 40 participants in the parade, with Salty Church winning first place, The Garden Club of Ponce Inlet winning second place, and Down the Hatch and Revival Salt Lounge sharing third place. Our team of veterans picked up our service branch flags from the Corvettes and decided that our service branches needed to be seen. So, off they went, led by our American flag and followed by our own version of an Army golf cart tank. We received so many compliments from both attendees and spectators that the parade is getting better and better each year.





Many thanks to all that made it possible. Just a reminder that proceeds from the parade goes to Operation Changing Lives and our Association.

Please take a minute to check out Operation Changing Lives on their website. They provide some life changing services here in the United States and abroad.

[www.operationchanginglives.com](http://www.operationchanginglives.com)

The day was topped off by our Christmas tree winning First Place in the Annual Christmas Tree Festival, which is organized by the Friends of the Marine Science Center. Our Christmas tree 'designer' Keery Wolf outdid herself this year with the 'Tis the Season to Honor' tree decorated with all the service medals that can be earned while in service to our country and topped with a bald eagle with lighted wings.





# Ponce Inlet Women's Club

by René Joy Rodriguez

## Riding the Coastal Breeze with the Ponce Inlet Women's Club

As Florida's gentle winter settles over our beautiful seaside town, the Ponce Inlet Women's Club would like to share the latest news, celebrations, and upcoming adventures that capture the vibrant heart of our club. With 91 active members and still growing, our organization continues to shine as a place where friendships flourish, service inspires, and community spirit runs deep.

We invite everyone to stay connected by following our Facebook page, where you'll find the latest event details, photos, and club updates throughout the year.

### [Women's Club Facebook](#)

This edition is brimming with highlights from our recent gatherings and the joyful energy that filled each one. After our summer break, we kicked off the season in September with a cheerful Welcome Back Luncheon. It was an afternoon filled with laughter, reconnecting, and excitement for the year ahead.

October brought a wine lover's treat as our luncheon featured a tasting experience hosted by 95 & Vine with a presentation by Ali, a Level 2 Sommelier. Members enjoyed sampling four delicious wines while learning about flavor profiles and pairings. This Italian-themed get-together was not only entertaining but educational as well.

Our club also proudly took part in the Ponce Inlet Children's Halloween Party. Members

Sue Simanton and Jennifer Mascola welcomed a parade of little dragons, princesses, ninjas, firefighters, and more with sweet treats and big smiles. Thank you to everyone who donated candy and helped make the day magical!

Another of the season's most enchanting events was the Annual Witches Luncheon & Fundraiser, co-hosted with the Sugar Mill Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution. The afternoon was filled with creativity, laughter, and generosity as guests arrived in whimsical costumes and supported scholarships and historic preservation projects. Beautiful gift baskets, fall-themed décor, and handcrafted treasures were available for purchase, all in support of these meaningful causes. A showstopping moment came when The Creekettes performed their lively witches' dance and then invited everyone to join in for a truly interactive celebration!

The holiday season sparkled at our annual Holiday Boutique at the Beach which took place at the Ponce Inlet Community Center. Members showcased incredible talents with hand-painted ornaments, stunning jewelry, and festive décor. Santa himself even made a surprise visit for photos by the sleigh and with members and their guests by the Christmas tree! Each table took turns sharing favorite holiday songs, creating heartwarming moments that made the day unforgettable.

Typical November Florida weather did not stop the ladies from strutting their Cowboy Christmas style in the Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade, braving the rain with smiles, candy, and dog treats in hand.

With our growing membership, this year's members Holiday Luncheon was hosted at the beautiful Halifax River Yacht Club, where members enjoyed a lovely riverside meal in an elegant setting.

There's plenty to look forward to in the upcoming months, beginning in February with the election of our new club officers and a special guest presentation by Dr. Lauren Girard of The Shores Medical Spa, who will share insights on health, wellness, and beauty.

In March, we are excited to host our highly anticipated Annual Fashion Show, presented by Clara Schneider of Em'z on Fifth at the Halifax River Yacht Club. This year's Mardi Gras theme promises dazzling flair, and with tickets expected to sell out quickly, members are encouraged to follow our Facebook page for event details and ticket information.

Following last year's wonderful turnout, the club is excited to host its **Second Annual Pop-Up Boutique** this April at the Ponce Inlet Community Center. This special fundraiser benefits the **Domestic Abuse Council of Volusia County**, and we will begin collecting gently used and like-new donations starting in January.

If you're seeking new friendships, meaningful ways to serve the community, and a whole lot of fun, we warmly welcome you to join the Ponce Inlet Women's Club. To get started, please contact Urszula Zumwalt at [uzumwalt@yahoo.com](mailto:uzumwalt@yahoo.com). Our meetings are held from September through May at 10:30 AM on the second Wednesday of each month. Residents of Ponce Inlet and neighboring areas are encouraged to attend.

Thank you for being part of our journey. We look forward to growing together, supporting one another, and continuing to make a positive impact in our beloved town.

I hope you enjoy these photos from past events!



















## Citizens For PONCE INLET

### 2026 Citizen of the Year and 2026 Lifetime Achievement Award

Please submit your completed Nomination Form by **Friday, March 20th 2026 at noon** for consideration.

Since 1987 the Citizens for Ponce Inlet Organization has selected, honored, and acknowledged a resident of Ponce Inlet or a Ponce Inlet employee for both the Citizen of the Year and the Lifetime Achievement Awards. The award is to acknowledge those individuals involved in volunteer work who have made an outstanding contribution to our community.

In 2022, the CFPI Board voted again to honor husbands and wives in the same year if their volunteer work is deserving of joint honors. This year, it will be possible to nominate couples or individuals for the 2026 award. Past winners cannot be nominated.

The CFPI Lifetime Achievement Award is bestowed on a former Citizen of the Year. However, it doesn't have to be a past COTY winner. Anyone who has volunteered in our community for over 20 years is eligible for nomination for this prestigious award.

Nomination forms for both awards can be found online, picked up at the Community Center Office, or requested by emailing: [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org).

**[Click Here for Citizen of the Year Nomination Form](#)**

**[Click Here for Lifetime Achievement Nomination Form](#)**

#### **You may return it in one of these ways:**

- Email it to [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org)
- Hand-deliver it in a sealed envelope to the CFPI auxiliary mailbox at the Ponce Inlet Community Center

We look forward to your recommendations for individuals who deserve these awards.

The Annual Awards Ceremony Dinner is scheduled to take place on Thursday, April 23rd, 2026, at the Community Center from 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm.







# Citizens For PONCE INLET

## TOWN OF PONCE INLET

The purpose of the Town's section of this Newsletter is to provide information to its citizens and businesses that concern the workings of the Town government. Articles feature the various departments of the Town and include pertinent information to educate and inform individuals on issues of interest to them.

To avoid the appearance of political favoritism or viewpoints on public issues, the Town cannot accept political or public issue ads or ads from non-profit associations for publication.

## CITIZENS FOR PONCE INLET (C4Pi)

The Citizens for Ponce Inlet Newsletter is published quarterly throughout the year to inform the citizens and businesses of Ponce Inlet about matters which may be of interest or have an impact on them. The Newsletter is not a public forum and no editorial articles or letters will be accepted for publication.

For 35 years the Citizens for Ponce Inlet Newsletter has been distributed in paper form. Volunteers on foot and sometimes roller skates faithfully delivered the letter to the households. As the years passed, the publication was mailed directly to all residents and property owners.

In 2020, the Citizens for Ponce Inlet (CFPI) created the website [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) and posted the first digital edition of the CFPI Newsletter with the Winter 2021 issue. The new digital version is emailed to all CFPI Members and to the Town's email list.

If you would like to be placed on the email list please go to [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) and JOIN – it's free -you will automatically be enrolled to receive the Newsletter and important notifications while enjoying other C4Pi benefits.

The Citizens for Ponce Inlet is an independent organization and not part of the Town government. Read the Citizens for Ponce Inlet agreement with the Town on our website.

The Town's financial contribution relates solely to the CFPI/C4Pi Newsletter and insures all citizens in Ponce Inlet have access to this information and to the Newsletters provided on the [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) website. The newsletter does not accept paid advertisements and is distributed free of charge. We hope you find this information valuable.



Citizens for Ponce Inlet, Inc. has achieved 501(c)(3) status, marking a significant milestone in its more than 40-year history as an entirely volunteer-driven organization dedicated to serving the residents of Ponce Inlet. The organization's roots trace back over four decades, when it first embarked on a mission to conduct research, investigate various issues, and propose initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life in Ponce Inlet. Its primary objective was to collaborate with the Town Council in shaping a community that would be a source of pride for all. Today, this dedicated organization not only persists in pursuing these objectives but also annually recognizes and celebrates exceptional citizen volunteers through its Annual Awards Banquet. Among the accolades bestowed are the Citizen of the Year Award as well as various Lifetime Achievement Awards, reserved for residents who have generously volunteered for more than two decades.

Furthermore, CFPI, Inc./C4Pi hosts an annual Election Forum, providing residents with a valuable platform to engage with town council candidates. In a recent development, the organization introduced an Election Edition Newsletter, distributed via email to its C4Pi membership. This newsletter serves as a medium for candidates to address crucial community concerns and questions. In an effort to conserve funds, offer more information, and

adapt to the digital age, CFPI established the C4Pi.org website in 2019. This platform grants members the opportunity to access a digital quarterly newsletter, along with an extensive archive spanning over 40 years of past newsletters.

In addition to the services mentioned earlier, the C4Pi.org website also provides users to access live streaming of town council meetings and other special town council meetings or conveniently view stored videos at their leisure.

For those seeking even more information and ways to get involved, the website offers an extensive assortment of resources and details. Please visit [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org)

Citizens for Ponce Inlet is constantly on the lookout for dedicated volunteers who possess website and computer skills, expertise in newsletter publication, and strong writing talent. If you are interested in contributing your skills and making a positive impact, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org) about how you can be a valuable part of this community-driven organization.

Donations may be made directly on the [C4Pi.org website](http://C4Pi.org) or by mailing a check made to:

**Citizens for Ponce Inlet, Inc.**  
**4670 S. Peninsula Drive**  
**Ponce Inlet, FL 32127**







*Join  
Today!*

## *"Our Mission is to Educate and Preserve"*

The Citizens For Ponce Inlet Website compiles and organizes all of the relevant and critical information you need into one single, easy to navigate information portal. It's like having the entire town at your fingertips. With just 1-2 clicks on your smartphone or desktop, you can access:

- Live Streaming
- News Alerts
- Town News & Events
- Campaign Reports
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Monthly Police & Fire Activity Reports
- Agendas & Minutes for All Meetings
- Extensive Library of Past Meetings
- Participate in our Surveys

Ponce Inlet's most informed citizens turn to C4Pi.org to obtain the information they need to be informed on town business, town events and town department activity.

**Membership is free. Get informed. Join today.**

***Promoting and Improving the Quality of Life in the Town of Ponce Inlet***

**info@C4Pi.org**

**www.C4Pi.org**