



The Leon County LINK

Connecting Citizens with Leon County Services

Abused and Neglected Children Need Your Help



In the spirit of National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Guardian ad Litem of the Big Bend is asking for volunteers to help represent the most vulnerable members of our community – our children. On any given day, there are approximately 1,000 abused and neglected children in the Second Judicial Circuit. Four hundred ninety-five of these children are right here in Leon County, and 127 children – most under 14 years of age – are alone in the court system. Guardian ad Litem are volunteers who represent abused and neglected children in court, social service agencies, and in the community. Anyone, ages 19 and up without felony charges or a history of child abuse or neglect, can be a Guardian ad Litem. On average,

Guardian ad Litem devote four to six hours a month, depending on the case. Volunteers must complete 30 hours of training before becoming a Guardian ad Litem. Training sessions occur every other month. The next training sessions begin on May 15. For more information, please visit www.guardianadlitembigbend.org or contact Leigh Meritt, Assistant Circuit Director, at 488-7612 or Leigh.Merritt@gal.fl.gov.

Learn How to “Go Green” at the Earth Day Green Fair



Many minor adjustments we make in our everyday lives can have a big impact on our environment. Learn how you can make a difference at the Earth Day Green Fair hosted by Leon County Recycles and City of Tallahassee - Your Own Utilities on Saturday, April 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Tallahassee Mall on North Monroe Street. In addition to

informational booths, vendors and prizes, there will be a scavenger hunt where you can learn fun “green” facts about the products we buy and what our local businesses are doing to “go green.” More than 20 prizes have been donated by local sponsors, including a refurbished computer, a programmable thermostat and gift certificates. For more information, please contact Leon County Recycles at 606-1823 or www.leoncountyfl.gov/recycling or City of Tallahassee - Your Own Utilities at 891-4YOU (4968) or talgov.com/YOU.

VolunteerLEON Celebrates Our Community’s Heroes – Volunteers

April is National Volunteer Month, a time to promote volunteerism and recognize those who exemplify this year’s theme, “Inspire by Example.” Throughout April, VolunteerLEON will be hosting a series of events to increase awareness about volunteer opportunities in Leon County and encourage more citizens to make a difference in our community. These events



include the Street of Service, National Youth Service Day, the Volunteer of the Year Awards, Disaster Training and Come Together Day.

Volunteering links individuals, schools, non-profit agencies, faith-based organizations and businesses together. This results in a vibrant community where citizens can thrive and prosper. Studies have shown that people who volunteer are healthier, happier, and possess more marketable skills than those who choose not to volunteer. Also, organizations with employee volunteer programs report lower employee turnover rates, higher morale, and better community relations.

For more information on volunteering in Leon County, or to find out more about the events planned for Volunteer Month, please visit www.volunteerleon.org or call 606-1970.

With the First Rate Increase in Ten Years, Waste Management, Inc. Fees Remain Competitive

Leon County is dedicated to providing the highest level of service to residents. In September 2006, the Board of County Commissioners approved the franchise extension agreement with Waste Management, Inc. for a six-year term, which included an increase in



Waste Management, Inc. collection fees. This increase will affect Leon County residents in the unincorporated area who subscribe to Waste Management, Inc. for curbside collection services, including garbage, yard waste, recycling, and bulky items. Because the agreement is effective April 22, 2007, quarterly bills are now reflecting the change.

As part of the franchise agreement, Waste Management, Inc. is able to increase fees for fuel adjustments or based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI). However, Waste Management, Inc. negotiated with the County to implement a larger collection fee increase for the year, which has not been done in more than ten years, to compensate for inflation. Future increases will be based on the CPI.

The increase equates to \$0.75 per year for the past ten years, and inflation and fuel adjustments were considered for the new rate. Residents in the unincorporated area who subscribe to the service will see a quarterly increase from \$31.59 to \$49.86. This fee breaks down to a monthly cost of \$16.62 – an increase from \$10.53.

The new fee is comparable to the City of Tallahassee’s fee, which is \$14.39 per month. Differences between the unincorporated area of Leon County and the City of Tallahassee consist of higher density in the City, thus more efficiency in pick-up, and 25 percent more waste per household is generated by unincorporated Leon County residents. In comparison to the current market for other midsize Florida counties, this rate is competitive. Alachua County charges \$20.61; Lee County charges \$17.67; Escambia County charges \$16.80; Martin County charges \$14.88; and, Seminole County charges \$13.83.

For additional information, please call Leon County Solid Waste Management Division at 606-1800.

“Gardening Done Right” You’re Invited to an Open House

If you want to see “gardening done right” in Leon County, come to the UF-IFAS Leon County Cooperative Extension demonstration garden open house on Saturday, April 21, at 9 a.m. The Extension Center is at 615 Paul Russell Road, east of the fairgrounds.



There will be tours and demonstrations conducted by trained Master Gardener volunteers who tend the garden year-round. The garden demonstrates the nine principles of the Florida Yards and Neighborhood (FYN) program, which teaches gardeners how to have an attractive landscape without contributing to water pollution. The garden will show you how to select the “Right Plant for the Right Place,” the first and foremost FYN principle. For more information, please call 606-5202.

April 2007 Board of County Commissioners Schedule

- 10 Workshop on Density Limitations in Rural Zoning Districts, 12 p.m. Workshop on Potential Impact of Residential Development on Land with R1, R2 and R3 Zoning Located on Canopy Roads, 1:30 p.m. Commission Meeting, 3 p.m. Public Hearings, 6 p.m.**
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers
- 17 Mayor/Chair Meeting, 11:30 a.m.**
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Administration Conference Room
- 24 Commission Meeting, 3 p.m. Public Hearings, 6 p.m.**
Leon County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers

The Link is produced by Leon County Public Information, 606-5300.