



THE MAILBOAT



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The Town of Malabar got its 1st official Post Office and name on December 24, 1883 when R.A. Ward was named Postmaster by President Chester A. Arthur. Two times a week, the boat that travelled down the intracoastal waterway from Jacksonville, would deliver the mail to the palmetto shack post office along the river bank at Malabar. The mail was dumped on the counter for the population of 25 to shuffle through. With the coming of the railroad, in 1893, the mail boat was no longer needed.

News from the Mayor

by Patrick T. Reilly

I attended the 11th annual Brevard County Mayor's Breakfast last week but it's more like a Mayor's Roast. Each of the 16 mayors have 5 minutes to give their accomplishments and happenings of the Town or City. The major topics that I brought up were finishing the Comprehensive Plan Update for the State of Florida, SR514 Malabar Rd widening project with the FDOT proposed roundabouts at Corey and at Weber Roads, the accomplishments of the Trail and Greenway's Committee this past year, and creating a Resolution that would make the Town of Malabar a Florida Sandhill Crane Sanctuary and also making it the Town's official bird.

The Malabar Trails and Greenway's Committee have been very active. The Town of Malabar was selected as a Florida Trail Town! This will be a big boost to Malabar and make us a recognized tourist destination for outdoor recreational activities. I would like to thank Drew Thompson and the rest of the committee for their efforts in making this happen. Malabar has over 20 miles of trails that can be used for hiking, biking and horseback riding. Doug Hoyt our Town Administrator retired this past November and Matt Stinnett has taken over that role for the Town.

Inside this issue:

- Malabar becomes Florida Trail Town
- Upgrades to Major Equipment
- Hurricane Awareness Info

Sandhill Crane Becomes Official Town Bird

We've all seen these beautiful birds in our Town. The Sandhill Cranes populate Malabar year-round and have become an integral part of our community. These birds have lived in Florida much longer than we have. A fossil of one dating back 2.5 million years was found in Macasphalt Shell Pit in Florida. These birds are known for their loud rolling call. Their call is a product of their anatomy, as they have very long windpipes which coil in their sternums to develop the low-pitched harmony. The Cranes are also known for their intricate and beautiful mating dances. Mating Cranes will stretch their wings, pump their heads, bow, and leap into the air to attract a mate. The Cranes mate for life, which can be up to twenty years. Juvenile Cranes stay with their parent for nine to ten months before venturing out on their own. For a bird with such a deep history in our area, the Cranes have had some rough times in Malabar. Within two weeks between April and May, there were two incidents of Sandhill Cranes being struck by motor vehicles along Malabar Road. The first incident happened on April 25th in front of the Malabar Fire Rescue Department. Two adult Cranes were struck by a driver who did not stop. The driver behind that car, Charles



(Continued on pg 7)

Malabar's New Equipment

Over the last few years, your Town has been steadily replacing and improving the equipment in our various departments. In June of 2017, The Malabar Fire Rescue Department was approved to replace their 21-year-old fire engine. The truck had seen its better days, with a bent frame, and a pump that could barely pass an inspection. The Town Council voted 5-0 on June 19th, 2017 to approve



the purchase of the new Engine 99, a Pierce truck. One year later, the truck was put into service! On June 6th, 2018, the truck was given its

ceremonial "Wet Down" and was commissioned for service.

Malabar has also recently purchased a new slope mower. The purchase of the John Deere tractor was approved on June 5th, 2017. This machine is used to



clean the slopes of our Town's drainage ditches. The John Deere tractor can also support several other attachments. One of those attachments is the Alamo Boom Ditcher. This attachment is like a snow blower for ditches. It scoops the dirt from the bottom of the ditch and ejects it through a chute at the top. This piece of equipment has been used to great effect on many of our Town's roads, such as Elaine Ln., Duncil Ln. and Kelly Ln.

Another new piece of equipment is the Town's new Gradall XL4300 excavator. The purchase of this machine was approved by the Town Council on July



16th, 2018, and it was delivered that September. This large piece of equipment is used to clean the Town's deep ditches, as well as improve and

add additional ditches throughout the Town. When cleaning out existing ditches, this machine lowers its bucket into the ditch, and scrapes out anything that would obstruct the flow of water. Where ever you see this machine around Town, a dump truck is never far. This machine takes such large scoops out of the ditches, it is almost always accompanied by a dump truck to take away the ditch waste. If you see this machine, please drive carefully. It is very bulky and slow moving, so be aware of the machine itself and other drivers that may try to pass it.

Also added recently to the Town is the new Public Works building. This new building has four garage doors, and stores much of the Town's heavy equipment. Both of Malabar's dump trucks, the Caterpillar

Road Grader, the old Gradall, as well as several of the Town's tractors. This new building helps keep these expensive



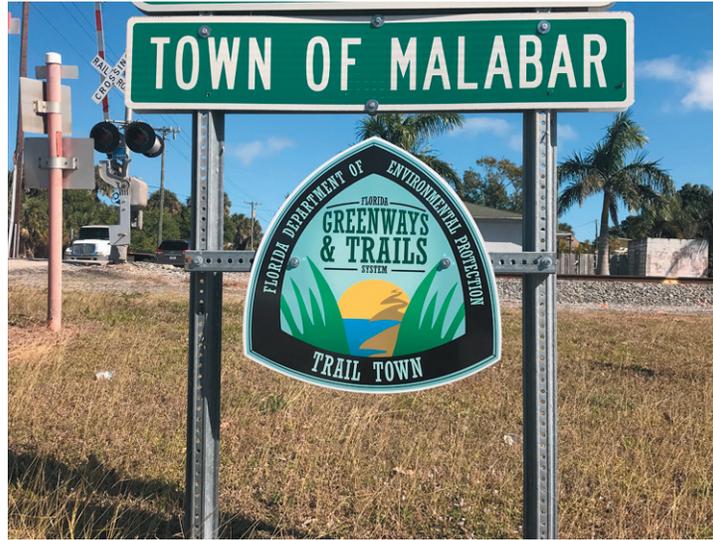
pieces of equipment shielded from the harsh Florida weather, such as the sun and rain. Hopefully the addition of this new building will extend the life of our Town equipment.

Malabar Becomes a Florida Trail Town

Our Trails and Greenways Committee, headed by Chairman Drew Thompson and Vice Chair Murray Hann, is proud to announce that Malabar is now officially a Florida Trail Town. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection describe a Trail Town as “A vibrant destination where people come together. It is a place where trail users can venture off a hiking, biking, equestrian or paddling trail to enjoy the services and unique heritage of the community, benefiting the town economically and socially.”

Malabar was designated due to its vigorous efforts to establish walking and

bicycling trails through its conservation areas. Our small town is made up of 33% conservation land, much of which have active biking, hiking, and horseback trails! The Trails and Greenways Committee has worked tirelessly to connect all the trails in our town.



Maps of the trails can be found online at www.malabartrails.org. The main trailhead for the Malabar Trail System is located at 1400 Marie Street. The trailhead has a newly built ADA compliant restroom, and access to the paved Al Tuttle Trail.

From the Desk of the Fire Chief

Mike Foley, Fire Chief

Malabar Fire Department Giving Back

This March, the Malabar Fire Rescue Department teamed up with the Palm Bay Fire Department and Meals on Wheels to provide meals to elderly citizens in our area. From Monday March 18th to Friday the 22nd, our brave Firefighters traveled all over the South Brevard area to distribute daily meals to seniors.

Meals on Wheels is a nationwide program that helps ensure at risk seniors are provided with a daily meal. Nationally, fifty-nine percent (59%) of seniors receiving care from Meals on Wheels is over seventy-five (75) years old, thirty-five percent (35%) are at or below the poverty line, fifteen percent (15%) are veterans, and forty-six percent (46%) self-report fair or poor health.

Our Fire Department helped deliver meals for many seniors in South Brevard. Malabar hopes to become a regular fixture in these people's lives by delivering meals.



A Letter from Your Parks and Recreation Board

The Malabar Parks & Recreation Board is in the process of putting together a wish list and would like to invite interested people to participate in this endeavor. Our small-town budget does not provide for many of the amenities that would enhance the enjoyment of our parks. Donations of items such as park benches, gazebos, picnic tables, boardwalks, small wooden bridges, trees, pavilions, landscaping and storage sheds have been discussed. If anyone has any donations, thoughts, or creative ideas/suggestions, our Town meetings take place on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at 6PM. Citizens may also contact the Parks and Recreation Department via phone or email. Donors may be corporations, organizations and individuals honoring achievements or memorializing loved ones.

The Trails and Greenway Committee volunteers designed and built the observation deck and shelter in the Cameron Preserve. The committee also worked with other volunteers to clear branches that blocked trails and built kiosks and trail markers. The Parks & Recreation Board members, along with family and neighbors, have put together work parties to sand down rust on the playground

equipment in need of maintenance. A few good deeds by your friends and neighbors have and are currently contributing to the ongoing effort to enhance the exercise area in front of the Fire Department. Another effort taken on by your neighbors has been the ground maintenance and trash placement by the Disk Golf members. These are only two of the many deeds your neighbors contribute to our Town. Not only does our Community contribute money and labor, but also with designing, engineering advice, research and artistic talents! The Town of Malabar reminds people we can achieve so much more by combining our efforts and time together, making our community stronger every day.

Stewardship consists of pride, time, talent, and treasure. If you are interested in joining those in your community and dedicating yourself, in making the most of our small town, please feel free to contact any of your Park Board members!

-Vickie Thomas,
Parks and Recreation Board Member

History of the Malabar Schoolhouse

In 1927, the Brevard County Board of Public Education built a two-story building to act as the new Malabar Schoolhouse. The building was constructed of masonry and stucco with tall windows for light and to allow the cool breeze to come in off the Indian River. The school was heated by wood burning stoves, with the wood being provided by the students. There were two classrooms downstairs, and a large auditorium upstairs.

The teacher was Miss Louise Rogero, a graduate of both Eau Gallie High School, and Florida State University. She taught students from first to eighth grade. Mrs. Rogero would ensure the students kept their school clean, and during the Great Depression, would prepare lunches for her less fortunate students. The school was closed in 1935 due to the depression.



In the 1940s, the building was transformed into a restaurant and night club called Nan's Chateau. This establishment had to have room darkening curtains to avoid being spotted by German submarines patrolling the Florida coast. In the 1970s, the schoolhouse was turned into a wood mill. Eli Leone opened Malabar Millworks, and later sold it to Jim Noble, who renamed it Brevard Hardwoods.

Mr. Noble did extensive restoration to bring the building back to its original beauty, as well as adding new A.D.A. compliant bathrooms and an entrance ramp. Recently, the school house was purchased by locals Thomas and Joanne Murdoch and converted into Banyan Estates, a high-end venue for weddings and celebrations. This beautiful building is listed on the Brevard County Registry of Historical Places and is located right next to the Sandhill trailhead along Marie Street.

Malabar Business Spotlight



Ace Hardware on Babcock Street in Malabar has been family owned and operated since 1986. They offer a large variety of different products that include electrical, plumbing, automotive, and lawn and garden equipment. This store isn't a run of the mill hardware store. It offers a large home improvement section, screen repairs, paint matching, pool supplies, and much more.

Ace Hardware in Malabar supports the local Cub Scout and Boy Scout troops with the products they need to flourish in their journey. They welcome the troops to hold their fundraisers at the store. They also carry a variety of camping gear and scouting needs, from uniforms to badges and awards. In the thirty-three years of being a part of our community, their number one priority is outstanding customer service.

Any patron who walks in to the store will be greeted and assisted in finding what they need to complete their project. The staff is very knowledgeable of the store and all the products they offer. They also have a great reputation of always having the products in stock of something that can't be found at the big box home improvement stores. Of course, with exceptional customer service this always includes an Ace Hardware employee assisting customers with their carry out service.

"Ace is the Place."

Visit Ace Hardware Malabar for great prices every day.
6755 Babcock St. SE, Malabar, FL 32950
321-729-6690



District 2 Council Member Brian Vail

Please help the Town help you. Each owner of improved property is supposed to be maintaining the area between the edge of the road and their property line. In many cases that means the area on the outside of your fence (in most cases it is a minimal area relative to your property size). We know you can't get down into deep ditch areas and don't expect you to, but by mowing the flat areas you will help keep the Town looking nice while relieving the mowing currently being done by Public Works, so they can focus more on the stormwater projects approved for this year.

We are asking for you to do your part as a good neighbor. I'm sure that you will see many improvements on other projects and maintenance issues throughout the Town if each resident does their part by mowing these rights of way. This is a great way to help your community and we will continue to put information about this in future issues of the MailBoat as well as on the Town's website – www.townofmalabar.org. The Town appreciates your contributions in this matter. Again, help us to help you!

Thank you,
Brian Vail,
Council Member, District 2

Town Employee Profile

Felix Roque is one of the Town of Malabar's Public Works Medium Equipment Operators. Born in 1955 in Cuba, Felix immigrated to Miami Florida in 1980. In Miami, Felix was a decorated driver for Waste Service Inc. for 20 years. After that, Felix and his wife, Maria Lillian, moved to Palm Bay and he was hired by our Town in 2007.



Felix primarily operates our John Deer tractor with many of the heavy equipment attachments, such as the Alamo Ditcher, the Flail Axe slope mower, and box blade road grader. On page 2 is a photo of Felix and his machine, slope mower attached, hard at work on Billie Lane!

Hurricane Season is Upon Us

It's that time of year again, as Hurricane season is here. Please read about some of these suggested preventative tasks you can complete before disaster strikes. The goal is to ensure that everyone is prepared and has a plan should a major storm cross our path.

A great place to start is to determine your risk. That includes checking local flood maps, storm surge charts, and the possibility of inland tornados in your area. Another good step would be developing an evacuation plan, which would mean finding out if you live in an evacuation zone, planning your evacuation route, and planning for your pets. Next, you should assemble disaster supplies. You should have enough dry food and water for approximately a week, a backup of any essential medicines, an emergency radio with batteries, extra fuel for any vehicles, and a stash of extra cash in hand. It is also advised to include an insurance checkup. Use this opportunity to find out what kind of flood insurance you have, learn if you need to update any of your policies, and get a copy ready to be taken with you in the event of an evacuation. A large part of hurricane preparedness is remembering to strength your home. That includes trimming all loose and overhanging branches on trees near your house, securing any loose items in and around your yard, developing a plan to secure your windows, and moving your car to a safe location. A big step many people overlook is clearing the drainage ditches on your property of any blockages or debris. It is important for the stormwater to be able to flow freely away from your property and into the greater stormwater system. Remember, the garage door is generally the weakest point in most houses, so ensure that it can withstand hurricane force winds. Don't forget to help your neighbors. Take a few hours to check in on your neighbors and ensure they have been following the same steps you have and offer to help them if needed. Before, during and after a hurricane, neighbors can be the best resource for communication and sharing needed materials, so you should all have a similar disaster plan. Finally, you and your family should come together and create a written plan. Having a written plan helps ensure you do not forget any of these important steps and can help you remember many small things that could be overlooked during a disaster. Being prepared for a major storm before it begins gives you and your family the upper hand for safety. By collecting all the necessary supplies, you can avoid spending valuable time waiting in long lines trying to get products that

have already been sold out. Instead, you can use that time to begin following your written disaster plan and beginning to prepare.

Being in a hurricane can be a scary ordeal. Following these helpful tips can make all the difference in such a situation. Be sure to listen to the radio or television for official bulletins on the storm's progress and path. Make sure you follow all instructions issued by local, state and federal agencies. If you are in an evacuation zone, be sure to leave immediately. If you are evacuating, do your best to leave during daylight hours. Whether you stay with friends or family, or head to a hotel, make sure your relatives and loved ones know where you are going. Ensure that your family members know who to call if they get separated. If you are evacuating, do not leave your pets behind. Find a shelter for them or find a family shelter that accepts animals. Another good idea is to remove anything that is susceptible to water damage. Unplug all small appliances and shut down all computers. Make sure that your computer equipment is placed high up off the floor and you may want to cover it in plastic as extra protection. If you are staying home during the storm, turn your refrigerator to its coldest setting and leave the door closed as much as possible. It is also a good idea to fill all sinks and bathtubs with water. This can be helpful with washing yourself and your dishes and can also be used to flush toilets in an emergency. This is especially important for homes that use a septic/well system.

After the storm, it's time to assess the damage to your property and ensure all your belongings have survived. Listen to the radio for safety updates and advisories. Some advisories you should listen for are flood warnings, electrical outages, and road conditions. Do not attempt to drive across flowing water. As little as six inches of water is enough to make you lose control of your vehicle, and only 2 feet of water can carry a car away. Also, avoid standing water, as it can be electrically charged from underground power or fallen utility cables. It is a good idea to have a professional assess your home, appliances and property for damages. Lastly, make sure that your local officials have cleared your water for consumption before using it to cook or clean.

While we all hope that these steps won't be needed this year, it is much better to have a plan and not need it, than to need a plan and not have it!

Article from District 5 Council Member Danny White

As I begin to write this I am sitting by our pond, guarding our ducks and geese (about 25 of them) and chickens (about 15 of them) from falling prey to the occasional bobcat. Dorthea is cleaning their houses and pens. I believe I got the better deal here.

We moved to Malabar a few years ago in order that we may live this semi-rural life. I believe most of Malabar's residents choose to live here for the same reason.

The benefits of living here are clear to most of us. Most of us don't have to deal with an HOA. Most of us have enough elbow room. There is a live and let live attitude here. You have to be a pretty poor neighbor to be on the enforced end of a Town Ordinance. Our tax burden is the lowest in the county.

There are also costs to living here. About 12 years ago we considered funding our own police department. The start up alone was estimated to cost \$400k and could climb to twice that. The MSTU that cost us \$266K last year was determined to be a better deal.

If you consider that a similar route would be appropriate for our fire protection, consider these facts. The Brevard County Fire Assessment Fee for an 1800 square foot residence is about \$255 per year, a 2600 square foot is about \$330 per year, and Brevard County may require an MSTU in addition to those fees. If we went that route and even if we reduced our Ad Valorem to zero many of you would still pay more taxes for a lower standard of fire protection.

The Town Council recently expanded the fire department's staffing from 4 full time / 4 part time fire fighters to 8 full time fire fighters. This could potentially increase the Malabar Fire Department budget from \$600k to \$700k. But the alternative of going with the County is more expensive and unacceptable to me.

We have roads and drainage issues that are equally important. All of our paved roads will require repaving in the near future. There are drainage projects identified necessary for this Town such as taking the Corey drainage across Malabar Road to Turkey Creek. We are fiscally unprepared for these projects.

The total revenue the Town of Malabar expects to receive this year is \$1,908,273. The share of this

revenue directly paid by the residents of Malabar in Ad Valorem property taxes at a millage of 2.1582% is \$499,680. Residents also pay the non-Ad Valorem assessment of \$52.00 per homesite for stormwater utility improvements. Other significant sources of Malabar's annual revenue come from the Electric Utility Tax FPL pays at \$260,000; the Franchise Fee payments from FPL, WM and Palm Bay total \$252,000.00. We also receive a Communications Service Tax of \$97,465 and State Revenue Sharing and Sales tax at \$263,483.00. The Local Option Gas Tax is the other major source at \$100,052.00. The remainder of revenues come from other sources and are not likely to increase in any significant way.

Consider this, and I only ask you to think about it. If we increased our Ad Valorem taxes from 2.1582% to 3.1582% the revenue would go from \$499,680 to \$731,206.00. I think that would address the future needs of our Town. I know this is a matter of trust. I ask you to look at the improvements in the Town in just the last year. I know we will continue this progress. We will still have the lowest tax burden of any town in our county while maintaining the Malabar rural lifestyle.

Sandhill Cranes (con't from page 1)

Merrill, stopped and assessed the damage. While assessing the scene, Merrill noticed an infant Crane hiding under the fence in front of the Malabar Fire Rescue Department. Three Firefighters came to the scene and assisted in catching the orphaned Crane. Lieutenant Kevin Riley, Driver/Engineer Chris Smith, and Firefighter Bryce Nachreiner caught the Crane, and Mr. Merrill called the Florida Wildlife Refuge, operating out of Palm Bay. The Florida Wildlife group transported the Crane to a South Florida wildlife refuge that specializes in Sandhill Cranes. Then on May 9th, another Crane was struck on Malabar Road near Eva Lane. Again, the driver who hit the large bird did not stop. After the April 25th incident, citizen Lloyd Behrendt, a former Town Councilman, whose photo can be seen above, asked the Malabar Town Council at the May 6th Council meeting to consider passing a resolution protecting Sandhill Cranes inside the Town. The Council responded with a 5-0 vote at the May 20th meeting to adopt Resolution 08-2019 naming the Florida Sandhill Crane the official Town Bird. Along with this resolution, the Town is planning to place additional signage along our roads to ensure drivers are aware of these delicate and beautiful birds.

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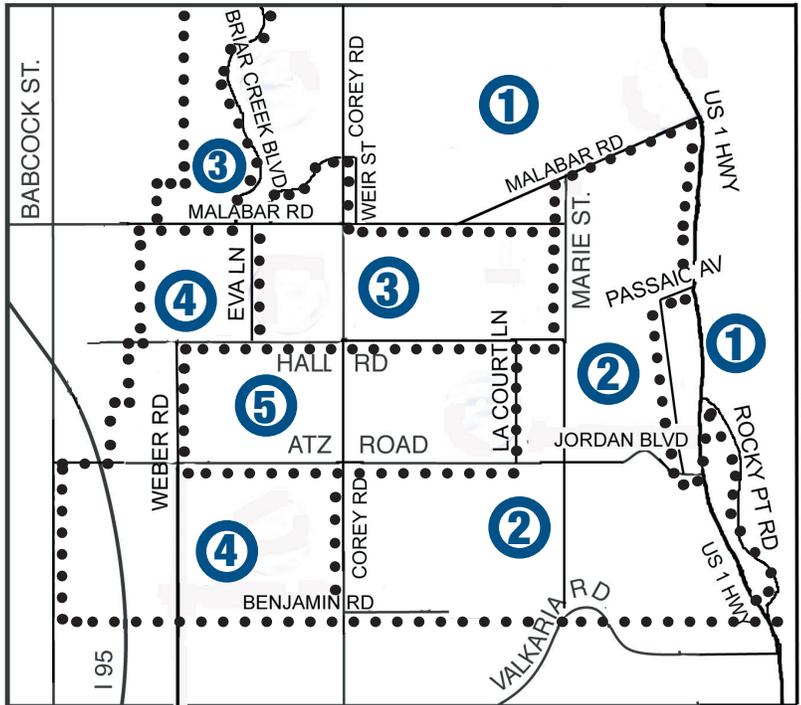
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The Council members to the left represent these districts:



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The MAILBOAT

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