Gulfport Community Update

October 21 - 27, 2012

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

The Osgood Point kayak launch ramp is closed for construction through December 23. Kayaks may be launched from the Gulfport Municipal Marina.

The **Great American Cleanup at Clam Bayou** on October 20 was very successful in keeping Gulfport beautiful. Thirty volunteers picked up 420 pounds of garbage throughout the morning (photos below). It was a fun packed and beautiful day. Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's event.

Upcoming Events:

Start the fun early and kick off the festivities at the **Gulfport Library Teen Halloween Bash** at 2 p.m. Wednesay, October 31. Wear a Halloween costume and enjoy a scary movie with refreshments. Bring a friend! For more information call Cailey at 893-1134.

Put on your best costume and take the kids to the **Halloween Bash** at the Gulfport Recreation Center on Wednesday, October 31, 7 - 9 p.m. Carnival games, Costume Contest, Haunted House, Tot Boo Room and a Snack Shack. For more information call 893-1068.

Come on down to the **Citywide Yard Sale** sunrise - sunset Saturday, November 3. Applications can be picked up and dropped off at City Hall or the Gulfport Library. Maps are available at Gulfport City Hall & Library, and online at www.mygulfport.us For more information call 893-1118.

Gulfport's popular **Antiques in the Park** returns on Saturday, November 3. Join us from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. at Clymer Park located at the corner of Gulfport & Beach Boulevards and peruse antiques and collectibles exhibitors. Find estate jewelry, old pottery, art, china and glassware, primitives and folk, kitchen collectibles, linens, toys, fun ephemera, small furnishings, home

décor, and more! This event is cosponsored by the City of Gulfport and the Gulfport Historical Museum, and is managed by Hula Hula Productions. In the event of rain, this event will be rescheduled to Saturday, November 10.

Stetson Law Alumni Veteran Javier Centonzio, American Legion Post 125, The Gulfport Area Chamber of Commerce, Gulfport Merchants and the City of Gulfport would like to invite everyone to a fun packed weekend of events for **Heroes Weekend** November 8 - 11:

- On Thursday, November 8 the **Gulfport Casino Ballroom** will be transformed into a high-stakes gambling casino with Vegas style games including poker, blackjack, roulette, craps, slot machines and Texas hold'em. Buy-ins includes $1000 each in "funny money" and can be increased. Enjoy auctions, hors d'oeuvres, a full cash bar and live music. Admission is $20 per person, or $35 per couple in advance. Proceeds benefit the Small Business Mentor Program at the Gulfport Area Chamber of Commerce and the Gulfport Multipurpose Senior Center Foundation. Veterans with I.D. cards get an extra $500 in 'play money' at the door. There will also be a table shared by the American Legion/Vets and the Red Hatters to promote their events at the Casino night. Please visit the Gulfport Area Chamber of Commerce at 4926 Gulfport Boulevard for tickets.
- All are welcome to join the **City of Gulfport Veteran's Day Parade** on Beach Boulevard Saturday, November 10 at 4 p.m. Those wishing to participate should stop by City Hall to pick up an application, or print a copy from the City's website. Participation is free, but donations will be accepted for the Veteran's Law Institute.
- On Sunday, November 11 the City of Gulfport will have **dedication ceremonies and ribbon cuttings** for the new beach playground and volleyball courts. The dedication for the playground begins at 11:30 a.m. and the dedication for the volleyball courts begins at 11:45 a.m. Then stay for the fun as VETSports takes on Gulfport Police & Fire Departments in Volleyball Benefit at 1 p.m. Many Veterans playing in the volleyball matches use prosthetics for mobility. Please come and cheer on America's Bravest and Gulfport's Finest! Immediately following the volleyball event, an aerial photo will be taken by helicopter of the human chain spelling of ***GULFPORT, FL*** on the beach.

The Gulfport **Tuesday Fresh Market** is a weekly year-round open-air market featuring fruits, vegetables and a wide variety of foods; hand-made art and crafts; bath, body and wellness products; live music and more. Over 50 vendors and exhibitors participate each Tuesday, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. (8 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month). Special events are planned to enliven the experience. Bring donations of non-perishable food, toiletries and personal needs for the **Gulfport Senior Center Pantry** to the Gulfport Merchants Association tent each Tuesday. The Pantry is in great need of donations to keep up with the needs of clients. For more information visit www.gulfportma.com or contact Daniel Hodge at 366-4086 or dan@igc.org.

Weekly Casino Ballroom Events

- Every Tuesday, 12 p.m.: Ballroom lessons, - $7
- Every Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.: Argentine Tango Dance/ Lesson - $7
- Every Wednesday, 6 p.m.: Swing Dance/Lesson - $7
- 1st and 3rd Thursday 7 p.m.: Salsa Dance/Lesson - $7
- 1st and 3rd Sunday, 6 p.m.: Band/Ballroom Dance and Band - $7
- 2nd & 4th Sunday, 6 p.m.: Ballroom DJ & dance - $7

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Administration

Calls for Service:

Offenses	56

Arrests	13
Traffic citations	22

Examples of arrests and significant incidents or calls this week:

Officers responded to the 3000 block of 49th Street South in the early morning hours of October 18 after a witness observed 2 males in her neighbor's car. The subjects were gone when officers arrived and nothing was taken from the vehicle.

GPD received a late-reported burglary complaint from a resident in the 2900 block of 45th Street on October 18 who reported that they left a laptop and digital camera in the car after returning from a trip, and discovered the items had been taken sometime during the night.

Officers were in the area of the 5000 block of Gulfport Boulevard on the evening of October 18 when they observed smoke and flames coming from the Gulfport Hardware Store. Patrol officers were tasked with monitoring the business after the fire was finally extinguished as there was no way to secure the structure.

While officers were monitoring the building housing Gulfport Hardware they observed a hit and run in a parking lot in the 4900 block of Gulfport Boulevard. Liza Karcher struck a vehicle and left the scene. She was found to be impaired and arrested for driving under the influence.

An officer responded to the 5700 block of 18th Avenue on the morning of October 19 regarding a runaway juvenile. The juvenile left the residence after the parent went to bed, and was found that evening and returned home without incident.

Officers responded to the 5000 block of 12th Avenue on the afternoon of October 19 after receiving two separate calls regarding a male and female fighting in the street. The male, Gerrell Bowens was arrested for battery on a pregnant woman and child abuse.

An attempted burglary the 1200 block of Freemont Street was reported on the afternoon of October 19 after an unknown subject attempted to gain entry by prying the front door of the residence. Entry was not made.

Officers responded to a reported battery the 5500 block of 15th Avenue South on the evening of October 19. The suspect who remains at large struck the victim with his bicycle.

Officers responded to the area of 45th Street South and 26th Avenue South on the evening of October 19 regarding an intoxicated male walking with a small child. The male was so intoxicated that he allowed the child to run into the street, putting him in danger. The male was arrested for child abuse. When the child's mother was located, she was intoxicated as well. A child protection investigator responded and the child was released to their custody.

Officer Ashcom conducted a traffic stop on the evening of October 20. The driver and passenger were not wearing seatbelts. The driver fled from Officer Ashcom after she made contact, and was arrested a few minutes later and was charged with fleeing and eluding (felony), driving while license suspended (felony), 2 outstanding warrants, possession of cocaine, possession of marijuana, and resisting an officer without violence.

Officers responded to the 1400 block of 61st Street South on the afternoon of October 23 after a resident reported a shed was broken into and lawn equipment taken.

Investigations:

New Cases:	18
Cases Assigned:	3
Cases Closed-No Leads:	6
Cases Cleared With Arrest:	1
Cases Exceptionally Cleared:	0
Cases Unfounded/No Crime:	8

Cases Referred Back to Patrol:	0

Supplements Received:	15
Cases Cleared With Arrest:	0
Previously cleared with Arrest:	3
Cases Closed-No Leads:	2
Cases Unfounded/No Crime:	0
Exceptionally Cleared:	1
Cases Still Active:	9

Sgt Woodman investigated the arson at Gulfport Hardware Store and arrested owner David Cretella based on numerous aspects, including surveillance video placing the owner at the scene 58 seconds before smoke was observed coming from the building.

Detective Hanh Pham investigated a credit card fraud case and located the alleged suspect, Colleen Alicea. Alicea confessed to the alleged crime, but Detective Pham did not take her into custody because the victim did not wish to prosecute. Additionally, Detective Pham interviewed a male subject at the Pinellas County Jail who may be involved in the Coin Laundry robbery.

Detective Embry attempted to locate a suspect involved in a theft and dealing in stolen property case. His search has been unsuccessful; therefore he set a Non-Arrest Invest. Detective Embry has Probable Cause for the suspect arrest in VIPAR if contact is made. He will continue to investigate his assigned cases.

Ofc. Beltran conducted follow up on several vehicle burglaries but was unable to make contact with the suspect. He also mentored a student and provided peer mediation for 2 students.

Ofc. Motte mentored a student, intervened and mediated an altercation preventing a fight, and arrested a student for battering another student. He also covered the Junior Varsity and Varsity football games on Thursday and Friday nights, and assisted Sergeant Woodman in collecting video regarding the arson at the Gulfport Hardware Store.

Records

Reports reviewed:	47
Supplements reviewed:	89
Public records requests:	20
Bike registrations:	0
Fingerprints:	1
Subpoenas processed:	9
Citizens assisted:	53

Professional Standards Section

Lieutenant Farrand is coordinating the field training program for two probationary officers.

An officer attended and successfully completed Laser/Radar speed measurement at the South Eastern Public Safety Institute (SEPSI).

MARINA

Pumped two thousand three thousand three hundred nine (3,309) gallons of gas, and one thousand eight hundred sixty four (1,864) gallons of diesel fuel, fueling one hundred eleven (111) vessels.

Assisted in twenty four (24) pump-outs evacuating four hundred (400) gallons of sewage. This free service is well received by the boating public and helps keep our waters clean.

Transient Vessels:

Staff welcomed a 40' motor boat, 30' sailboat and a 20' sailboat this week. Welcome to Gulfport.

LEISURE SERVICES

Technical Events

Visit the City of Gulfport YouTube website at www.youtube.com/user/cityofgulfport. Cable and DSL internet users can access streaming video from the City's website at www.mygulfport.us. Watch videos of recent events. It's a great way to keep in touch with out of town family and friends! Spread the word!

- Updated weekly program schedule. Copy available at the City Hall reception desk, or online at http://www.mygulfport.us/GTV615/Live_Webstream.htm.
- Distributed biweekly press releases to Gabber, and weekly Constant Contact newsletter to email distribution list. There are 1,231 active contacts on email distribution list.
- Rebooted GTV615 station equipment.
- Updated City Events Email/Newsletter contact list. Please email at jshea@mygulfport.us for additions and updates of City events.
- Continued collecting registrations for Citywide Yard Yale and updating brochure.
- Provided control room coverage for October 18 City Council Workshop, rebroadcast on GTV615 and made DVD copies for IT Director and City Clerk.
- Updated Veteran's Parade participant list and contacted last year's participants. The Veterans Parade application is available at City Hall and online at www.mygulfport.us under latest news on the home page. Deadline to sign up for this event is Tuesday, November 6. Please contact Justin Shea at jshea@mygulfport.us for more information.
- Received RSVP confirmations for Volunteer Luncheon scheduled for November 14.
- Photographed Clam Bayou Cleanup event on October 20, and handled raffle giveaway of t-shirts and key chains. Approximately 30 volunteers picked up 420 pounds of garbage from Clam Bayou.
- Attended Pinellas County Public Information Officer meeting in Largo on October 24.

Parks

Leveled sand at new Playground & Volleyball courts, scheduled Volleyball court fence installation and ordered stage for Veteran's event.

Adjusted irrigation at Clymer & Veterans Parks.

Weeded, trimmed and cleaned Clymer & Veterans Parks and Recreation Center grounds, hand raked around benches and pavilions and cleaned beach.

Greased mowers, sharpened blades, and replaced primer ball on blower.

Mowed Recreation Center grounds, Caldwell Park, Chase block and dog park, Pasadena entrance and Hoyt perimeter.

Repaired bench on beach, and removed old sand box and garden from Recreation center playground.

Opened & cleaned Skate Park daily.

Staff continues to rake Gulfport Beach & volleyball areas every Monday and Friday. Trash and debris were picked up along the water and children's playground areas. Trash receptacles were emptied and the Bocce Ball courts were inspected for needed repairs.

Other Activities:

- All City park trash containers and cigarette waste containers were emptied.
- Watered all non-irrigated areas.
- Cleaned all City playground areas.
- Mowed, raked, lined and dragged all ball fields daily.

GEMS (Gulfport Extended Mini-Bus Service)

The City of Gulfport offers transportation service for residents 55 and older. GEMS (Gulfport Extended Mini-Bus Service) offers rides to grocery stores, medical appointments, etc. The $65 annual registration fee entitles members to ride GEMS for $2 per one-way trip and is good for one year from date of registration. Want to go shopping? GEMS offers hourly trips to South Pasadena on Monday, Wednesdays and Fridays; transportation to the Tyrone Shopping area on Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, and; service to Walmart and Aldi every Tuesday afternoon. GEMS has 160 active riders. Call 893-2242 for more information on this door-to-door service.

Senior Center

A **Beginners Line Dance class** is offered at Scout Hall at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesdays for registered members of the Senior Center. Senior Center membership is free.

Looking for various Christmas cards or blank note cards for loved ones? The Gulfport Senior Center will offer cards for sale November 1 - 30. The regular price for each card is 25 cents each. The Senior Center will offer Christmas cards and blank notes for 2 for 25 cents.

November, The Gulfport Multi-Purpose Senior Center will be closed on November 12 in observance of Veteran's Day, and Thursday & Friday, November 22 & 23 in observance of Thanksgiving Day.

Back by popular demand, every first Friday is the **Friday Mini Flea Market**. Our next event is November 2, 9 a.m. - noon. Find great items at affordable prices while supporting Senior Center special programs. Drop canned goods into the new "Love Bucket" for the Senior Center pantry.

Join in a free panel discussion in the Gulfport Senior Center Dining hall on Wednesday, November 7, 1 - 2:30 p.m. Find information on services, programs, finances and more. Contact Sally Marvin at 893-7190 for more information.

Tuesday, November 13 is national Memory Screening Day, and the Senior Center will offer free memory tests from 1 to 4 p.m. Call 893-2237 or 893-1231 to schedule an appointment.

The annual Senior Center **Thanksgiving Dinner Party** is scheduled for Tuesday, November 20 at 11:30 a.m. Seats are limited, and participants must be registered members of the Gulfport Senior Center. Tickets are available at the Center, online at www.gulfporseniorfoundation.org or by calling 893-1231 or 893-2237. Brentwood Senior Community Living is sponsoring this event.

Gulfport Casino, Catherine Hickman Theater & Gulfport Neighborhood Center

Casino (last week's events):

Sunday, October 14	6 p.m. - Ballroom Dance lesson with John 7 p.m. - Mario DeLeon's Band & Ballroom dance (Turnout 44)
Tuesday, October 16	Noon - Intermediate Ballroom dance lessons with Carol Baker (Turnout 8)

	1 p.m. - Beginner Ballroom dance lesson (Turnout 2) 2 p.m. - Ballroom dance 6:30 p.m. - Beginner Argentine Tango lesson 8 p.m. - Milonga dance (Turnout 32)
Wednesday, October 17	6 p.m. - Bonus Dance lesson with Swingtime 7 p.m. - Beginner Swing lesson 8 p.m. - Swing Dance (Turnout 193)
Thursday, October 18	7 p.m. - Salsa lesson with Carol Rivera 8 p.m. - Salsa dance (Turnout 25)

Casino (Upcoming Events):

Every Sunday	6 p.m. - Ballroom Dance Lesson 7 p.m. - Band & Ballroom Dance Admission $7
Every Tuesday	2 p.m. - Ballroom dance Admission $7 6:30 p.m. - Beginning Argentine Tango lesson 8 p.m. - Milonga dance Admission $7
Every Wednesday	6 p.m. - Bonus dance lesson with Swingtime 7 p.m. - Beginner Swing lesson with Swingtime 8 p.m. - Swing dance Admission $7
Every Thursday	6:30 p.m. - Salsa lessons with Carol Rivera 8 p.m. - Salsa dance Admission $7
Monday, October 29	7 p.m. - USA Ballroom Dance Admission $5 members; $7 nonmembers

Catherine Hickman Theater (last week's events)

Tuesday, October 16, 1 p.m. - Humana insurance presentation (Turnout 32)

Catherine Hickman Theater (upcoming events)

Sunday, October 28, 2 p.m. - The Performing Arts Consortium of St. Petersburg presents *Witches, Goblins & Friends* featuring Composers David Martines III & James Weaver, and dancer Travis Mesman. Admission $10 for adults/$5 for students, or free if in costume and accompanied by an adult. For more information call 258-8315.

Neighborhood Center (Last week's events):

Sunday, October 14	9:30 a.m. - Faith Cathedral International Church services (Turnout 21) 6:15 p.m. - Over Eaters Anonymous meeting (Turnout 8)

Neighborhood Center (Upcoming events):

Every Sunday	6 p.m. - Overeaters Anonymous meeting
Every first - third Sunday	9:30 a.m. - Faith Cathedral International Church services
Every fourth Sunday	9:15 a.m. - Bible study

Scout Hall (Last week's events):

Monday - Wednesday 7 a.m. - Alcoholics Anonymous meeting

Scout Hall (Upcoming Events):

Every Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - Alcoholics Anonymous meeting

LIBRARY

The Gulfport Library offers free one-on-one computer instruction on a first come basis every Monday and Wednesday from 10:30 a.m. until 1 p.m.

Public Programs/Meetings/Events:

- Tuesday, October 16, 1:30 p.m. - *Suncoast Hospice Bereavement Group* meeting.
- Tuesday, October 16, 3 p.m. - *eSalon* facilitated by Alex Hooks.
- Tuesday, October 16, 5:30 p.m. - *Free Thinkers Open Twelve Step* meeting.
- Wednesday, October 17, 10 a.m. - *Gulfport Prompt Short Story W*riters meeting.
- Wednesday, October 17, 3 p.m. - *Teen Zone*, facilitated by Sheri Stanley.
- Thursday, October 18, 10:30 a.m. - *Storyime for Preschoolers* facilitated by Diann Morningstar.
- Thursday, October 18, 3:30 p.m. - R.E.A.D Therapy Dog Maya.
- Thursday, October 18, 4:30 p.m. - *Business Debtors Anonymous* meeting.
- Thursday, October 18, 7 p.m. - *Tales from a Haunted Peninsula: The Folklore and Legends of Pinellas County.*
- Saturday, October 20, 10:30 a.m. - *Free Family Movie Day.*
- Saturday, October 20, 1 p.m. - *In Our Own Words* youth book writing workshop/contest.

Upcoming Events:

- Monday, October 29, 1 p.m. - *NaNoWriMo Plot Party*. For more information call Sheri at 893-1074.
- Wednesday, October 31, 2 0.m. - Teen Halloween Bash.
- Saturday, November 3, 10 a.m. - *International Gaming Day.* For more information call Sherri at 893-1074.
- Wednesday, November 7, 5 p.m. - *Real Estate News You Can Use* forum.
- Thursday, November 15, 10:30 a.m. - Coffee/Talk group discussion of *Mrs. Pollifax, Innocent Tourist* by Dorothy Gilman. Copies of the book are available at the circulation desk. Sponsored by the Circle of Friends of the Gulfport Library.
- Thursday, November 15, 2 p.m. - *Quick & Easy Appetizers for Holiday Entertaining:* Join Rita Fabula as she demonstrates how to create delicious refreshments for guests.
- Every Tuesday, 1:30 p.m. - *Suncoast Hospice Bereavement Group* meeting.
- Every Tuesday, 3 p.m. - *eSalon.* Learn to browse, place a hold, check out and download ebooks from our digital catalog. Meet with others to learn the basics, or discover new ways of using the e-Reader, tablet or mp3. For more information call 893-1073.

- Every Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. - *Free Thinkers Open Twelve Step* meeting. For more information please call 916-0916.
- Every Wednesday, 10 a.m. - *Gulfport Prompt Short Story Writers* meeting.
- Every Wednesday, 3 p.m. - *Teen Zone* facilitated by Shrei Stanley.
- Every Thursday, 9:30 a.m. - *Beginning Spanish.*
- Every Thursday, 10:30 a.m. - *Storytime*: Enjoy picture books selected to be read to preschool age children, in the Youth Services area at the rocking chair near the Easy books.
- Every Thursday, 4:30 p.m. - *Business Debtors Anonymous*
- Every Saturday through November 11, 1 p.m. - *In Our Own Words* Youth Book Writing contest & workshops.

Library Services/Statistics October 14 - 20, 2012:

	Items Circulated	**Patrons**
Weekly Circulation:	2,037	469
Sun. 10/14	50	8
Mon. 10/15	347	95
Tue. 10/16	338	69
Wed. 10/17	331	85
Thu. 10/18	417	85
Fri. 10/19	294	72
Sat. 10/20	260	55

Recreation Center

The art room was rented 2 - 6 p.m. Saturday October 20 for a baby shower with approximately thirty five (35) in attendance.

The gym is reserved 6 - 9 p.m. Saturday, October 27 for a party.

Programs, Classes & Activities

Thirty eight (38) children are registered for the School Year Child Care program, a quality program that provides a nurturing atmosphere where children in Kindergarten through age 14 have the opportunity to experience recreational, social, creative and enriching activities. Program hours are until 5:30 p.m. with extended hours available until 6 p.m. for an extra charge. Annual registration fee is $17 for residents and $110 for non-residents with monthly fees of $146 for residents and $292 for non-residents. Bus transportation is available from Pasadena Fundamental, Gulfport Elementary, Bear Creek Elementary and Douglas Jamerson Elementary.

Ten (10) children are registered for the 2012/13 Tot Time Program, and eight (8) for VPK (Voluntary Prekindergarten). Tot Time is a pre-school, hands-on program for children ages 3-5. Registration fees for the Tot Time Program are $17 for residents and $110 for non residents. VPK is FREE for children who live in Florida and who turned 4 years of age by September 1. Parents must apply at the Early Learning Coalition of Pinellas County, Inc. and the child must receive a Certificate of Eligibility. Both programs aim to make learning fun for children and help prepare them for Kindergarten. Eleven (11) Tot Time/VPK participants and twelve (12) adults attended a performance of *The Velveteen Rabbit* at the Mahaffey Theater on Tuesday morning.

Contractual classes: Braveheart Bootcamp, Conversational Spanish, Fencing, Gymnastics, Hula Dance, Karate, Pickleball, Table Tennis, Tai Chi, Tennis, Yoga and Zumba.

One (1) 2012/13 Gulfport Skate Park sticker has been sold to date.

Registration continues for the 2012/13 Teen Night program, a great hang out for teens in grades 6-12 providing recreation and social activities, and offers monthly field trips, cooking projects, guest speakers and service projects. The teens utilize the gymnasium, game room and outdoor area. Annual registration fee: $2 for residents, $22 for nonresidents. Program hours are Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 6 - 9 p.m. To date thirty eight (38) teens have been registered.

Staff Activities

Alton Hooker worked the room rental on Saturday afternoon.

Nicole Latragna, Mike Worthington, Asaph Graham and Kristin Ossola are working on the haunted house.

Mike Worthington drove the trolley for the judging of the Halloween Decorations Contest on Monday evening.

John Lapham used the school bus to transport Tot Time/VPK participants to the Mahaffey Theater in St. Petersburg on Tuesday.

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Customer Service and Finance

• Account Activity (Water and/or Marina):	22 new, 0 closed
• Water payments:	1,120 totaling $113,141.25
• On-Line Water payments:	99 transactions totaling $9,942.53
• Bright House payments:	22
• Utility Bills Mailed 10/24/12:	1,307
• Accounts Payable 10/19/12:	486 transactions totaling $538,640.21
• Mail processed 10/19/12:	937 pieces totaling $1,000.85
• Purchasing Cards October 2012 report:	116 transactions totaling $14,523.03

FIRE DEPARTMENT

Calls for Service:

- 30 Emergency Medical Calls
- 3 Structure Fires
- 2 WFF
- 2 Vehicle Crashes
- 2 Fire Investigations

Life Safety

- 6 Fire Inspections
- 4 Re-Inspections

The CERT Team meets monthly at the Gulfport Senior Center. The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 15 at 7 p.m. Training will cover Fire Prevention. For more information visit www.gulfportcert.com or call Bob Worthington at 916-8014.

The CERT Team will be assisting Recreation staff with the Spooktacular Halloween Bash on October 31.

This Week's activities:

- The Gulfport Fire Department and the State Fire Marshal's Office investigated a fire that consumed the Gulfport Hardware Store on Thursday night. The fire was intentionally set by the store's owner according to the State Fire Marshalls Office Bureau of Fire and Arson Investigation (BFAI). The BFAI said the fire was started in two places in rapid succession, and investigators were unable to find any accidental causes.
- Inspector Frank Vento investigated a kitchen fire at 5510 18th Avenue South on Tuesday evening caused by unattended grease on the stove. Six family members had to be temporarily housed by the National Red Cross.
- Inspector Frank Vento completed a Plans Review for 1614 49th Street South.

The Gulfport Fire Department would like to remind residents that hurricane season is still underway. The National Hurricane Center's 11 a.m. Friday update reports that Hurricane Sandy is located approximately 460 miles south-southeast of Charleston, South Caroline, and moving northward at 6 mph. Residents along the mid-Atlantic seaboard are bracing for the storm's landfall early next week. Hurricane season officially ends on December 1, and residents of the Gulf Coast and Atlantic should remain vigilant.

"It is crucial for coastal homeowners and business owners to be vigilant, not just this week, but over the next few weeks as well," Chris Hackett, Property Casualty Insurers Association of America's director of personal lines policy, said in a statement. "Historically, many of the deadliest and most costly hurricanes have hit at this time of year, including Katrina, Andrew, Charley, Ivan and Hugo, among others. We urge residents along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts to be prepared and alert, and ready to take steps quickly to safeguard their lives, their families and their property."

PUBLIC WORKS

Building Maintenance:

- Installed air conditioning duct work and vent in Police substation.
- Transported donated safe to Historical Building.
- Replaced hose bib at Little League building.
- Repaired toilet at Library and replaced toilet seat in Beach restroom.
- Replaced plug on vacuum cleaner.
- Delivered Halloween equipment to Recreation Center and installed a new toilet seat in restroom.
- Set up for daily events at the Senior Center.
- Performed routine daily maintenance duties at all City buildings.

Streets & Sanitation:

- Removed and disposed of animal carcasses on roadways.
- Completed billable work orders for brush, trash, electronics and Code Enforcement.
- Delivered recycling bins and "The City of Gulfport Recycling Guidelines" information sheet to multiple residential and commercial properties.
- Received shipment of new automated containers, assembled and delivered to multiple residential and commercial properties.
- Removed traffic control obstructions and debris from various roadways and alleys throughout City.
- Cleaned, reset and maintained storm drains, grates and inlets at various locations throughout City.
- Completed asphalt patch work on multiple potholes throughout City per direction.

- Completed alley and easement grading, fill and dust control spraying throughout City.
- Removed and disposed of illegal dumping at Osgood Point, Gulfport Marina, Gulfport Beach, Tangerine Greenway and other locations throughout City per direction.
- Cleared tire and metal debris from city garage and graded the city yard.
- Graded Gulfport Beach and removed seaweed & debris.
- Replaced damaged traffic control signs.
- Installed "STOP" sign at 51st Street & 25th Avenue, and "Duck Crossing", "Crosswalk" and "Casino" signs at 58th Street & 28th Avenue.
- Set up garbage containers for Coastal Cleanup event.
- Installed new sidewalk at Beach playground and other locations throughout City.
- Delivered load of recycled mulch to Neighborhood Center.
- Disposed of unclaimed property for Police Department.

Water:

- Daily Chloramines sampling at the points of connection to water distribution system (includes Saturday & Sunday).
- Daily inspection and read of Wholesale meters (includes Saturday & Sunday).
- Completed routes 45, 46, 47 and 48 of the monthly meter reading schedule.
- Disconnected water service at 44 locations for non-payment of service.
- Completed 13 non pay rechecks to confirm water services are still off.
- Completed 106 Customer Service-generated miscellaneous service orders.
- Completed 2 Sunshine One-Call Call Before You Dig Utility Locates.
- Replaced 6 water meters with new style meters.
- Reviewed permit application for fences, driveways and irrigation.
- Collected bay water sample at Gulfport Beach for quality testing.
- Repaired water leak at 5130 16th Avenue.

Sewer

- Daily preventive maintenance and service at lift stations 1 & 2.
- Daily rainfall check and documentation.
- Daily ground water elevation recording.
- Daily per trip vehicle check inspection.
- Weekly generator exercise and preventive maintenance check on lift stations 1 & 2. Police & Fire Departments and Senior Center.
- Weekly vehicle safety and maintenance inspection.
- Cleared main line sewer stoppage on 29th Avenue & 52nd Street S.

Vehicle Maintenance

- Repaired grabber arm work light electrical circuit on Sanitation Truck #42.
- Replaced faulty fuel shut off valve, pulled axle and replaced left rear wheel seal and brakes, reassembled brakes, axle and wheels on Sanitation Truck #44.
- Replaced front and rear brakes on Police Vehicle #154.
- Replaced turn signal light assembly and socket on Parks Department Vehicle #85.
- Repaired overhead emergency lights on Fire Truck #P17.
- Performed routine maintenance, repairs, etc. on various City vehicles.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Don't take chances with unlicensed contractors

The Pinellas County Communications Department offers the following information when looking for qualified contractors:

Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board helps guide homeowners in hiring a licensed contractor for home improvements

From January to July of this year, the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board issued 536 citations against unlicensed contractors. Hiring an unlicensed contractor can put residents' homes in jeopardy, produce safety hazards and cost extra money to homeowners when work is not done correctly.

"Do your homework and follow the guidelines and resources provided to you by the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board," said Executive Director Rodney Fischer. "Why take a chance with your money and safety?"

The function of the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board is to regulate construction and home improvement contractors practicing in all Pinellas jurisdictions.

The licensing board can tell you if a contractor has a license. They must be licensed by the board or the state of Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation and be registered with the board. Licensed contractors have passed a competency exam and perform electrical, plumbing or structural work in compliance with the building codes.

The state requires licensed contractors to have workers' compensation and liability insurance and the board monitors their insurance coverage. Without these, if a worker gets injured on the job or damages property, the homeowner is liable. Many insurance policies will not pay claims if an unlicensed contractor was doing the work.

WHEN SELECTING A CONTRACTOR, REMEMBER:

- Talk to friends and neighbors for recommendations.
- Home improvement contractors of various skills must be licensed with the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board. The license number must be displayed on advertising as well as on contracts. You can verify a contractor's license number and check any complaints by contacting the Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board at (727) 582-3100.
- Check with the Department of Justice and Consumer Services at (727) 464-6200 to determine the number of complaints against a business.
- Ask the contractor for references and follow through with verifying them.
- Ask the contractor for proof of insurance.
- Never deal with anyone who solicits or appears at your home unannounced.
- Obtain a minimum of two bids for the work to be done.

WHEN SIGNING A CONTRACT, MAKE SURE:

- All work should be specifically stated in the contract.
- An approximate starting and completion date should be included.
- All warranties including labor and materials should be addressed.
- A payment schedule should be contained in the contract.
- Do not give a large deposit before the beginning of work and do not pay the balance until completion.
- A three-day right to cancel rarely applies to home improvement contracts.
- Do not sign a blank contract or one containing blank spaces.
- Watch for non-refundable deposits and non-escrow accounts. In new home construction, part of the purchase price must be escrowed (this can be waived).

For more information call the board at 582-3100 or check their website at www.pcclb.com.

Building Division staff tries to take special time to work with homeowners embarking on do-it-yourself projects. Whether it's deferred maintenance or new improvements, due to hard economic times many are electing to do these projects themselves. Before beginning home improvement projects give us a call at 893-1024 to discuss plans and inspections that may be necessary, to explain code requirements and help you through the process.

Thinking of starting a new business? Check out the New Business Checklist at www.mygulfport.us under the Online Services/Documents and Publications section.

Code Enforcement activities continue in Section 2 of the City, also known as the Northeast Area which generally extends north to 7th Avenue, south to Gulfport Boulevard, west to 58th Street and east to 49th Street.

Because the City has one inspector who focuses on one section at a time, we depend on residents to call in violations when they see them. We will inspect within one working day of a complaint to verify any violation. Please call 893-1061 if you see violations. If the inspector is unavailable, leave as detailed a message as possible to help us find the violation. Complaints can be anonymous, but if you want a follow-up you will have to leave contact information which means the complaint is no longer anonymous.

Beginning in November Code Enforcement activities will move to Section 3 of the City, also known as the Southwest Neighborhood Area which generally extends south from Gulfport Boulevard to the water and west from 58th & 59th Streets to the City Limits. To review the Code Enforcement Activities documents for more detailed information and a map of the Code Enforcement areas please visit the Special Documents section of the City's website at www.mygulfport.us.

November 7 Planning & Zoning Board & November 20 City Council/CRA meeting:

- Consideration of amendments to the zoning code related to outdoor sales or displays within the WRD, CL-1 and CL-2 zoning districts to allow for expedited review.
- Consideration of amendments to the zoning code relating to political signs.
- Consideration of amendments to the zoning code relating to notice requirements.

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