

The Pen is Moving to SharePoint



The monthly employee newsletter, the *Pen*, has been delivering the latest stories and updates to you for the past 50 years. While the format has changed throughout the years from a printed version to an electronic version, the look

and feel of the *Pen* has remained the same. Thanks to your feedback through surveys, word of mouth and emails, we have made some changes recently. We are moving the *Pen* to SharePoint so you can easily get top news, access your go-to features, and share links.

Some of the features include:

- You are now able to search the current issue and previous issues of the *Pen* all at once in one search. You can use the navigation menu bar at the top of every page to search by *Topic* or *Department/Appointing Authority*. Or, you can use the blue Search bar at the very top of every page to type in keyword(s).
- Ask HR has been expanded to include all of the previous year's Ask HR questions and answers on one page.
- There are multiple ways to read the *Pen*. Either click on individual articles from the issue's home page or click the link at the top of the issue's home page and use the arrows above each article to read the *Pen* in full.
- You can now share articles featured in the *Pen* on your department/Appointing Authorities' SharePoint site.
- Our monthly features such as *Employee Spotlights*, *Your Total Rewards*, the *Pen Extra*, and others now have a "View Previous" button at the bottom of each page that allows you to view previous editions of those pages.

Still produced monthly, the new version of the *Pen* will be on a platform that many are familiar with, as SharePoint has been introduced throughout the County.

We invite you to explore this month's [Pen in SharePoint](#) (internal link for employees).

You'll also be able to view the past six months' versions (March through August) of the *Pen*. Be sure to click *Not Following* at the top, so the *Pen* becomes one of the SharePoint sites you follow for easier access.



Other than making sure you follow the *Pen* in SharePoint, no action is needed on your part. We will still send monthly emails to announce when the latest edition of the *Pen* has been published and you can also see reminders in [MyPinellas](#) (internal link for employees), the County's new intranet site in SharePoint.

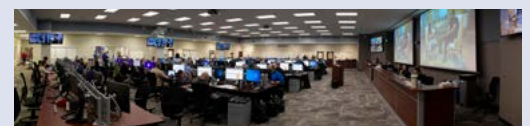
For the best viewing experience, use Microsoft Edge as your browser.

Note to Retirees: For your continued access, we have combined the *Pen* and *Retiree Connection* into a monthly newsletter, *Retiree Pen Connection*, just for retirees. You will receive all the information that you enjoy in the *Pen*, as well as information pertinent to retirees, like what was featured in *Retiree Connection*. Look for the newsletter in your email every month starting in October.



Employees Respond to Hurricane Idalia

In this issue, we will be highlighting through pictures and stories the tremendous response from Pinellas County employees to Hurricane Idalia. *Story begins on [page 6](#).*



FY24 General Pay Increase, Salary Adjustments, and Retention Supplement

The Board of County Commissioners approved the Fiscal Year 2024 budget which includes the following [FY24 changes](#), effective **October 8**, which will appear on your **October 27, 2023 paycheck**:

- Eligible permanent employees will receive a **salary increase of 4.5%** based on their current salary.
- After the 4.5% increase has been applied, employees will be brought to the **minimum rate of their pay grade** (see below) **or receive an additional increase to base pay of \$0.29 per hour**, whichever is greater.
- All employees' base hourly wages will be **at least \$18 per hour**. Effective October 8, 2023, the minimum of the following pay grades shall be as follows:
 - C10 — All positions in this pay grade will move to C13
 - C11 — All positions in this pay grade will move to C13
 - C12 — All positions in this pay grade will move to C13
 - C13 — \$18.00
 - C14 — \$18.31
 - C15 — \$18.62
 - C16 — \$18.93
 - C17 — \$19.24
 - C18 — \$19.50
 - C19 — \$19.87

Use the Calculator

- See your work email for an email from Employee Communications sent on 9/20 and open the FY24 General Increase Calculator Excel sheet attachment or click this SharePoint link: [FY24 General Increase Calculator](#).
- Enter your *hourly pay rate*, *hours worked per week* (exempts to not exceed 40 hours), and *pay grade* to **see your individualized increase calculations** with the FY24 general increase.
- Not sure of your pay rate or pay grade?
 - Log into [OPUS](#), select *PIN Employee Self Service*, select *My Information*, and the Salary tab.
 - Enter the pay grade exactly as shown with letters and numbers (e.g. C22) and press Enter or Tab to see your calculations.

- All other pay grade **minimums will be increased by 2.5%**, the pay range maximums will remain the same, and the midpoint will be adjusted so it is halfway between the new minimum and the unchanged maximum.
- Employees who are continuously employed from July 29, 2023 through January 27, 2024 will be eligible for a **final \$600 (before taxes) retention supplement payout** in February 2024.
- **Maxed Out Employees:** Employees who are at the maximum for their pay grade will receive a single lump sum payment in their October 27 paycheck.

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Start Your Day with MyPinellas

[MyPinellas](#) is filled with useful information. Join the 1,000+ employees who visit the site daily. Here are **easy ways to access the site**:

- **Okta:** Click the MyPinellas icon in Okta.
- **Browser bookmark:** Bookmark MyPinellas by entering the redirect of www.pinellas.gov/MyPinellas.
- **Use the Employee Access link** found at the bottom of every County webpage.
- **Follow MyPinellas** in SharePoint by clicking the Not Following star at the top right.

MyPinellas is **updated every day**. The information is timely and relevant, including dates for events, classes, timesheet deadlines, meetings, and holidays. **Special features include** employee and department spotlights, event and park of the week, adoptable pets, consumer tips, internal job postings, food truck menus, and more.

Access useful links such as department intranet sites, payroll calendar, OPUS and Okta logins, *Pen* and *To Your Health* archives, policies, and much more in easy-to-navigate menus.



Q. What is the last day to use floating holidays and personal days this year?

A. For employees who have not yet used their [floating holidays](#) and [personal days](#) in 2023, the last day to use them is December 16.

Q. How can I sign up to view my W-2 electronically instead of by mail?

A. Pinellas County offers employees the option to opt in to an electronic version instead of a mailed copy of the Form W-2 Wage and Tax Statement (W-2). Your consent to receive an electronic W-2 will be valid for all subsequent tax years unless you decide to change it in OPUS.

To opt in, first log into [OPUS](#). From the menu at the top left

(3 lines), select *PIN Employee Self Service* and *Electronic W-2 Consent*. Read the Electronic Delivery Consent, then click *Update*. Select the *Online* check box for the Delivery Method. Read the confirmation statement and check the box, then click *Apply*.

To view screenshots of the steps listed above, see the [Electronic W-2 Screenshots Guide](#), or watch a [video tutorial](#).

If you opt in for an electronic version and change your mind later, you can easily change your preference. If you prefer a mailed copy, no action is needed. Your W-2 form will be mailed to your home address as listed in OPUS Employee Self Service. Visit [Electronic W-2 Opt In](#) for more information.



Employees' Advisory Council



to continually improve the Pinellas County classified employees' quality of work life

The Pen

Who Would You Like to Represent You?

Annual elections for Employees' Advisory Council (EAC) Representatives are coming soon. EAC Representatives advocate for you and your coworkers to the Personnel Board and the executive level decision-makers.

If you'd like to get involved, consider nominating yourself as an EAC Representative. Or, think about a coworker who would be a great choice and nominate them.

Candidates are required to have been a permanent employee in the classified service for at least one year.

If you are a classified employee working in one of the areas in the table below, fill out the [nomination form](#) to nominate someone. The deadline for nominations is **October 6**.

Each year, half of the Representatives' positions are up for election, so if your area is not listed, you'll have an opportunity to participate next year.

The EAC serves in an advisory capacity to the Unified Personnel Board concerning personnel matters, policies, rules, and regulations affecting employees. The EAC plays a vital role for employees and management at Pinellas County to facilitate working together and discussing issues, solutions, and accomplishments for the benefit of all involved.

Visit the [EAC webpage](#) to learn more. To find out the name of your current EAC Representative, see the [Membership List](#). For more information, contact Lisa Arispe, EAC Chair, at (727) 453-3357 or by [email](#).

EAC Group	Departments/Divisions
BCC Group 1	Maintenance North, Maintenance South, Solid Waste
BCC Group 2	Administrative Services
BCC Group 3 (one-year term)*	Public Works
BCC Group 6	Utilities Customer Service, Utilities Engineering, Office of Management & Budget, County Administration
BCC Group 7 (one-year term)*	Parks & Conservation Resources
BCC Group 8	Airport, Building & Development Review Services, Convention & Visitors Bureau, Contractor Licensing, Economic Development, Communications, Housing and Community Development
Clerk North	Finance Division, Administration, Civil Court Records, North County Branch, Probate Court Records, Recording Services/Official Records, Records Management, Clerk's Customer Information Center, Court and Operational Services
Property Appraiser	All classified employees at the Property Appraiser's Office
Supervisor of Elections	All classified employees at the Supervisor of Elections' Office

*The one-year term is due to the previous Representatives only serving one year due to changes in their job position to a different area within the County.

YOUR TOTAL REWARDS

Health • Wellness • Retirement • Compensation

Jet Dental Clinics Return

Skip the traffic and get a dental cleaning and exam at a worksite near you. Jet Dental will be at the following locations from 7:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.:

- **Downtown Clearwater, October 10**
310 Court Street, Clearwater
- **Parks & Conservation Resources, October 13**
12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo
- **Solid Waste, December 5**
2940 110th Avenue North, St. Petersburg

For more information and to register, visit [Jet Dental](#).

Free Legal & Financial Email Series from ARAG

Our voluntary benefits partner for [legal insurance](#), ARAG, is offering several free email series this fall. Sign up for one of all three topics to receive access to guidebooks, helpful articles, and other valuable information. The topics are: [All of Life's Legal Matters](#), [Estate Planning 101](#), and [Financial Fitness](#). Any employee can sign up for these free emails, regardless of whether you signed up for ARAG benefits.

Florida Woman Care Rejoining Cigna Network Oct. 1

We are pleased to share that Florida Woman Care, a provider group that left Cigna Healthcare's network on July 1, 2023, has reached an agreement with Cigna Healthcare and will be returning to the network effective October 1, 2023. Cigna's team is working to reload these providers to their directory and system to display on October 1. In addition, if you are a patient with Florida Woman Care, you may receive notification from your doctor that they will be in network as of October 1. If you have any questions about whether or not your healthcare provider is in-network, please contact our [Cigna onsite claims/customer service representatives](#), Keith and Shevella, at (727) 464-4555, option 1.

Flu Shots & More Vaccine Clinics Coming in October

For your convenience, Pinellas County is partnering with Publix to offer free onsite vaccination clinics. You can get the following vaccines: Flu, shingles, pneumonia, Hepatitis A and B, and Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis). **Appointments open 7 days before the event.**

- **Airport, October 25**
14700 Terminal Blvd., Clearwater
- **Annex Building, October 17 and 25**
400 S. Ft. Harrison Ave., Clearwater
- **Justice Center, October 24 and 26**
14250 49th Street North, Clearwater
- **Parks & Conservation Resources, October 12**
12520 Ulmerton Road, Largo
- **Public Works, October 18 and 19**
22211 U.S. Highway 19 N., Clearwater
- **Solid Waste, October 11**
3095 114th Ave. N., St. Petersburg
- **STAR Center, October 10**
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

For more information, visit [Flu Shots](#).

Annual Enrollment Info Sessions Coming Soon

Annual Enrollment info sessions for employees will begin on **Monday, October 16**. An email will be going out with more information and links to register.

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2023 Benefits Partners

DENTAL

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNT (FSA)

[TASC](#)
(800) 422-4661

HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNT (HSA)

[HSA Bank](#)
(800) 357-6246

LIFE INSURANCE

[Securian Financial](#)

For questions, call Benefits
(727) 464-3367

MEDICAL/BEHAVIORAL/MENTAL HEALTH

[Cigna](#)
(800) 862-3557

PRESCRIPTION

[Express Scripts](#)
(866) 544-9221

VISION

[EyeMed](#)
(866) 939-3633

VOLUNTARY IDENTITY PROTECTION BENEFIT

[AIP](#)
(800) 789-2720

VOLUNTARY LEGAL ASSISTANCE BENEFIT

[ARAG](#)
(800) 247-4184

VOLUNTARY SUPPLEMENTAL MEDICAL BENEFITS

[Aflac](#)
(800) 433-3036

Take Care of Yourself



In the [September To Your Health newsletter](#), you will find:

- Are You at Risk? Fall Prevention is for Everyone
- Suicide Awareness: In Help There is Hope
- September & October Wellness Activities
- Heart Work
- Can I Get Your Number?
- Group Fitness Class Schedule

Employee Spotlights



Kim Belanger

Position: Executive Assistant 3

Department: Business Technology Services (BTS)

How long with Pinellas County?
I will celebrate 10 years of service this December.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I play an important role in minute taking for the Technology Steering Cooperative and the Security Panel. These two governance committees were created as part of the BTS Interlocal Agreement and utilize the expertise and knowledge of the IT professionals across Pinellas County through the various agencies.

Best part of job: Working with my fellow BTS co-workers. Recently, I was able to learn and create our BTS SharePoint Site. This is the creative and fun side of the job, including wordsmithing the content and selection of the graphics. Microsoft Teams has improved the methods of communicating with the various BTS teams and sharing information in a seamless fashion.

Most challenging part of the job: Calendaring — finding time on busy calendars is both challenging and satisfying. Coordinating with the other executive assistants across the County when we book our BTS board meetings with our Constitutional Officers and Commissioners is a pleasure. I've compared this task at times to playing three-dimensional chess.

Most memorable moment? More than one to mention, but I really love it when employees come to me for information; when I am able to guide them to the proper resources to find information on various programs, meetings, or services. Being the go-to person is like being the "Alexa" of BTS!

What do you do in your free time? Anything non-IT related, like raised-bed vegetable gardening and crossword puzzles. In addition, I'm a big proponent of pet adoption, and I have three greyhound ex-racers. One traveled all the way from Ireland to find her forever home in St. Petersburg. They are truly the 45-mile-an-hour couch potatoes.



John McIntyre

Position: Senior Application Analyst

Department: Business Technology Services (BTS)

How long with Pinellas County?
2.5 years.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer:

Improving our co-workers current workplace experience by analyzing and subsequently providing elegant, simple and sustainable options to access the reliable information they need to be successful in their job.

Best part of job: Meeting with colleagues from other Appointing Authorities and learning about their work and job challenges.

Most challenging part of the job: Keeping current with the constant changes from Microsoft.

Most memorable moment? Developing the new [MyPinellas](#) (internal link for employees) intranet with help from HR, BTS and the Appointing Authorities.

What do you do in your free time? Enjoy the quiet time with my bride of 37 years, Susan, taking in baseball games, working on model train layouts, but most especially, playing with my grandbabies.



Shannon Tufts

Position: Senior Security Analyst

Department: Business Technology Services (BTS), Information Security

How long with Pinellas County?
1 year.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer:

As a Senior Security Analyst, my role involves assessing, improving, and safeguarding digital assets, while monitoring and addressing security threats to ensure data and systems remain secure.

Best part of job: The most enjoyable aspect of my role is collaborating with teams of highly talented professionals while facing the ongoing challenge of addressing evolving cyber threats, helping protect valuable data and ensuring that our security posture remains strong.

Most challenging part of the job: The most challenging part of my job as a Senior Security Analyst is staying updated with the ever-changing landscape of cybersecurity threats and developing effective strategies and tactics to defend against them.

Most memorable moment? One of my most memorable moments was participating with the BTS Information Security team to effectively respond to an intricate cyberattack, averting a potentially disastrous outcome. It was a testament to our team's expertise, leadership, and dedication to protecting County systems and data.

What do you do in your free time? In my free time, I enjoy staying informed about the latest cybersecurity trends and techniques to continually improve my skills. I also like to relax by reading books, staying active with outdoor activities, and spending quality time with friends and family.



Response to Hurricane Idalia

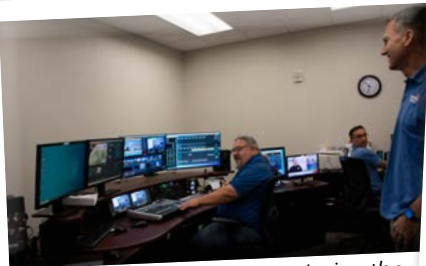


Employees work at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) during the storm

Response By the Numbers

- The County Information Center (CIC) answered 4,679 calls and 1,988 chats.
- At the peak of shelter usage, Pinellas County staff, Pinellas County Schools' staff, and Florida Department of Health in Pinellas County staff provided sheltering to 1,689 general population residents, 187 special needs residents, 43 dogs and 29 cats.
- Pinellas County Regional 9-1-1 answered 800+ calls from Tuesday, August 29 at 7:00 p.m. through Wednesday, August 30 at 5:00 p.m.

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Employees work at the EOC during the storm



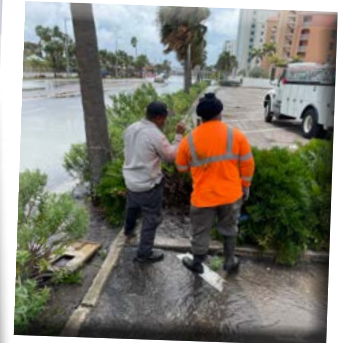
Emergency Management Director Cathie Perkins gives a briefing to the media



Employees work at the EOC during the storm



Utilities employees Raymond Wells (left) and Kedrick Poole (right) inspect a sewer line in Largo ahead of the storm



Utilities employees Donzel Redding and Rondell Thomas fix a backflow leak on Treasure Island to ensure customers in the area continued to receive water



Water Conservation Supervisor Frank Roberson (left) with County Administrator Barry Burton (right) at New Heights Elementary School shelter



Utilities employees at New Heights Elementary School shelter



Ambulance Billing Compliance Officer Cassandra Helm works at the County Information Center (CIC) during the storm



A citizen wrote in to thank lifeguard Charlie McLaughlin, who won Top Lifeguard of the season, for his help in filling sand bags for her before the storm



Facilities Employees Spend Weekend Helping Co-workers Clean Up

Department of Administrative Services found out right after Hurricane Idalia that a couple of our employees' homes were impacted by the storm. Once we found out that one of our employees needed help, our team members jumped into action. **Frank Terry**, Facility Manager for DET/SEC, contacted his team and asked if anyone would be available to come to the employees' homes to help out on Saturday and Sunday after the storm. We were overwhelmed with the response for help! With this coordination, we spent a few hours each day helping out each employee collect items that could be saved and cleaning up debris left from the flood.

The employees affected were extremely grateful and the work really helped them in their time of need. As a department, we are all here for one another and it makes us so happy to know how many of the team members are willing to come help when one of us needs it. Special thank you to: **Bill Busick, Lance Byrne, Jason Dearsman, John Dunlap, Lilly Flores, Dave Johnson, Quantavious Jones, Kelly Meek, Sergio Negron-Falcon, Randy Rose, Diana Sweeney, Frank Terry & Family, Bob Vandemortal, Ryan Varney, and John Way.**

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From left to right: Sergio Negron-Falcon, Joanne Paterson, Frank Terry, Bill Busick, Lance Byrne, Randy Rose, Kelly Meek, Jason Dearsman, and Dave Johnson



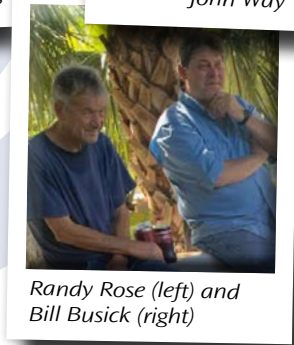
From left to right: Melissa Wymore, Kelly Meek, Tara Terry, Frank Terry, Lilly Flores, Ryan Varney, Bob Vandemortal, John Way, Quantavious Jones, Shamine Daniels, and Christy Carpenter



Lilly Flores



John Way



Randy Rose (left) and Bill Busick (right)

Make the Biometric Screening Faster & Easier!

Learn tips to simplify the process and ensure proper completion of both the biometric screening and the health assessment by watching the [2023 Biometric Screening & Health Assessment Process Information Session video](#). Tips and tricks are discussed at the beginning (21 minutes), followed by a step-by-step tutorial, if desired (23 minutes).

The deadline for the [Biometric Screening & Health Assessment](#) is **November 30**. View the [Completion Help Guide](#) for help with checking your completions or call Benefits at (727) 464-3367, option 1 for assistance.



Upcoming Blood Drives



Did you know that one blood donation can save up to three lives? You can donate whole blood, red blood cells, platelets or plasma. Please consider donating! Walk-ins are welcome or [schedule an appointment](#).

- **Clearwater Courthouse**
315 Court Street (west parking lot)
October 17, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- **Public Works**
22211 U.S. Highway 19 N., Clearwater (in front of the Survey building)
October 26, 12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **STAR Center**
7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo
October 24, 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Tax Collector's Office Donates Over 2,000 Pairs of Socks to Children in Need

Tax Collector, Charles W. Thomas, and members of his team delivered 2,047 pairs of socks to the local non-profit, [Clothes to Kids](#), in Clearwater on August 17.

Clothes to Kids serves Pinellas and Hillsborough counties and its mission is to provide new and gently used clothing to low-income or in-crisis school-age children, free of charge. They have provided over 300,000 clothing items to children in 2022 alone.

Clothes to Kids is the Tax Collector's employee-selected charity of the year. Every year, employees are surveyed to determine what charitable cause they would like to support with internal fundraising efforts. This year, in addition to the Thread of Hope fundraising initiative which invites employees to break the dress code by donating to the cause, each office held a "Sock it to Us" sock drive for Clothes to Kids.

Throughout June and July, both employees and customers were invited to donate new girls' and ladies' socks for Clothes to Kids. Each child who qualifies for the Clothes to Kids program receives five outfits, including new socks and underwear, for school twice a year. Tax Collector

offices' donations will help clothe 409 Pinellas County students.

"It is amazing to see all the different ways our organization can give back to our community," Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas said, "Clothes to Kids does a wonderful job building the confidence of Pinellas County students and I am honored that our donations will help them with that mission."

For updates and important info from the Tax Collector's Office, find them on social media (Facebook, Instagram, and X) @PinellasTC, or visit www.pinellastaxcollector.gov.



Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas (center-right) and team presenting sock donations to Megan DeBlasi, Director of Development for Clothes to Kids (center)

The Pen

Tax Collector Offices Help Local University Raise Funds for Students

The Tax Collector offices teamed up with the [University of South Florida](#) (USF)'s Alumni Association this September to raise funds for educational scholarships and programs.

USF was founded in 1956 and, despite being a young university, is now one of the fastest-rising universities in the United States. With campuses in Tampa, St. Petersburg, and Sarasota-Manatee, it serves over 50,000 students and offers more than 200 undergraduate majors, minors, and concentrations. USF's Alumni Association has awarded over \$6 million in scholarships since its inception.

Tax Collector employees will sport USF Bulls gear and have some extra green and gold in their offices to promote the USF specialty license plate. Customers who visit a Tax Collector's office during September and switch to the USF specialty plate will receive a \$25 rebate voucher from USF. When customers choose to "Ride with Bull Pride", proceeds

from the specialty plate go back to the USF Alumni Association to be used for student scholarships and programs.



"I am excited that we can give back to an organization that has enriched our county, state, and beyond in so many ways," Tax Collector Charles W. Thomas said, "A solid educational foundation is important for our community now and for future generations. I know we have some USF Bulls in our offices who cannot wait to represent. Go, Bulls!"

Find more info about the Tax Collector's Office at www.pinellastaxcollector.gov or on their Facebook, Instagram, and X pages, @PinellasTC.

Employee Spotlight



Frank Matzelle

Position: Tax Technician 1

Department: Tax Collector's Office, North County Branch

How long with Pinellas County?
5 years.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer: I

administer road tests and issue driver's licenses. After the test, I review the exam with the customer, issue a driver's license, or book another appointment, if needed.

Best part of job: Seeing the excitement when they pass

their road test and receive their driver's license.

Most challenging part of the job: Doing a medical road test and having to suspend someone's driver's license. They don't realize how their driving skills have diminished due to their condition and they feel like we are taking away their independence.

Most memorable moment? Dressing up as Santa and doing road tests.

What do you do in your free time? Help with our Homeless Ministry we have at church. We take in donations of clothing and nonperishable foods and distribute them to those in need.

Celebrating National Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15 by celebrating the histories, cultures, and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central and South America.



The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to cover a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

The day of September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is October 12, falls within this 30-day period.

There are many [local celebrations](#) during the month-long Hispanic Heritage Month.

The Pen

Administrative Services Announces New County Safety Manager

The recruitment process for the vacant County Safety Manager saw 33 qualified applicants. Four were scheduled for face-to-face interviews. After a competitive interview process, the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) is proud to announce the new County Safety Manager is **Thomas Boyd**.



Tom leaves Public Works as a Safety Specialist to join the DAS team in October. Some of Tom’s notable accomplishments while with Public Works include: DOT/CDL compliance (currently at 100%), a decrease in vehicle accident rates, and CPR/AED training, resulting in an additional 180 personnel trained in life-saving knowledge.

“My time at Public Works has been filled with lots of successes. I feel good knowing that the safety culture has improved in Public Works due to the implementation of safety training, support from Public Works’ supervision and a new understanding that safety is here to help”.

DAS is excited as we move forward with the next chapter in employee safety at Pinellas County.

Employee Spotlight



Blake Patton

Position: Residential Appraiser

Department: Property Appraiser’s Office

How long with Pinellas County? 1.5 years.

Describe job in 25 words or fewer:

I perform mass appraisal valuation where I am responsible for reviewing sales, parcel, and permit data for single family residences in Pinellas County.

Best part of job: The team that I work with and the amazing directors that help make the office run. I wouldn’t be where I am today or learned as much if it were not for them. I love this job and the opportunities and knowledge it has provided me in my short time at Pinellas County so far.

Most challenging part of the job: I love what I do, and my job, and I don’t find any of it difficult or challenging. There are times where there can be obstacles, but I have plenty of resources and people to help me along the way.

Most memorable moment? The recent International Association of Assessing Officers conference in St. Pete for the Florida chapter. It was a great experience to meet other people from different counties and learn about new trends and how other offices operate. Also, the recent scalloping trip was an absolute blast, and it was great to spend time with coworkers outside of the office and enjoy a beautiful day out on the water.

What do you do in your free time? I like to watch my favorite movies or television shows, spend quality time with my fiancé and little puppy, and I love to detail cars.

Watch for Scams After Natural Disasters



Scammers often use a natural disaster as an opportunity to capitalize on people’s misfortune. In the wake of the recent fires in Hawaii and Hurricane Idalia that caused damage to parts of Florida, Pinellas County Consumer Protection warns consumers to beware of scams that target people recovering and rebuilding after such disasters.

Here are some tips to help you avoid falling victim to recovery scams:

- Unlicensed contractors target storm damaged areas, offering quick repairs, clean-up and debris removal. Unlicensed contractors often don’t have the skills to do the job correctly, over charge you, or may even take your money and not do the work they promised. Before hiring a contractor, be sure to check them out. A quick visit to [Pinellas County Construction Licensing Board’s](#) website will tell you which contractors are licensed and insured.

- Scammers not only pretend to be legitimate contractors, but after a disaster, will impersonate government officials, insurance adjusters, utility workers and others to steal personal information and money from storm victims.
- If you’re seeking assistance from FEMA, know that FEMA does not charge application fees. If someone asks you to pay for them to help you qualify for FEMA funds, it’s a scam. Visit [FEMA’s](#) website for more information and alerts.
- How you’re asked to make payment can be a telltale sign it’s a scam. Scammers want money quickly; therefore, they’ll insist that you pay by wire transfer, gift cards, payment app, or cryptocurrency. These forms of payment are the same as sending cash, as cash is another preferred payment method for scammers.

For more information on scams, to file a complaint, or check the complaint history of a business, call Pinellas County Consumer Protection at (727) 464-6200 or visit [Consumer Protection](#).

The Pen

Support the Annual Employee Bike Drive Before Nov. 1



The committee is preparing for the 37th Annual Employee Bike Drive! Last year, nearly \$10,000 was raised and we were able to donate bicycles and helmets to many children of families in need. We are collecting donations now through Wednesday, **November 1**.

If you’d like to be more involved, contact your department’s Bike Drive Coordinator (see the list at the right). If you are interested in becoming a Bike Drive Coordinator for your department, please contact Marisa Chartier at mcchartier@pinellas.gov.

- Animal Services – Lindsey Martin
- Building Design & Construction – Derek Weaver
- BDRS – Nikki Vasquez
- BTS – Lynda Morrill & Becky Gonzalez
- Clerk's Office – Leena Delli Paoli
- Communications – Arellys Escalera
- County Admin – Della Klug
- County Attorney – Allyson Matos
- County Commissioners – Nikki Coats
- DAS Budget & Analytic Services – Kahleal Carpenter
- Detention – Lance Byrne
- Economic Development – Heather Fawley
- Emergency Management – Mary Burrell
- Facilities/Real Property Division – Kit Lindsay
- Facility Ops – Lisa Dieffenthaler
- Fleet – Angela Roberson
- Housing & Community Development – Cynthia Watkins
- Human Resources – Breanne O’Leary
- Office of Human Rights – Carol Strickland
- OMB – Veronica Ettel & Toni Merrill
- Parks & Conservation Resources – Lisa Molina
- Public Works – Casey Morse
- Purchasing & Risk Management – Rocky Luoma
- SES – Dawn Shontz
- Survey & Mapping – David Farley
- Urban Forestry – Carolyn Cheatham Rhodes
- Utilities – David Cox
- Utilities Logan Station – Nicole Haverberg
- Utilities 142nd Ave – Valerie Andreichuk

Your Learning Opportunities

Learn Today. Be Ready for Tomorrow.

Pinellas County supports a learning culture for all employees. For more information, visit [Organizational & Talent Development](#) or call the team at 464-3367, option 2.

The Golden Meter Award



A new recognition program has started in Utilities' Water Conservation Division. The Golden Meter Award was the idea of **Shane McGahan**, a Water Conservation Outreach and Compliance Specialist.

The award has been a great success and we asked Shane to share with us a bit more about the program:

What is the Golden Meter Award?

The Golden Meter Award is earned when you go above and beyond in your job responsibilities, whether it is helping others with a specific task or a customer in the field. The program went into effect April of this year. Hard work does not go unnoticed!

How did the Golden Meter come about?

The idea actually came to me while taking *Develops Talent*, one of Organizational & Talent Development's classes. In the class, participants learn about the importance of employee recognition and discuss different programs that exist within the County. These programs go from formal application-based processes to informal programs passing recognition amongst team members.

I truly believe since I brought the idea back from class it catapulted me to earn the award first, along with always offering to help anyone in the department who needs it. After all, a rising tide lifts all boats!

Angel Warf, another recipient of the award, noticed and called in a huge water leak at a customer's house. Our team was able to get out there super quick and turn the water off. The customer was out of town and was unaware of the leak. Our team potentially saved that customer a lot of money!

Why a Golden Meter, what is the significance?

We chose a golden meter because we wanted the award to symbolize something everyone in the Utilities Department deals with. Essentially, everyone's job in our building has something to do with water. The meter is passed from co-worker to co-worker and we get to proudly display a framed certificate signed by our manager.

How does this impact the employees of your department?

It impacts us greatly. Everyone loves to win, right!? It gives you the feeling of gratitude. There isn't a single

person in our department who minds going the extra mile, helping a teammate out, or even volunteering to perform duties that aren't necessarily assigned to them.

How many individuals have been honored with the Golden Meter Award?

So far, 4 people have earned the award.

Below are comments gathered from the recent recipients of the Golden Meter Award:

- "It means we have a work environment that builds trust and comradery amongst co-workers." - **Alex Cook, Meter Reader I**
- "It means you are the MVP; it is a bestowed honor to be number 1!" - **Willie Talbert, Meter Reader I**
- "It's an exciting acknowledgment that makes you feel appreciated. Co-workers recognize the hard work you put in; it's a memory that you will treasure forever." - **Angel Warf, Water Conservation Compliance Officer**

The last quote we gathered is from Shane's direct supervisor:

- "The recipient of the award sees that we value them and that their contributions contribute to the success of their team and the organization as a whole." - **Frank Roberson, Water Conservation Supervisor**

What can you share with other departments looking to implement a similar program?

Go for it! Everyone likes to be acknowledged for their hard work. Sometimes even a simple "good job" goes a long way. In my opinion, employee recognition should be a priority. Give it a chance, it will give you results.

Are you ready to get inspired?

Come and join us for *Develops Talent* being offered on October 4. In this class we discuss strategies for creating pools of people ready and willing to take on new challenges and step-up when needed. Below are the course objectives. Be sure to [register](#) (internal link for employees) today!

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the purpose of talent development and engagement.
- Explore the talent acquisition process.
- Recognize and establish opportunities for talent growth.
- Introduce a Learning Culture.

The Organizational & Talent Development team has a variety of learning opportunities for you to explore. Start by searching our [Learning Catalog](#) (internal link for employees). We hope to see you in class soon!

Welcome Aboard

New employees listed are for August 2023.

Board of County Commissioners

Airport

Kauany Costa Penna Landside Operations Agent
 Adriana Da Costa Penna Crew Chief 2

Animal Services

Taylor Montejo Animal Services Representative
 Nicholas Moran Animal Care Assistant

Building & Development Review Services

David Spencer Mechanical Inspector 2

Economic Development

Camulus Gallo Business Assistant Specialist 1

Housing & Community Development

Stephanie Rayman Community Development Specialist 4
 Matthew Rider Community Development Specialist 2

Human Services

Kyleigh Hazelwood Management Intern
 James Foster Veterans Services Officer 2
 Nancy Marquez Administrative Support Specialist 1

Parks & Conservation Resources

Derek Feiler Craftworker 1
 Sean Fitzgibbon Park Ranger 1

Public Works

Reginald Grigley Tree Trimmer 1
 Walter Jackson Spray Technician 1
 Philip McCrary Crew Chief 1

Safety & Emergency Services

Susan Pierce Medical Billing Specialist 2

Utilities

Patricia Cortez Facilities Manager 3
 Justin Bowes Trainee Under-Fill B
 Joel Tucker Meter Reader 1
 Taquisha Brown Meter Reader 1
 Daniel Searles Meter Reader 1
 Logan Fuseek Trainee Under-Fill A
 Kedrick Poole Trainee Under-Fill A
 Irind Muskaj Systems Support Analyst
 Marquesha Gulley Customer Services Specialist
 Terrence Thomas Customer Services Specialist
 Samuel Lorenzen Utilities Maintenance Worker

Business Technology Services

Bradley Foltz Endpoint Analyst
 Mitchell Jones Operations Center Specialist 1
 Karlee Kategianes Management Intern
 Jennifer Ricottilli Program Coordinator BTS OTI
 Thomas Van Nostrand System Analyst

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Tonya Deal Finance Accountant 1
 Kayla Hall Customer Information Center Specialist 1
 Stephen Kellams Records Specialist 1
 Janee Scarle Customer Information Center Specialist 1
 Justin Verron Inspector General 2
 Christine Walker Records Specialist 1

County Attorney

Tina Hoover Paralegal

Property Appraiser's Office

Summer Sheffield Information Technology Analyst CV

Supervisor of Elections

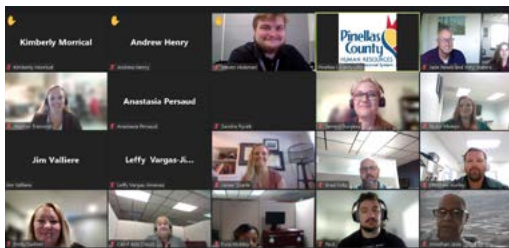
Gabriel Cintron Administrative Support Specialist 1
 John King Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Theresa Roxburgh Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Brad Sbardella Administrative Support Specialist 1
 Mary Scott Administrative Support Specialist 1

Tax Collector

Jeffrey Adkins Tax Technician 1
 Brian Barry Tax Technician 1
 Shylina Campbell Tax Technician 1
 Carley Dolan Tax Technician 1
 Chauncey Ivey Tax Technician 1
 Kimberly Morrill Tax Technician 1
 Anastasia Persaud Tax Technician 1
 Robert Petzinger Tax Technician 1
 Colby Rachal Tax Technician 1
 Courtney Shea Tax Technician 1
 Leffy Vargas-Jimenez Tax Technician 1

The Pen

August
 14 New
 Employee
 Orientation
 via Zoom



August
 28 New
 Employee
 Orientation
 via Zoom



Promotions

Promotions listed are for August 2023.

Board of County Commissioners

Airport

David Brown Landside Operations Agent
 James Fletcher Airport Security Coordinator
 Albert McCue Landside Operations Agent

Building & Development Review Services

Jeff Reed Plumbing Inspector 3

Human Services

Heather Williams Human Services Case Manager 1

Parks & Conservation Resources

William Sturm Craftworker 1

Public Works

Adam Crittenden Engineering Specialist 2

Safety & Emergency Services

Mark Eggers Department Administrative Manager
 Kalia Mills Medical Billing Supervisor

Utilities

Alex Flake Electrical/Mechanical Technician 2
 Misael Munoz Alers Section Manager 3
 Dwight Terry Water Quality Technician 1
 Raymond Wells Utilities Maintenance Specialist 3

Clerk of the Circuit Court

Christian Eres Records Specialist, Sr.

Human Resources

Ashley Jackson Executive Assistant 3

Property Appraiser

Anthony Siragusa Asst. Dir. of Commercial Appraisals

Supervisor of Elections

Debra Prior Elections Departmental Supervisor

The Pen

THE RECORD KEEPER



Sending Boxes for Storage at the Records Center

When you enter your box details into the Gimmal Records Management System (Gimmal), don't forget these important steps:

- Retention Code – Use only one retention code per box.
- Easy to Lift – Boxes weigh 25 lbs. or less.
- Safe – Hanging files have been removed, and the box itself is not damaged.
- Barcode (box) Number Assigned – The system-generated barcode number should be written on the outside, short end of the box.
- Request Pick-up – After the box details are entered and saved in Gimmal, you must complete the Request Pickup steps.
- Send Completed Boxes to the Records Center – Boxes should be sent to Records Management via interoffice mail.

For more information, please contact Records Management at (727) 464-5555.

Food Trucks on Wednesdays



Connect with your co-workers during Food Truck Wednesdays at three County locations.

You can order at the truck, or pre-order up to 3 days ahead, pay and select a pick-up time using each location's unique link. The cuisine rotates each week for variety. You can also sign up for email reminders of which truck is coming each week using the links below.

Clearwater Campus

Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 400 South Fort Harrison Avenue

In front of the Annex building. View the [Clearwater Campus Food Truck Schedule](#) and pre-order if desired.

Criminal Justice Center

Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
 14250 49th Street North, Clearwater

Near the main entrance. View the [Criminal Justice Center Food Truck Schedule](#) and pre-order if desired.

STAR Center / Raytheon

Wednesdays 10:30 - 1:30 p.m.
 7887 Bryan Dairy Road, Largo

West parking lot near Raytheon main entrance. View the [STAR Center/Raytheon Food Truck Schedule](#) and pre-order if desired.

Service Anniversaries

Service anniversaries listed are for August 2023.

30 YEARS



Gene Crosson
Building &
Development Review
Services



Allan Miller
Utilities

25 YEARS



Gene Fields
Human Resources



Jason Stuck
Public Works

20 YEARS



Courtney Degros
Utilities



Wesley Merritt
Public Works



Pamela Reddy
Clerk of the Circuit
Court

Unavailable for Photo

35 Years

Donald McDonald
Public Works

20 Years

Ron Harders
Public Works

25 Years

Christine Short
Clerk of the Circuit
Court

Tanya Kurtin
Housing & Community
Development

Donna Spurling
Building & Development
Review Services

3 TO 15 YEARS

10 Years

Christine Alvarez..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Lauren Botbyl Clerk of the Circuit Court
Lorry Brutcher..... Tax Collector's Office
Charles Duff.....Solid Waste
Gregory Duque Public Works
James FletcherAirport
Adeliah Jackson Clerk of the Circuit Court
Willie Roundtree.....Administrative Services

5 Years

Drew Boylson..... Utilities
Anthony Caropolo Business Technology Services
Monica Drake.....Parks & Conservation Resources
Stephen Farrell Utilities
Beau Gordon..... Property Appraiser's Office
Jemera Hollis..... Clerk of the Circuit Court
Robert Johnson..... Public Works
Adis Kreso Utilities
Thomas Scofield Housing & Community Development
Felicia Seferi Utilities
Jennifer Shannon Public Works
Karen Yatchum..... Human Services

3 Years

Chanmolina Black..... Safety & Emergency Services
David Blum Building & Development Review Services
David Deck Public Works
Larry Dickie.....Administrative Services
Pasquale DiDiana.....Administrative Services
William Hamann Property Appraiser's Office
Natalie Ingham.....Human Resources
Kevin Knutson.....County Administration
Drew McLean Public Works
Timothy Moore.....Utilities
Stephanie Muskus.....Administrative Services
Terrance PaulUtilities
Karen Peek Safety & Emergency Services
Michael Presti.....Administrative Services
Sierra Sherako..... Public Works
Evangelos ThomathakisParks & Conservation Resources
Anna YuParks & Conservation Resources

Retirements

Retirements listed are for August 2023.

Over 35 Years



Scott Coulter
Preserve Supervisor,
Parks & Conservation
Resources

Over 23 Years



Elizabeth Kraemer
Public Information Specialist,
Communications

Retirees Unavailable for Photo

Over 32 Years

John Lemonias
Engineering Specialist Supervisor,
Public Works

Over 19 Years

Kenneth Dailey
Computer Systems Specialist,
Property Appraiser's Office

REPCO News

The next REPCO lunch meeting will be on October 9, 2023 at Quaker Steak & Lube located at 10400 49th Street North in Clearwater. The meeting begins at noon; please arrive early to order your meal prior to the start of the meeting. Representatives from Pinellas County Employee Benefits and Aetna will join us and provide information on retiree health insurance. If you have any questions, contact Rudy Garcia at rdgarcia@verizon.net or (813) 855-3466.

Utilities Department Saves Money on Training

Utilities Maintenance employee, **Bernie Maloney**, who is a Florida Water & Pollution Control Operators Association instructor, assisted by his co-workers, **John Bacon** and **Josh Wyles**, trained three new Pinellas County employees for the backflow testing license, which is required for backflow testers. Additionally, recertification training and exams were provided to 26 employees.

The training was previously held offsite. Onsite licensing and recertification training and testing provided cost savings and efficiency to the County.



Bernie Maloney provides training to Utilities employees



Employee and family news including kudos, weddings, births, graduations, memorials, and classified ads. Send your news to employee.communications@pinellas.gov or call (727) 464-3367.

Gone but not Forgotten

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



Bruce Buzzell, 83, of Dunedin, passed away on August 8, 2023. Buzzell retired in 2004 as an Engineering Specialist with Public Works after over 6 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View his obituary.](#)

Kerry Clifford, 85, of Palm Harbor, passed away on August 29, 2023. Clifford retired in 2000 from Fleet Management after over 38 years of service with Pinellas County Government. [View his obituary.](#)



Gloria Gilghrest, 78, of Dunnellon, passed away on August 17, 2023. Gilghrest retired in 2007 as a Senior Real Estate Specialist with Administrative Services after over 28 years of service with Pinellas County Government. No obituary was found.

Doris Slaton, 91, of New Port Richey, passed away on August 29, 2023. Slaton retired from Pinellas County Government in 1993. No obituary was found.