

# Citizens for Ponce Inlet NEWSLETTER



*Improving the Quality of Life in the Town of Ponce Inlet*



Ponce Inlet is and will be a residential haven for those persons who value nature, quiet, and privacy.

## Citizen of the Year/Lifetime Achievement Award Forms



Who will be Ponce Inlet's next Citizen of the Year and Lifetime Achievement winner? Information and nomination forms can be found starting on page 50.

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Ponce Inlet recognizes the 2025 Employee of the Year recipient.....Pg 12



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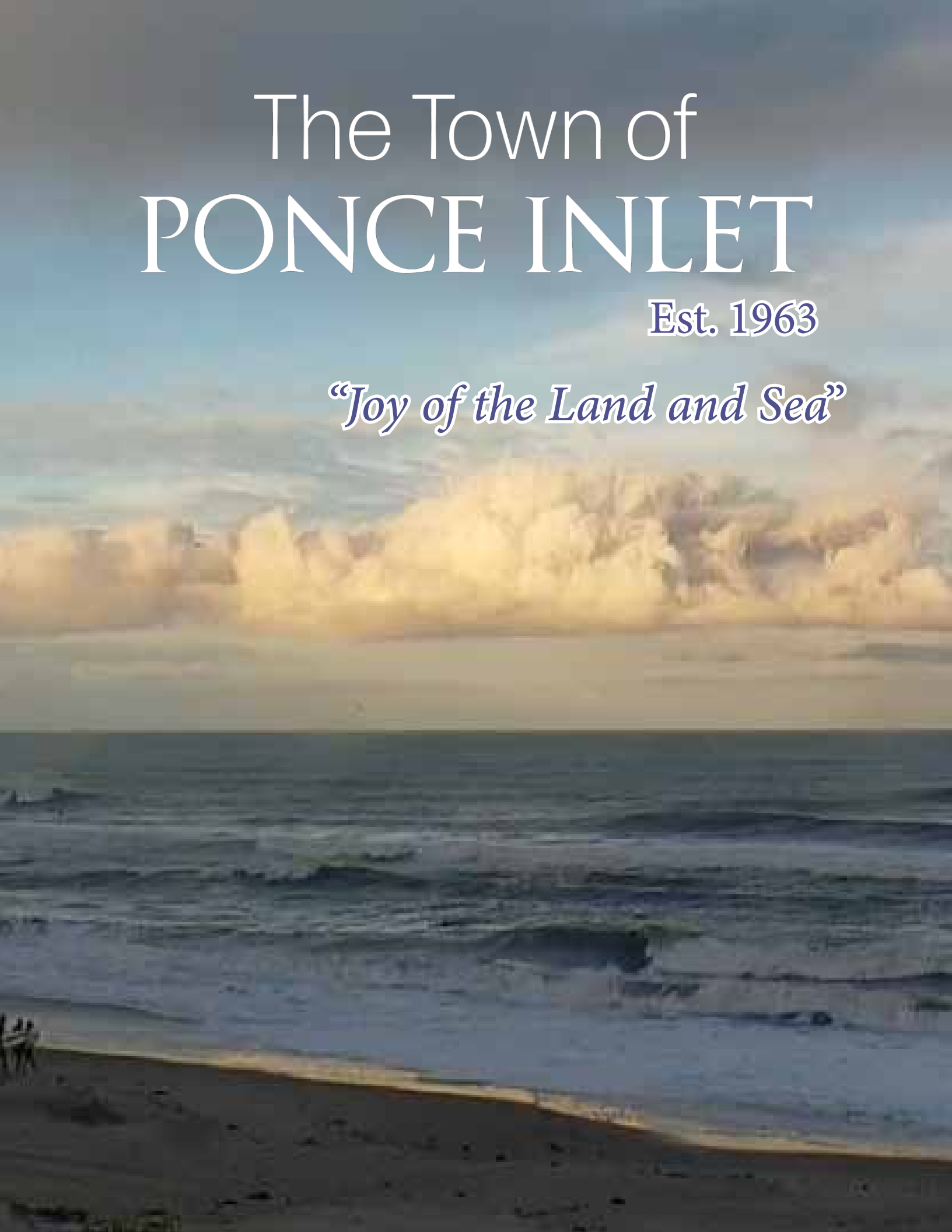
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# The Town of PONCE INLET

Est. 1963

*“Joy of the Land and Sea”*



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# A Moment with the Mayor

Congratulations to Councilman Milano and Councilman Villanella for being reelected to the Ponce Inlet Town Council. Gary Smith, our former Mayor and current Vice-Mayor, has been reappointed to Vice-Mayor. The Town Council remains committed to protecting the safety, well-being, and resilience of our community. Furthermore, we are committed to maintaining active engagement with leadership at the county, state, and federal levels to ensure our long-term prosperity.

Your Council members are deeply involved in various organizations that work to represent our interests at the onset of state legislation and county initiatives. At the state level, the Florida legislature addresses a wide array of topics such as property insurance, business regulations, and vacation rentals through proposed legislation. The 2024-2025 legislative session is set to begin on March 4, 2025. However, the Senate and House committees are already in the process of holding preliminary meetings to collect data and scrutinize bills prior to the session's official start.

Our legislative advocacy centers on the financial implications for residents, the provision of essential services that enhance our quality of life, and the safeguarding of "home rule." Home rule grants local governments the freedom to make policy decisions independently, avoiding a generic, statewide approach. This autonomy is crucial because each town or city has unique attributes that necessitate customized laws. Local elected officials are instrumental in educating state legislators



Lois Paritsky

on how proposed legislation impacts our community.

At the state level, the Florida League of Cities (FLC), a nonpartisan organization, supports local leaders by providing resources and training. This support equips elected officials with the knowledge and tools needed to articulate how state laws affect their constituents' daily lives.



The Florida League of Cities (FLC) focuses on tracking legislation each session that could have financial repercussions for municipalities, particularly concerning issues like property insurance, short-term rentals, homestead exemptions, and statewide stormwater management. Local representatives participate in numerous committees and engage directly with legislators in Tallahassee. I personally serve as a member and Vice-Chair of the Utilities, Natural Resources, and Public Works Committee, which deals with vital municipal issues including coastal management and water quality. It is crucial for elected officials at the local level to ensure state legislators understand the real-world implications of their legislative proposals. Through the Florida League of Cities, your Council works diligently to advocate for your interests.

At the county level, residents' interests are represented through various bodies and committees. The Volusia League of Cities brings together the 16 municipalities of Volusia County to push for effective governance and to amplify residents' concerns across all levels of government. Council members attend bi-monthly meetings of this League, where I have had the honor of serving as president for the last two years, a term ending in January 2025.

Additionally, the Volusia County Elected Officials Roundtable tackles shared community issues like flooding and infrastructure maintenance. I am set to become the chair of this important organization in January 2025. These bi-monthly meetings take place at the Daytona Beach Airport and include all mayors, municipal managers, county council members, and others. These meetings are open to the public, and everyone is encouraged to attend.

## Town Hall Meeting with your Mayor & Councilmembers

Presentations on the State of the Town Address, 2025 Department Goals, Town Budget Process, and Watershed Master Plan.

- Date: Wednesday, February 5, 2025
- Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
- Location: Ponce Inlet Community Center  
4670 South Peninsula Drive  
Ponce Inlet, FL 32127



# COUNTY CORNER

Hello everyone. Here is your quarterly update from your Volusia County Councilman, Matt Reinhart.

First, I would like to thank everyone for their endorsement of my reelection. I am very humbled by this support and am looking forward to continuing to assist the residents of Ponce Inlet, as well as all citizens of Volusia County.

Some projects that are moving forward that I have mentioned in prior updates are those of the Second Chance Initiative, dune restoration projects, Transform 386, as well as other “outside the box thinking” tax initiatives for our citizens.



Therefore, I will start with the first and speak to the Second Chance Initiative. This month we are conducting the second Corrections’ Job Fair, where soon-to-be-released inmates will be able to interview for a potential job once released from custody. As I described before, these are individuals that are our neighbors and possibly our family members who made a bad decision and absolutely deserve a second chance to become productive members of our society. In addition, it will absolutely help our local workforce by assisting those local businesses that are otherwise struggling to obtain needed employees.



Secondly, with respect to our dune restoration project, the USACE (United States Army Corps of Engineers) will start the sand dredging project of our entire Intracoastal Waterway in January 2025. As mentioned, this will provide approximately 770,000 cubic yards of beach-compatible sand to areas north of the Inlet. The staging of this sand will be placed in Ponce Inlet, and our county workforce will transport it north of that staging location to those most vulnerable areas. The second dredging project of Rattlesnake Island will address the vulnerable coastal areas south in the New Smyrna Beach area (set to begin in April of 2025). On a side note, the USACE dredging project of the entire Intracoastal Waterway only addresses the channel area of the waterway and not the shoals/edges. We are in the process of testing that sand to see if it is beach compatible as well. Therefore, we can possibly dredge that sand, which may produce approximately another million cubic yards. Another good thing to point out is if it tests the way we hope, we have the grant money to fund it.

The third project I mentioned was that of Transform 386. This is the almost \$390 million grant project as a result of the damages caused by Hurricanes Ian and

Nicole. There are currently seven active homeowner applications for the Ponce Inlet area, and the Transform 386 Team is preparing to do a second-round review of infrastructure applications. The result of the first round produced \$6.8 million in studies for our municipalities (approximately 27 of them).

Other issues that we plan to work on are those of the much-needed attention for recent flooding issues. County staff is already preparing information for Council to review for our upcoming January special meeting to address this. The USACE is already involved as well.

In my last update I mentioned the beach feasibility study that is being funded with the \$462+ million grant we received. Part

of that study will involve town meetings in order to obtain information from local residents and business owners on how they feel our beach needs to be maintained in the future. This will be called a “Beach User Survey.” Be sure to keep an eye out for when and where those town meetings will be held. Either way, I plan on keeping everyone informed on the progress of this.

As always, stay involved and stay informed. If you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. Thank you and God bless!

Matt Reinhart  
Volusia County Council  
District 2  
[mreinhardt@volusia.org](mailto:mreinhardt@volusia.org)



# THE TALK OF TALLAHASSEE



It is a distinct privilege to serve District 30 as your Representative in the Florida State House. I'm incredibly honored to be appointed to the following 2025 Committee assignments by Speaker Perez:

- Commerce Committee Majority Whip
- Rules and Ethics Committee
- Health Care Budget Subcommittee
- Health Care Facilities and Systems Subcommittee
- Housing, Agriculture, and Tourism Subcommittee

In the coming week, we will be holding numerous committee meetings to prepare for the upcoming legislative session, scheduled to begin March 4, 2025.

We invite you to utilize the House website at [flhouse.gov](http://flhouse.gov). There you are able to access a wealth of information such as legislator pages, bill tracking, and the House

schedule. The website is being updated to include many new improvements and resources.

Additionally, you can live stream or watch recordings of important government meetings on the Florida Channel, a public affairs TV network that offers coverage of Florida's state government. Find them at [thefloridachannel.org](http://thefloridachannel.org).

If you would like to see our recent Volusia County Delegation meeting, it was held and recorded by the Florida Channel on 1/7/2025. This was an informative time for the Volusia County Senators and Representatives to hear the needs, concerns, and legislative priorities of municipalities, organizations, and private citizens.

We have much to accomplish, and I will do everything in my power to make a difference for all Floridians. Thank you for your trust in me to serve the great town of Ponce Inlet.

Please feel free to reach out to me or my staff any time.

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# From the Town Manager, Mike Disher

## Happy New Year!

The start of the New Year is when we take time to reflect on the hard work and accomplishments of the prior year and look forward to the next. Last year, at this time, the Town was finishing its repair efforts from Hurricanes Ian and Nicole and beginning preparations for future storms. Since then, much has been accomplished, including cleaning out the stormwater pipes in the north half of Town; dredging out the Town's three retention ponds; obtaining a state appropriation for a new generator at the fire station; and securing remaining eligible reimbursements from our insurance provider and FEMA. By the time Hurricane Milton hit in October, the Town was in better shape and better prepared to handle it.

The Town also worked closely with Volusia County beachfront property owners to secure temporary easements for the upcoming beach restoration project with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. This project will involve dredging approximately 770,000 cubic yards of beach-quality sand from the Intracoastal Waterway and Ponce de Leon Inlet for placement onto the beaches north of the inlet. To accomplish this, easements were needed from 50 private property owners to allow a portion of their land to be used for this project. Without their helpful cooperation and assistance, this project for the entire county coastline north of the inlet would have been in jeopardy or significantly delayed.

The Town accomplished many other important tasks last year, such as completing the Watershed Master Plan; modifying the Fire Station to house additional firefighter personnel; purchasing a new Quint 75 fire apparatus; renewing the 30-year franchise agreement with FPL; relaxing dock size restrictions that unfairly



penalized certain properties; enrolling in the Florida Department of Emergency Management's public assistance program to expedite hurricane relief; changing the zoning code to allow farmers markets as a special exception use in the Public-Institutional zoning district; transitioning from a volunteer Code Enforcement Board to a Special Magistrate; ensuring the town's court reservation system complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act; and achieving a perfect financial audit for the 8th straight year.

The Town Council's adopted budget for this fiscal year continues its efforts toward greater resiliency, with funds allocated for creating an Adaptation Action Plan; installing one-way backflow valves in storm drains on low-lying streets; updating stormwater requirements for properties under construction; and improving the Town's flood insurance rating. Updates on these projects will be provided periodically throughout the year.

The Town Council has set additional ambitious goals for our staff for 2025, some of which include extending sanitary sewer service to all remaining unserved parts of town; working with Volusia County to design the S. Peninsula sidewalk widening project; designing and constructing a replacement for Building "B" at the Public Works facility; creating a stormwater utility fund; and seeking grants for future stormwater improvement projects.

It is our pleasure to help make Ponce Inlet the special place that you call home. On behalf of all your employees with the Town of Ponce Inlet, we wish you a safe, happy, and productive 2025!

## **Your Town's Budget: What You Need to Know**

Have you ever wondered how the Town decides where your tax dollars go? Here is a quick rundown of our budget process—the annual financial plan that keeps the community running smoothly.

### **The Basics**

The Town, along with all local governments in Florida, operates on an annual schedule known as the fiscal year, which starts October 1 and ends September 30. Each year, we create a balanced budget—matching revenues to expenses—as required by Florida law. Our budget sets the stage for everything from public safety to parks, street repairs, and more.

The millage rate (the property tax rate) is a significant part of this process. The Town Council sets the millage rate once a year after factoring in everything from projected revenue and community priorities to inflation and maintenance costs. Florida's Truth in Millage (TRIM) Act ensures this process is transparent, with many opportunities for public input.

### **A Year-Long Effort**

Budget planning starts early. From January to June, input is gathered from Town departments, advisory boards, the Council, and you—our residents. July 1st kicks off the 100-day countdown required by state law for local governments to adopt an annual budget. During this time, the Council reviews the draft budget at a public workshop, adopts a proposed millage rate (which sets the cap for taxes), and holds public hearings. The final budget and tax rate are adopted in September after everyone has had a chance to weigh in.

### **Your Voice Matters**

Between the Town Council and its advisory boards, there are 12 public meetings from January to September where you can ask questions and share feedback. The Essential Services Advisory Board (ESAB) reviews budget ideas for Police, Fire, and Public Works, while the Cultural Services Board (CSB) looks at suggestions for improving our Town parks and the Historical Museum. It is important for Town staff and the Council to hear from as many people as possible during these meetings to understand what is important to the community. Attending these workshops also provides valuable information to the public about the laws, fiscal constraints, and choices facing the Town for the next fiscal year. This process ensures that the final budget reflects the community's needs and desired level of service while staying within financial limits.

### **Checks and Balances**

Once the budget is adopted, it does not mean the work is finished. Each year, an independent auditor reviews the Town's finances to make sure everything is in order. For eight years running, our audits have been spotless—a testament to sound financial management. Reports for the past two audited years can be found at: <https://www.ponce-inlet.org/509/Auditors-Reports>. The FY 23/24 audit will be presented to the Town Council in April 2025.

### **Wrapping Up**

Our budget process is designed to be transparent, efficient, and responsive to the community. From start to finish, it is about making the most of our resources while planning for a brighter future. The entire process is outlined in the table below. You can also review the budget documents, reports, Q&A, and meeting minutes for the past two years at <https://www.ponce-inlet.org/519/Budget>. We will be putting together this same type of information for FY 25/26, so be sure to check back regularly.

## ***Town of Ponce Inlet Budget Timeline***

Approximate Date	Activity
October-December	Audit of prior fiscal year begins. Majority of tax revenue is received in December.
January	<b>ESAB</b> meets to review preliminary budget ideas from Police, Fire, and Public Works.
	<b>CSB</b> begins to review budget ideas for parks, recreation, and the historical museum.
	Property Appraiser provides the Prior-Year Final Tax Roll.
February-March	<b>ESAB</b> meets to review, prioritize, and recommend capital expenditures from Police, Fire, and Public Works.
	<b>CSB</b> provides its budget recommendations.
April	Departments send budget requests to Town Manager, including personnel changes, capital purchases, operating budgets, and revenue projections.
	Auditor presents prior-year financial statements and audit to <b>Town Council</b> .
May	Department heads meet with Town Manager to review budget proposals.
	HR receives annual employee health and insurance benefits proposal from broker.
June	Property Appraiser provides the Preliminary Tax Roll.
	Mid-year budget adjustment resolution presented at June <b>Town Council</b> meeting.
	1st budget workshop with <b>Town Council</b> . Includes discussion of reserves, revenue and expense assumptions, Board recommendations, and the 5-year CIP.
	HR receives Florida Retirement System (FRS) rate updates from the FL Dept. of Management Services.
July 1st	<b>Day 1</b> of 100-day deadline to adopt budget per Statute. Property Appraiser certifies the final taxable value.
	2nd <b>Town Council</b> workshop to review the initial Draft Budget.
	<b>Town Council</b> adopts Proposed Millage Rate (millage rate cap).
August	<b>Day 55.</b> The Property Appraiser mails the Notice of Proposed Property Taxes (TRIM notice) to all property owners.
	HR receives final property/liability insurance rates from insurance broker.
September	<b>Days 65-80.</b> The <b>Town Council</b> holds 1st public hearing on the Tentative Millage Rate and Final Budget.
	<b>Days 80-100</b> The <b>Town Council</b> advertises and holds 2nd public hearing to adopt the Final Millage Rate and Final Budget.
October	<b>Day 101.</b> New Fiscal Year begins.

## Ponce Inlet Employee of the Year: Debra Spampanato



Congratulations to Debra Spampanato for being selected for the Town of Ponce Inlet's Employee of the Year Award, in recognition of her exceptional performance, dedication, and unwavering commitment to her work. As the town's sole custodian, Debra consistently goes above and beyond in her role, demonstrating an extraordinary work ethic and genuine pride in everything she does. Whether performing routine cleaning duties or taking on additional responsibilities, Debra sets a high standard for herself and her colleagues, ensuring that our work environment remains clean, organized, and functional. Her attention to detail and positive attitude make her an invaluable asset to the team.

Debra's contributions extend far beyond her job description. She actively fosters a sense of community by volunteering her time to organize and decorate for events such as employee holiday gatherings and town functions. Her enthusiasm, creativity, and dedication to making others feel welcome have greatly enhanced morale and strengthened the camaraderie among our staff. Moreover, her kindness and willingness to help others are evident not only in her work but also in her daily life. For instance, one afternoon on Debra's travel home, she witnessed someone fall in their driveway. We received an email from a witness who called Debra's actions that day "heroic" as she stopped her car

and immediately rendered aid to the woman. This act of compassion exemplifies Debra's character and her care for both her colleagues and the residents of Ponce Inlet.

In addition to her exceptional work ethic and community spirit, Debra is a model of positivity. She consistently brings a can-do attitude to her work, regardless of the challenges she may face. Whether it's keeping the coffee pot warm for the team, ensuring supplies are stocked, or simply offering a kind word, Debra's presence is a daily reminder of the power of positivity in the workplace. Her consistent efforts to go above and beyond make her a standout member of our Public Works team and an asset to the Town of Ponce Inlet.

## Keep up with what's happening in your Town

The Town seeks to inform and engage residents on many subjects and in a number of ways. We host meet and greets and Town Hall meetings, and we provide a substantial amount of information on the Town website, [www.ponce-inlet.org](http://www.ponce-inlet.org), and social media accounts. You can also contact us directly for any specific information you may seek, and we'll be happy to assist.

Please visit our website, [www.ponce-inlet.org](http://www.ponce-inlet.org), for all public meeting notices and minutes, general information, and the status of current or upcoming projects. If you haven't already done so, please sign up for our "[Notify Me](#)" e-mail list through the website. You can also find the latest news and important announcements on our Facebook and Nextdoor social media accounts. Finally, please also be sure to read the back of your utility bills for special announcements and important information.

For emergency information, we suggest signing up for the Town's Code Red emergency phone call alert system by texting "PonceAlerts" to 99411 or by calling the fire department at 386-322-6720. We use this phone alert system very sparingly, as it is meant to be only for emergency notifications and will not burden you with unwanted calls.

# From Police Chief Jeff Glazier...



## About the Department

The Ponce Inlet Police Department operates 24/7 with 13 full-time officers, 4 part-time officers, and 2 civilian administrative staff. There are always a minimum of two officers patrolling the Town at all times. The Police Department currently has two vacancies and is actively looking to fill them. The Police Department only hires officers with previous law enforcement experience.

All Ponce Inlet Police Officers must qualify annually with their handgun, patrol rifle, shotgun, and taser. All officers participate in quarterly training at the Edgewater Police Department's shooting range to stay proficient with their weapons. They also participate in local active-shooter exercises with other police agencies in addition to classroom and online training. Our department is the smallest agency in the State of Florida to be fully accredited by the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation.

## Police Stats at a Glance:

Call Type	2022	2023	2024
Emergency	4	2	4
Priority 1	127	115	132
Priority 2	289	282	284
Priority 3	133	123	135
Priority 4	14	13	15
Total Calls for Service	567	535	570
Average Response Time	4:49	4:24	4:14

The Ponce Inlet Police Dept is proud of our response times to 911 calls. The PIPD responded to over 500 calls for service in 2024 with an average response time of 4 minutes, 14 seconds.



## Ponce Partners Program:

The Ponce Inlet Police Department is looking for more “Ponce Partners.” This program is designed to be a safety net for those who have severe health problems, live alone, or may be in the early stages of cognitive decline. Any resident can become a member by completing a short request form. When you become a Ponce Partner, you simply agree to contact the Police Department by phone each day before 12:00 noon. If we do not hear from you, we call you to ensure you are ok. If we are unable to reach you by phone, we send an officer out to check on your well-being. This program is set up to ensure our most vulnerable citizens have some form of communication each day. This program has been successful in rescuing several residents who had fallen and were unable to contact anyone for help. We have a great relationship with our “Ponce Partners” and look forward to their morning calls. If you or anyone you know is interested in joining this program, please contact the Police Department at 386-236-2160 or download the [online application \(PDF\)](#) from our website.

## Citizens Watch:

The Ponce Inlet Police Department is looking for more Citizen Watch volunteers. The Citizens Watch Program is an important and valuable asset to the Ponce Inlet Police Department. These volunteer members are dedicated citizens who generously donate their time to assist the Police Department as extra sets of “eyes and ears.” Their duties include residential security checks, miscellaneous pick-up and delivery services for the police department, and regular patrols throughout the town. Our members are provided with a vehicle with amber warning lights, police radio, flashlight, traffic vest, raincoat, first aid kit, and a fire extinguisher. All volunteers undergo a background check and training before they begin.



## From Public Safety Director and Fire Chief Dan Scales...



### Enhancing Safety with Innovative Technology: Bridgehill Fire Blanket Training

The Ponce Inlet Fire Department recently conducted a training session with the new state-issued Bridgehill Fire Blanket, a cutting-edge tool designed to contain and extinguish electric vehicle (EV) fires. As EVs become more prevalent, they present unique challenges for firefighters, as traditional suppression methods like water are often ineffective against the intense and prolonged heat generated by EV battery fires.

The fire blanket offers a practical solution, particularly in high-risk situations such as fires in parking garages or areas with significant exposure risks, like condominiums. This single-use blanket is deployed over the burning vehicle to smother the flames and prevent the spread of heat and toxic gases. Once in place, the blanket remains on the vehicle for several days to ensure the fire is fully extinguished before being removed along with the vehicle.

Our firefighters, including **Lt. Reneker, DE Garcia, FF Kananen, FF Lord, and Lt. Juliano**, participated in this training to

familiarize themselves with this innovative technology. Their commitment to mastering new tools ensures that Ponce Inlet continues to adapt to emerging challenges and remains a safe place for residents and visitors. This training highlights our department's dedication to staying at the forefront of safety measures in an ever-evolving world.



### Search and Rescue Training

The Department is committed to ensuring our firefighters are fully prepared for search and rescue (SAR) operations during structure fires. Recently, crews participated in realistic training simulations, navigating a smoke-filled training building to locate and extract victims (represented by mannequins). After completing the rescue, they practiced essential fire suppression techniques. This critical refresher training keeps our firefighters' skills sharp and their readiness at its peak, ensuring they are always prepared to protect and serve our community.

### Winter Safety Tips from the Ponce Inlet Fire Department

While Florida may not experience harsh winters, cooler weather still brings unique safety concerns. Here are some important tips to help keep you and your family safe this winter season:

## **Heating Safety**

🔥 Space heaters: Keep heaters at least 3 feet away from flammable items like curtains, bedding, or furniture. Always turn them off before leaving the room or going to bed.

🔥 Fireplaces: If you use a fireplace, ensure the chimney is clean and free of debris. Use a screen to catch sparks and never leave a fire unattended.

## **Holiday Decorations**

🌲 Lights and cords: Inspect holiday lights for damage before use, and avoid overloading outlets. Use outdoor-rated lights for exterior decorations.

🕯️ Candles: Consider battery-operated candles for a safer option. If using traditional candles, keep them away from flammable items and never leave them unattended.

## **Carbon Monoxide Awareness**

🔴 Detectors: Install carbon monoxide detectors in your home, especially near sleeping areas. Test them monthly to ensure they're working properly.

🔴 Ventilation: Never use charcoal grills, camp stoves, or generators inside your home or garage, as they can produce deadly carbon monoxide gas.

## **Fire Safety Plan**

🚪 Exit drills: Review your home fire escape plan with your family. Make sure all exits are clear and accessible.

🚒 Smoke alarms: Test your smoke alarms and replace the batteries if needed.

## **Outdoor Activities**

🔥 Fire pits: Enjoy fire pits safely by keeping them at least 10 feet away from your home and other structures. Always extinguish the fire completely before leaving it unattended.

🚗 Vehicle fires: Regularly inspect your vehicle for maintenance issues that could lead to fires, especially during long holiday travels.

By taking these simple precautions, we can all enjoy a safe and happy winter season. Stay vigilant, and as always, the Ponce Inlet Fire Department is here to assist with any questions or concerns!





## From Planning and Development Director Darren Lear...



### Town Hall Landscaping

The Town Hall landscaping project is complete! This project's aim was to replant areas previously cleared of aggressive muscadine grape vines with native species along the east side of the property closest to S. Atlantic Avenue. The Public Works Department and volunteers had removed the vines earlier this year.

Replanting of the cleared areas began in October. Dedicated volunteers organized by Barbara Davis helped pull vines and invasive plants that had reemerged. Volunteers installed the new native plants during the last week of October. The native planting plan was developed by Katie Tripp, with Natural Beauty Florida. Native plants include Beach Creeper, Beach Verbena, Fakahatchee Grass, Muhly Grass, Spotted Bea Balm, Tropical Sage, Wild Petunia and many other varieties. Thank you to all involved!

### New Survey Encourages Public Input to Help Shape the Future of Volusia County Beaches

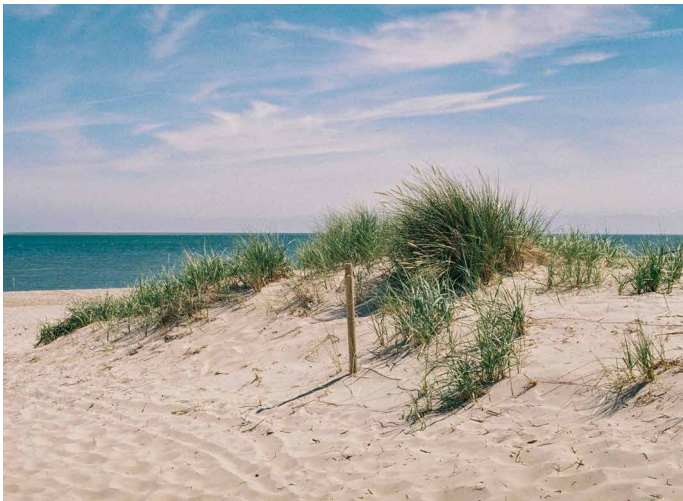
Volusia County is conducting a study to gather insights into how residents and visitors utilize its beaches and their perceptions of beach quality. The study will also examine alternative beach management strategies beyond the upcoming Coastal Sand Placement projects, which are scheduled to begin in early 2025 with funding from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

The initial survey in this study, which focused on beach usage and perceived quality, was made available online at [www.volusia.org](http://www.volusia.org). Residents, property owners, businesses, and visitors were encouraged to participate. Participants who completed the survey and provided their email addresses received automatic updates about upcoming public meetings and the release of the second survey.

In February, the County will hold a series of public meetings to share information about potential beach resiliency improvements, address questions, and collect further community input. A second survey on potential beach resiliency measures will be launched in spring or summer 2025. This survey will build upon the results of the first survey and feedback gathered during the public meetings. It will focus on studying Volusia's distinctive coastal dynamics, ongoing historical shoreline trend research, and potential funding options for these projects.

## Volusia County Secures \$2.5 Million Grant to Restore Coastal Dune Vegetation

Volusia County has received a \$2,576,838 grant from the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) to restore and strengthen coastal dune habitats by planting native vegetation. This initiative aims to fortify the dunes against storms and improve habitats for threatened and endangered species. The planting will align with the County's Coastal Division's sand placement projects, scheduled to begin early next year, enhancing the dunes' ecological function.



“This generous grant allows us to further our efforts to improve Volusia County’s coastal habitats,” said Samantha West, the County’s Sustainability and Resilience Manager. “Restoring our dunes with native vegetation revitalizes wildlife habitats and supports the overall health of our ecosystem.”

The funding will also support community engagement and education, fostering awareness among beachside residents about the importance of large-scale coastal resilience efforts. Through outreach, Volusia County aims to increase understanding of coastal dynamics and the critical role dune ecosystems play in environmental health and public safety.

The NCRF supports initiatives that restore and strengthen the natural infrastructure of U.S. coastal areas. It is a partnership among the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the U.S. Department of Defense, Shell USA, and Occidental. Volusia County is one of 94 recipients in the 2024 funding cycle.



## Getting Your Landscape Ready for Cold Weather

Providing proper care throughout the year helps plants better withstand cold weather. Healthy plants are more resilient to cold temperatures and recover from damage more quickly.

### Prior to a Freeze

Be prepared to move tender potted plants to warmer, sheltered areas if frost or freezing temperatures are forecasted in your region. Take stock of your plant covers and frost blankets ahead of time to ensure you're ready when the need arises.

Avoid fertilizing cold-sensitive plants in late fall or winter, as fertilizer promotes new growth that is especially vulnerable to cold injury. Similarly, delay pruning until spring, as freshly pruned plants are more prone to cold damage.

### Protecting Your Plants from the Cold

Florida's winter temperatures can be erratic, so it's important to monitor the forecast and prepare to safeguard your plants.

- *Covering Plants:* During a hard freeze, cover plants completely, ensuring the cover extends to the soil to trap ground heat. For extra warmth, consider placing an electric light bulb (not LED) under the cover, ensuring safety precautions are taken.
- *Wrapping Larger Plants:* For cold-sensitive plants that are too large to cover fully, wrap their trunks with several layers of cloth or newspaper for protection.
- *Removing Covers:* Once temperatures rise above freezing, remove covers promptly to prevent overheating or moisture buildup.

### Avoiding Risky Cold-Protection Methods

While gardeners use various techniques to protect plants, some methods can be impractical or even harmful. Overhead irrigation, for example, is effective on farms where irrigation systems are designed to run continuously from before the freeze until hours after temperatures rise. However, for residential properties, using a home irrigation system wastes water and can lead to heavy ice formation that damages plants.

### Caring for Cold-Damaged Plants

If your plants suffer from cold damage despite your efforts, resist the urge to prune immediately. Wait until spring, as cold-injured plants will often sprout below the damaged areas, allowing you to clearly see where pruning is needed.

With careful planning and proper techniques, you can protect your plants and help them recover from winter weather challenges.



# Watering Guidelines

## Watering Restrictions

To ensure the efficient use of water for lawn and landscape irrigation, the St. John's River Water Management District has adopted watering restrictions. These restrictions are in effect year-round and apply throughout the District's entire 18-county area.

## Rules & Regulations

During Daylight Savings Time the following rules apply:

Daylight Saving Time begins the second Sunday in March and ends the first Sunday in November. Residential irrigation is allowed at odd-numbered addresses from 4 p.m. to 10 a.m. Wednesdays and Saturdays and even-number addresses Thursdays and Sundays.

Business may irrigate from 4 p.m. to 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Fridays.

Restrictions apply to all water sources, including private wells and pumps, ground or surface water, and water from public and private utilities. New plantings may be watered any time for 30 days, then every other day for another 30 days. Keep the store receipt for proof of purchase. Hand watering with a spray nozzle that shuts-off when released is allowed anytime.

During Standard Time watering is allowed only once a week.

## Helpful Resources

For more information regarding watering restrictions, you may contact the St. John's River Water Management District or 800-451-7106, or you may contact the Code Enforcement office at the Town of Ponce Inlet at 386-236-2187.

<https://www.ponce-inlet.org/286/Watering-Restrictions>

 <h2>Know your watering days</h2>			
	Homes with odd-numbered or no addresses	Homes with even-numbered or no addresses	Nonresidential properties
<b>Daylight Saving Time</b>	Wednesday and Saturday	Thursday and Sunday	Tuesday and Friday
<b>Eastern Standard Time</b>	Saturday	Sunday	Tuesday

**These guidelines apply to all areas in Volusia County, including cities:**

- Water only when needed, and not between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Water for no more than one hour per zone, and no more than ¾ inch per zone.
- Restrictions apply to all water sources, including private wells and pumps, ground and surface water, and water from public and private utilities.



## From Public Works Director Steven Wargo...



The following projects demonstrate our commitment to improving both the safety and beauty of our town. From stormwater management to preserving historical landmarks, Public Works is dedicated to making our community a better place to live and visit. We appreciate your continued support as we work together to enhance our town's infrastructure and environment.

### **Stormwater Projects**

We are pleased to announce that the dredging of three stormwater retention ponds located along Beach Street and Inlet Point Boulevard has been successfully completed. This necessary maintenance was needed to ensure that the ponds function properly at their designed capacity. In addition, we are currently in the design and fabrication phase for new one-way drainage valves at Anchor Drive, Beach Street, and Old Carriage Road. Once completed, the installation of these valves will begin. The valves will prevent water from the Halifax River from backing up through the drainage inlets into the streets during extreme high tides and storm events.



Additionally, at the beginning of the year, swale construction and maintenance will begin around Town. These initiatives are part of ongoing efforts to enhance drainage efficiency and safeguard our community against potential water-related damage.

### **Ponce Preserve Boardwalk**

Repairs to the Ponce Preserve boardwalk began on December 2nd, with work being done to encase the damaged pilings in concrete to enhance their safety and durability. The project is expected to be completed in January. The boardwalks at Timucuan Oaks Park and the Ponce Inlet boat ramp are under evaluation by an engineer. Necessary repairs and improvements will be planned and initiated following the assessment.

### **Historical Museum**

Several important projects are scheduled to take place at the museum in the coming months. A new fence is expected to be installed at the beginning of January, followed by exterior painting of the museum buildings and the repairing of the boardwalk. These enhancements are part of our ongoing efforts to preserve the museum and ensure a safe, welcoming environment for all visitors.

## From Cultural Services Manager, Jackie Alex...



### Celebrating a Year of Growth and Community in 2024

As 2024 draws to a close, this department is reflecting on a year filled with achievements, new beginnings, and unwavering community engagement. Together, we have made strides in ensuring inclusivity, fostering connections, and preserving the natural beauty of our shared spaces.

### Inclusivity in Action

One of our proudest accomplishments this year was ensuring the pickleball court reservation system complied with standards set by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). This six-month effort was not only a critical step to meet legal requirements but also a reflection of our commitment to accessibility and inclusivity for all park visitors.

### Innovative Programs for a Thriving Community

The department welcomed a new team member, Julie Cotton, this year, who hit the ground running with fresh, engaging

programs aligned with our community mission. A program spotlighting the importance of butterflies and native plants encouraged participants to think about sustainability in their own backyards. Another program made history come alive with an interactive archaeology walk in the park, sparking curiosity and connecting families to our local heritage.

Our partnership with the local Pawpaw Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society also flourished with a native plant hike in Ponce Preserve. With their continued volunteerism, they helped deepen our community's appreciation for Florida's unique flora.

### Volunteers: The Heart of Our Ecosystem

Volunteers continue to be the backbone of our ecosystem restoration efforts. Their dedication to removing invasive plants at Ponce Preserve and Town Hall has been nothing short of inspiring. This year again saw hundreds of hours spent tackling invasive species, including a focused volunteer workday to remove the air potato vine. When partnering with an environmental consultant, volunteers learned about the challenges of managing invasive species while making a tangible impact on the park's health.





## Resilience in the Face of Challenges

Hurricane Milton tested our community's resilience again this year, but we rose to the occasion. Town staff stepped up with preparedness and determination, playing key roles in recovery efforts and ensuring the safety and continuity of services.

Despite the challenges of storm recovery, we did not lose sight of community traditions. The department successfully hosted two beloved events: a festive Halloween party and a dazzling tree lighting ceremony, even braving unusually cold weather for the latter.





## Looking Ahead with Gratitude

The department, with invaluable participation from the community of volunteers, hosted a total of 25 programs and events with over 1,300 total attendees. The department also coordinated 14 events within the town, 7 of which received co-sponsorship approval by the Town Council.

As we wrap up 2024, the department extends our heartfelt thanks to the families and volunteers who have supported our work and enriched our community. This year has shown us the power of collaboration and the importance of shared purpose. We look forward to building on this year's success and creating more opportunities for connection in the year ahead!

## Special Events

There are numerous special events taking place in Ponce Inlet throughout the year. To determine if your event requires a Special Event permit, please review the Special Event regulations in Chapter 51 of the Town's Code of Ordinances. All questions can be directed to Jackie Alex, [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 322-6703.

## Upcoming Events and Programs

Below is a list of the Town's upcoming events. Please continue to visit the Town of Ponce Inlet website and Facebook page for additional details. For all events, please contact Jackie with any questions at [jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 322-6703.

## Events for February:

### Lecture Series: NASCAR Hall of Fame

"Beach Racing History" presented by Buz McKim, the former Historian for the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte.

**Tuesday, February 4, 2025 @ 10:30 AM**

Town Council Chambers at Ponce Inlet Town Hall, 4300 South Atlantic Avenue.

**Free**; RSVP by 2/1 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Pet Rock Painting

Fun for all ages! Join us in the park any time between 9:00 and 11:00 AM to paint and decorate a few rocks to take home.

**Saturday, February 15, 2025, @ 9:00-11:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free**; RSVP by 2/08 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Scavenger Hunt @ the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Parents and children 2 and up.

**Saturday, February 22, 2025 @ 9:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free**; RSVP by 2/15 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408



## Sediments of Ponce Preserve

Join Professor Benjamin Tanner and take a walk along the trails of Ponce Preserve to discover the sediment records of the park. We will also discuss the relationship between soils and plants. Be prepared to get your hands dirty as we take soil core samples and learn what Ponce Preserve was like in the past.

**Thursday, February 27, 2025 @ 11:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Drive, meet in the parking lot.

**Free;** RSVP by 2/20 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Events for March:

### Sea the Change

This program, developed by a local student, teaches children about the importance of combatting pollution and keeping our oceans clean. Join us for interactive stations and a craft to learn how even little ones can make a difference.

**Saturday, March 8, 2025 @ 10:30 am**

Town Council Chambers at Ponce Inlet Town Hall

4300 S. Atlantic Ave.

**Free;** RSVP by 03/01 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Sandbox Archaeology

Does your little one have archaeological aspirations? In this program, kids can learn the basics of archaeology and dig for “artifacts” in their own miniature excavation site. We will also learn the importance of mapping sites and keeping records in a field journal.

**Saturday, March 15, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free; space is limited to 12 people.** RSVP by 3/8 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Scavenger Hunt @ the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Parents and children 2 and up.

**Wednesday, March 19, 2025 @ 9:00 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 3/15 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Lecture Series: Pollinators and Plants: Who Eats What

Learn all about native plants and the insects that thrive on them with Inia Burginger, a speaker from the Florida Native Plant Society.

**Saturday, March 22, 2025 @ 11:00 am**

Town Council Chambers at Ponce Inlet Town Hall

4300 S. Atlantic Ave.

**Free;** RSVP by 3/15 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Events for April:

### Ponce Preserves the Planet

Family fun, food, crafts, and art vendors celebrating Earth Day. The event and parking will be at Ponce Preserve.

**Saturday, April 5, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Drive

**Free.** Jackie: [Jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:Jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 322-6703

## Scavenger Hunt @ the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Parents and children 2 and up.

**Saturday, April 12, 2025 @ 9:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free;** RSVP by 4/5 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Children's Easter Egg Hunt Party

The egg hunt begins promptly at 10:00 am. Ages will be divided into groups. After the egg hunt, get your picture with the Bunny and check out the petting zoo. Be sure to bring your basket!

**Saturday, April 19, 2025, @ 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM**

Kay & Ayres Davies Lighthouse Park

4931 S. Peninsula Drive

**Free.** Jackie: [Jalex@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:Jalex@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 322-6703

## Flutter by the Park

Learn all about host and nectar plants for butterflies, then join us for a craft and bring home native wildflower seeds to start your very own butterfly garden.

**Saturday, April 26, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., under the gazebo by the playground.

**Free; space is limited to 18 people.** RSVP by 4/19 required. Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Events for May:

### What's the Buzz? Bee Encounter

Come meet bee expert Marlin Athearn and his talented honey-making bees! Honey and beeswax candles for purchase at the event.

**Wednesday, May 7, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., under the gazebo by the playground.

**Free; space is limited to 18 people.** RSVP by 4/30 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Mermaids and Manatees in May

Come find your inner mermaid self, learn about the historic connection between mermaids and manatees, play a game, and create a craft!

**Saturday, May 10, 2025 @ 10:00 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 5/3 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

### Pet Rock Painting

Fun for all ages! Join us in the park any time between 9:00 and 11:00 AM to paint and decorate a few rocks to take home.

**Saturday, May 17, 2025 @ 9:00-11:00 AM**

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr., outside under the pavilion.

**Free;** RSVP by 5/10 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Scavenger Hunt @ the Park

Come look for natural treasure and make a memory with your little one on a tiny tot park adventure, then join us for a craft project! Parents and children 2 and up.

**Wednesday, May 28, 2025 @ 9:00 AM**

Timucuan Oaks Garden

4550 S. Peninsula Dr., outside on the lawn.

**Free;** RSVP by 5/03 required: Julie: [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org) or (386) 761-2408

## Volunteer Opportunities

The Cultural Services Department is currently seeking dedicated and passionate individuals to volunteer during special events, programs, and volunteer workdays throughout the year! Volunteering is a wonderful way to contribute your skills, knowledge, and time to help shape the future of our community. If you would like to join us as a volunteer for other opportunities, please contact our Cultural Services Coordinator at (386) 761-2408 or email [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org).

## Invasive Plant Removal

Do you want to help protect our Town's Do you want to help protect our Town's native ecosystem? Join volunteers to learn about invasive plants. They will teach you proper removal techniques to then apply within Ponce Preserve. Volunteers should bring sunscreen, bug repellent, garden gloves, a hat, and closed-toe shoes.

If you would like to join us as a volunteer, please contact our Cultural Services Coordinator at (386) 761-2408 or email [jcotton@ponce-inlet.org](mailto:jcotton@ponce-inlet.org).

Age: 18+

**\*Volunteer Application is required\***

Tuesdays starting 9/3/24

8:00-10:00am

Ponce Preserve

4401 S. Peninsula Dr.



# The Art Guild of Ponce Inlet

by Deborah Boyd

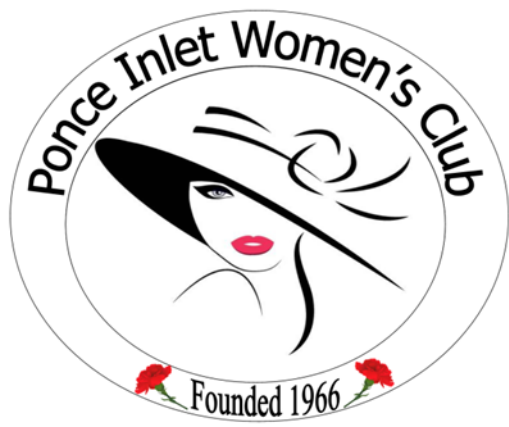
## Mark your calendars for Ponce Inlet's annual Fine Art Show!

This annual event allows visitors to purchase original fine art and meet the artist who created each piece. Whether you are decorating your home or office or looking for a special gift, you'll find it here.

The Ponce Inlet Art Guild Fine Art Show and Sale takes place **Saturday, February 22, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and Sunday, February 23, 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** at the Ponce Inlet Community Center, 4670 S. Peninsula Drive.

**Admission is Free**





by Rene' Joy Rodriguez

As the Ponce Inlet Women's Club embraces another vibrant season in our beautiful coastal town, we are excited to share updates, events, and stories that highlight the incredible spirit and contributions of our members. Our club is dedicated to fostering connections among women, empowering each other through service, and enhancing the quality of life in Ponce Inlet and its surrounding areas. We currently have upwards of 77 members and are constantly growing. Please join our [Facebook page](#) to stay up to date on our list of events throughout the year.

In this edition, you'll find a recap of past meetings and events as well as details about upcoming meetings, fundraisers, and special projects that showcase our commitment to community improvement.

Let's start with the SOLD OUT 2024 Spring Fashion Show that was held in March and presented by Clara Schneider of Em'z on Fifth. What an excellent opportunity this was for fundraising and fellowship at the PICCI!

In April we played everyone's favorite game, BUNCO, and had a luncheon introducing the club's newly elected board and welcoming several new and returning members.

What better way to end the season than with a Woman's Club trip aboard a lovely motor coach to Mount Dora, where we

spent the day shopping and socializing. The weather was perfect, and everyone had a fantastic time.



It was a great year getting the clubs momentum back, and we are moving full steam ahead. We held our first annual Pop-Up Boutique at the Ponce Inlet Community Center in October. It was a huge success raising money for the Domestic Abuse Council of Volusia County. You won't want to miss this event next year!



The club's 35th annual Holiday Boutique and Raffle took place at the Ponce Inlet Community Center on November 13th, 2024, and was a wonderful success with approximately 60 women in attendance. Thank you to those who donated and attended!

The Ponce Inlet Women's Club decorated and presented a Christmas Tree "Sea Dreams," in the exhibit at The Ponce Inlet Community Center this year, taking 2nd place!! What a talented bunch of ladies!



The women would have been hard to miss in the annual Ponce Inlet Christmas parade, walking alongside "Cousin Eddy's RV," where they passed out candy and treats for onlookers and their pets.



We were all in the Christmas spirit at the yearly holiday members luncheon held at The Grill at Riverview in New Smyrna Beach. A special thanks to the ladies that organized this opportunity for everyone to get together to share a delicious and festive meal.

The Ponce Inlet Women's Club has a lot in store for the upcoming months. Tickets will go on sale in January for the 2025 Spring Fashion Show and fundraiser, which will be held again at The Ponce Inlet Community Center on March 12th, 2025. The theme is "Springtime in Paris" and will most definitely sell out!!

We will be hearing from special guest speaker and author Derek Catron at our January meeting, and our new member welcome luncheon is scheduled for February 12th. We hope to see you there!

If you are interested in new friendships, opportunities to serve the community, and FUN... The Ponce Inlet Women's Club would love for you to join! Please reach out to Urszula Zumwalt at [uzumwalt@yahoo.com](mailto:uzumwalt@yahoo.com) to get started. The club meets from September to May at 10:30 on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Residents of Ponce Inlet and surrounding areas are welcome... Join us as we continue to grow together, support one another, and make a difference in our beloved town. Thank you for being a part of our journey.

I hope you enjoy these photos from past events!



PIC • COLLAGE



# Ponce Inlet Community Center

The past few months have been both hectic and wonderful for the Community Center. In November, we set a record for the number of rentals. We hosted a variety of events including weddings, birthday parties, bridal showers, sweet sixteens, and business meetings. Locals are discovering that we offer the best value for the money in all of Volusia County.

For more details on renting our facility for your next special event, please visit our website at <https://picommunitycenter.com/rentals/> or call us at 386-760-0615. Our office is available for inquiries from Monday to Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

In December, we organized the Christmas Tree Festival, which was managed by the Friends of the Marine Science Center, and on that same Saturday, we held Breakfast with Santa, hosted by our Veterans Association.

## January is packed with wonderful and exciting events:

- We kicked off our first weekly farmers market on January 12th. The turnout was beyond what we and the vendors had anticipated. The community's support for the vendors was overwhelming, and we believe that as awareness grows about the weekly nature of the market, its popularity will continue to increase.

As we look ahead, our goal remains to offer a diverse range of activities that our residents desire. Here's what we have lined up:

- On the 19th, we're hosting a violin concert featuring Dixon, a nationally-acclaimed musician. As his promotions claim, the performance promises to be magical. Tickets are available [here](#). Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

- On the 22nd, we'll hold our annual Soup and Salad event, which is always a delightful evening where everyone can enjoy a variety of soups brought by fellow residents. Tickets are still available at the Community Center.

- For a cinematic experience, we're presenting a free movie screening of "Heart of a Servant, The Father Flanagan Story" on the 24th at 6:00 PM and again on the 25th at 2:00 PM.

To conclude, we will honor one of our most dedicated residents and volunteers with a Celebration of Life for Jim Hinson on the 30th. He will be greatly missed.

Looking ahead to Spring, we have a wide array of activities planned that reaffirm our role as the hub of our community.

For more details on these upcoming events, please visit our website at <https://picommunitycenter.com>.







## The Ponce Inlet Community Center will be hosting its Annual Soup & Salad Event

**Wednesday, January 22nd, 2025**

5:00 - 6:00 Sharable Appetizer for your table & BYOB

6:00 - 8:00 Soup, Salad, Bread, Dessert and coffee/tea will be served

Tickets can be purchased at the Community Center office Monday-Friday 9am-12pm beginning December 26th through January 17th

**CALL OR SIGN UP AT THE OFFICE TO DONATE A SOUP 386-760-0615**

**WELCOME**  
**Aboard**  
**the**   
**Love Boat**

**ENJOY A NIGHT OF**  
**DINNER**  
**DANCING &**  
**PHOTO BOOTH**



Presale  
tickets  
available for  
Soup & Salad  
attendees

**FEBRUARY 15TH, 2025**

4:00 PM BYO APPETIZERS 5:00 PM DINNER

**\$35 PER PERSON**      **BYOB**

CRUISE ATTIRE WELCOME

**THE PONCE INLET COMMUNITY CENTER**

# Ponce Inlet Corvette Club

by Kevin Kirsch

## Happy New Year, Ponce Inlet!

Where is the time going? Another amazing quarter of shows, men's and ladies luncheons, cruise events to area attractions, and parades for our Corvettes. In the last few months, we have engaged in Trunk or Treat, a new form of sharing a safe Halloween for our communities, down in New Smyrna Beach at the NSB Chevrolet Dealer. The Bass Pro Outlet Parade for Santa's arrival at One Daytona, the Gaslight Car Show in Ormond Beach, the Tom Gibbs Holiday Corvette Show at the Bunnell County offices, the Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade, and a Corvette Christmas Toy Drive at NSB Chevrolet. Our club celebrated the Christmas Party, Dec. 14, at Spruce Creek Country Club. So much fun, so little time.



In our November Club meeting at NSB Hidden Lakes Country Club, we had two speakers come in to speak to the club about their charity foundations that the club has donated funds to this year. We started off the evening with Anthony Kleppe from the Kids Rock the Nation Foundation, who discussed how our donation helps fund giving musical instruments to deserving children who are unable to financially afford these types of instruments. This program has been going for 15 years and is

expanding its presence worldwide. Our second speaker was Deputy Chief Chris Kirk, discussing how our donation is helping the Police Department Foundation purchase items that are not included in their budget. Our donation also helps the Shop With A Cop program that allows them to take underprivileged children shopping for Christmas gifts. Our club has donated \$1,000 to each of these 3 charities this year.



Not sure what a lighthouse and a leg lamp have in common but if there is a Corvette involved, I am sure there is something!

The Club is now directing our attention to the next One Daytona Show. If you live in our town, or in the local area, and own a Corvette, now is the time to consider joining our club. Lots of opportunities for fellowship and giving back to our community.

General Meeting Every Third Thursday of  
The Month

Next meeting is on Jan. 16, 2025

HIDDEN LAKES CLUBHOUSE

35 FAIRGREEN AVE

NEW SMYRNA BEACH, FL

Social @ 5:00PM, Dinner @ 5:30 p.m.

Meeting @ 6:30 p.m.

# Town Hall Invasive Plant Removal

by Barbara Davis

In 2009 Ponce Inlet received the Award of Honor from the Florida Native Plant Society for the 9.6-acre Town Hall and Police Department native landscaping. Unfortunately, the landscaping was not maintained and became covered with invasive vines such as balsam pear and air potato, plus extensive coverage with grapevines. In August 2023, the Town Council established the volunteer program for invasive plant removal on Town properties.

In October 2023 the volunteers began removal of vines and invasive plants at Town Hall. There was so much debris that the Public Works Department had to bring in tractors and dumpsters to dispose of the vegetation that completely covered the trees and native plants.



Dune structures covered in vines, September 2023  
photos by Barb Davis

Eventually, the dune areas were substantially cleared of invasive plants such as Brazilian pepper, balsam pear, and the native nuisance grapevines. In March 2024, Katie Tripp of Natural Beauty Native Florida Landscapes consulted with the Town regarding replanting the three dune areas in the courtyard of Town Hall.

In October, which is Native Plant Month, the volunteers removed the remainder of the invasive and non-native plants. Katie Tripp delivered and placed over 500 native plants on the dune areas, and 20 volunteers dug holes and planted the plants, which

were then surrounded with pine straw and watered in.



Volunteers on October 30 planting Town Hall dunes, photos by Barb Davis

Within a month, several species of butterflies had discovered the pollinator plants that were blooming.



Monarch butterfly on seaside ageratum, photo by Patty Rippey

Native plants evolved and have lived in Florida since before Europeans arrived. Over 3,000 native plant species contribute to the biodiversity of Florida while providing shelter and food for birds, butterflies, pollinators, and wildlife. Many species of butterfly rely entirely on a single native species. With bird and pollinator populations declining, preserving native plants and habitats is central to the health of Florida's natural resources and wildlife. Native plants use less water and chemicals such as pesticides and fertilizers, which impact our natural water resources. To learn more, access the Florida Native Plant Society website at [www.FNPS.org](http://www.FNPS.org).

# Garden Club of Ponce Inlet

by Patricia Morris



The Garden Club has had a very busy season so far this year. We had our 1st membership meeting of the year on September 25. It was wonderful welcoming back all of our members. Our membership continued to grow over the past 4 months, bringing our total membership number to 91, and we look forward to welcoming even more new members throughout the year.

At our October 2024 membership meeting we had our 1st speaker of the year. Christian Robinson, of Revival Gardening, gave a very informative presentation about how unhealthy soil can be returned to health. We also selected our 1st Beautification Winner of the year, and it was one of our very own members, Jo Curcio, and her husband, Val. If you get a chance, please take the opportunity to go and see Jo and Val's beautifully landscaped property at 59 Jennifer Circle, and if you can't, please enjoy the photo below.



In October the Garden Club was also represented at the Towns' Children's Halloween Party held on Friday, October 25, at Lighthouse Park. Many thanks go to Ginger Van Rensselaer and her friend Dave Castiglioni, who handed out candy to all the families and children who came out for this annual town event.

Unfortunately, due to Hurricane Milton, we had to postpone our Annual Arts, Crafts, and Plant Show, which was scheduled for October 11th and 12th. But don't be dismayed, as we have a rain date set for the show in March 2025. You can catch our rescheduled show on March 6 and 7, 2025, at the Community Center. You can also find our new flyer for the March show below. While many of our crafters will be returning to our show in March, we are always looking for new and unique crafters. If you happen to know of any crafters who would like to join our show, please let us know.

In November, we welcomed Ashlee Roberson, of Simply Roses in Ormond Beach, as our guest speaker. Ashlee gave a beautiful Floral Design Demonstration to our members. We also selected our November Beautification Winner of the year—Sunny and Dave Duecker of 66 Ocean Way. If you get a chance, please take the opportunity to go and see Sunny and Dave's beautifully landscaped property at 66 Ocean Way, and if you can't, please enjoy the photo below.



December is a very busy but fun and festive month for our club. The month began with the Garden Club participating in the 3rd Annual Marine Science Center Christmas Tree Festival, which was held on December 6 and 7. A special thanks goes to Ann Marie Waters, Lea Hicks, and our other members who participated in the design and decoration of our beautiful and unique tree. Our tree, "A Diamond in the Rough," was dedicated to Portia Mallack, a long-time club member who passed away over the summer.

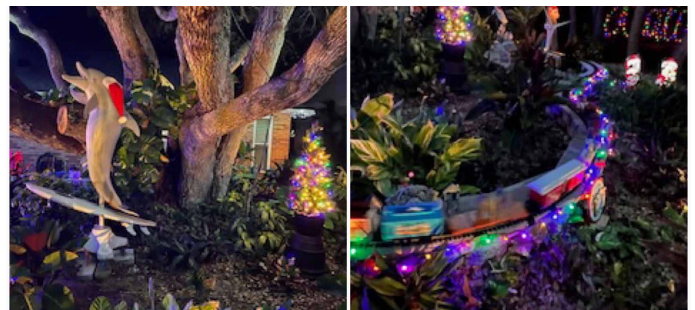


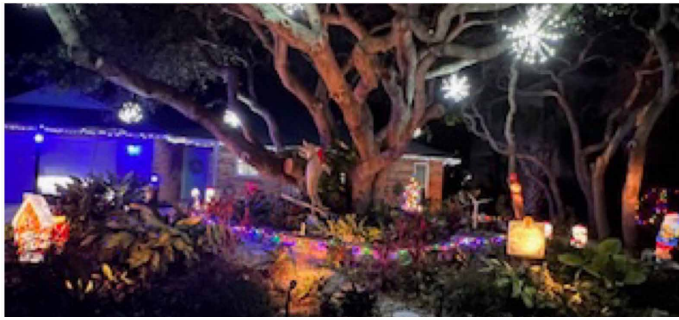
Our club also participated in the 14th Annual Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade on December 7. The overall theme for the parade was 'Your Favorite Christmas Movie.' In keeping with the overall theme, our club chose 'A Christmas Story.' Several of our members participated in the holiday event as walkers, banner bearers, and characters from the movie. Much thanks goes to our member Geri Seindenfaden for everything she did to bring our theme to life. Our members clearly had a lot of fun representing our club. I hope you all had

a chance to get out and view the parade and thoroughly enjoyed our Garden Club members strutting their stuff.



In December our club had the pleasure of selecting and awarding the Garden Club of Ponce Inlet's Holiday Lighting Contest. This award is presented annually to a Ponce Inlet residential home and/or a condo or local business selected by our Garden Club beautification committee. This year's residential award went to Kevin and Mary Kirsch of 68 Calumet Avenue, who had a beautiful display that also included an outdoor train display. Sea Gull Landing was awarded the Condo Holiday Lights winners this year. We hope you all had a chance to drive by and see the beautiful displays by the Kirsch's and Sea Gull Landing, but if you did not, please take pleasure in the photos below.





the Town Council to make this happen. Also on hand were many members of Edwina's extended family and town staff to celebrate with Edwina and our club. Please enjoy the photos below celebrating 'Edwina.' The Garden Club wishes Edwina 'Congratulations' on this honor!



Finally, on December 18th, we had our annual Holiday Party, with some very special guests in attendance. Everyone enjoyed this meeting where we were able to sit back and enjoy socializing with fellow members. Members also participated in some mild competition, playing some entertaining holiday games.

We also had a very, very special presentation for our Founding Member and 1st Garden Club President, Edwina Knox. Mayor Lois Paritsky read a proclamation proclaiming that a tree located in the Ponce Preserves, and formerly known as "Athena," will now be named "Edwina" in honor of Edwina's legacy within our community. Many, many thanks go to our member, Barbara Davis, who led this effort by working with town staff and

## Garden Club of Ponce Inlet Arts, Crafts & Plants Sale



Friday and Saturday  
March 7th and 8th, 2025  
10am-4pm

Artists, Crafters, Gardeners  
Bake Sale  
Raffles & Refreshments

Location: Ponce Inlet Community Center 4670 S. Peninsula Drive

# Ponce Inlet Lions Club

By Nancy Epps, President



The fall was a sad time for our club. On September 22, it was our somber duty to celebrate the life of one of our Life Members, Past District Governor Shel Reichard. Shel and his wife, Carol, were both members of our club who met several years ago as a result of being Lions. We hosted the service at the Ponce Inlet Community Center (PICC), and numerous Lions from various parts of the state came to honor the life of this most accomplished Lion and good friend. District Chaplain Mary Yochum from the Ormond-by-the-Sea Lions Club performed the formal service, and then numerous Lions shared their memories of Shel. Lion Carol was so appreciative of all those who attended, including our District Governor, Bob Armstrong, who came all the way from Davenport, FL.

On December 18, a longtime, very active Life Member Lion and well-known community member, Jim Hinson, lost his long battle with failing health. Jim's loss is very personal for me. He was my sponsor into the Lions, and before that he served on the Town Council with me. He was one of the hardest-working and most dedicated Lions I knew. He and his wife, Mary Lou, also founded the town Christmas parade. He was a member of the PICC board of directors for many years, serving as president for some of those years. He was also a co-founder

of the Veterans Association. I'm sure those organizations will have more to say about his service to them. The Veterans are planning a celebration of life at the PICC in January, and the Lions will be playing a role. Please watch the C4PI website, our Ponce Inlet Lions website [www.pilions.org](http://www.pilions.org), or the PICC marquee for more details.



On a happier note, Lions Shirley Okhovatian and Nancy Epps both represented our club in the Christmas parade on December 7. Lion Shirley used her Miata convertible as transportation while Lion Nancy rode in the back in the Lion costume. Lion Shirley's daughter, Tara, grandson Rummy, and friends of her son, Tyler, walked behind throwing candy. It is always fun to see the reaction of the children to the Lion! The theme this year was Christmas movies, and we used Elf as our theme.

Speakers planned for spring include a representative from Waste Pro in March speaking to us about recycling and Representative Chase Tramont in June with a summary of the 2025 spring legislative session. Meetings will be open to the public. We meet at the community center at 6 PM on the first Wednesday of the month. We have dinner for \$10 if you are interested. Please RSVP to me if you plan to attend.



There will be no general Lions meeting in February because the PI Lions will be the host club for the Zones 6 and 7 Lions meeting on February 3. These zones include clubs from New Smyrna Beach, South Daytona, Daytona Beach (both Daytona Halifax and the Conklin Davis Club Branch), DeLand, Kissimmee, Ormond Beach, Ormond by the Sea, Palm Coast, Pierson, and Volusia County at large. As you can imagine, there will be a lot of Lions in attendance.

For updated information on our meetings, etc., please visit our webpage [www.pilions.org](http://www.pilions.org).

Stay warm!



## Ponce Inlet Veterans Memorial Association

This past November, Veterans Day was celebrated with a ceremony at the Memorial. This year we dedicated a plaque honoring the nine Ponce Inlet veterans who made this memorial a reality to have a special place to honor those who served in the defense of our country. Also, we were again blessed to have the Aca Fella singing group and the missing man ceremony from the ROTC program at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. We also want to extend our appreciation to all the other ceremony participants and speakers. And we want to give a special thanks to all who attended to honor our veterans.

Our progress on expanding the memorial continues. We have received the construction permit and hope to have the block walls up by the beginning of the year. We hope that within a couple of months we will be able to start taking orders for new pavers for the walkway and the stainless-steel plaques that will be on the black granite walls. Here are a couple of an architect's portrayals of the expansion.



In December we participated in the Friends of the Marine Science Center's 'Christmas Tree Festival. Our submission was 'Faces of Christmas Past,' created by one of our veterans, Keery Wolf. It contained pictures of many of our local veterans from their time in the service. It clearly had an impact on the hundreds of people attending, as it was awarded the best of all the trees submitted.



The next day we held a successful Breakfast with Santa for the children of all ages. We served over 170 breakfasts, and it was evident the kids loved the special treats and pancake toppings. Special thanks to Winola Farms ([www.winolafarmbeef.com](http://www.winolafarmbeef.com)), who have a local store in Port Orange, for their donation of all the sausages. Later in the day we participated in the Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade, posting flags to honor our branches of service in the Cavalcade of Corvettes. As is tradition, we are the first in the parade after the fire engine, and this year we added a new element—a "tank"—created by Tracy and David Bell. We received rave reviews of the parade for

its wonderful participants, including the three marching bands. First place went to the Janet Hale Foundation, who 'went over the top' with their float 'Nightmare Before Christmas.' Thanks to all that spent the time to join us in the parade and those that spent the time to watch it.



We would like to invite all local veterans and those who are still serving on active duty to join us. The Association is a non-profit 501(c)(19) organization, and our mission is to maintain our Memorial and promote veterans' activities in our community. Dues are \$20 per year, and meetings are held at the Ponce Inlet Community Center at 7:00 PM on the second Tuesday of each month, except during the summer. Contact Mark Oebbecke at 610-716-0041 or write an email to [piveterans@yahoo.com](mailto:piveterans@yahoo.com) for additional information or to obtain a membership form.

And finally, we would like to extend an invitation for all to join us on Monday, May 26, 2025, at 9:00 AM when we celebrate Memorial Day and honor those men and women who gave all while serving our country. The ceremony will be held at the Memorial at Davies Lighthouse Park.



# PONCE INLET ANIMAL WELFARE "PAW"

BY NANCY EPPS, PRESIDENT



Happy New Year, Ponce Inlet residents!

Our two resident colony cats survived the hurricanes just fine. They are still receiving food, water, and love every day from the volunteers. They have lots of places where they can get out of the wind, rain, and cold, and they stay close to the colony. Terri has replenished the straw on the ground and in their beds, preparing them for the impending cold snap.

Some of you may have enjoyed visiting the calico cat who lived in the Lighthouse Point Park, the county park here in town. She was very friendly, and many people would go to visit her. Her name is Coco, and she has spent her entire life of at least fifteen years in the park. A Ponce Inlet native, Julie Davis, has her daughter, Pookie, who was a kitten when she was trapped fifteen years ago. A couple of months ago, someone in the county decided that Coco and the other two cats who had lived there all their lives needed to go, and they were trapped and were going to be taken to Halifax Humane

Society. Fortunately, one of the volunteer feeders arrived to feed and found out what had happened, and all three were rescued before they were taken away. Coco is now living with Julie and Pookie, and she has adjusted well. The town put a story on their Facebook page about her whereabouts because so many people have become accustomed to seeing her in the park and visiting with her, and they were worried when she disappeared. The other two cats, Tigger and Parker, are also in a private home here in town, so the ending to the story is a good one.



If you would like to be alerted when someone in our area either loses a pet or finds a stray animal, you can sign up for free notices from Paw Boost lost and found at [www.pawboost.com](http://www.pawboost.com). They will also post to their Facebook page. I see a lot of reports of pets being returned to their homes via Paw Boost.

Our little organization, Ponce Inlet Animal Welfare (PAW), can assist with trapping a cat, getting one sterilized to prevent more unwanted kittens, etc. If you would like to know more about what we do or how you can help, please call me, Nancy Epps, at 386-795-2310. Have a great winter!

# PONCE CHURCH



by Pastor Nina Tidwell

Ponce Church meets Sundays at 10:30 a.m. at the PI Community Center, 4670 S. Peninsula, next to the fire station. Everyone is welcome at Ponce Church.

## ESTABLISHED 2003

Twenty-one years ago, the Lord led our family to the beautiful town of Ponce Inlet. One day, while Pastor Rick was walking on the beach, the Lord spoke to him and said, "There is no church in this town; I want you to start one." In January 2003, the Tidwell family launched the first church in the history of Ponce Inlet. Ponce Church is a Christian, non-denominational church that is active in obeying the Words of Jesus to teach others what it means to live by faith and love for neighbor by caring for the orphan, providing food for the hungry, water for the thirsty, providing clothing, healing the sick, visiting those in prison, and providing shelter for the homeless. As Jesus said, "...If you have done it to the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you have done it to me..." Matthew 25:31-46, Matthew 10:8

Visit [PonceChurch.com](http://PonceChurch.com) for more information. Thank you.

## ANNUAL LEGACY HOUSING GALA FOR AGE-OUT FOSTER YOUTH A SUCCESS:

On Thursday, December 5, 2024, we hosted our 8th Annual Legacy Housing Gala! Thank you to all who attended and supported our annual fundraiser. Because of your and many others generosity, we are able to continue to provide a loving and safe home for these young individuals.

At Legacy House, we prevent youth homelessness and trafficking by providing safe housing for girls and boys aging out of the foster care system. The Legacy Housing Project provides a safe support system that allows our youth to graduate high school, enroll in a local college, and obtain employment. To learn more and give, we welcome you to visit [LegacyHousingProject.org](http://LegacyHousingProject.org), where we provide more information and video testimonies of our Legacy Housing Family.

Thank you for your continued love and support.



**LEGACY**  
H O U S I N G

Join us Sundays at 10:30 a.m. at Ponce Church.

4670 S. Peninsula Drive in Ponce Inlet

Everyone Welcome!

(386) 308-1533

Thank you.

# Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum

by Zach Hopple



As the calendar changes to 2025, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse celebrates another wonderful year engaging with crowds from around the world. People from areas near and far have visited to climb Florida's tallest lighthouse, interact with one of the many educational activities provided by the museum, or explore the newest offering, the Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum.

## Educational Programming

The end of 2024 brought wonderful opportunities for visitors to engage with museum programming at the lighthouse. These included the annual Indigenous Peoples Day event, where cultural centers from across Florida gathered at the lighthouse to enlighten guests to the rich history of the native population of Florida.

Also, on December 7th, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse partnered with the Daytona Beach Concert Band to provide a spectacular concert entitled Tunes at the Tower. Christmas music filled the air, and all guests left with a renewed joy for the holiday season. Following the concert, the lighthouse volunteers and staff manned a float in the Ponce Inlet Christmas Parade that afternoon. It was a fun-filled day for all!



In the first quarter of 2025, the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse is proud to announce the revival of two of the most fascinating educational opportunities.

The first of these events on the calendar is Museum at Night. On Monday, February 3rd, enjoy an evening of stargazing at the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse with Seth Mayo, Curator of Science at the Museum of Arts and Sciences. Climb to the top of Florida's Tallest Lighthouse and explore the wonders of the night sky through Cassegrain reflector telescopes! All Volusia County teachers and students are admitted free of charge with valid ID.

EXPLORE THE STARS AT  
THE PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE!

## MUSEUM AT NIGHT

FEBRUARY 3, 2025  
5 PM - 8 PM

Climb the Lighthouse and explore the wonders of night sky through MOAS Cassegrain reflector telescopes!

Participate in The Science of Light Program and learn how lighthouse lenses work!

Admission: \$6.95 for Adults,  
\$1.95 for children 11 and  
under.

Teacher & Student  
Appreciation Night

\* All Volusia Teachers &  
Students Admitted Free  
with Valid I.D.  
from 5 PM - 8 PM



PONCE INLET  
LIGHTHOUSE  
& MUSEUM

PONCE INLET LIGHTHOUSE  
4931 S. PENINSULA DR.  
PONCE INLET, FL 32127  
386-761-1821 EXT. 18

MOAS  
MUSEUM OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Another wonderful cultural educational experience is Florida Heritage Day. Visit the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse and Museum and Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum on March 22nd and learn what it was like to live and work around the Mosquito (now Ponce De Leon) Inlet at the turn of the 19th century. Interact with museums and cultural centers from across the state of Florida as we celebrate the rich history of our great state. Join us for fun family-oriented activities, including kids' crafts and interactive workshops at no additional charge between the hours of 10:00 am and 3:00 pm.

### **Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Tower**

Enjoy a fascinating historic presentation or a guided tour of the lighthouse and museum led by one of the museum's knowledgeable staff on select Tuesdays and Thursdays of each month at 11:00 am. Please contact the museum's programs manager, Zach Hopple, by email at [education@ponceinlet.org](mailto:education@ponceinlet.org) for more details.

### **Scheduled Tuesday at the Tower Events:**

- January 7th Alexander Hamilton: Father of America's Lighthouses 11:00 am  
Presentation by PILH Lead Docent John Mann
- February 18th Walk and Talk – The Ponce Inlet Lighthouse 11:00 am
- March 4th Hiking Through History: Retracing a Minorcan Odyssey 11:00 am  
Presentation by Ryan Brennan – Ximenez-Fatio House St. Augustine

### **Scheduled Thursday at the Tower Events:**

- January 23rd Walk and Talk: The Science of Light 11:00 am

- February 6th The Coast Guard in Volusia County...Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow  
Presentation by Coast Guard Auxiliary Member Andrew Gygi

- March 20th Walk and Talk: Building the Lighthouse 11:00 am

### **Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum**

After over a century of being closed to public visitors, the Pacetti Hotel will once again open its doors to anyone wishing to experience Ponce Inlet's longest-surviving structure. Constructed between 1881 and 1886, the Constance D. Hunter Historic Pacetti Hotel Museum, as it is now called, officially opened to the public on August 22nd. This opening is the result of multiple years of hard work by the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Staff and various other entities involved in the restoration and rehabilitation of this historic building since its purchase in late 2019. Readers are encouraged to stop by for a visit and enjoy the history and nature of this new addition to the rich history of Ponce Inlet. All residents are admitted free with valid identification, and the cost to all other museumgoers is only \$5.00 for adults 12 and older and \$1.00 for children 11 years and younger.





## Become a Member

Purchasing an Annual Membership is one of the most popular and affordable ways to support the Ponce De Leon Inlet Lighthouse Preservation Association in its mission to preserve and disseminate the maritime and social history of the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse. Benefits of membership include free admission to the museum and lighthouse during normal hours of operation, a 10% discount on all regular-priced merchandise in the gift shop, an annual subscription to the Association's quarterly journal Illuminations, as well as invitations to special events.

For more information about membership, please visit [www.ponceinlet.org](http://www.ponceinlet.org) or call 386-761-1821.

## Climb to the Moon

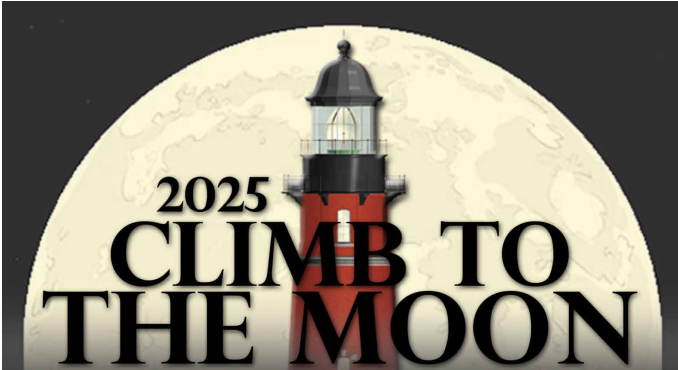
Climb to the Moon at Florida's tallest lighthouse! Treat your significant other, family, friends, coworkers, or simply yourself to breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, the World's Most Famous Beach, Ponce Inlet, and surrounding inland waterways under the golden glow of the setting sun. View the full moon as it rises above the Atlantic Ocean and enjoy panoramic vistas of the Florida coast by moonlight. Join the old lighthouse keeper as he leads you on your journey into the past and discover the unique history of this National Historic Landmark.

Open to young and old alike, Climb to the Moon is offered only once a lunar month when the moon is at its fullest. Participation is limited to only 25 guests per event. Tickets must be purchased in advance and are sold on a first-come, first-served basis. Event dates and times differ depending on the time of the year. Please refer to the Climb to the Moon schedule below for specific event dates and times.

Climb to the Moon admission prices are \$35 for non-members and \$30 for Preservation

Association members. Memberships may be purchased online by selecting the membership link below. Climb to the Moon tickets may be purchased in advance by contacting the museum's administrative assistant Amanda Pratt via email at [admin@ponceinlet.org](mailto:admin@ponceinlet.org) or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 10.

The success of all of the programs provided by the Ponce Inlet Lighthouse relies on the dedication and hard work of our amazing volunteer corps. They are the backbone of the programs department, and we appreciate everything that they do for us. The Preservation Association is always looking for more individuals interested in becoming volunteers. Monthly meetings and trainings will be provided for all volunteers, as well as the opportunity to preserve and interpret the history of a National Historic Landmark. Any individuals interested in volunteering are encouraged to contact Programs Manager Zach Hopples by email at [zhopples@ponceinlet.org](mailto:zhopples@ponceinlet.org) or by phone at (386) 761-1821 ext. 18.



**2025  
CLIMB TO  
THE MOON**

JOIN US ON THE EVENING OF THE FULL MOON FOR A PRIVATE TOUR OF THE LIGHT STATION! ENJOY SPARKLING DRINKS AND TASTY TREATS BEFORE CLIMBING TO THE TOP OF FLORIDA'S TALLEST LIGHTHOUSE TO MARVEL AT THE BREATHTAKING VIEWS OF THE SUNSET AND MOONRISE. GUESTS WILL EXPERIENCE A VISIT TO THE TOWER'S LANTERN ROOM, WHICH HOUSES IT'S STUNNING 3RD ORDER ROTATING FRESNEL LENS.

\$30 MEMBERS / \$35 NON-MEMBERS  
RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED. PLEASE CALL 386-761-1821 TO BOOK.

Monday, January 13th 4:45 PM - 6:15 PM
Wednesday, February 12th 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
Thursday, March 13th 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM
Saturday, April 12th 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Monday, May 12th 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Tuesday, June 10th 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Thursday, July 10th 7:45 PM - 9:15 PM
Friday, August 8th 7:30 PM - 9:00 PM
Sunday, September 7th 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM
Monday, October 6th 6:15 PM - 7:45 PM
Wednesday, November 5th 4:45 PM - 6:15 PM
Thursday, December 4th 4:30 PM - 6:00 PM



# Citizens For PONCE INLET

## 2025 Citizen of the Year and 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award

Since 1987 the Citizens for Ponce Inlet Organization has selected, honored, and acknowledged a resident of Ponce Inlet or a Ponce Inlet employee for both the Citizen of the Year and the Lifetime Achievement Awards. The award is to acknowledge those individuals involved in volunteer work who have made an outstanding contribution to our community.

In 2022, the CFPI Board voted again to honor husbands and wives in the same year if their volunteer work is deserving of joint honors. This year, it will be possible to nominate couples or individuals for the 2025 award. Past winners cannot be nominated.

The CFPI Lifetime Achievement Award is bestowed on a former Citizen of the Year. However, it doesn't have to be a past COTY winner. Anyone who has volunteered in our community for over 20 years is eligible for nomination for this prestigious award.

Nomination forms for both awards can be found in this 2025 CFPI Winter Newsletter, online at [www.c4pi.org](http://www.c4pi.org), picked up at the Community Center Office, or requested by emailing: [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org).

All completed Nomination Forms must be received by March 21st, at noon to be considered and can be returned by email, send to [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org), or hand-delivered to the Ponce Inlet Community Center CFPI auxiliary mailbox in a sealed envelope.

We look forward to your recommendations for individuals worthy of receiving these awards.

The Annual Awards Ceremony Dinner is scheduled to take place on Wednesday April 23rd, 2025, at the Community Center from 5:00 pm – 9:00 pm.





# 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award Nomination Form

## Qualifications for the Award are as follows:

- A resident of Ponce Inlet or a Ponce Inlet employee who has made outstanding contributions and volunteered in our community for over twenty years.
- Previous winners of this award are not eligible to be nominated. For a list of prior recipients, please visit the C4Pi website awards page.
- Nominations are limited to two pages citing the nominee's accomplishments and contributions in Ponce Inlet. This honor may be and often is awarded to a former Citizen of the Year recipient. More than one person may receive this award.

**Nominations must be received no later than March 21st, 2025 at noon.**

Name of Nominee:
Address:
Phone:
Email:

Explain briefly your reason for nominating this individual. Please list past and present community-service involvement.

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(Attach a second sheet if necessary and indicate the nominee's name.)

**We look forward to receiving your recommendations for individuals worthy of the 2025 Ponce Lifetime Achievement Award.**

**Nominated By:**

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:
Date:

**Please complete the Nomination Form and return via:**

- Email to **[admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org)**
- Hand delivered, in a sealed envelope, to the CFPi Auxiliary Mailbox at the Ponce Inlet Community Center office at 4670 S. Peninsula Drive.

**Awards will be presented at the Annual Banquet on April 23rd 2025 at the Ponce Inlet Community Center from 5:00PM - 9:00PM. Tickets for the event will be on sale in the Community Center Office beginning March 24th, 2025.**



Citizens For  
**PONCE INLET**

# 2025 Citizen of the Year Award Nomination Form

Who will be Ponce Inlet's next Citizen of the Year?

## Qualifications for the Award are as follows:

- A Ponce Inlet resident, a married couple, or a Ponce Inlet employee involved in volunteer work who has made an outstanding contribution to our community.
- Previous winners of this award are not eligible to be nominated. For a list of prior recipients, please visit the C4Pi website awards page.
- Nominations are limited to two pages citing the nominee's accomplishments and contributions in Ponce Inlet. Only one person, or a married couple will receive this award.

**Nominations must be received no later than March 21st, 2025 at noon.**

Name of Nominee:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Explain briefly your reason for nominating this individual. Please list past and present community-service involvement.

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(Attach a second sheet if necessary and indicate the nominee's name.)

**We look forward to receiving your recommendations for individuals worthy of the 2025 Ponce Citizen of the Year Award.**

**Nominated By:**

Name:
Address:
Phone:
Email:
Date:

**Please complete the Nomination Form and return via:**

- Email to [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org)
- Hand delivered, in a sealed envelope, to the CFPi Auxiliary Mailbox at the Ponce Inlet Community Center office at 4670 S. Peninsula Drive.

**Awards will be presented at the Annual Banquet on April 23rd 2025 at the Ponce Inlet Community Center from 5:00PM - 9:00PM. Tickets for the event will be on sale in the Community Center Office beginning March 24th, 2025.**



# Citizens For PONCE INLET

## TOWN OF PONCE INLET

The purpose of the Town's section of this Newsletter is to provide information to its citizens and businesses that concern the workings of the Town government. Articles feature the various departments of the Town and include pertinent information to educate and inform individuals on issues of interest to them.

To avoid the appearance of political favoritism or viewpoints on public issues, the Town cannot accept political or public issue ads or ads from non-profit associations for publication.

## CITIZENS FOR PONCE INLET (C4Pi)

The Citizens for Ponce Inlet Newsletter is published quarterly throughout the year to inform the citizens and businesses of Ponce Inlet about matters which may be of interest or have an impact on them. The Newsletter is not a public forum and no editorial articles or letters will be accepted for publication.

For 35 years the Citizens for Ponce Inlet Newsletter has been distributed in paper form. Volunteers on foot and sometimes roller skates faithfully delivered the letter to the households. As the years passed, the publication was mailed directly to all residents and property owners.

In 2020, the Citizens for Ponce Inlet (CFPI) created the website [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) and posted the first digital edition of the CFPI Newsletter with the Winter 2021 issue. The new digital version is emailed to all CFPI Members and to the Town's email list.

If you would like to be placed on the email list please go to [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) and JOIN – it's free -you will automatically be enrolled to receive the Newsletter and important notifications while enjoying other C4Pi benefits.

The Citizens for Ponce Inlet is an independent organization and not part of the Town government. Read the Citizens for Ponce Inlet agreement with the Town on our website.

The Town's financial contribution relates solely to the CFPI/C4Pi Newsletter and insures all citizens in Ponce Inlet have access to this information and to the Newsletters provided on the [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org) website. The newsletter does not accept paid advertisements and is distributed free of charge. We hope you find this information valuable.

## Newsletter Content and Publication Requirements

The Quarterly CFPI Newsletters are finalized around the end of December, March, June, and September. Deadlines for submitting content are as follows:

**December 15th**                      **Winter Edition**

**March 15th**                              **Spring Edition**

**June 15th**                                **Summer Edition**

**September 15th**                      **Fall Edition**

Upload your submissions:

<https://www.c4pi.org/newsletter-content-portal/>

This portal is intended to simplify the process of submitting content for the CFPI Newsletter Your content has two elements: text and photos (optional).

For assistance, directions to upload the information can be found on the webpage. Thank you for your continued contributions and support of the CFPI Newsletter.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions about an upcoming issue of the newsletter or need assistance in submitting information via the portal.

Please email [admin@c4pi.org](mailto:admin@c4pi.org) with your contact information and questions.

Donations may be made directly on the [C4Pi.org website](http://C4Pi.org) or by mailing a check made to:

**Citizens for Ponce Inlet, Inc.**  
**4670 S. Peninsula Drive**  
**Ponce Inlet, FL 32127**

Please visit [www.c4pi.org](http://www.c4pi.org) for more information about our Organization.

Volunteers are always needed.

If you can help, please email:

[info@c4pi.org](mailto:info@c4pi.org) or contact C4Pi on the bottom of our Home Page.



### Board of Directors:

- Lynn Albinson, President
- Elviria LaBarre, Vice-President
- Joe Cannon, Treasurer
- Kathy Cannon, Secretary
- Lauren Albinson, Newsletter Editor
- Ed Davis
- Judy DiCarlo
- Sue Fillion
- Don Hampton
- David Miller
- Pat Morris
- Mark Oebbecke
- Pamela Schafer
- Jane White





Citizens for Ponce Inlet, Inc. has achieved 501(c)(3) status, marking a significant milestone in its more than 40-year history as an entirely volunteer-driven organization dedicated to serving the residents of Ponce Inlet. The organization's roots trace back over four decades, when it first embarked on a mission to conduct research, investigate various issues, and propose initiatives aimed at enhancing the quality of life in Ponce Inlet. Its primary objective was to collaborate with the Town Council in shaping a community that would be a source of pride for all. Today, this dedicated organization not only persists in pursuing these objectives but also annually recognizes and celebrates exceptional citizen volunteers through its Annual Awards Banquet. Among the accolades bestowed are the Citizen of the Year Award as well as various Lifetime Achievement Awards, reserved for residents who have generously volunteered for more than two decades.

Furthermore, CFPI, Inc./C4Pi hosts an annual Election Forum, providing residents with a valuable platform to engage with town council candidates. In a recent development, the organization introduced an Election Edition Newsletter, distributed via email to its C4Pi membership. This newsletter serves as a medium for candidates to address crucial community

concerns and questions. In an effort to conserve funds, offer more information, and adapt to the digital age, CFPI established the C4Pi.org website in 2019. This platform grants members the opportunity to access a digital quarterly newsletter, along with an extensive archive spanning over 40 years of past newsletters.

In addition to the services mentioned earlier, the C4Pi.org website also provides users to access live streaming of town council meetings and other special town council meetings or conveniently view stored videos at their leisure.

For those seeking even more information and ways to get involved, the website offers an extensive assortment of resources and details. Please visit [www.C4Pi.org](http://www.C4Pi.org)

Citizens for Ponce Inlet is constantly on the lookout for dedicated volunteers who possess website and computer skills, expertise in newsletter publication, and strong writing talent. If you are interested in contributing your skills and making a positive impact, please don't hesitate to reach out. You can contact Lynn Albinson, President, at [lynn.albinson@c4pi.org](mailto:lynn.albinson@c4pi.org) to express your interest and learn more about how you can be a valuable part of this community-driven organization.

We are also grateful for any tax-deductible donations you may make to help us continue these valuable community services. Thank you.

## *"Our Mission is to Educate and Preserve"*



*Join  
Today!*

The Citizens For Ponce Inlet Website compiles and organizes all of the relevant and critical information you need into one single, easy to navigate information portal. It's like having the entire town at your fingertips. With just 1-2 clicks on your smartphone or desktop, you can access:

- Live Streaming
- News Alerts
- Town News & Events
- Campaign Reports
- Quarterly Newsletters
- Monthly Police & Fire Activity Reports
- Agendas & Minutes for All Meetings
- Extensive Library of Past Meetings
- Participate in our Surveys

Ponce Inlet's most informed citizens turn to C4Pi.org to obtain the information they need to be informed on town business, town events and town department activity.

**Membership is free. Get informed. Join today.**

***Promoting and Improving the Quality of Life in the Town of Ponce Inlet***

**info@C4Pi.org**

**www.C4Pi.org**

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If enjoyed this newsletter, please consider supporting our efforts by making a donation and subscribe to our online quarterly newsletter by completing the form below:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to Citizens for Ponce Inlet, Inc.

Detach and mail to:

CFPI c/o Ponce Inlet Community Center, 4670 S. Peninsula, Ponce Inlet, Fl., 32127  
or become a free member online and make your donation on our secure website with your credit card at [www.c4pi.org](http://www.c4pi.org) Your generosity is appreciated. Thank you.