



U P D A T E

St. Lucie County

July 15, 2007

**A Monthly Update
of Current Events
and Happenings
within St. Lucie**

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This update is published monthly by the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners' Public Information Office. Direct inquiries to Ja' Net Pentz, Executive Assistant St. Lucie County 2300 Virginia Avenue Fort Pierce, FL 34982 772.462.1453 pentzj@co.st-lucie.fl.us

Board of County Commissioners Special Meetings & Workshops Scheduled

- The Regular County Commission Meeting on Tuesday, July 17, 2007 has been canceled due to lack of quorum.
- The Board of County Commissioners 2008 Budget Workshops will begin Thursday, July 19, 2007 and run through Wednesday, July 25, 2007 in Conference Room 3.
- The Board of County Commissioners will hold a Budget Millage Adoption Meeting on Tuesday, July 31, 2007 at 9 a.m.
- The Board of County Commissioners will hold a Preliminary Budget Public Hearing on Thursday, September 6, 2007 at 6 p.m.
- The Board of County Commissioners will hold a Final Budget Public Hearing on Thursday, September 13, 2007 at 6 p.m.

Lakewood Park Pool Offers Swimming Lessons This Summer

With the dog days of summer in full swing, there has never been a better time to take a dip in the pool. But St. Lucie County's Parks & Recreation Department's aquatics staff wants to make sure area residents know how to swim before they jump in to cool off. Registration is now underway for both morning and evening water safety lessons at the new 117,000-gallon pool at the Lakewood Park Regional Park. Morning sessions will begin July 23 and will meet Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday for two weeks. Evening sessions begin July 24 and will meet Tuesday and Thursday for four weeks. The cost for an eight-lesson session is \$31. There are a variety of lessons being offered for beginners to advanced swimmers with children as young as six months old eligible to participate. The new 150-acre Lakewood Park Regional Park is located at 5990 Emerson Ave., Fort Pierce. The park's pool is open 1 – 5 p.m. everyday and 5 – 8 p.m. on Monday and Wednesday. Admission is \$2 a day for county residents and \$3 a day for non-county residents. Monthly, quarterly and yearly passes are available. For complete details on the swimming and water safety lessons being offered at the new Lakewood Park Regional Park pool, including times, skill levels and requirements, call the staff at (772) 462-3772 or visit:

www.stlucieco.gov/leisure/aquatics/.

New Harry Potter Release Parties

The Fort Pierce and the Morningside Branch Libraries will be celebrating the release of the final book in the Harry Potter series. The Morningside Library will celebrate with a party Saturday, July 21 at 1 p.m. The Fort Pierce Library will celebrate with a party on Wednesday, July 25 at noon. Participants are encouraged to dress as their favorite character from the book or movie. Bring your cameras and have your picture taken with the life-size replica of Dobby, the house elf at the Morningside Library event. Enjoy trivia contests and other activities. Prizes will be awarded and cake and "Butterbeer" will be served. These programs are free and open to everyone. The Morningside Branch Library is located at 2410 Morningside Blvd., Port St Lucie. For more information call (772) 337-5632. The Fort Pierce Library is at 101 Melody Lane, Fort Pierce. For more information call (772) 462-2787.

Sheraton Scrub Natural Area

St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department (ERD) will open a new nature preserve along Juanita Avenue this week, providing 56 acres of passive recreation. Sheraton Scrub Natural Area offers a 20-minute interpretive hiking trail and observation tower that leads visitors through rare habitat occupied by the Florida Scrub-Jay, a threatened species. Due to habitat loss, the Florida Scrub-Jay is rapidly disappearing in Florida, and this site was purchased to preserve the unique habitat of the bird. Scrub-Jays range over much of the western United States and Mexico, but the Florida Scrub-Jay, which is physically and behaviorally unique, is restricted to scattered and often small and isolated patches of sand pine scrub, xeric oak scrub, and scrubby flatwoods in peninsular Florida such as Sheraton Scrub. It is the state's only endemic bird species, which means it is found in Florida and nowhere else in the world. This species is entirely dependent on scrub habitats, which is a unique vegetation community composed of ancient dune ridges left thousands of years ago by retreating seas. The greatest decline of this species has occurred during the last 15 to 20 years with an estimated 25 to 50 percent reduction in Jay numbers. The decline over the last 100 years may be as high as 80 percent. The original range of the Jay, once estimated at 7,000 square miles, has been reduced considerably by suburban development and conversion of scrub habitats to agricultural uses. Many isolated populations have been eliminated, and the almost continuous population along the Atlantic coast has been radically fragmented by urban development. Preservation of existing populations is very important, as is management of the habitat within preserved areas. The Jays at Sheraton Scrub will be monitored on a regular basis to determine the status of the population. Some birds have been banded with special leg bands which will help identify the individual to ensure protection. The Sheraton Scrub Natural Area was funded through the Florida Communities Trust and the Environmentally Significant Lands Program. It is the 17th site opened to the public of the 25 sites purchased through the Environmental Significant Lands Bond Program. This site is located on the southern corner of Juanita Avenue and 41st Street in Fort Pierce. The site is open from dawn until dusk and managed and maintained by St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department. For more information call the ERD staff at (772) 462-2525 or visit www.stlucieco.gov/erd.

Modified Phase II Water Restrictions

The South Florida Water Management District has modified Phase II of the water restrictions. Irrigation is restricted to two days a week for both Martin and St. Lucie County residents. Residents with less than five acres in the unincorporated areas of St. Lucie County and addresses ending in odd numbers may only irrigate their lawns Wednesdays and Saturdays between 4 a.m. – 8 a.m. Hand watering is permitted on those days between 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. with an automatic shut-off nozzle. Residences with less than five acres and addresses ending in even number may water during those times on Thursdays and Sundays. Residents with more than five acres and odd number addresses can irrigate their lawns Wednesdays and Fridays between 12:01 a.m. – 8 a.m. **All other restrictions on activities including car, boat and pressure washing; and irrigation of sports fields, gold courses, plant nurseries and farms are lifted.** These restrictions will remain in effect until sufficient rainfall is received. For more details about SFWMD water restrictions visit: www.sfwmd.gov or call (800) 250-4100 ext. 3630. For water conservation tips call SFWMD Water Conservation Hotline at (800) 662-8876. To report water violations in the unincorporated part of St. Lucie County contact the county's Code Enforcement Hotline at (772) 370-2545.

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