Holiday Giving 2019

Pinellas County employees make a difference year round. At this time of year in particular we tend to count our blessings and feel fortunate leading to increased goodwill. Here are just few examples of your kindheartedness.

The 33rd Annual Bike Drive

Over $12,000 was raised to purchase 123 bicycles and helmets for children of needy families identified through the Human Services Department. Andrew Pupke (Real Property & Facility Management) has coordinated the effort for 20 years. He said over 20 departments contributed to make the drive a success again this year.

The Clerk’s Office

In addition to the donations to the Bike Drive, staff from the Clerk’s Office collected gifts for the PARC Holiday Gift Program. Recipients included adults who live in group homes or participate in adult day programs, and 5 children. Each recipient’s wishes (such as toys, pajamas, DVDs, headphones) were printed on stars. The staff then picked a star and purchased the requested gift.

Employee also donated gifts for Hospice such as small stuffed animals and books.

Staff members are also currently collecting money for children being cared for at Carlton Manor Foster Home in St. Petersburg.

The Property Appraiser’s Office

Contributed by John Van Heest

This holiday season, the PAO participated in two food drives: one for Kind Mouse which provides after-school food for children throughout Pinellas County as well as donations for Empath Hospice.

A Look Back at 2019 with the HR Director, page 3.
New Benefit Administrator for EAP and Behavioral Health

The administration of Pinellas County’s Behavioral Health Program is moving to UnitedHealthcare (UHC) and the Employee Assistance Program will transition to Optum (a subsidiary of UHC) from CompPsych as of January 1, 2020.

The move to UnitedHealthcare leads to a whole-person approach to your healthcare by integrating medical and behavioral health services with one administrator and allows for an expanded national network of behavioral health providers, addition of virtual visits and availability of out-of-network benefits.

Those utilizing behavioral health benefits may continue to see their current provider during the transition period from January 1 to March 31, 2020.

To learn more about this transition and benefits offered to you through the Behavioral Health and Employee Assistance Programs, view our FAQs.

BLOOD DRIVES

Mark Your Calendars

Utilities Building
14 S. Fort Harrison Ave.
Clearwater
January 15
8:30 - 1:30

Tax Collector
1663 Gulf to Bay Blvd.,
Clearwater
January 22
10:30 - 1:00

Courthouse
315 Court St.
Clearwater, west lot
January 21
11:00 - 4:00

Utilities-SGMD
6730 142nd Ave. N
Largo
February 5
12:00 - 5:00

Public Works
22211 US Hwy. 19 N.
Building 1, Clearwater
February 6
12:00 - 5:00

Also view the NEW blood donation web page.

Back to School Drive

Parks and Conservation Resources PCR Direct Newsletter, Oct. 2019

Parks and Conservation Resources staff, in collaboration with Public Works Environmental Management Division and the County Administrator’s Office, donated school supplies to the Greater Ridgecrest YMCA. The supplies were handed out to deserving families during their Back-to-School event.

INSIDE

Click on the topic to go directly to the page.

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How to Protect Your Personal Information During the Holidays

The Extra

The Pen

A monthly publication by Pinellas County Human Resources
EDITOR: Mary L. Sault

Would you like to put something in the Pen?
Let us know by the first of the month.
And be sure to include photos!
employee.communications@pinellascounty.org
Q. What day are the 2020 Personal Days and Floating Holidays available – December 22, 2019 or January 1, 2020?

A. The Personal Days and Floating Holidays are available to use during first pay period of 2020, which begins December 22, 2019. It takes few days for them to appear in OPUS. If they don’t show as available when you complete your timecard, use Annual Leave and then submit a retro correction to change it later.

Use It Or Lose It

For those who have not yet used their Personal Days or Floating Holidays for 2019, the last day to use them is December 21.

If a Personal Day is taken immediately before or after a recognized holiday, it must be scheduled and approved in advance.

Got the Flu?

Effective with the December 22 pay period, leave taken for flu and flu-like illness will be considered scheduled leave.

If you get it, don’t spread it!

Stay home from work to avoid spreading the virus to coworkers and customers.

Avoid the flu

FREE flu shots available for County group health plan members at:
- Your network physician’s office
- Convenience care clinics
- Walmart and Publix pharmacies

For more information about the flu, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website.

HR Wants Your Feedback

Have you seen the “How are we doing?” link on HR’s website and emails? Take this quick anonymous Customer Satisfaction Survey whenever you contact Human Resources.

Let us know: Did you get what you need in a timely manner? What do you think we can do to improve? We want to hear from you to help us serve you better.

A Look Back at 2019

Holly Schoenherr, Director of Human Resources

This past year, I’ve made it a priority to spend time with employees across the Unified Personnel System. Throughout the year, I’ve attended many group meetings, conducted a Listening Tour regarding the Classification and Compensation Study, accompanied our Benefits team on their informational sessions and shadowed EAC Representatives while they were on the job. I’ve heard and seen much and want to share with you my top 5 observations:

1. Employees across the County care deeply about one another and are always willing to lend a hand in the community. From your response during Hurricane Dorian to your involvement in the community throughout the year, our employees are truly passionate about making a difference and committed to leaving a lasting impact on Pinellas County.

2. Employees want to be involved in the decision-making process and have many good ideas to offer. Two-way communication is so important, even if it’s uncomfortable. We are keeping the conversation going and opening new avenues for your feedback and suggestions. I always welcome an invitation to your workplace to meet you and your coworkers.

3. The Unified Personnel System is an (unusual yet) effective model for delivering HR services.

Because the UPS is unique, it can be confusing. It was created in 1975 to provide consistent personnel practices across all Appointing Authorities. The separation of Human Resources from any Appointing Authority promotes objectivity and fairness. Also, the diversity among Personnel Board members contributes to effective decision-making.

4. I have so much more to experience and learn about our 3,100+ employees. I look forward to more opportunities to meet and discuss the best ways we can serve you.

5. I have felt privileged to serve and work beside an incredibly dedicated and caring group of people in the Human Resources Department.

I wish you and your family happy holidays and I look forward to working together in 2020.
1... 2: Invest in You!
Only 2 Weeks Left

The December 31 deadline to obtain your 2020 preferred premium and save $500 is just around the corner. Get BOTH your biometric screening and health survey completed now!

What's a preferred premium?
The preferred premium means you'll save $500 in 2020 on your healthcare premium.

How do I earn the preferred premium?
Step 1: Complete the biometric screening. There are two components — an annual physical exam and lab work.
Step 2: Complete the health survey. The online Rally questionnaire asks about your health and habits, which can help you identify possible risks or medical conditions.

What if I'm not sure if I completed the two steps this year?
To verify that you completed both activities in 2019, see the handy Rally Quick Guide which includes screenshots.

How can I learn more?
View the Biometric Screening and Health Survey FAQs.

Take Care of Yourself

In December’s To Your Health newsletter, you will find:
- Emotional Intelligence During the Holidays
- Healthcare Updates for 2020
- Wellness Center Updates
- Stepping Into Your Health 2020
... and more!

WageWorks FSA Card Suspended?
IRS regulations require that 100% of your FSA card transactions be verified (to show your plan benefits were used to pay for eligible expenses). WageWorks may require you to submit a detailed receipt in order to verify the transaction. A credit card receipt alone is not acceptable since it is not itemized. If you do not provide the requested information, your FSA card may be suspended until the payment in question is verified.

To ensure WageWorks has the appropriate information to verify a payment, a detailed receipt must contain all of the following information:
1. Date of service or purchase
2. Description of service or purchase
3. Provider or merchant name
4. Patient name
5. Your out-of-pocket cost
A detailed pharmacy receipt or Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from the health plan are examples of detailed receipts.

For more information from WageWorks, view their Healthcare Benefits “Receipts” web page.

*The EAP and behavioral health vendors are changing to Optum and UnitedHealthcare as of January 1, 2020. View more information.*
Passport Event Helps Citizens with Extended Office Hours on Saturday, January 11th

Many citizens apply for their passports at the Pinellas County Clerk's office throughout the year. However, finding the time to make it into the office during regular business hours may be difficult.

“The decision to offer a Saturday passport event was based on the hectic work and school schedule many families have to juggle,” said Ken Burke, Pinellas County Clerk of the Circuit Court and Comptroller. “This is a great opportunity, especially for those planning any Spring Break travels, as now is the time to get those passports ready.”

The Passport Day Event takes place on Saturday, January 11, 2020, from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. at the following Clerk’s office locations:

- **Downtown Clearwater Court- house** - Recording Services Department, 315 Court St., Room 150, Clearwater
- **Downtown St. Petersburg Judicial Building** - St. Petersburg Branch, 545 1st Ave N., St. Petersburg
- **North County Branch** - 29582 U.S. 19 N., Clearwater

First-time passport applicants, citizens with expired passports (over 15 years from the issue date), and minors needing to renew their passports are encouraged to take advantage of this event.

Passport photos will also be available to the public for $15. As of November, U.S. military veterans and active-duty personnel can get their passport photos free of charge by visiting the Pinellas Clerk’s office locations listed above and presenting their CAC card (active duty), Military 10 card (veterans) or a veteran designation on their driver license.

The passport event will focus exclusively on processing passport applications and work on a first-come, first-served basis with regular passport fees. All passport applicants must appear in person, bring identifying documents such as government-issued identification and birth certificates, as well as two separate forms of payment for the Clerk’s processing fee for each passport (check, cash, money order or credit card) and the Department of State passport application fee (check or money order only). Passport applications can be completed in advance by visiting www.travel.state.gov.

For more information on the Passport Day Event or passport requirements, visit the Clerk’s website www.mypinellasclerk.org or call (727) 464-7000.

**ATTENTION EMPLOYEES:**

Don’t forget: All current Pinellas County employees, including the Sheriff’s Office, can get their passport photo free of charge by presenting their county ID. All other passport fees will apply.

### Pets of the Month

**Contributed by Pinellas County Animal Services (PCAS)**

Meet **Maggy**, a delightful girl with wisdom in her facial features, gathered through her life. Maggy came to PCAS as a stray and is now hopeful we can help her find a new loving home. She can be quiet and sometimes bashful with visitors. Like some senior companions, Maggy may have her moments of being independent, but will probably seek out her favorite someone for love and attention. A gentle cat, Maggy is an older girl who may take a little while to settle into her new home. After spending time with Maggy she will capture your heart with her determined yet loving, laid back personality. Come in and meet Maggy. She is ready to be a big part of your life... fur-ever. Maggy is a 7 year old orange tabby.

**Not able to adopt?** Consider signing up as a foster! We need help with kittens, puppies, adults who need more socialization, and medical rehab cases. Please contact Jennifer at (727) 582-2636 or by email at jrenner@pinellascounty.org.

**Kaper** is a friendly guy and likes to be around other dogs. He may be nearly 7 years old, but he still has energy! He appreciates a treat and will jump high to catch one. He is athletic and with training would make a great agility dog. This handsome boy appears house trained, knows sit and accepts treats calmly, and is very talkative, too! Wouldn’t it be great to come home to that smiling face each day? Kaper is a 6 year old Retriever mix.
Bicycles, Gifts and Food ... Oh My!

Contributed by Kim Belanger

Many lives will be touched this year through the fundraising efforts of the Business Technology Services (BTS) Team through three separate efforts.

The Bicycle Drive collected enough money to purchase 21 bicycles and helmets for children of needy families in Pinellas County. This is part of the larger County initiative headed up by Facilities and Real Property Department.

The Holiday Angel Tree program supports Pinellas County Foster Parents Association and grants wishes to 30 foster children.

In addition, BTS held a food drive to support the Homeless Empowerment Program (HEP). BTS employees donated canned goods, non-perishable food items and grocery store gift cards to this worthwhile cause.

Solid Waste Department’s Silver Santa and 11th Annual Food Drive

Contributed by Carlee Ward

This was the Solid Waste Department’s 4th year working in partnership with the Silver Santa program. The program provides clothing, toiletries and many other necessities to needy elders who might otherwise be forgotten. This year Solid Waste was able to fulfill the wishes of 25 senior citizens within Pinellas County.

Solid Waste hosted their 11th annual holiday canned food drive. Employees dropped off the food at the Solid Waste Food Donation Station. It is all weighed and a contest is held to Guess the Weight as everything the department does is weight based. This year 242 pounds were collected! Jan Tracy estimates that close to 1 ton or 2,000 pounds of food has been donated over the years. The food is taken to Religious Community Services and the St. Pete Free Clinic for distribution.

Cuddle Bear Coin Collection in Third Year

Contributed by Darla Epper

Year 3 for the Cuddle Bear Coin Collection had many different returning collectors including employee’s children. The amount collected throughout 2019 for the Vets’ Children’s Bike Drive totaled a whopping $540!

Ava and J.J., daughter and son of Abigail Stanton (Human Services) donated the blue piggy bank shown above filled with many coins. They also made a card with a bicycle (behind the blue piggy bank) which says “Give to people who need it.”

Omar, son of Sasha Perez (Community Development) donated a white and red teddy bear coin bank also shown above. Marie Kingsbury donated a white and black Cuddle Bear Coin Collection Bear piggy bank shown above nuzzling with the blue piggy bank.

Other Cuddle Bear Coin Collectors include: Abigail Stanton, Ana Carrera, Barbara Fore (Building), Brea Mullins, Brook Gajan, Carol McKinney, Christina Bott, Christine Colabella, Clark Scott, Daniel Carriero (friend), Daphne Johnson-McCluster, Darla Epper, Deborah Berry, Diana Persha, Donna Houser (mom) Elissa DeGregorio, Elle Ploseno, Flo Harding, Geni Trauscht, Jackie Civelio, Jadonn Sowell, Jane Muhrlin, Jessica Aragon, Joe Riddle, Jodi Groth, Julie Wason, KB Baird, Karl Booker, Kellie Pettye, Keri Vizandieu, Laura and John Lent (sis and bro-in-law), Linda Boger, Lisa Freeman, Manny (friend), Marie Kingsbury and Fred, Marcella Faucette, Meghan Lomas, Michelle Newton, Sara Gordils, Sasha Perez, Scott Glaeser, Shari Harris, Steve Baumann, Vivian Padron, and Zeffrey Mims. My apologies if I forgot anyone who donated.

Have a very happy and healthy holiday season!

Silver Santa donations; Food Donation Station. In the background is a Red-Shouldered Hawk sighted near the administration building. It is one of the many birds that can be found flying around the Solid Waste property.
For some, the workplace can be a big source of stress in life. Potential stressors can include looming deadlines, demands from customers and managers alike, and potential conflicts with coworkers, just to name a few. While the impacts of stress can be significant, you’re not powerless to the effects. Effectively coping with job stress can benefit both your professional and personal life.

**Identify Your Stress Triggers**

Your personality, experiences, and other unique characteristics all influence the way you respond to and cope with stress. Situations and events that are distressing for your colleagues might not bother you in the least. On the other hand, you might be particularly sensitive to certain stressors that don’t seem to bother other people at all. We all have different stress triggers.

To begin coping with stress at work, you should identify your stress triggers. When you feel stressed at work, record the circumstances, events, and people who cause you to have a negative physical, mental, or emotional response. Include a brief description of each situation, answering questions such as:

- Where were you?
- Who was involved?
- What was your reaction?
- How did you feel?

**Tackle Your Stress Triggers**

Once you’ve identified your stress triggers, consider each situation or event that triggered your stress and look for ways to resolve it. Remember, the best way to cope with stress is to find a way to change the circumstances that are causing it.

Consider:

- Talking to a trusted friend, family member, or colleague about the issues you’re facing at work that cause you stress. See if they can offer advice or perspective to handling the stressor.
- Taking a break and removing yourself from the environment that stresses you; this can be a short 5-minute break during the workday or a 2-week vacation, whatever is needed to help you de-stress and refocus.
- Having a healthy outlet for your stress; like exercise, spending time on a hobby, or reading.

**Know When to Seek Help**

If the stress seems like too much to handle on your own, don’t be afraid to ask for help. Remember that the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is there to offer confidential assistance to you 24/7.

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**Additional ULearnIT Resources**

(Copy ID into search field after logging in.) [Log in to Skillsoft](https://www.skillsoft.com)

- Take a Deep Breath and Manage Your Stress - ID: pd_30_a03_bs_enus
- Managing Pressure and Stress to Optimize Your Performance - ID: apd_07_a01_bs_enus
- Taking Stock of Your Work/Life Balance - ID: pd_30_a01_bs_enus

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**Thanksgiving at Pinellas County Economic Development**

*Contributed by Stacy Swank, Economic Development*

The Pinellas County Economic Development team contributed two barrels full of food for the RCS Pinellas Food Bank on November 21. RCS Pinellas provides nutritious groceries to our Pinellas neighbors in need. Our thanks to our own Becky Wills for coordinating and organizing this Thanksgiving food drive for us each year.
SERVICE ANNIVERSARIES

40 YEARS

Sheila Murphy
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Court & Operational Services

Fred Flowers
Public Works

Kathleen Roach
Utilities

James Cannon
Public Works

35 YEARS

Unavailable for Photo

25 Years
Anthony Fails, Utilities

30 YEARS

Andrea Gammon
Safety & Emergency Services

Laura Averill
Risk Management

Janet Roberson
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Court & Operational Services

Andrea Henry
Safety & Emergency Services

20 YEARS

Carol Hopper, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Shelley Sarabia, Safety & Emergency Services
Robert Vandermortel, Real Estate Management
Tiana Walker, Management & Budget

Un available for Photo

20 Years
Carol Hopper, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Shelley Sarabia, Safety & Emergency Services
Robert Vandermortel, Real Estate Management
Tiana Walker, Management & Budget

3 YEARS

Anthony Augustine, Animal Services
Sheri Bowers, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Patrick Campbell, Parks & Conservation Resources
Kara Devlin, Utilities
Roxann Foreman, Clerk of the Circuit Court
Amanda Gillespie, Building & Development Review Svcs.
William Jardine, Utilities
Scott Perkins, Utilities
Edward Ramous, Public Works
Cheryl Sharp-Miller, Utilities
Joan Wilke, Public Works
REPCO News

The next REPCO lunch meeting will be January 13, 2020 at Applebee’s Restaurant located 5110 East Bay Drive. A representative from Pinellas County Animal Services will join us and provide information on the services they provide. For questions, contact Rudy Garcia at (813) 855-3466 or rdgarcia@verizon.net.

RETIREMENTS

OVER 33 YEARS

William Zweil
Spray Technician 2
Public Works, Mosquito Control & Vegetation Management

Antony Rodwell
Department Computer Support Specialist 2
Public Works Customer Services

32 YEARS

Retiree Unavailable for Photo

25 Years
Van Cobb, Craftworker 1, Airport

HO! HO! HO!

Would you like to play Santa?
Are you jolly?
Do you have a generous lap?

If you’d like to volunteer to play Santa for the Annual Holiday Lights in the Gardens event this year, the Florida Botanical Gardens would like to hear from you! If you’d like to play Santa, contact the Foundation office at 582-2117.

Others interested in volunteering for the event should go to www.fbGFoundation.org/volunteer to sign up.

Departments Working Together to Help Wildlife

Contributed by Kristine Florig, Parks

Park Rangers at Fort DeSoto frequently rescue wildlife, especially birds that become the victim of fishing line. On this day, the rangers got a little help from their friends at the Sheriff’s Office. These deputies not only serve and protect the human residents of the County but are sometimes called to help the wildlife residents as well.
Promotions

Promotions listed are for November 2019.

Board of County Commissioners

Administrative Services
Valerie Edmons.............................Insurance Analyst
Heather Fawley..........................Purch Sys Coord

Airport
Jodey Stambaugh...........................Craftwrkr 1

Animal Services
Caitlyn Antkowiak.........................Ani Svcs Prog Coord
Charlae Mitchell.........................Ani Svcs Rep

Marketing & Communications
Anthony Fabrizio.........................Proj Coord-Proj Mgmt

Public Works
Tyler Ferris........................................Fld Insp 2
Ryan Goshay.....................................AEO 1
Gary Gray........................................Constr Mgmt Insp 2
Matthew Hill..................................Tree Trimmer 2
Ali Mauer........................................Envir Spec 2
Perry Medland...............................Traf Sig Techn 2

Safety & Emergency Services
Lissette Arias..............................911 Pub Safety Telecomm 3

Solid Waste
Joshua Kirchmann.........................GIS Analyst

Utilities
Rachel Blank...............................Wtr Qual Mgmt Spec 2
Charles Jeffries............................Util Maint Spec 3
Tyler Jones....................................Util Maint Spec 3
Robert Kacinko............................Elect Equip Tech 3
Kenneth Kloostra.........................Elec/Mech Tech 2
Ender Perozo...............................Util Maint Spec 2
Ricky Rozzi.................................Elec/Mech Tech 2

Business Technology Services
Ryan Boylan.................................Sys Analyst

Clerk of the Circuit Court
Jennifer Gundel.........................Info Tech Sys Analyst 1
Diana Marin...............................Fis Rec Spec

Property Appraiser’s Office
Zach Bloomer..............................Appraiser 2
David Henderson, II......................Appraiser 3
Wendy Parsons.............................Appraiser 3
Michael VanHofwegen....................Appraiser 3

Tax Collector’s Office
Tanika Allen..............................Tax Tech 2
Raylisha Dizon.............................Tax Tech 2
Stephen Elder..............................Tax Tech 2
Joshua Jones..............................Tax Tech 2
John Stolar.................................Tax Col Aud Compl Spec
Ebru Tan........................................Tax Tech 2
Sarah Vandergriff........................Tax Tech 2

Ready to Take Your Career to New Heights?

Learning Paths offer a unique opportunity to develop yourself and expand your skills.

Different Paths for Different Needs

There are seven Learning Paths which include instructor-led and self-paced learning to help you build knowledge and skills progressively over time. Courses are tailored for every level—core to advanced. Certificates and microcertifications are available upon successful completion.

It’s easy to start! See the Learning Paths Guide, or email learning@pinellascounty.org, or call (727) 464-3796.

Learn Today, Be Ready for Tomorrow

The 2019 Learning Catalog is available online.

The catalog presents learning opportunities for employees and provides a framework to develop your knowledge and skills. View the catalog.
Welcome Aboard!

New employees listed are for November 2019.

Board of County Commissioners

Airport
Christian Denis.................................Electrician 1

Ambulance Billing & Financial Services
Latara Washington.................................Office Spec 2

Building Services
Cameron Vasser.................................Bldg Insp 1

Development Review Services
Calyn Lee.............................................Envir Spec 2

EMS Fire Administration
Holly Dombroski Estep................Admin Supt Spec 1

Fleet Management
Robert Kramel.............................Fleet Mech

Human Services
Jade Smith............................................Grant Wkr A

Parks & Conservation Resources
Ronald Taylor.................................Craftwkr 1
Cynseir Brooks.................................Craftwkr 1
Jonathan Prieto.................................Grant Wkr A

Public Works
Jarek Chrzanowski.......................Surv & Map Asst
Lee Bussey...........................................Maint 2
Marque Chestine..............................Trne UF A
Robert Barrier..............................Spray Tech 1
Gene Johnson.................................Spray Tech 1

Solid Waste
Shannon Unrue..............................Scalhhs Svcs Spec 1
Christine Kujawa.............................Scalhhs Svcs Spec 1

Utilities
Jawanza Gainer............................Meter Rdr 1
Monica Aponte..............................Scalhhs Svcs Spec 1
Mary Margaret Harmon..............Admin Supt Spec 1

Business Technology Services

Reginald Blank..................Ntwrk Telecomm Analyst

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Judith Scott.........................Fin Opns Spec
Kimberly Chavez.......................Cust Info Ctr Spec 1
Courtney Richtman..................Fist Rec Spec
Diana Marin..............................Rec Spec 1
Lindsey Simpson.....................Rec Spec 1
Kaitlyn Veisz............................Rec Spec 1

Colors of Pinellas

The Colors of Pinellas Art Show Returns in 2020!

Start thinking about what you’d like to enter now!

- See the 2020 Art Show Timeline.
- Open to all employees, retirees and volunteers and your families.
- Classifications include youth, teen, amateur, intermediate and professional.

New Employee Orientation 11/12/19.

New Employee Orientation 11/25/19.
How to Protect Your Personal Information During the Holidays

The holidays can be hectic with shopping, gift wrapping, cooking, and traveling. But there’s one more thing you should add to your list … protecting your personal information. Here a few helpful tips to protect your personal information this holiday season.

**Use Credit Card vs. Debit Card:** Credit cards offer better protection against fraudulent charges. Federal law limits consumer liability for credit card fraud to $50, but in most cases, you have no liability. With debit cards, the amount you’re responsible for could depend on how quickly you report the charges to the bank. Also, with a debit card the money is taken directly from your bank account, which could take additional time to reimburse.

**Password protect your devices:** Do you often forget where you put your cell phone? If your devices aren’t password protected, your personal information could be accessed by anyone. Set up passwords on all your devices; by using a few unrelated words with spaces in between and include a mixture of letters, numbers, characters for a secure password.

**Avoid Public WIFI:** When on the go, using your devices at the hotel or nearby coffeeshop is convenient, but the connection may not be secure putting your information at risk. Protect your information, wait until you’re on a secured WIFI network, or set up a VPN (virtual private network) which encrypts your connection on a public network.

**Don’t use public USB charging ports:** While traveling avoid using public USB power charging stations commonly found in hotels and airports because they could contain malware. This latest form of identity theft is referred to as “juice Jacking.” Thieves install malware onto charging stations or cables infecting the electronic devices of unsuspecting users. Instead, it’s recommended that you directly use the AC power outlet, pack the chargers for your devices or purchase a portable charger for emergencies.

For more information, to check the complaint history of a business or to file a complaint, contact Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727)464-6200 or at www.pinellascounty.org/consumer/tips.htm.
Employee and family news including kudos, weddings, births, graduations, memorials, and classified ads. Send your news to employee.communications@pinellascounty.org or call 464-5098.

Gone but not Forgotten

The Pen is saddened to report the passing of the following retirees:

Roger “Butch” Doty, 72, of Helotes, TX, passed away November 11. He was employed with EMS/Fire Administration as an Accountant when he retired in 2010 after 20 years of service. Read his obituary.

Geoffrey Hamlin, 72, of Clearwater, passed away November 28. He retired from the County Attorney’s Office in 2010 after 10 years of service. Read his obituary.

David H Springer, 69, of St. Petersburg, passed away November 23. He retired from the Highway Department in 2009 after 22 years of service. No obituary was located.

Paul Sweeney, 65, of St. Petersburg, passed away November 14. He retired in 2016 from the Transportation and Stormwater Division of Public Works with 28 years of service. Read his obituary.

Brenda Williams, 78, of Palm Harbor, passed away November 20. She retired in 2003 from the Finance Division of the Clerk’s Office with 18 years of service. Read her obituary.

Robert Zakrzewski, 77, of Georgia and Wisconsin, formerly of Tarpon Springs, passed away December 4. He retired from Pinellas County and was a Parks Supervisor. Read his obituary.

Festival of Trees

Camille Evans (Human Resources) entered a Labrador Retriever-themed tree at the Festival of Trees charity event and won first place in the 4½ foot division which had 60 trees. The tree sales are donated to The Arc Tampa Bay. The tree was dedicated to her four rescue Labs and to Labrador Retriever Rescue of Florida. The tree was mounted on a custom doghouse made by Camille’s husband, Mike Evans (retiree, Property Appraiser), and it features 8 stuffed Labs. The tree had 105 dog-related Christmas ornaments handmade by Camille and Joan Panabaker (retiree, Communications). The goal was to encourage people to adopt a Lab while helping The Arc assist people with disabilities. Camille’s tree was priced at $650, all to be donated to The Arc!

Classified Ads

For Sale Trundle Bed (twin size), purchased from Kane’s Furniture, barely used by grandson, color is distressed red. All mattresses are stored in moving mattress bags. Linens are included. Great for sleepovers.

$300 Katrinashisler@yahoo.com (727) 735-2091
Classified Ads

For Sale 2002 Mustang GT 4.6 - 106K miles, one owner, all maintenance performed regularly, cold A/C, $5,000 OBO (727) 647-6513

For Sale Equipment or moving trailer, aluminum slide on trailer, 8 ft long; 4 ft wide, 8 ft tall; single axle; 450 lbs; totally enclosed and water tight; back door opening is 7 ft high; back door closes with a lock and is reinforced with steel mesh to unload anything heavy and not flex under load; hand crank jack in front for front wheel; spare tire $1,999 Phone: (727) 360-3913

Want to Get Rid of Stuff?
Advertise here for FREE if you’d like to give away, donate, or sell something.

All County employees, active or retired, permanent or temporary, may submit ads. Only personal items can be advertised - business or commercial ads or ads providing services will not be published.

To submit an ad, complete this online form.

Questions? Contact Employee.Communications@pinellascounty.org.

The Pen is published once per month on or around the 15th. Submissions are due the 1st of the month.