

# VOLUNTEER VOICE

A newsletter by and for Pinellas County government volunteers.



December 2015

We're on the web at [www.pinellascounty.org/volunteer](http://www.pinellascounty.org/volunteer)



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**How to participate:** Send questions, article submissions, upcoming events, photos, or story ideas to [mkvam@pinellascounty.org](mailto:mkvam@pinellascounty.org).

## Pinellas County SKYWARN Training Class

Private citizens, ham radio operators and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) members gathered December 15 at the new Pinellas County Emergency Operations Center in Largo for a SKYWARN spotters training class. The class was hosted by the Pinellas County ACS/ARES unit, along with their sponsoring agency Pinellas County Emergency Management.

The class had 100 attendees and was taught by **Dan Noah**, the NOAA warning coordination meteorologist at the Ruskin National Weather Service (NWS) office. The class was welcomed by the Emergency Management Department Director **Sally Bishop**, who said in part, "We are grateful for the community service provided by the spotters as it is a vital piece of the process that takes place between the Weather Service and Emergency Management to ensure the community is warned and as ready as possible for weather events."

*The Pinellas County ARES (Amateur Radio Emergency Service) and ACS (Auxiliary Communications Service) are amateur radio operators who provide a variety of professional unpaid (volunteer) skills. The Pinellas County ACS/ARES Unit provides, supplements, or augments government communications and other agencies as needed during emergencies where normal communication systems have sustained damage, are being over taxed or overburdened, or backup radio operators are required.*

Mr. Noah explained "SKYWARN is a program sponsored by the NWS consisting of trained weather spotters who provide reports of hazardous weather to the NWS to help in the warning process. SKYWARN spotter reports provide vital 'ground truth' to the NWS. These reports serve the NWS mission of protecting life and property from the adverse impacts of severe weather. Each year, spotters donate their time and/or equipment to help the NWS in the severe weather warning process."

Training included what to look for when reporting weather, what to report, how to estimate hail size, wind speed and the format to use (TEL: Time, Event, Location). Since El Niño will be a major factor in our weather for the next few months, Mr. Noah detailed some of the



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# Events

## Holiday Lights

Every evening now through December 31 from 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., the Florida Botanical Gardens is displaying holiday lights in the gardens. This event includes nightly entertainment and is the largest fundraiser for the gardens. [www.flbg.org/](http://www.flbg.org/). Florida Botanical Gardens, (727) 582-2100; 12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo.

**Suggested donation of \$4, ages 13 and up.**

## Holidays at the Village

Now through January 3, visitors can enjoy the holiday season at Heritage Village, Pinellas County's 21-acre living history museum. Historical houses are decorated true to their time period, locality and lifestyle, from an elaborately decorated Victorian home to a simply adorned 1852 log cabin. For information, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/heritage](http://www.pinellascounty.org/heritage) or call (727) 582-2233. Heritage Village, 11909 125th Street N., Largo. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays as well as December 25 and January 1.

## Pinellas Folk Festival

January 30, 2016, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
\$5 donation suggested.

*Sponsored by the Pinellas County Historical Society.*

Listen to dozens of the Tampa Bay area's premier folk musicians play traditional folk, gospel, country and bluegrass music on stages throughout the Village! View the [flyer](#) or call (727) 582-2123. Heritage Village, 11909 125th Street N., Largo. Closed Mondays and Tuesdays as well as December 25 and January 1.



## Colors of Pinellas

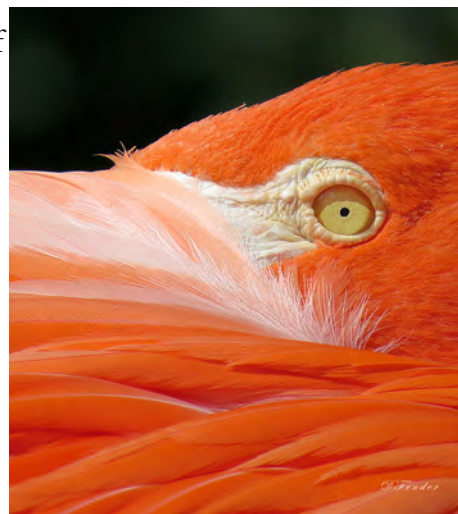


For the past two years, the Colors of Pinellas Art Show has been open to active volunteers. Now we are able to **open it up to family members** of active volunteers as well!

There are three categories: amateur, intermediate and professional. Join us and enter your favorite creation. It could be a photo, drawing, craft, painting, you pick it.

Registration deadline: May 20, 2016

Visit [pinellascounty.org/hr/artshow](http://pinellascounty.org/hr/artshow).



*Peeking Flamingo, by Debra Fender, Volunteer at Animal Services, amateur photography*

## PINELLAS PAWS CAUSE

A Pinellas County Animal Services and Murals for Mutts Partnership

Murals for Mutts artist Anna Hamilton Fields wants to paint YOUR pet ... on the wall at Animal Services. Your \$100 donation includes the pet portrait while 25% goes to the Animal Welfare Trust Fund which helps support a higher quality of care for the dogs and cats at the shelter.

Simply contact Murals for Mutts at [muralsformutts@gmail.com](mailto:muralsformutts@gmail.com) or call (727) 204-5515.

You can view some of the completed work at [www.muralsformutts.com](http://www.muralsformutts.com).

**ADOPT | DONATE | VOLUNTEER**





# *Gone but not Forgotten*

*The Volunteer Voice is saddened to report the passing of the following volunteer, as reported by Theresa Badurek, Extension Services.*

**Jim Wolfinger**, 81, of Seminole passed away November 20, 2015. He is survived by his loving wife of 59 years, Lillian; his two daughters, five grandsons and one great grandson. He was born in Lancaster, OH and moved with his family to Florida in 1969. He was the owner of Discount Boat Tops and an active member of Christ the King Lutheran Church. He was a Master Gardener and volunteered at the Florida Botanical Gardens.



*My heart is thankful to have had the chance to work with wonderful people like Jim and all of the Master Gardeners. - Theresa Badurek*

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added dangers with Florida weather during El Nino.

“During an El Niño, Florida has an increased risk of severe weather and flooding from January through April. There will be about seven or so nights this winter and spring where people will want to pay extra attention to the weather as it moves through the area, and have multiple ways to receive tornado warnings, including NOAA Weather Radio and smart phone Apps” Noah said.

**Clayton Parrott**, KJ4RUS, Pinellas County ARES/ACS Radio Officer and Emergency Coordinator said, “We are helping our citizens become more aware of weather-related events such as tornados, lightning, and now the threat of El Niño by providing them tools such as this SKYWARN training. In doing this we help them to be better prepared for severe weather related events in their communities.”

There are no prerequisites to become a SKYWARN spotter. However, you must be 18 years of age to receive a SKYWARN certification and a spotter ID number.

For more information please visit:

Skywarn: [www.pcacs.org/skywarn](http://www.pcacs.org/skywarn)  
and [www.srh.noaa.gov/tbw/](http://www.srh.noaa.gov/tbw/)

Pinellas County ARES/ACS: [www.pcacs.org/about](http://www.pcacs.org/about)  
Amateur Radio: [www.arrrl.org](http://www.arrrl.org)

*The Volunteer Voice is saddened to report the passing of the following volunteer, as reported by Sharon Biemiller (Fort De Soto Park):*

**Waldo Amasa Rowell**, 91, died at his residence in St. Petersburg, FL on October 25, 2015. Waldo was born in Holden, MA on April 2, 1924. He served in the U.S Navy from 1943 to 1946 as a sonar operator in the Pacific. In the spring of this year, Waldo participated in a celebration of his WWII service by attending a trip to the War Memorials in Washington DC, sponsored by Southwest Florida Honor Flight. A very emotional journey for Waldo, he was immensely touched by those who honored him with their outreach and efforts on his behalf.

Following retirement in 1987, Waldo and his wife, Barbara, moved to St. Petersburg, FL.

He was a member of the Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg, serving as a board member and chairman of the buildings and grounds committee. Throughout his life, Waldo committed much of his time to volunteer service for many worthwhile organizations, including: both the Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts of America; the Coast Guard Auxiliary; AARP; the Veterans Administration Bay Pines National Cemetery; and as a docent and volunteer caretaker at Fort De Soto Park in Pinellas County. The *St. Petersburg Times* featured Waldo in May 8, 2013 article, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Fort De Soto Park. With more than 20 years of service, he became their oldest park volunteer, providing more hours to the upkeep of this beautiful public space than any other individual in the history of the park.

Waldo is survived by Barbara, his wife of 69 years; two sons and their spouses, a daughter in law, four grandsons, and six great grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Endowment of the Unitarian Universalist Church of St. Petersburg, 719 Arlington Ave N, St. Petersburg, FL 33701; or to the Westminster Retirement Communities Foundation (restricted to Westminster Palms), 80 W. Lucerne Circle, Orlando, FL 32801.