

GET CONNECTED

727-453-7394

MARCH 2008

SOUTH COUNTY CONNECTION CENTER



Connection Centers Consolidate

Most of you are aware by now that the County Connection Centers have reorganized operations into two centers, north and south.

The North County Connection Center located at 2431 Tampa Road in Palm Harbor is managed by Jane Muhrlin who was the previous manager of the Southwest County Connection Center at County Extension. This Center now serves residents north of Ulmerton and will include unincorporated areas of Feather Sound, High Point, Greenbrook, Ridgecrest, Ozona, Crystal Beach, Palm Harbor and East Lake.

Our South County Connection Center located at 3875 54th Avenue North in Lealman Park will serve citizens south of Ulmerton Road and will include unincorporated areas of Seminole, Bay Pines, Lealman, Gandy, Gulfport, Pasadena and Tierra Verde.

The Centers are a division of Community Development and serve as liaisons between residents and county government. Staff meets regularly with homeowner associations, civic/business organizations, neighborhood and crime watch groups to discuss county initiatives, programs and services.

The Centers also address neighborhood issues through facilitation of services with the assistance of appropriate county departments, agencies and other resources.

Contact Connection Center staff at the central phone number, **(727) 453-7394** or e-mail at connect@pinellascounty.org.



Armanda Lampley, Manager (C)
Kathy MacDaniel, Asst. Manager (L)
Susan Loulakis, Assistant (R)

Pinellas Trail Gets "LOOPED" In

The Board of County Commissioners is moving forward in plans to extend the Pinellas Trail in the creation of a "loop," which would dramatically increase the trail's accessibility to more county residents and visitors. Under the guidance of the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) Bicycle Advisory Committee and Pinellas Trail Inc., the loop would extend the trail along the east side of the county, increasing the length to 74.9 miles—it's presently 34.5 miles long.

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The design and construction of the loop would be a collaborative effort among several groups and municipalities, underscoring the trail's purpose of connecting communities, providing alternative commuter transportation pathways and recreational opportunities in our very urban Pinellas County home.



Contact Pinellas County Planning Department at **(727) 464-8200** or Pinellas Trails Inc. at www.pinellastrails.org.

DOWN PAYMENT ASSISTANCE PRODUCTS AVAILABLE!



Interest Free Down Payment Assistance is available with Home Key products!

MAKING PINELLAS HOME

Up to
\$15,000

Eligibility Requirements:

- Household income must be less than 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). See chart below:

Household Size				
1	2	3	4	5
\$30,450	\$34,800	\$39,150	\$43,500	\$47,000

* Incomes up to 120% in Targeted Areas

- Property must be located within Pinellas County.
- Maximum purchase price cannot exceed \$240,158.

*Other eligibility criteria may apply.

HOMETOWN HEROES PLUS

Up to
\$25,000

Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must be employed as police, fire, or emergency medical service personnel, employees of the Pinellas County School System, hospital workers, 911 dispatchers, assisted living facility employees, pharmacy technicians, active duty or reserve military personnel, or retirees of these job classes.

- Household income must be less than 120% of Area Median Income (AMI). See chart below:

Household Size				
1	2	3	4	5
\$45,720	\$52,200	\$58,800	\$65,280	\$70,560

- Property must be located within Pinellas County, excluding the cities of Belleair Shore, Clearwater, Largo, and St. Petersburg.
- Maximum purchase price cannot exceed \$240,158.

*Other eligibility criteria may apply.

Housing Finance Authority of Pinellas County

600 Cleveland Street, Suite 800
Clearwater, FL 33755
727 464-8210

www.pinellascounty.org





Pinellas Citizen University Begins New Session on April 3

Pinellas Citizen University (PCU) unravels the mystery. Citizens will meet and talk with county officials and elected county leaders. Through exciting field trips and decision-making exercises, they will learn first hand how Pinellas County provides services to nearly one million county residents.

Class enrollment is limited. Classes meet Thursday nights, usually from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Tuition for PCU is \$30, which includes a class shirt, all course materials, a picnic lunch, graduation ceremony and diploma. Enrollment applications are available at the County Courthouse Information Desk, by calling (727) 464-5197 or online at www.pinellascounty.org/citizenu.



Heritage Village Gets Children Ready for Spring with Living History Fun



Spring break for schools in Pinellas County is fast approaching so make arrangements now with Heritage Village to sign up children for a week of hands-on history fun. From Monday, March 31, to Friday, April 4, **Living History Spring Break Camp** is planned from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Children ages 5 to 11 have a meaningful experience and make new friends.

A fee is charged, and pre-paid registration is required for the camp. A discount is offered for Pinellas County Historical Society members. For more information on the camp, call (727) 582-2426 or e-mail heritagevillage@pinellascounty.org. Heritage Village is located at 11909 125th St. N., Largo.



St. Pete Beach Offers Kids A Much Needed "Break" A perfect alternative for parents who work during Spring Break, this kid-preferred option is easy and affordable. Camp runs from Monday, March 31st to Friday, April 4th from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. with extended hours at an additional costs. Spring Break 2008 "Kids Camp" is open to St. Pete Beach and all surrounding city residents in grades Kindergarten through 5th grade. Contact Amanda Page at (727) 363-9245 for further details.

Other Spring Break Opportunities for Youth in South County

City of Pinellas Park - Cost \$30, www.pinellas-park.com;

City of Seminole - Cost \$65, www.myseminole.com;

City of St. Petersburg - Cost \$71, www.stpete.org;

Pinellas Sheriff's PAL - Cost \$50, www.pinellascountypal.com

Treasure Island Tennis & Golf Camps - Cost \$90, www.ci.treasure-island.fl.us;

YMCA Camps, www.stpeteymca.org.



FloridaHousingSearch.org Brings Renters Home

More than 100 people a day use FloridaHousingSearch.org in their search for a place to call home. Four months after the launch of FloridaHousingSearch.org in Pinellas County, nearly 500 landlords used the service to advertise approximately 700 available units.

FloridaHousingSearch.org is an Internet listing that is free to both landlords and renters. A bilingual call center is available to support those without Internet access.

For landlords, the website offers 24-hour access to managing, adding and updating property listings, which can be immediately removed from the site once it is rented. Landlords can check under [individual communities](#) listed to see if their properties meet the rental criteria.

This service is available in Pinellas County as a result of a homeless prevention initiative launched in May 2007 by the Board of County Commissioners. For more information, visit FloridaHousingSearch.org or call (877) 428-8844.



Points of Pride in Pinellas County Schools South County

The first three winners of Pinellas County Schools' Young Heroes Award are **Michael Guidice of Lynch Elementary** who raised money for the homeless, **Brooke Murray of Azalea Middle** who saved a 9-year old from drowning and Elizabeth Foley of Palm Harbor University High who overcame adversity to attain a 4.625 GPA, be a school leader and volunteer in her community.

Sawgrass Lake Elementary and **Seminole Elementary** have been named 2008 State Schools of Character, the first step toward the National School of Character award from the Character Education Partnership (CEP). The schools, along with the three other state nominees, will be notified in March whether they are finalists for the national award. **Lakewood High School's Center** for Advanced Technologies CATCOM program won First Place for the Best 2008 "Live" High School Television Show in the nation from Student Television Network. **Anjanetta Hunter, Boca Ciega High**, is the only Pinellas County student of 16 Florida to attend the Walt Disney World Dreamer's Academy. She is one of 100 students selected nationwide from 3,000 nominations.

The New Student Assignment Plan will be implemented starting with the 2008-09 school year. It calls for the district to assign students to "close-to-home" schools while preserving choice options through magnet, fundamental & career academies. "Close-to-home" schools are expected to be made known by the end of March or early April. For more go to www.pcsb.org.