



Pinellas Employees Newsletter

May 2015 • Vol. 43 No. 5

To view past issues of *The Pen*, visit
www.pinellascounty.org/hr/publications.htm.

Celebrating Public Service

In 2013, Pinellas County employees completed a survey in which they rated their experiences working here. One of the things that stood out was the **pride** so many feel to be making a difference in the community.

Each year, the first week of May is Public Service Recognition Week. At Pinellas County we refer to it as Employee Appreciation Week. *The Pen* would like to share the stories of some of our employees' commitment to serving the community.

We asked this question: *Why did you choose public service?* Here are some of their answers:



Ryan Auclair
 Senior Project Manager,
 Business Technology Services

After serving in the Army and working in the Department of Defense for a number of years, I didn't find the private sector personally fulfilling. I came back to public service to regain a sense of mission and purpose, and so that I can work for the community I live in. Every day that I come to work, I have the chance to positively contribute to Pinellas County and improve our citizens' quality of life. There are not many places that offer that opportunity, and public service is one of them.

I feel extremely fortunate to have found a career that directly relates to my passion.

- 1) Keeping our environment healthy
- 2) Protecting our public health
- 3) Educating others about conserving water

Being a part of this team effort provides me with a great deal of gratitude and job satisfaction. I'm very proud knowing the work I perform as a Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator has a significant influence on the ecology system, economy and the citizens of Pinellas County.

My motto is "It's always about the mission and making a difference."



Alfrieda Lewis
 Wastewater Treatment
 Plant Operator/Trainee,
 South Cross Bayou Water
 Reclamation Facility

Making a difference every day is the bottom line. Being a public servant here means we work for everyone in Pinellas County, including not only our residents, but also the many people who visit (which once included me). I feel like I'm making a difference by keeping them informed so that they know about big events and great places to go and by helping them to prepare in case of disaster. I'm also grateful to be able to tell the stories of what we do as employees to make Pinellas County the wonderful destination that it is.



Kevin Baxter
 Public Information
 Specialist,
 Communications
 Department

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I grew up in a military family. To me, my dad was the ultimate public servant. He was in the Air Force for thirty years, retired from there, then worked for the State of Ohio for 13 years. I could tell he loved his career. I was thrilled when I got the opportunity to join Pinellas County Government.



Mary Schwartz
 Senior Office Specialist
 County Attorney's Office

I'm a receptionist for the County Attorney's office. There are days when my job is very stressful, however, most of the time it is very rewarding. I especially love when the elderly citizens call. They are so sweet, and usually have no idea where to turn. It makes my day to help them, and have them say "You are so kind, you just made my day." I celebrate nine years, Friday, May 1st, and I'm proud to say I live and work in Pinellas County.

Employee Spotlight

Kris Kondilis

Equal Opportunity Coordinator
Office of Human Rights



What is your job in 25 words or less?

My job is to investigate discrimination cases in housing, employment and places of public accommodation, i.e., businesses and restaurants.

What aspect of your job do you enjoy the most?

I enjoy interviewing people, learning about the unique situations in every case, and trying to resolve conflicting evidence from parties who each believe their actions and motives were the right ones.

What piece of advice would you give to a new employee?

The advice I'd give a new employee is to enjoy your time with the County and learn all you can. It's not a competition. Your colleagues and supervisors have knowledge and experience that you can learn from, no matter how long you stay. That said, be pro-active about your career. No company or single person can "make" you into the professional you want to be. Draw on the County's resources, but take the lead in getting yourself to the next level in your career.

What is something that only a few people know about you?

Most people don't know that I was on a "SWAT" team. The Southwest Archaeological Team, or "S.W.A.T." for short. We had to work fast on a piece of land in east Mesa, AZ that was being sold to a storage shed business. Before the site was paved over, we sifted through a lot of sand and recovered some Hohokam pottery shards and other artifacts dating from 1100-1400 B.C.E.

If you could take a vacation anywhere, where would you go?

In the past several months, during the Centennial commemorations for World War I, I've been swept up in historical fiction about this forgotten war. I'd like to visit the towns and battlefields in Belgium and in France that I've read so much about.

*The **Employee Spotlight** is a new feature focusing on you. If you would like to nominate a fellow employee, please send his or her name, position, and why you are nominating them to employee.communications@pinellascountry.org.*

OurSpace

Don't forget to check the employee blog – [Our Space](#) – regularly.

Bookmark it. There is news every day!

YOU can post to the blog. It's easier than you might think – give it a try! Share your photos, celebrations, upcoming events and check for the latest news from the County.

If you have questions, please contact Mary Sault at 464-5098 or employee.communications@pinellascountry.org.

The Pen

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Pinellas County Human Resources Department

How to Participate:

It's easy to get involved in *The Pen*. You can contribute by informing us of noteworthy news or sending us story ideas. You can also ask about writing a guest column or submit photos of co-workers at work in your department.

PHONE: (727) 464-5098

FAX: (727) 453-3660

E-mail: employee.communications@pinellascountry.org



BLOOD DRIVE

**Every donor is
three more lives
saved!**

Mark Your Calendars

Clearwater Courthouse
315 Court Street
West Parking Lot
Thursday, June 4, 2015
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

ASK PEGGY



Peggy Rowe
Director of Human Resources

Q. I heard that the DROP program is only two years now instead of five, but I can't find any information about it on the web site. Is that correct?

A. Eligible employees who enter DROP (Deferred Retirement Option Program) are allowed to remain in DROP for up to five years. For details visit www.myfrs.com. Among other information, there is a **DROP Guide** on the site that is very informative.

Q. Many times I have heard supervisors/managers signing paperwork they shouldn't be signing at my location. A few examples are: employment verification and paperwork that employees get from Social Security requesting benefit/insurance information. My understanding is that those

requests need to go through Human Resources. Isn't that right?

A. OPUS has an Employment Verification function where the employee authorizes release of personal, assignment, and period of service details. No supervisor involvement is needed for these requests.

Requests for more details or for information regarding employment verification should come through HR.

Q. I need some assistance on a family legal matter. I need to know when and where the free legal counsel for the County is. This may be something I will need to have further legal counsel, but I need a place to start.

A. I believe you are referring to our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider Guidance Resources, also known as ComPsych. Among other things, they provide limited legal support and resources. The best way to reach them is to call (866) 615-3047.

Q. Is there any County guideline on how old a child must be to participate in the "Take Our Sons and Daughters to Work" Day? My understanding is that the program is for older children.

A. The "Take Our Daughters and Sons to Work Day" is the successor to "Take Our Daughters to Work Day," which was expanded to include boys in 2003. Its goal is to bring children into the workplace to explore the many life choices they have. It is celebrated on the 4th Thursday of April every year in the United States and Canada. The Take Our Daughter's and Son to Work Foundation recommends the program for children 8 to 18.

There is no county-wide policy. Appointing Authorities and managers have latitude as to if and how the program is observed.



Don't miss a **Two-Minute Tuesday** video. Subscribe by going to www.pinellascounty.org/hr/two and click on "Subscribe to Two-Minute Tuesday."

Benefits U Employee Assistance Program

Feeling overwhelmed and in need of support? Contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for help with issues such as stress, relationship conflicts, job pressures, grief, substance abuse or problems with children:

- Available to all employees and those in their household.
- Up to six free visits are provided for an initial assessment.
- To learn more, visit the [Employee Assistance Program webpage](#).

FACE



FACE of Performance:

Tips

Employees: Got questions about logging into FACE or viewing your performance review?

- Get answers fast with the 2-page [Employee Quick Reference Guide](#).
- Find out how to access your review, make comments, eSign and print it with this handy guide.



Summer Breakfast Bytes & Lunch 'n' Learn Series

Business Technology Services (BTS) is taking our successful Breakfast Bytes series on the road to the **SPC EpiCenter**. We are also adding a Lunch 'n' Learn series for those unable to attend the morning sessions.

If you are interested in learning how to use everyday technology tools so you can work smarter not harder, then take advantage of our early morning or lunch-time series to learn some tips and tricks to be more productive.

Grab your breakfast and coffee, or lunch, and join your Pinellas County colleagues for the 1-hour sessions from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. or noon to 1:00 p.m.

Need more information? Contact the BTS Enterprise Technical Training Team:

Kat Black (kblack@pinellascounty.org)

Kevin Connelly (kconnelly@pinellascounty.org)

Sign up for either the 8 a.m. or 12 noon session on these dates.

- Tuesday, May 26th, Apple Mobile Devices: Take a Bite Out of Inefficiency (*BYOD encouraged*)
- Tuesday, June 23rd, Microsoft Windows 7: Unleash the Power of Your Productivity
- Tuesday, June 30th, Microsoft Word: Improve Your Document's Appearance & Impact
- Tuesday, July 7th, Microsoft Excel: Organize, Optimize & Analyze Your Data
- Tuesday, July 14th, Microsoft Outlook: Time Saving Ideas to Help Create Order
- Tuesday, July 21st, Greenshot: Capture Screenshots & Make Everyone Green (with envy)
- Thursday, August 13th, Password & Security Tips: Don't Let Safety Slow You Down
- Thursday, August 20th, GCF Learn Free & Grovo: Micro-learning Resources with Impact



TECH BITS: MICROSOFT EXCEL

Ever find yourself trying to determine which cells in a spreadsheet contain formulas/functions and which ones contain just numbers?

Press this key combination (**ctrl+`**) to show all formulas/functions. Press it again to switch back to normal view.

Find more Technical Training Resources at [BTS Enterprise Technical Training](#).



Training & Development Upcoming Classes

Some classes fill up quickly so request enrollment early through [OPUS Learning Management](#) (OLM).

Five Questions Every Leader Must Ask – 5/28

Use a set of highly effective questions to shift a group's focus from a problem orientation to one of solutions and success. These can be applied to almost every management challenge from improving teamwork, resolving conflicts, encouraging performance improvement, solving problems, managing projects, and much more. Change the emphasis from a backward-focused mindset of "what went wrong" to a forward focus. Create successful outcomes, create a buy-in, establish accountability, and build trust within teams.

Self Service HR – Manager – 6/8

New to your management role or a bit uncertain of the ins and outs of using PIN Manager Self Service responsibility in OPUS? If so then join us for this class. Training will demonstrate how to navigate and perform the following functions:

- Vacation and Worklist Access
- Worklist Notifications and Approvals
- Process Employee Assignment Changes
- Employee Information
- Time Entry
- Learning Management

Workplace Diversity: Beyond Race, Religion & Gender – 6/18

Diversity is more than race, religion and gender; true diversity is appreciating all that makes us different from one another. In a diversified work environment, it is important to know not only what the differences are but how our behavior, sometimes unconscious or unintended, can impact our relationships with others. This interactive workshop guides participants through identifying the many facets of diversity; how to translate an organizational commitment to diversity into behavioral terms; handling difficult or unexpected diversity situations at work and recognizing how diversity is cultivated from both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators.

To view a complete list of all courses, along with descriptions, go to the [Consortium Training Catalog](#). Need assistance? Contact Training and Development at 464-3796 or email them at training@pinellascounty.org.

SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

30 YEARS



Bonnie Buron
Utilities



Gale Clark
Utilities



Scott Stees
Clerk of the Circuit Court

15 YEARS

Ronald Bogan Public Works
Gregory Carro Business Technology Services
Denise Cotter Clerk of the Circuit Court
Peter Duff Parks & Conservation Resources
Ercel Hare Parks & Conservation Resources
Robert McDonald Tax Collector's Office
Mona McGuire Real Estate Management
Jared Rouillard Real Estate Management
Anne Theriault Clerk of the Circuit Court
Mark Wilson Real Estate Management

10 YEARS

James Abaka Risk Management
Todd Balika Clerk of the Circuit Court
Rodney Bolt Risk Management
Joseph Deddo Human Services
Jennifer Hadley Tax Collector's Office
John Hoffmann Utilities
Jan Price Clerk of the Circuit Court
Michael Schmidt Clerk of the Circuit Court
Gabriel Serrano Clerk of the Circuit Court
Sherri Skinner Clerk of the Circuit Court
Lewis Stapp Tax Collector's Office

5 YEARS

Kevin Campanaro Property Appraiser's Office
Melanie Goss Tax Collector's Office
James Hammond Property Appraiser's Office
Kelly King Tax Collector's Office
Michael McKinley Property Appraiser's Office

20 YEARS



Gary Dempsey
Radio and Technology

Unavailable for Photo

30 YEARS

Darenda Rill, *Property Appraiser's Office*

25 YEARS

Cynthia Eden, *Ambulance Billing & Finance Services*

20 YEARS

Brenda Ellers, *Real Estate Management*

REPCO News

REPCO's June meeting will be held at 12:00 noon on June 8 at Applebee's, 5110 East Bay Drive, Clearwater. Sheriff Deputy Charles Skipper will do a presentation on avoiding scams to steal our money. For more information contact Rudy at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

You don't have to be a Pinellas County retiree to attend. Current employees and family members are also welcome.

Promotions

Promotions listed are for April 2015.

Board of County Commissioners

Building Services

Marjorie Brown..... Bldg Svcs Spec
David Smith..... Sr Eng

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Leroy Bridges CVB Mgr

County Administration

Paul Sacco Asst Co Adm
Alexis Sergeant..... Exec Admin Spec

Ambulance Billing/Finance Svcs.

Casandra Helm Amb Blng Comp Ofcr

Regional 911

Michael Sloan 911 Pub Safety Ctr Supv 1

Parks & Conservation Resources

Derick Brown Lifeguard Sr
Vincent Dipadua..... AEO 3
Scott McGrail Aquatics Supv
Robert Sleppey..... Aquatics Supv

Public Works

Sharon Morris Craftwkr 1

Solid Waste

Charles Duff..... Craftwkr 1

Utilities

Shawn Gardner..... Util Maint Spec 2
Stanley Pasek Proj Coord-Admin
George Proper..... Wtr Qual Tech

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Regina Callahan..... Fis Rec Spec
Jacqueline LaPorta Info Tech Sys Analyst Spec

Property Appraiser

Rebecca Glazer GIS Cad 1
Alexander Luca PAO Staff Cncl

Tax Collector

Robert Carlson Tax Tech Sr
Amy McCormick..... Tax Tech Sr

RETIREMENTS

35 YEARS



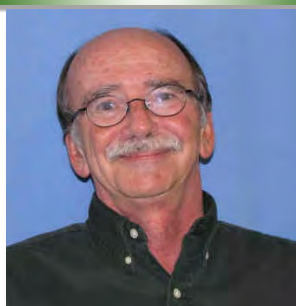
Diana Hunt
Appraiser 1
Property Appraiser's Office

31 YEARS



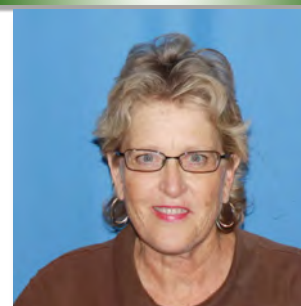
Laura Cormany
Environmental Specialist
Building Services

OVER 20 YEARS



Edwin Brown
Appraiser 1
Property Appraiser's Office

OVER 14 YEARS



Kathleen Dennehy
Appraiser 3
Property Appraiser's Office

UNAVAILABLE FOR PHOTO

36 YEARS John Holmes, *Trades/Field Services Worker, Public Works*

28 YEARS Janet Deane, *Info Technology Specialist, Business Technology Services*

OVER 23 YEARS Tony Garcia, *HVAC Mechanic, Real Estate Management*

OVER 16 YEARS Marcella Piniero, *Museum Collection Custodian, PCR/Heritage Village*

In case you missed it!

The May [To Your Health](#) newsletter has a wealth of info on fitness and nutrition. You will also find links to resources in the community, the May class schedule at the Clearwater campus, info on local Farmers Markets, and employee photos taken during National Walk Day and the Spring Golf Scramble.

May's [Leadership Notes](#) (formerly *Management & Supervisory Notes*) is all about supervisors and low performers. If you'd like to subscribe to *Leadership Notes*, click [HERE](#).

Welcome Aboard!

Board of County Commissioners

Ambulance Billing/Financial Services

Suzanne Lincoln Sr Office Spec

Animal Services

Christine Capozziello..... Acctg & Fin Tech

Building Services

Brian Lewis..... Mech Insp 1

Communications

Nicholas Zoller.....Pub Info Spec

Convention & Visitors Bureau

Victoria Phipps.....Bus Asst Spec 1

Parks & Conservation Resources

James Bartucci..... Park/Prsve Maint Wkr

Christopher Creamer Craftwkr 1

Deborah Reichart.....Office Asst

Public Works

Shawn Johnson.....Maint 1

Robert Krueger..... Entomology & Ed Supt Spec

Cedric Pace.....Maint 1

Chester Williams.....Maint 1

Real Estate Management

Reagan Higgins..... Real Prop Tech

Risk Management

Daphne Oehlers Claims Case Mgr, RN

Solid Waste

Andrew GoffeMaint 1

Business Technology Services

Elizabeth Berkobein..... Info Tech SME

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Jennifer DeJesus..... Fis Rec Spec

Kara Drew..... Fis Rec Spec

Property Appraiser's Office

Jamie Mosley..... Prop Rclds Asst

Terri Pettay..... Exempt Audit

Tax Collector's Office

Loutricia Abuyu Cust Svc Tech 1

Jami Alvarez Cust Svc Tech 1

Shannon Bynum Cust Svc Tech 1

Renee Robinette..... Cust Svc Tech 1

the Colors of PINELLAS

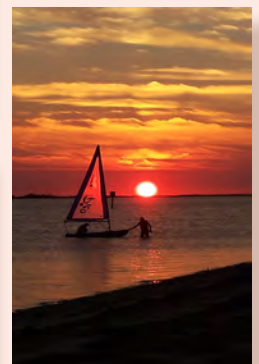
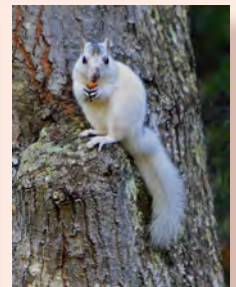
Remember these works of art from last year's *Colors of Pinellas Employee Art Show*? It was a great show.

There's not that much time left to get your works registered. **The deadline is May 29.** Click [HERE](#) to enter your works of art in the *2015 Colors of Pinellas Art Show*.

The juried show is open to Pinellas County employees, their immediate family members, retirees, and active volunteers. The prize for Best of Show and three 1st place categories is \$300 each! Artwork can be photos, works on paper (drawings, etc.), sculptures, crafts - you name it. It is open to all skill levels.

Here are the important dates:

May 29	Registration Deadline
June 12	Artwork Drop-off Day
June 18	Artwork Judging
June 29	Awards Ceremony
June 29-July 28	Artwork Exhibition Dates



THE
**National
ARTS
PROGRAM**
For the encouragement and development of artistic talent



Create Sustainable Solutions

Vision • Innovation • Collaboration

What is Your Eco-Footprint?

<http://www.earthday.org/footprint-calculator>

How much land area does it take to support your lifestyle? Take this **quiz** to find out your Ecological Footprint, discover your biggest areas of resource consumption, and learn what you can do to tread more lightly on the earth.



Want more information?

Upcoming classes

[Water-Wise Landscaping Classes](#)

[Extension Calendar](#)



Join Us on Facebook!

www.facebook.com/PinellasExtension



UF | IFAS Extension
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

FROM THE RECORD KEEPER



Wednesday Records Retrieval Services Reinstated

Records & Information Management - Clearwater has reinstated Wednesday record retrieval services effective April 16, 2015. Retrieval requests are now processed Monday through Friday.

All retrieval requests received before 8:30 a.m. will be processed the same business day. Retrieval requests received after 8:30 a.m. will be processed the following business day.

Delivery services are provided by the Clerk's Courier Service based on their schedule. For questions about deliveries to your location, please contact the Clerk's Courier Services department at 464-3426.

If you have any questions about this change, please contact Michele Koehler at (727) 453-3038.

Consumer Corner



Connie Consumer

Like most of us, Connie Consumer depends on her vehicle. When it needs repairs she wants to make sure it's fixed right. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS) regulates Motor Vehicle Repair Shops. Before you take your vehicle in for repairs, verify that the shop is properly registered with FDACS and check if they have any complaints with Pinellas County Consumer Protection.

If the cost of the repairs is more than \$100, the repair shop must provide you a written estimate prior to the start of the work. The repair shop must also obtain your approval if the cost of work will exceed the amount of the estimate by more than \$10 or 10%, whichever is greater. Upon completion of the job, be sure to obtain a copy of the invoice for your records; it should state the completed repairs, total cost and any warranties.

For more information on auto repairs, to file a complaint, or to check the complaint history of a business, contact Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/consumer/tips.htm.

PET OF THE MONTH



Look at her now! **Abbey** was one of the animals rescued from All Creatures Great and Small in March and has been recovering at Pinellas County Animal Services. She is a happy 10 month old hound mix. She is ready for a new start with her forever family.

Due to an overwhelming number of pets at Pinellas County Animal Services, take advantage of the **reduced adoption rates through May 15**. The adoption fee is waived for large dogs and all cats and reduced to \$25 for puppies and small breeds.

Every one of the pets offered for adoption at Animal Services are spayed or neutered and have all of their required shots. Visit Abbey and the other cats and dogs up for adoption at 12450 Ulmerton Road in Largo, or see them online at www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices/Adopt/. To learn more about Animal Services, stop by the shelter, call (727) 582-2600 or visit www.pinellascounty.org/animalservices.