

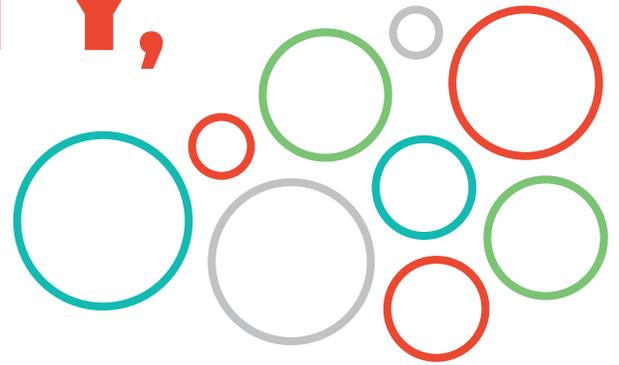
2021 ANNUAL REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 2020 - SEPTEMBER 30, 2021



BAY COUNTY, **FLORIDA**



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A MESSAGE FROM THE COMMISSION CHAIRMAN



robert carroll
district 2

More than three years on, rebuilding from Hurricane Michael continues, coupled with ongoing recovery from the effects of the 2020 pandemic. This book aims to highlight our ongoing work in dealing with the impacts of both the hurricane and pandemic but also to outline the many other accomplishments we made over the course of Fiscal Year 2021, which ran from Oct. 1, 2020 to Sept. 20, 2021. We intend to provide readers with understanding about how their government works daily to better all of Bay County, particularly in the wake of protracted dual disasters. As we continue to recover and rebuild, it is this board's responsibility to ensure that we do so in a thoughtful, expedient manner. The Bay County Board of County Commissioners is proud of our staff and how hard they work to make our home a wonderful place to live and visit. We expect our team to remain focused on our customers, the citizens of Bay County, while also being exemplary stewards of taxpayer dollars. We maintain a commitment to excellence and efficiency in government while also providing transparency and accountability to the citizens we serve. I speak for all members of this commission: Our doors are always open to the public and we welcome input and feedback about how we can do and be better for the people of Bay County.

A copy of the this Annual Report for the Board of County Commissioners is available online at www.baycountyfl.gov.





ABOUT THE COMMISSION

The Bay County Board of County Commissioners is a five-member governing board elected at-large to represent the citizens of Bay County. The board defines the role and guides the actions of the organization in ensuring the future of Bay County. The commission hires a county manager to implement policies established by the board and to manage the operations of the county. The commission annually adopts the millage rate and approves the budget, which determines the revenue and expenditures necessary to operate all county departments. The powers and duties of the county commission are established by Florida Statutes, Chapter 125.

The majority of offices of the Bay County Commission are located at the Bay County Government Center at 840 W. 11th St., Panama City. The campus also houses the offices of the Bay County Supervisor of Elections, the Tax Collector and the Property Appraiser.

THE 5 COUNTY DISTRICTS



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www.baycountyfl.gov

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robert "bob" majka



MESSAGE FROM THE COUNTY MANAGER:

Fiscal Year 2021 began almost exactly three years to the day after 2018's devastating Category 5 Hurricane Michael struck our community. In that time, we have made significant strides in recovery, despite challenges posed by the subsequent COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020. Both events had devastating impacts on many of our residents' livelihoods, mental health, children's education, and more. But despite the many challenges, our community continues to demonstrate its remarkable resilience.

Bay County will continue to be good stewards of our residents' and property owners' tax dollars. We are committed to providing quality customer service while keeping our tax rates among the very lowest in the state.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update to the citizens of Bay County about the many ways in which we are working to reach our goals each year, established through our strategic planning process.

We have again included an employee spotlight in the pages of the annual report. Bay County employees strive daily to serve their friends and neighbors with dignity and integrity, and we are grateful for their continued hard work despite the challenges of the last couple of years.

A FEW HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2021 INCLUDE:

- > Bay County's millage rate remained unchanged and among the lowest in the state at 4.43 mills. We are currently the 7th lowest taxing district in the state.
- > We continued free public COVID-19 testing initiated in 2020, culminating with having conducted more than 77,300 tests since the start of the pandemic.
- > We reduced retail water/sewer rates, beginning in 2020, years earlier than originally anticipated. Last year we implemented the second of several reductions planned over the next few years.
- > The Federal government approved more than \$45 million in Hurricane Mitigation Grant Program projects, including:
 - > Paving rural dirt roads
 - > Hardening traffic signals throughout the county
 - > Improving the county's wastewater system
 - > Adding new community centers that will also serve as public long-term emergency shelters in the northern part of the county and much, much more.
- > We closed the incinerator due to unsustainably high operating costs but were able to reduce the tipping fee at the Bay County Landfill from \$56.73 per ton to \$36 per ton.
- > We repaid \$150 million of \$300 million in debt borrowed to cover Hurricane Michael recovery costs.
- > We reduced building permit fees, making our construction permitting costs among the lowest in the area.
- > We deployed five large industrial spools donated by Oceaneering as artificial reefs. They range from 22 feet in diameter to 35 feet in diameter and weigh between 40 and 60 tons.
- > We removed 32 derelict vessels from Bay County waterways, with another 18 in process for 2022.

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WHO WE ARE

The County Attorney's Office represents the Board of County Commissioners in all legal matters. The three attorneys on staff represent Bay County in lawsuits, administrative hearings, and at public meetings. In addition, legal staff prepares and reviews ordinances, contracts, and other legal instruments. The attorneys also render legal opinions and provide legal support to commissioners, boards, and departments.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Legal staff worked on the following legal issues and projects this past year:

- > Negotiated a tentative agreement with the state regarding distribution of opioid settlement funds.
- > Worked through a series of issues associated with resuming direct management of the county housing programs.
- > Assisted in the negotiations of an interlocal agreement for distribution of local option fuel tax with the municipalities.
- > Prepared ordinances expanding the tourist development tax district for Panama City Beach and otherwise modifying the tourist development tax, repealing local preference rules, expanding penalties for double red flag violations, modifying county contractor licensing rules, and creating a special assessment against hospitals to enable them to access federal matching funds for their Medicaid shortfall.
- > Assisted with Hurricane Michael and CARES Act grant program implementation.
- > Completed negotiations with the federal government over the termination of the lease for the juvenile justice facility.
- > Completed the agreements to fully implement the public safety (800 MHz) radio system.
- > Shepherded the process for redistricting county commission boundaries to comply with state constitutional requirements following a census.

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don banks



employee spotlight

SHAD REDMON

Shad Redmon joined the County Attorney's Office in August 2021. He brings 24 years of experience from the private sector, the Public Defender's Office, the State Attorney's Office, and the Florida Department of Transportation. Shad is a double "Nole", having graduated with both his Bachelor of Science and Juris Doctor from Florida State University. Shad and his wife Rynn have two boys, Jackson, 11, and Colt, 9. Shad loves horses and rodeo, and he and his youngest son Colt are avid team ropers. He coaches Jackson's soccer team, and the entire family loves to snow ski.



employee spotlight

EMILY WYLIE

Emily Wylie is the assistant budget officer in the county's Budget Office. Originally from upstate New York, her husband's Air Force career brought her to Panama City in 2019. Emily earned her bachelor's degree in accounting from the State University of New York at Saratoga Springs and her Master's degree in accounting from Regis University in Denver, CO. Before moving to Florida she worked in government accounting at Colorado and Arizona state agencies. Emily has three daughters ages six, four, and two who occupy most of her time outside of work. On the weekends they enjoy visiting local parks, beaches, and the library as a family.



WHO WE ARE

The Budget Division creates, modifies, and monitors the annual budget for the Board of County Commissioners. We work closely with the county departments to develop the expenditure budget for the board. The office also develops financial projections for the county's revenues. It serves as a hub for financial data for the various departments under the board and assists the departments with any financial matters.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

- > Bay County's Hurricane Michael burn rate as of Oct. 11, 2021, including purchase orders and outstanding debris invoices, is as follows:

	PAYMENTS	P.O.s	REIMBURSEMENTS
FEMA A - DEBRIS REMOVAL OPER	\$ 214,979,400.76	-	\$ 174,388,947.44
FEMA A - DEBRIS REMOVAL CAP	\$ 727,816.43	-	-
FEMA B - EMPG PRTV MSRS OPER	\$ 24,056,881.91	-	\$ 14,311,025.25
FEMA B - EMPG PRTV MSRS CAP	\$ 3,364,322.42	-	-
FEMA C - ROADS & BRIDGES	\$ 4,018,606.49	\$ 42,924.01	\$ 6,231,330.81
FEMA D - WATER CNTRL FAC	\$ 624,695.38	\$ 2,257,201.00	\$ 521,142.40
FEMA E - BLDGS & EQUIP OP	\$ 779,125.04	-	\$ 465,916.23
FEMA E - BLDGS & EQUIP CAP	\$ 45,306,477.03	\$ 3,420,983.27	-
FEMA F - UTILITES	\$ 5,713,867.81	\$ 51,146.78	\$ 3,726,023.86
FEMA G - PARKS & REC, OTHER	\$ 6,349,941.57	\$ 45,802.86	\$ 3,384,544.96
FEMA Z - ADMIN COST	\$ 22,672,077.31	\$ 171,613.00	\$ 5,085,357.31
Disaster O/T	\$ 4,278,218.47	-	-
TOTAL	\$ 332,871,430.62	\$ 5,989,670.92	\$ 208,114,288.26

- > Bay County received the remaining 75 percent of \$30 million in Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) funding allocated to the county by the State of Florida. The Budget Office coordinated the reimbursement process for expenditures needed to address the COVID-19 public health emergency in the county. In August of 2021 the county received the first portion of funding, approximately \$16.9 million, from the American Rescue Plan. These funds must be expended by December 2026.
- > The Budget Office follows a Florida law known as TRIM (Truth-in-Millage). The Truth-in-Millage Law was passed by the Florida Legislature and designed to keep the public informed about taxes as proposed by local taxing authorities. Property owners receive their TRIM notices from the Bay County Property Appraiser once millage rates are established by a vote of each taxing authority. TRIM notices provide an estimate of each property, list all taxing authorities, and provide an overall total estimated property tax. Property taxes are based on \$1 per \$1,000 of assessed property value. For example, on a \$100,000 property, one mill would generate \$100. Taxable value for the General Fund in Fiscal Year 2021 was \$17.4 billion, resulting in ad valorem tax collections of \$75.1 million.
- > Budget is responsible for all Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) calculations for county payment to the various established CRAs throughout the county. A CRA is established in counties and municipalities that have areas deemed to be in a state of slum or blight. Once established, the CRA area tax base, from which a taxing authority realizes tax revenues, is frozen for a period of 30 years or 40 years if extended. During the 30 years, the taxing authority may only receive tax revenue equal to the revenue collected in the base year. Revenue collected in excess of that amount is returned to the CRA for redevelopment projects within the CRA. There are currently 12 CRAs within Bay County. Out of the \$75.1 million in ad valorem in the General Fund mentioned above, \$13.6 million was paid to CRAs in 2021.

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WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Communications Office is officially a staff of one person; however, with the increased workload since Hurricane Michael in 2018, storm recovery efforts in 2019, and the continuing COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020, this office has relied heavily on assistance from communication-oriented county staff members and the Public Information Network (PIN), comprised of communicators from various local governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The Bay County Communications Office aims to enhance the community's access to Bay County government both directly through social media and the county's website and also via traditional media outlets. We are responsible for maintaining positive community and media relations through frequent contact and constant availability; preparation and distribution of informational publications; television and print news stories; and through the use of social media outlets. Governmental transparency and integrity is of the utmost importance, and the Communications Office strives to ensure openness and accountability to the media and public.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

- > Collaborated with communicators from public and private agencies from throughout Bay County to coordinate broad response messaging for the COVID-19 pandemic.
- > Created and implemented the "Be a Hero" Campaign, aimed at encouraging members of the public to engage in mitigating behaviors to combat the spread of COVID-19. The campaign included public information ads on:
 - > Television
 - > Radio
 - > Digital (Spotify, Pandora, and YouTube)
 - > Newspaper/print
 - > Billboards
 - > Social media
- > Coordinated publicity for various county programs, projects, and events including multiple hurricane recovery-related programs, holiday parades and special events, road projects, and job fairs.
- > Coordinated public information response to Tropical Storm Fred.
- > Developed, coordinated, edited, and oversaw the production of the 2021 Annual Report and the 2021 Budget Summary.

employee spotlight

BROOKE POWELL

Brooke Powell is the chief administrative officer and public information officer for Bay County Emergency Services. Powell attended Florida State University Panama City, where she received an undergraduate degree in communication followed by her master's degree in communication in 2001. She entered the public sector as training and development coordinator for the Bay County Board of County Commissioners in 2006. Powell also worked in risk management as administrator of the Wellness Program and coordinated the County Safety Committee until transferring to Emergency Services in 2010. Powell is one of several administrators for the social media platforms for Bay County Emergency Services, using the platform to ensure public outreach regarding such items as hurricane preparedness, beach flag safety, and wildfire awareness. Powell served as one of the lead PIOs for Hurricane Michael response, and she was awarded a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition from Congressman Neal Dunn for her work with the hurricane response and recovery. Powell is a two-time winner for the State Emergency Response Commission Thomas Yatabe Award. She recently graduated from the Gulf Coast State College Fire Academy, obtaining her Florida Firefighter certification in July 2021. Brooke works diligently to promote and showcase our firefighters and emergency services personnel.

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cooperative extension

INTRODUCING THE COLLABORATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Collaborative Services Department is new to the county and was created in late FY 2021 to manage and oversee various divisions that include the Cooperative Extension, Library, Transit, Veterans, and the newly formed Housing Division. The new department exists as a central point of administration for programs that provide cultural, transit, military benefit services, housing, and life skill services.



employee spotlight

PAULA DAVIS

Paula Davis grew up in Kentucky. After getting married in April 2000 and wanting to support her husband's (Jim Moyers) career in Panama City, she officially moved to Bay County and began working for Extension in 2000. Paula received her bachelor's degree from Berea College, Master's degree from the University of Tennessee and Doctorate degree from Auburn University. Her 4-H work has focused on 4-H Youth Development in the areas of after-school and military programs, camping, plant sciences, teen leadership and volunteer development. She has worked with the military partnership program since 2004 and became the state liaison in 2015. Outside of work Paula enjoys baking, painting, and growing herbs.

WHO WE ARE

UF/IFAS Extension Bay County provides educational information to Bay County citizens through the combined efforts of state and county faculty, staff, volunteers, advisory committees, and local partners. We apply research and university expertise to solve problems that relate to 4-H Youth Development, Horticulture, Marine/Coastal issues, and Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS).

Like many offices and people in Bay County, UF/IFAS Extension had many challenges in the past year due to COVID-19 and continuing recovery from Hurricane Michael. The mission of our office is to provide science-based information to the public to enhance their quality of life. As a result of the pandemic and the storm, the need for valid information was increased. Despite these challenging events, we found alternative methods to communicate and respond to our community during this critical time.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Contacts

- > Average Number of Unique Volunteers Per Month - 52 average/620 total
- > Individual Calls, Office Visits, & Emails - 7,670
- > Group Education Participants - 3,761
- > Engaged Social Media Users - 22,791

Horticulture

- > Pesticide training classes transitioned from primarily virtual to in-person or hybrid (in-person and Zoom option) for green industry professionals. Five classes were held attended by 80 people. Exams also resumed at the Extension Office and 41 exams were administered.
- > The Agent and Master Gardener volunteers participated in a tree giveaway in partnership with Florida Forestry and the City of Panama City and ReTree PC, distributing 650 trees to the community on May 1, 2021.
- > The UF IFAS Extension Bay County Facebook Gardening Group was created in March of 2020 has grown to nearly 600 members.
- > Gardening in the Panhandle LIVE! is a collaborative effort among Northwest District Horticulture Agents (Jefferson to Escambia County) offering live webinars using both Zoom and Facebook Live to interact with the public twice a month on timely gardening topics.
- > Horticulture and Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) collaborated with the Bay County Public Library to offer "Seed to Salad" as part of the library card drive in September of 2021. Master Gardener volunteers prepared planting instructions and sorted seeds into packets for distribution at library branches within the Northwest Florida Regional Library System.
- > The county's Horticulture Agent graduated from the Leadership Bay program with the Bay County Chamber of Commerce and currently serves on the Steering Committee for the next class. Other leadership initiatives include her role on the UF Pesticide Extension Education Team (PEET), UF/IFAS Invasive Species Council, Florida State Agricultural Response Team, and ReTree PC Committee.

4-H Youth Development

- > 4-H and Horticulture faculty and staff collaborated with faculty from Holmes and Walton counties and Bay County 4-H teens to offer an 8-week virtual educational opportunity for 4-H youth called 4-H Seed to Food Plant to Plate Camp.
 - > This program featured the science behind growing plants to eating them. It also covered artistic expression for stress relief. This camp was for youth ages 8-13 that they could do at their own pace covering all parts of the plant. Youth could create a small garden or container garden.
 - > There were 33 individual participants and 101 group participants in the camp, and the site had more than 1,237 page views during the year.

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cooperative extension

- > Four of the teens designing the program have gone on to college to continue their education.
- > This program received The Beyond Youth Leadership National 4-H Award in recognition of a program that exemplifies strong youth-adult partnerships that impact their club, community, country, or world.
- > FCS and 4-H collaborated on a self-directed online Culinary Arts Adventure (virtual day camp). The Culinary Arts Virtual Camp provided educational videos introducing food safety, kitchen skills, kitchen safety, recipe preparation, and recipes for youth to prepare at home (under adult supervision). Multiple cooking videos were recorded and edited with the assistance of Bay County 4-H youth and a summer college intern. The 32 registered participants were provided access, through a closed site, to videos and recipes to practice the skills needed in the kitchen.
- > 4-H Faculty collaborated with other faculty to provide virtual training for volunteers on how to use technology and still reach and engage youth during the pandemic.
- > As the State Military Liaison, the 4-H Military Partnership Programs continued to operate during the pandemic. The 4-H faculty and staff are continuing to support military programs by offering virtual training and resources for Florida and international military sites that are a part of the grant program.

Marine/Coastal**Reels to Reefs**

- > Three offshore trips from the Port of Panama City were made from July through September 2021 to deploy five large industrial spools provided by Oceaneering. The spools, ranging from 22 feet and 40 tons to 35 feet and 60 tons, were sunk 100 feet below the surface. The new reefs are 11.5 nautical miles SSW of the St Andrew Bay Pass.
- > The reefs were deployed through a partnership with multiple organizations and volunteers including the Bay County Tourist Development Council, Bay County Board of County Commissioners, Oceaneering International, UF/IFAS Florida Sea Grant Extension Bay County, Port Panama City, Mar-K Towing, and Panama City Diving.
- > This event was chronicled in an episode of the destination's coastal fishing and lifestyle television show, "Chasin' The Sun." The deployment was documented from several angles, including an on-deck camera, underwater cameras attached to the spools, a deep-sea drone, and a sky drone.

Abandoned Vessel and Hurricane Michael Clean-up in St Andrew Bay

- > A variety of funding sources and workers were used to aid in the removal of boats from St. Andrew Bay. During 2021, 32 storm-impacted or abandoned vessels were removed. An additional 18 boats have been identified and are being processed, with removal expected to be completed by the end of February 2022.
- > Key to these efforts are the Bay County Board of County Commissioners, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), UF/IFAS Extension Bay County, NOAA Response and Restoration, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). Keep up with our vessel removal progress in St. Andrew Bay by visiting <https://bit.ly/BayDVs>.

Family and Consumer Sciences

- > A Healthy Table Virtual Cooking Schools: During Spring 2021 the first virtual cooking school, A Healthy Table, was taught

and focused on the basics of cooking. During the Fall a second school, Fall Festive Feasts, was taught focused on cooking with fall flavors. These were both a collaborative effort among the Northwest District and statewide FCS agents. We had 76 registered participants. Agents held 10, one-hour interactive Zoom sessions, including educational lessons and cooking demonstrations.

- > Living Well Wednesday Webinars: Designed and planned with Northwest District FCS agents throughout 2021. This four-session, quarterly webinar offered program topics ranging from Proper Home Maintenance to Achieving Financial Capability. Currently we have more than 100 viewers/live participants, but the webinars are still being taught and will continue into 2022.
- > Other leadership initiatives include membership in the UF/IFAS Culinary, Food Safety, Heart Health and Housing teams and participation at the state level as the Northwest Florida District Director for FFAFCS and a faculty Senate member providing a means for faculty to participate in the shared governance of the college.
- > Formed partnerships with local communities and agencies for collaboration on future virtual and/or face-to-face programming efforts in the areas of health/wellness, food preservation, basic budgeting, and home ownership.
- > Currently studying to become a certified HUD Housing Counselor to teach home buyer classes.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION**National**

- > 2021 Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals (ANREP), Outstanding Team Award, "Gardening in the Panhandle LIVE!" (Julie McConnell, Scott Jackson et al.)
- > 2021 Beyond Youth Leadership Award for Seed to Food and Plant to Plate Virtual Camp, NAE4-HHYDP, National, Regional and State winner (Paula Davis, Julie McConnell et al.)
- > 2021 Distinguished Service Award: National Extension Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (Melanie Taylor). *
- > 2021 ANREP Gold - Book or Comprehensive Program Curriculum AND another award: 2021 Silver Video Series for Florida Master Naturalist Program Marine Habitat Restoration Course (Scott Jackson et al.)*

* **Also awarded at the state level**

Local

- > 2021 FANREP Early Career Leadership (Julie McConnell)
- > 2021 FANREP Long Publication 2nd Place for invasive species terminology: standardizing for stakeholder education publication (Julie McConnell)
- > 2021 FANREP Achievement Award Outstanding 4-H/Youth Development (Paula Davis et al.)
- > 2021 Florida Association of Extension 4-H Agents (FAE4-HA) Excellence in Camping 4-H Award (Paula Davis et al.)
- > 2021 FAE4-HA Excellence in 4-H Teamwork Award (Paula Davis et al.)
- > 2021 FFAFCS Team Awards: Internet Education Technology Award, Communications TV/Video Award, and Extension Disaster Education Award (Melanie Taylor et al.)
- > 2021 FFAFCS Professional Development Grant Winner (Melanie Taylor)
- > 2021-22 UF/IFAS Extension Professional Development Mini-Grants (Melanie Taylor)

library services



employee spotlight

JOYELLE LINTON

Joyelle Linton has been with NWRLS for seven years. Her first position was as a part-time library assistant and managing the children's programming at the Wewahitchka library branch. Joyelle was promoted to Branch Manager at the Charles Whitehead Public Library last year. She has already made many exciting changes to the library, including the addition of a beautiful native landscape garden at the library's main entrance and book character murals on the Children's Department walls. A great asset to the public has been the addition of notary services in Gulf County. Joyelle commissioned the construction and placement of 10 Books-To-Go mini libraries around Wewahitchka, which has been very well received from the community. A seed library consisting of vegetables, fruits, and herbs began in September 2021.

Due to COVID-19, Joyelle had to be creative to provide programming to the residents of Wewahitchka. New adult programming, including crafts and a book club, were added requiring reservations. Weekly children's take-home crafts are offered along with monthly STEAM kits. Monthly adult and children activity packs are also available. Fun, themed activities at the library are now offered for adults and children. In October, the Wewa branch hosted their first story time since COVID-19 began, which was held outdoors, celebrating fire prevention week with two local fire trucks. All of these programs have garnered much interest from the patrons and the community of Wewahitchka.



WHO WE ARE

The Northwest Regional Library System has seven locations in Bay, Gulf, and Liberty counties as well as a mobile library. Our headquarters are at the Bay County Public Library in Panama City. We served 170,348 visitors in 2021, providing access to more than 320,021 books, audiobooks, DVDs, e-books, downloadable audiobooks, plus additional online materials. We offer public computers with internet access and Wi-Fi access in all locations. We also offer a variety of programming for all ages.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

- > Northwest Regional Library System locations created 255 virtual programs for children, teens, and adults through Zoom and the Northwest Regional Library System FL YouTube channel with a total of 8,114 participants during 2021. Take and Make Craft Kits, scavenger hunts, and activity packets were also provided at the branches with much success. Our summer theme was "Tails and Tales" all about animals!
- > The Unstacked library podcast had 820 listens during 2021, providing readers advisory and in-depth interviews with 12 notable authors including Chuck Wendig, Grady Hendrix, Marie Bostick, and Amy Stewart. Listen through <https://anchor.fm/nwrls> or wherever you listen to podcasts!
- > Storywalk® Programs were organized as a way for children and adults to enjoy reading and the outdoors at the same time by posting a book along a trail for readers to follow along as they walk. NWRLS Mobile Library set up eight Storywalks at stops in Bay County. Gulf County library locations had four Storywalks throughout the summer.
- > The Corinne Costin Gibson Public Library in Port St. Joe began a year round Seed Library in March where library users can select five seed packets each month with their library card. The seed library is sponsored by the Port St. Joe Garden Club with a grant from the Tapper Foundation. The Charles Whitehead Memorial Public Library in Wewahitchka began their Seed Library in September.

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- > Bay County library locations partnered with the UF/IFAS Extension Office to create From Seed to Salad Kits (kale, radish, lettuce, arugula, and xarrots). A total of 364 seed kits were given to individuals with their library cards during the month of September 2021.
- > NWRLS updated our website (www.nwrls.com) to be more user friendly, visually appealing, and ADA compliant across devices. The website was created by GORGEOUS.
- > NWRLS's Libby by Overdrive app merged with Panhandle Library Access Network (PLAN) to provide a larger collection of eBooks, audiobooks and over 3,000 magazines. First select PLAN, then NWRLS as your location, and login with your library card number and pin.
- > The Reference Department, with assistance from Administration, answered 3,152 calls to the Bay County Citizen Information Center (CIC) until June 18.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > Career Online High School scholarships were federally funded at \$35,018 through the Florida Division of Library and Information Services (DLIS) CARES Act from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. All 27 scholarships have been awarded.
- > The Charles Whitehead Public Library in Wewahitchka received a "Libraries Transforming Communities: Focus on Small and Rural Libraries" American Library Association (ALA) grant for \$3,000 towards preserving local history.
- > The Gulf County library locations received \$3,500 from the Tapper Foundation toward nonfiction children's books to meet the education curriculum.
- > The Northwest Regional Library System received \$5,000 from the FINRA Investor Education Foundation to increase financial literacy materials systemwide.
- > The Ukulele Orchestra of St. Andrews Music in Education donation provided six soprano ukuleles and three concert ukuleles for circulation system wide.





employee spotlight

TAMMY HARRIS

Tammy Harris was hired in August 2021 as the Housing Program manager for the newly created Housing Assistance Division. Tammy comes to Bay County with a wealth of knowledge and experience in administering housing assistance programs. She moved from the City of Lecanto in Citrus County to take the helm of the new division. In Lecanto, Tammy was the Citrus County housing director. Prior to that she worked in Brevard County as the Code Enforcement manager and Community Planning & Resource manager. She loves to volunteer for organizations serving special needs populations, golfing, and spending time with her pug dogs, Otis and Phoebe.

WHO WE ARE

The Housing Division was created to administer state and federally funded housing assistance programs for the county. The services include purchase assistance, including down payment and closing costs, rental assistance, home repairs and improvements, first-time home buying counseling, and utility deposit assistance.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Prior to July 2021, the county's housing assistance programs were administered by Panama City. This was by contract, and on behalf of the county, the city would oversee the application process for housing assistance programs that were available. In July 2021, the county took back the assistance programs under its supervision and administration. The Housing Division was created and a Housing Program manager was hired to run the program. There are four sources of funding for the county's housing programs.

State Housing Initiatives Partnership Program (SHIP) funds

SHIP provides funds to local governments as an incentive to create partnerships that produce and preserve affordable homeownership and multifamily housing. The program is designed to serve very low, low, and moderate-income families. SHIP funds may be used to fund emergency home repairs, new construction, home rehabilitation, rental developments, foreclosure, and rental assistance including security and deposit, mandatory utility connection, and first-time home buyer programs; match dollars for federal housing grants and programs; and state and federally declared disaster assistance.

Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP)

The NSP was created to respond to residential foreclosures and property abandonment. The main purpose of the NSP was to stabilize neighborhoods that were impacted by foreclosures. Bay County used NSP funds to acquire, renovate, and sell foreclosed homes at affordable prices to eligible families. Bay County currently owns 14 NSP homes that are rented to very low- and low-income families at affordable rents as determined by HUD's Fair Market Rent Standards.

Hurricane Housing Recovery Program (HHRP)

The county was awarded HHRP funds due to the devastation caused to our housing stock by Hurricane Michael. The program's design is similar to the SHIP program, serving very low, low, and moderate-income families. HHRP funds may be used to fund emergency home repairs, new construction, home rehabilitation, rental developments, foreclosure and rental assistance including security and deposit, mandatory utility connection, and first-time home buyer programs; match dollars for federal housing grants and programs; and state and federally declared disaster assistance.

Coronavirus Relief Fund (CRF)

The CRF program was created by the U.S. Treasury as a federally funded emergency program to assist renters and property owners/landlords and homeowners facing evictions, foreclosures, and homelessness due to experiencing a COVID-19-related financial hardship. Residents who qualified were provided with emergency assistance for 10 months (March 1, 2021 - Dec. 30, 2021).

Shortly after July 1, the county began aiding people who needed rental assistance, security deposits, and housing rehab. The county contracted with a consulting company to help with administering the case management of the various programs during the conversion period from the city to the county. At the same time the county released a request for proposals to locally procure case management for its various programs.

CONTACT US:

(850) 320-3211 | director@rebuildbaycounty.org

www.rebuildbaycounty.org

[Facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc](https://www.facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc)

Text-2-Donate : REBUILDBAY (to 41444)

WHO WE ARE

The Transit Division oversees Bay County's only public transportation provider. The Bay County Public Transit System is made up of a fixed-route system as well as a demand-response system. The fixed-route system, called Bay Town Trolley, is made up of larger buses that are utilized to operate on a predetermined route according to a predetermined schedule. The fixed-route system has posted timetables and designated stops where riders are picked up and delivered.

The demand-response system, Bay Area Transportation, is made up of smaller buses that transport eligible individuals who are transportation disadvantaged, 65 years of age or older, have a disability, or are unable to use the fixed-route system. Just as its name implies, the demand-response system utilizes a reservation system to schedule individuals to be picked up and dropped off at designated locations and times in accordance with their needs.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

As an essential service, public transportation continued to operate throughout the pandemic, providing service to those citizens needing transportation to and from essential services. As each day presented new challenges, transit employees had to be flexible and adapt quickly to the ever-changing requirements of the pandemic. Ridership decreased with so many people staying home and not working or doing their normal travel routines. In response to safety protocols, social distancing was implemented, and enhanced cleaning measures were put in place on buses and at all transit facilities.

All staff and riders are required to wear masks while working and riding. Social distancing signs and hand sanitizer stations on buses have become permanent fixtures. Although COVID-19 has changed so much of our world, The Bay County Public Transit System remains unwavering in our mission to serve the community with vital transportation now and into the future.

New Fixed Route Buses

We purchased four new Eldorado EZ Rider II buses for the fixed-route system at about \$1.4 million using state and federal grant funds.

New Bus Shelters

Federal funding and a generous donation from the Chapman family provided eight new bus shelters, benches, trash receptacles, and bicycle bollards.

Newly Renovated Transit Facilities

After Hurricane Michael, the Bay County Public Transit System was left with two partially destroyed buildings in need of complete renovation. In late 2019 construction began on both the operations and maintenance facility along with the administration and meeting facility located at the Massalina Drive Fuel Yard. The buildings were ready for occupancy in late 2020. The cost of the project was more than \$3.5 million dollars, made possible by federal grant funding and insurance proceeds.



employee spotlight

SANDY CULBREATH

Sandy Culbreath has been an asset to the Transit team for the past eight years. She has been a county employee for 14 years and transferred to the Transit Division from the Budget Office. Sandy began her career as the Transit Finance Coordinator where she oversaw budget coordination, preparation, analysis, and supervision of the division's accounting, purchasing, and special program functions. In July 2021, Sandy transferred to the role of Transit Operations coordinator where she is now responsible for overseeing the division's daily operations.

Always friendly, Sandy strives to make others comfortable and creates a warm atmosphere in our department by remembering everyone's birthday and making sure to celebrate life accomplishments with her team. Her care and compassion for colleagues is evident in so much of what Sandy does and she has a way of making everyone feel at home in her presence.

Sandy's work ethic and devotion to the citizens of Bay County is evident both in her personal and professional life. She is active in a ladies' motorcycle group and often volunteers at community service events. Dedication is an understatement of Sandy's role in the Transit Department. We are so pleased to have her as part of our team.

FIXED ROUTE SYSTEM



TOTAL RIDERSHIP	# OF BUSES IN FLEET	# OF BUS ROUTES
302,274	15	9

DEMAND RESPONSE SYSTEM



TOTAL RIDERSHIP	# OF BUSES IN FLEET
38,605	18

CONTACT US:

Bay Town Trolley | (850) 769-0557 | info@baytowntrolley.org
 Bay Area Transportation | (850) 785-0808
 Transit 8161 Administration | (850) 248-8161
www.baycountyfl.gov



employee spotlight

MICHAEL BUTLER

Senior Counselor Michael Butler has been with the Veterans Services Office since September 2011. Michael is the husband of Sherry Butler and father of son Michael Jr. Michael is a deacon at the Zion Hope Baptist Church in Panama City. His passions in life are fishing and any sporting events. His top two loves in sports are Louisiana State University and the New Orleans Saints. Michael is a well-respected individual in the community and a great asset to Bay County.

Through the trying times this past year, the Bay County Veterans Services Office continues to support our veterans and families with compassion, dedication, and professionalism second to none. We are grateful to Michael for his continued dedication to our citizens.



WHO WE ARE

Behind every veteran's benefits claim is a veteran in need. The Bay County Veterans Services Office remains ready and willing to assist in obtaining those benefits. We provide dedicated service to all qualified veterans and their dependents, ensuring that they are provided fair and just treatment in accordance with the published laws and regulations governing the Department of Veterans Affairs.

Our office assists veterans in applying for service-connected disabilities, obtaining non-service-connected pension benefits, healthcare eligibility, education benefits, life insurance, and VA home loan guaranty certificates of eligibility. Our office also helps veterans' family members with burial claims, widows' and widowers' benefits, and dependency claims.

Our office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. We average between 21 and 25 client visits daily. In between client visits, our staff will receive another 20 to 30 phone calls per day.

The Veterans Services staff consists of three counselors, one senior staff assistant, and one county veterans officer.

Our primary objective is customer service that may include: adding a spouse or a new baby to a veteran's award, requesting a veteran's eligibility to education, healthcare, or home loan, filing a service-connected disability claim, a pension claim, a widow's benefit claim, or even notifying the VA of a veteran's passing and burial. We assist veterans and their families from the cradle to the grave.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Once again, this year our office faced the pandemic head on without faltering. We learned better ways to help veterans more efficiently to receive benefits that they so richly deserve. We can now assist our clients not only face to face but also in a virtual reality platform where the client may be assisted from their home without the need to come to the office.

Organizations and Events:

- > We assisted the Bay County Board of County Commissioners and the Bay County Veterans Council with a highly attended and successful Memorial Day Service in May.
- > We represent the Bay County Board of County Commissioners at the monthly meeting of the Bay County Veterans Council.
- > We serve on the Executive Board of Career Source Gulf Coast.
- > We support the veterans at Clifford Sims Florida State Veterans Nursing Home through the Friends of Sims Nursing home, a nonprofit organization run by the County Veterans Services Offices of Northwest Florida. Funds are donated to the organization and distributed to the nursing home to purchase items that the State of Florida does not include in their budget.
- > We are members of the Disadvantaged Transportation Board assisting our veterans.
- > Our county Veterans Service Officer also is on the Executive Board of the County Veterans Service Officers of Florida and is the Northwest Region vice president for that organization.
- > We attend and support the annual Homeless Veterans Stand Down.
- > Our office assisted the Bay County Board of County Commissioners along with the Bay County Veterans Council with the annual Veterans Day Parade and Wreath Laying Ceremony.
- > We do various programs throughout the community annually to inform the public of what our office does concerning veterans benefits.
- > We do discharge briefings to the Navy and Coast Guard to those active duty personnel that are discharging from the military and entering civilian life.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8350 | buildersservices@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov



WHO WE ARE

The Builders Services Division consists of Florida-licensed building code officials and staff dedicated to assisting the public in meeting the requirements of the Florida Building Code along with related state laws and local ordinances intended to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Last year was challenging for Bay County, but throughout the pandemic restrictions and recovery from Hurricane Michael in 2018, Builders Services has continued to provide uninterrupted service to the citizens of Bay County.

Builders Services remains committed to the continued recovery and growth of Bay County. Last year, some 16,246 permits were issued with 890 of those permits being for new homes. Several new subdivisions have begun construction, including the Latitude Margaritaville community with 144 new homes permitted and an amenities center. Some 24,314 inspections were completed by our inspectors, and 998 certificates of occupancy were issued for new single family, duplex, triplex, and mobile homes.

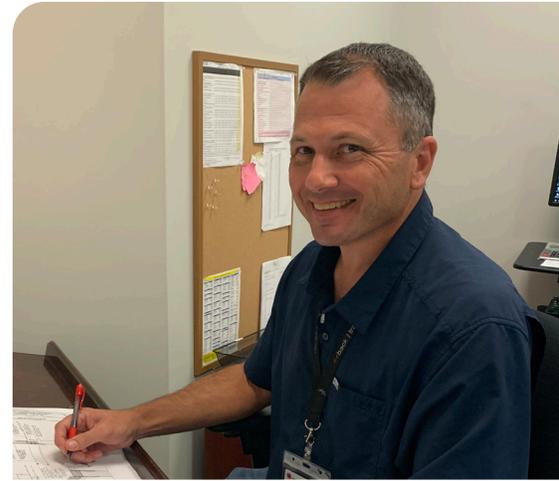
Builders Services has continued to work closely with the Department of Business and Professional Regulation and the Bay County Sheriff's Office to help combat unlicensed contractors. Contractor Licensing Coordinator Tina Moody is working diligently to guarantee that contractors working in Bay County are properly licensed and insured.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

We are pleased to currently have an Insurance Service Office (ISO), Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) score of 3 for Residential and 2 for Commercial. This scoring matrix is 1-10, with 1 being the top spot.

CONTACT US:

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www.baycountyfl.gov



employee spotlight

MATT MCCLURE

Building Code Officer Matt McClure has been with Builders Services for two years. He graduated from the University of North Florida in 2011 with a bachelor's degree in business administration. Matt's extensive background in mechanical and plumbing contracting enabled him to quickly become licensed as an inspector and plans examiner in both trades. Dedicated to professional development and to better serve Builders Services, he is currently participating in a state-approved cross-training program for the commercial building and commercial electrical inspector/plans examiner licenses. These comprehensive programs include foundational building code coursework with a total of 256 classroom hours and 144 hours of on-the-job training. Matt draws upon his business acumen to create workflow efficiencies. He is dedicated to becoming a better employee and contributing to the great team at Builders Services.

In his free time, Matt enjoys spending time with family and his two dogs, traveling, and attending concerts.





employee spotlight

CINDY FIGUEROA

Although Cindy Figueroa has been with Bay County for four years, she has worked for Code Enforcement for more than six. She mastered her craft at the Panama City Police Department in dispatch as an assistant for the officers and for Code Enforcement. Cindy's infectious laugh brightens every room, meeting, or phone call. She has several regular citizens that call Code Enforcement just to chat with her. Always the first to offer help, Cindy has learned how to process permits for Builders Services and man the fort for other divisions when they are busy. She is also bilingual, and is requested to translate daily for departments all over the Government Center.

Cindy was raised in New Mexico, has lived all over the country, and settled down in Bay County in 2011 with her military family. She is happiest when she is making authentic Mexican cuisine, video chatting with her granddaughter, and traveling out west to visit her family.



WHO WE ARE

A Code Enforcement Officer is an agent of the county with the authority to enforce any provision of the Bay County Nuisance Ordinance and Land Development regulations. The division currently consists of eight code enforcement officers, one building inspector, one coordinator, one staff assistant, and one manager. Three term-limited officers have been approved for FY2022 to continue to work Hurricane Michael-related cases.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

For Code Enforcement, the two-pronged approach still applies. Team Code Enforcement and Team Hurricane Michael were both in full swing during 2021, and the doubled workload and doubled-up hearings continue.

Some 2,096 Code Enforcement cases were opened in FY21. Staff brought 155 of those cases to hearings in front of a magistrate or the Code Board. Another 72 were brought into compliance by the property owner after the hearing, and 69 were cleaned by the county.

Temporary housing was approved by the Board of County Commissioners shortly after Hurricane Michael to assist with recovery efforts. Although the authorization expired in October 2020, Code Enforcement continues to work with residents living in temporary recreational vehicles (RVs) as they continue to rebuild. Currently, 172 properties remain in violation. With active building permits, citizens can continue to live in RVs while work is completed.

Some 170 newly-identified Hurricane Michael cases were opened in FY21. There are still 394 hurricane-damaged properties that we continue to work. Another 158 hearings for Hurricane Michael were held before a special magistrate during FY21. Of those, 41 were brought into compliance by the property owner after the hearing, and 89 were abated by the county. An additional 102 hearings were held for commercial and mobile home park lots that were not approved for the Private Property Debris Removal program (PPDR). All 102 properties were cleaned by the county.

After more than 1,000 citizens applied for the PPDR program in FY19 and the first PPDR was completed in FY20; the program was finalized in FY21. A total of 745 properties were approved and cleaned by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), state, and county-sponsored program. Code Enforcement staff assisted Tetra Tech, the disaster recovery contractor, with research, inspections, surveys, applicant assistance, contractor coordination and FEMA arrangements. Some 661 properties had dangerous trees and debris removed, while demolitions were conducted on 289 properties. In all, 401 hurricane-damaged structures were demolished by the program. As Tetra Tech leaves Bay County, Code staff has provided feedback and advice as they move forward to assist Louisiana with Hurricane Ida recovery.

CONTACT US:

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WHO WE ARE

The Planning Division's mission is to affect an orderly and efficient growth pattern that promotes economic development and enhances the environment, aesthetics, and quality of life in Bay County.

The division is staffed by certified planners, a Florida-registered professional civil engineer, a certified floodplain manager, a senior planner, and an administrative coordinator dedicated to providing quality examination and review of new development projects for the citizens of Bay County. We also manage requests for sign permits, conditional use permits, variances, and land-use and zoning changes.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

The Planning Division had another busy and challenging year. Our workload remains high. While we saw a decline in the number of Hurricane Michael-related redevelopment projects, new development is still trending upward.

While the number of development orders received was slightly less in FY2021 (69 total) than the previous year, the number of low-impact development reviews we reviewed in support of the Builders Services Division continued to increase to 2,713 in FY2021 from 2,429 in FY2020. We also issued 85 total land clearing, fill, and grading permits and received 70 sign permits applications.

The Planning Division also reviews and oversees the process where applications to change the land use and zoning are considered by the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. We received 25 total land use and zone change applications that were presented before both the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners. Nine total planned unit development (PUD) applications were received and presented to the Board of County Commissioners. Another 11 variance and conditional use permit requests were presented to the Planning Commission in FY2021.

We fielded 6,588 phone calls in FY2021 and served 883 walk-in customers.

Bay County sustained a direct hit from Tropical Storm Fred, which brought Bay County more than eight inches of rain in just 24 hours. That storm, combined with several late summer and early fall rainfall events, greatly affected our area by delivering over 200 percent more rainfall than the previous year. These heavy rain events resulted in localized flooding and standing water across the county. Planning staff answered many calls and conducted many site visits in response to these concerns.

Bay County's Community Rating System (CRS) program is coordinated by the Planning Division's certified floodplain manager. Bay County received its cycle review audit from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to evaluate the county's floodplain management program during the FY2021. Bay County maintained its Class 5 CRS rating which ensures that all residents with flood insurance policies will continue to receive a 25-percent discount on their flood insurance premiums.

The Planning Division also completed all the development order reviews for the first phase of the Latitudes Margaritaville Watersound residential development in the West Bay area. The first phase includes 1,150 residential lots with amenities. We also received, and are currently reviewing, an application for the West Laird Detailed Specific Area Plan (DSAP) in the west beaches area. The DSAP covers more than 1,368 acres and proposes a mixture of residential, recreational, and conservation uses.



employee spotlight

PAM STANLEY

Pam Stanley joined the Planning and Zoning Division in July 2016 and quickly became an integral part of the team. Pam came to us highly qualified, having spent more than 14 years combined with both the Florida Department of State and the Florida Department of Health.

Pam is the glue that holds the Planning Division together. As the administrative coordinator, she serves as clerk for the Planning Commission and Restore Act Advisory Committee meetings. She coordinates and communicates with all members of the commission to ensure a smooth and well-informed meeting. Pam is also instrumental in assisting the Planning Division staff with their daily responsibilities. Additionally, Pam is the first face seen and the first voice heard by the public when they visit or call the office. She will always take the time to listen and understand what sort of information an individual is seeking so that she can direct them to the appropriate resources.

Pam was raised on both the Maryland and Virginia sides of the Capital Beltway around Washington D.C. She relocated to Bay County 30 years ago and says it is the best decision she ever made. Her husband and son both graduated from Florida State University, which made her into the avid fan she is today. Go Noles! She also enjoys watching NASCAR races with her father.

CONTACT US:

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emergency management



employee spotlight

FRANKIE LUMM

Emergency Management Division Chief Frank E. Lumm, also known as “Frankie”, began his career with Bay County in March 2018 in hopes of finally finding a place he could call home.

Frankie began his military career in 1986, eventually becoming commissioned to Second Lieutenant while also serving as a volunteer firefighter. After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001 he quickly deployed to Iraq. Over the next 10 years, he deployed three additional times to Iraq and once to Afghanistan. He retired from the military after 25 years in October 2013.

Frankie holds bachelor’s degrees in criminal justice, sociology, and public safety and master’s degrees in military science, public safety and emergency management. He is pursuing a doctorate in general psychology, with a goal of completion in Spring 2022. His dissertation centers around veterans and their positive assimilation back into the community upon discharge.

Finally, Frankie just purchased and moved into his new home in Panama City Beach and can officially say Bay County is home.

WHO WE ARE

Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating the emergency preparedness efforts of the county. We provide assistance to local jurisdictions and county agencies before, during, and after disaster strikes.

Our department manages the Emergency Operations Center, which facilitates planning and aid in the aftermath of a disaster. The center is made up of a staff of professionals and liaisons from area public safety agencies, non-governmental organizations, schools, military partners, and other key community stakeholders.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

- > Bay County Emergency Management continued to oversee COVID-19 testing sites to meet the needs of our citizens until June 1, 2021. More than 120,000 tests were provided at no charge to our residents.
- > Emergency Management worked in conjunction with the Florida Department of Health in Bay County and the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) to set up and oversee vaccination sites throughout Bay County. These sites provided both the initial and secondary vaccination.
- > Emergency Management also worked with the Governor’s Office and FDEM to establish and oversee a monoclonal antibody treatment site in order to provide an alternative therapy for people diagnosed with COVID-19 throughout Bay and surrounding counties, serving more than 4,000.
- > Bay County was the first of only four counties that established and managed their own testing and vaccinations sites.
- > Emergency Management was awarded a \$5,000 Volunteer Florida 2021-2022 Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)/Citizens Corps (CC) grant. This allowed us to begin the CERT program in Bay for the first time.

Emergency Management had an extremely active weather year. In the spring Bay County was hit by six tornados over a four-week period, affecting the entire county. We experienced two tropical storms (Fred and Mindy) along with unprecedented rainfall.

The yearly normal precipitation for Bay County is around 60 inches. The National Weather Service recalculates “normal” rainfall every 10 years, using the most recent 30 years of data, so the current normal is based on rainfall from 1991-2020. During a three-month timeframe (Aug-Oct) portions of Bay County received between 40 to 50 inches of rainfall, which is more than 200 percent of normal. For the year, more than 80 inches of rain occurred across portions of Bay County, which is more than 150 percent of normal.

Due to the lowering of COVID-19 restrictions, Emergency Management returned to overseeing the emergency response operations at both IronMan events, the four-day Gulf Coast Sea Breeze Jazz Festival and the three-day Gulf Coast Pepsi Jam.

Emergency Management was also able to resume Incident Command Structure (ICS) Training at the Emergency Operations Center. ICS was initially developed to address problems of inter-agency responses to wildfires in California and Arizona but is now a component of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) in the US, where it has evolved into use in All-Hazards situations, ranging from active shootings to HazMat scenes.

CONTACT US:

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www.baycountyfl.gov



WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Communications division oversees County operations of the 911 call center. We are co-located with the Bay County Sheriff's Office at the Emergency Operations Center. The call center is continuously staffed to field the emergency and non-emergency calls from our citizens and visitors.

Because an emergency can, and will, happen any time of day, our communications operators are always ready to take calls. We are responsible for all 911 medical and fire calls in Bay County. We also dispatch after-hours for Bay County Animal Control, Roads and Bridges, Traffic Engineering, Utilities, and the American Red Cross.

Our telecommunication operators are highly trained to handle extremely serious and stressful calls. Many callers who use 911 services are experiencing what they would consider the worst day of their life. It is the job of our communications operators to get them the help and resources they need.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Additional Staff

As call volume continues to increase, the Communications Division worked with county Administration and Human Resources to add four new supervisors. These supervisors ensure all calls into the call center are answered quickly, efficiently, and with empathy. These supervisors also ensure our telecommunicators are fully trained in their field.

Our telecommunicators are required to complete a rigorous training program consisting of a minimum of 610 hours in instruction, including classroom, on-the-job, scenario, and online training. Telecommunicators receive their 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator state certification upon successful completion of the program and state exam. A minimum of 20 hours of job-related training is required biennially to renew each telecommunicator's 911 Public Safety Telecommunicator certification.

These new supervisors are also responsible for annual training related to the 911 field. Training may consist of required annual training topics, refresher training, training in new procedures or new equipment, or any other training that would assist in developing the employees' skills.

State-mandated CPR Training

In February, EMS instructors Capt. Bridgette Whately and Lt. Gina Salaty taught state-mandated CPR to communications staff. Providing the training internally is a significant savings to the taxpayers.

Telecommunicators, including call takers and dispatchers, are true first responders and a critical link in the cardiac arrest chain of survival. Working with the 911 caller, telecommunicators have the first opportunity to identify a patient in cardiac arrest and provide initial care by delivering CPR instructions while quickly dispatching emergency medical services.

CONTACT US:

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www.baycountyfl.gov



employee spotlight

LINDSEY GRABBE

Telecommunications Operator Lindsey Grabbe is a longtime resident of Bay County and a dedicated employee.

Lindsey started her career as a tele-communications operator with Bay County in 2008, and is pursuing a degree in Emergency Management. During Hurricane Michael, Lindsey used her extensive skills to serve as the scribe for the incident commander. In this role, she recorded details and information that is critical to disaster response, receiving reimbursement, and making improvements in future responses.

Lindsey loves the high-paced environment that keeps her on her toes with something different every day. She is the single mom of a beautiful high-schooler, Angel.

CALL INFORMATION

INCIDENTS DISPATCHED	TYPE OF CALL	% OF CALLS
FIRE	10,101	16.8%
EMS	34,481	59.9%
EOC (R&B, ETC)	429	0.8%
OTHER AGENCIES WE PROVIDE FIRE DISPATCH FOR	19,270	22.5%
TOTAL	64,281	100.00%
PHONE CALLS (911/INCOMING & OUTGOING ADMIN)		
FIRE/EOC	47,337	48.4%
Fire Admin	29,149	26%
EMS Admin	26,282	25.6%
TOTAL	102,768	100.00%

emergency medical services (ems)



employee spotlight

KEVIN FRENCH

Paramedic-Firefighter Kevin French has been involved in emergency services for over 40 years. Kevin obtained his EMT certification (1978) and fire certification (1981) through Chipola College. He began his career with EMS in Bay County as an EMT in 1980 and in 1988 he obtained his paramedic certification through Gulf Coast State College. Kevin also works full-time as a lieutenant with the Airport Fire Department. He has been there for 40 years.

When asked why he continues to work as a first responder and what he likes most about his job, Kevin says, "the typical answer would be I enjoy helping people, which is the case, but I think to myself in the morning, Son, what else do you have to do today? All kidding aside, I enjoy the rewards that come with the job, the many lifelong friendships, the extended family and just making a difference in someone's life at their most vulnerable time." Kevin says he enjoys working with the new generation of EMTs and paramedics and passing on some of his wisdom and knowledge. He wants the new generation of EMS to be the finest and the brightest.

Kevin is admired and well respected by all first responders in Bay County. He takes great pride in ensuring his medical knowledge and his ability to provide outstanding patient care are always top level. His peers and supervisors describe him as someone who loves everyone and who has never met a stranger. He always reports to work with a smile and an extremely positive attitude.



WHO WE ARE

Bay County Emergency Medical Services Division (EMS) is a state-licensed Advanced Life Support (paramedic level) service. We answer all 9-1-1 emergency calls for service throughout Bay County, including the municipalities of Callaway, Lynn Haven, Panama City, Panama City Beach, Parker, and Springfield, along with the unincorporated portions of Bay County such as Southport, West Bay, Bayou George, Youngstown, and Fountain.

Working in conjunction with our municipal and county first-responder fire department and law-enforcement partners, Bay County EMS answers nearly 31,000 calls for service each year.

We provide emergency care, treatment, and transport for incidents such as heart attacks, strokes, illness, traumatic injuries, vehicle accidents, water rescues, industrial incidents, and rescues and structure fires in support of our fire department partners. We more than 70 Florida-licensed EMTs and paramedics operating under the medical direction of Dr. Linda Fox.

EMS operates between seven and 10 mobile intensive-care ambulances along with field operations command staff 24 hours a day, seven days a week from eight strategically placed stations located throughout Bay County.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

The COVID-19 pandemic continued to be a challenge throughout the year. Our first responders continued to provide outstanding patient care to the citizens of Bay County. Knowing their work was essential and that they were at risk at every moment of their day did not deter them from responding with grace and compassion. As we continue to navigate through life during this pandemic, EMS will continue to support Bay County.

- > In December, the Bay County Board of County Commissioners approved the purchase of three new ambulances with CARES Act funding. The COVID-19 pandemic continued to cause an increase in call volume, which also increased the amount of miles placed on the current EMS fleet. The purchase of three new ambulances ensured that EMS would continue to serve its community to the best of their ability.
- > Bay County EMS added a quick-response vehicle to Mexico Beach staffed with a paramedic to provide EMS coverage for The City of Mexico Beach. Our paramedics are proud to work closely with Mexico Beach Fire Rescue to provide quality, expedient care.
- > In spite of college campus changes, as well as hospital clinical procedure changes, in August 2021, Bay County EMS had seven employees graduate from the paramedic program at Gulf Coast State College. This program is a strenuous three-semester program that is offered once a year, beginning every fall. The program involves clinical rotations not only on the ambulance, but in the operating room, emergency room, catheterization lab, labor and delivery, pediatrics unit, and a respiratory rotation. Congratulations to Evan Campbell, Laura Kerr, Kristopher Pearish, Eric Ponce, Maranda Seagroves, Mark Stangl, and Timothy Thompson.
- > Our paramedics and EMTs constantly train to provide the best pre-hospital treatment possible. Throughout the year, we hosted numerous internal training courses. Several

CONTACT US:

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www.baycountyfl.gov

emergency medical services (ems)

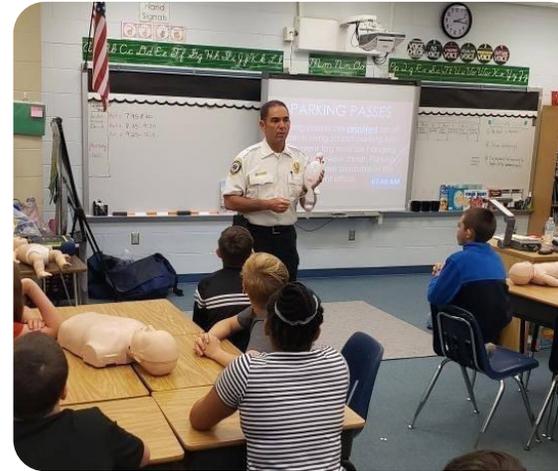


of our employees are certified instructors, which saves the taxpayer thousands of dollars annually. EMS Training Captain Bridgette Whately and her team of instructors provided 132 hours of continued education throughout the year including courses such as Emergency Pediatric Care (EPC), Principles of Ethics and Personal Leadership (PEPL), Advanced Medical Life Support (AMLS), and Geriatric Education for EMS (GEMS)

- > Refresher courses were provided for Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) as well as Basic Life Support (BLS). EMTs and paramedics are required to renew their respective certifications in each of these disciplines every two years. The ACLS course reviews the treatment of cardiac arrest, stroke, myocardial infarction and other life-threatening cardiovascular emergencies. The BLS course reviews the skills needed to provide cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) for all patients from infants to senior adults.
- > In September, several EMS supervisors completed three days of "EMS Refresher and Ambulance Familiarization Training," with members of the Panama City Fire Department. The three days of training included a refresher on the location of equipment on the ambulance, preparing normal saline IV bags, BLS airway adjuncts, blood glucose measuring, stretcher operations, and use of the automated compression device. We are proud to have such an amazing relationship with the Panama City Fire Department and all of the first responder agencies in Bay County. When we train together the community will always receive the best care possible!
- > We continue to participate in community events, including medical standbys for high school football games. The "#FridayNightLights" campaign is popular on the Bay County, FL Emergency Services Facebook page. Bay County EMS also participates in high profile stand-by events such as the Gulf Coast Jam, Ironman and Gulf Coast triathlon.
- > Throughout the year, the EMS Division took on the monumental task of providing COVID-19 vaccinations to all first responders in Bay County. Over 500 first responders received vaccinations to assist in the fight against COVID-19. EMS was also involved in providing vaccinations for homebound residents and Veterans of World War II and the Korean War as part of the White House Mission to vaccinate veterans.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > Several EMS employees were promoted during the year to positions in leadership. Paramedics Nic Dickinson, Erik Lowe, James Lundeen, and Kevin Shipp were promoted to lieutenant. Lieutenants Shawn McCardle and Lawrence Smith were promoted to captain. Lieutenant Jessica Lundeen was promoted to captain - critical incident and operations manager. Assistant Chief Danny Page was promoted to EMS division chief. Congratulations!!
- > Paramedic Chuck Kendrick and Captain Joel Welch were honored for their 20 years of service with EMS in Bay County. We are eternally grateful for their sacrifice and commitment each and every day!





employee spotlight

SHIQUAN GREEN

Shiquan Green, or Shaq as he is known to his fellow firefighters, is originally from Washington County and has been with Bay County Fire Rescue for two years. Shaq keeps us all laughing with his quick wit and dry sense of humor. A video of Shaq swinging on a swing set between fire calls was viewed over 30,000 times on the county Facebook page. This is just one example of his carefree spirit.

Shaq also volunteers with Washington County Fire Rescue and The City of Vernon Fire Rescue. In November 2020, he was appointed the Volunteer Fire Chief of the City of Vernon. As one of the youngest fire chiefs in that city's history, he is bringing new and innovative ideas to their department.

Shaq says that volunteering in his neighborhood is why he decided to go into the first responder field. "I continue to work as a first responder because I enjoy helping out the community when they are in need," says Shiquan. "I enjoy every part from medical calls to structure fires. I also enjoy how family oriented the department is as a whole."

When he is not serving the citizens of Bay or Washington counties, Shaq loves to be outdoors. He is an avid hunter, fisherman, and enjoys trail riding on his four-wheeler and horses.

WHO WE ARE

Bay County Fire Rescue serves the rural and suburban unincorporated areas of Bay County responding to structure and wildland fires as well as first responder calls in assistance to Bay County Emergency Medical Services. Bay County Fire Rescue has Advanced Life Support (ALS) engines at three stations for quick response to the Sand Hills, West End, Youngstown and Fountain districts.

Bay County Fire Rescue responds to mutual aid and automatic aid calls with county municipal fire departments. The Bay County Hazardous Materials Team is operated by Fire Rescue and assists fire departments and law enforcement agencies throughout the region with hazardous materials issues. The Surf Rescue Team provides water rescue assets and personnel to the unincorporated areas of the beach. With around 80 percent of calls being medical in nature, BCFR personnel are required to be dual-certified to at least the Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) level. All officer-level positions now require a paramedic certification for promotion.

BCFR consists of 65 career personnel and 35 volunteers. BCFR occupies 13 stations in unincorporated Bay County.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Chief Brad Monroe

Bay County Emergency Services Deputy Chief Bradley S. Monroe was named to succeed Chief Mark Bowen, who retired in December 2020 after an exemplary career with Bay County Emergency Services. Chief Monroe began his career in public safety in 1979. He is a veteran who served in active duty during the Persian Gulf War, and he worked in emergency management with the State of Florida prior to his employment with Bay County. Chief Monroe has worked for 14 years for Bay County serving as a firefighter and battalion chief prior to his promotion to deputy chief of Emergency Services in March 2008. As deputy chief of Emergency Services, Monroe coordinated responses to such large-scale incidents as the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Hurricane Michael. He currently supervises the day-to-day operations of Fire Rescue, Emergency Management, Emergency Medical Services, and the county's Communication and 800 MHz Radio divisions.

Surf Rescue

As a result of the high-volume of water rescue calls over the past few years, Bay County Fire Rescue has fully implemented a Surf Rescue Team. The team is in close partnership with the Bay County Sheriff's Office and Panama City Beach Fire Department's Beach Safety Division. Operational costs are funded through bed taxes collected by the Tourist Development Council.

Team members are accredited by the United States Lifesaving Association to perform open water rescue. Unlike pools and waterparks, which are relatively similar regardless of locale, the crowd conditions, water currents, waves, dangerous animals, weather, and related conditions of open water differ greatly and pose unique obstacles to maintaining water safety.

To become qualified team members must be able to run a mile in under 10 minutes, swim 500 meters in under 10 minutes, and complete an open water rescue course. The team also receives training on using rescue boards and other personal flotation devices.

The team is made up of state certified firefighters, Emergency Medical Technicians, and paramedics who are proficient in the latest lifesaving techniques. The team is part of a total system that includes the coordinated efforts of surrounding agencies and jurisdictions including area fire departments, area law enforcement, city and county lifeguards, and the United States Coast Guard.

Fire Schools

The COVID-19 pandemic precluded our participation in the events we love the most: elementary school details. We were thrilled to be part of a sendoff for the Waller Elementary children as their buses left for the summer, and we enjoyed being a part of their Community Day when students returned in the fall. We were also honored to implement an annual flag retirement ceremony with Waller Elementary, wherein students learn proper flag handling. We participated in several events at Bozeman School, including parades, fire prevention details, career day, and elementary field day.

CONTACT US:

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Multi-Agency Training

Bay County Fire Rescue and Panama City Beach Fire Department instructors taught a Pump Operations course to students from six agencies: BCFR, Panama City Beach Fire Department, Callaway Fire Department, Springfield Fire Department, Panama City Fire Department, and Fort Walton Beach Fire Department.

Teaching the courses using fire department instructors brings significant savings to taxpayers. Instructors from BCFR were Lieutenants Paul Hagan and Jerrad Hiers.

Rebuild Florida

Bay County Fire Rescue is proud to be part of the recovery of our communities. The Sand Hills and Youngstown fire stations hosted several mobile pop-up centers to assist homeowners with applications for assistance for home repair, rebuilding, or replacement.

Pet O2 Masks

Each year, more than 40,000 pets die in fires, mainly due to smoke inhalation. Animals tend to hide and by the time firefighters find them, they often have a critical need for supplementary oxygen. Bay County Fire Rescue saves pets' lives with our specialty pet oxygen masks. The masks are on all of our fire apparatus, come in three sizes to fit cats, dogs, small pets, and even birds. The masks are reusable and are treated as an important tool in our life-saving arsenal.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Tim Howard - The State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) for Hazardous Materials selected Capt. Tim Howard to receive the Thomas Yatabe Certificate of Outstanding Achievement, recognizing his superior participation in hazardous materials planning or response and his contributions to the West Florida LEPC.

Billy Writch - In his 25 years with the county, Capt. Billy Writch has become known as the "Forestry Guru". He is our subject-matter expert on wildland firefighting and coordinates our personnel's training and certifications with the Florida Forest Service, Gulf Coast State College, and other agencies. Capt. Writch's knowledge and expertise has become especially important with the increased fire danger we face after Hurricane Michael.

Ike Smith - In March, Lt. Ike Smith was appointed as Tactical Medic to the Bay County Sheriff Office's Special Weapons and Tactics team (SWAT). The Tactical Medic is a certified medical professional trained to provide life-saving care and, sometimes, transport in situations such as tactical police operations, active shooters, bombings, and natural disasters.

Mark Bowen/Brad Price Public Safety Hall of Fame

Retired Chief Mark Bowen was inducted into the Gulf Coast Public Safety Hall of Fame. During his tenure at Bay County, Chief Bowen was responsible for the implementation of many programs, policies, and procedures that have helped shape the progress of Bay County's Emergency Services including the conversion from a volunteer to career fire department, construction and relocation of several new county fire stations, the construction of the Emergency Operations Center at Southport, and the blending of dispatch operations with the Bay County Sheriff's Office.

Promotion Ceremony

After a pandemic-driven hiatus, a pinning ceremony was held for Bay County Emergency Services employees. Receiving pins were Firefighters Alexander Miller and Leo Padua, Engineers Justin Barron, Lucas Kisela, and Michael Laramore, Lts. Joshua Crundwell and Paul Hagan, and Capt. Steven Whitters, and Logistics Section Chief Seth Imhof.



alertbay - emergency notification system

stay prepared in an emergency.

When disaster strikes, how will you and your family be notified? Protect yourself and your loved ones in Bay County by signing up for **AlertBay Emergency Notifications**.



ALERTBAY: A MASS NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

In Bay County, we use AlertBay, a partnership with the State of Florida's Division of Emergency Management and the AlertFlorida mass notification system, to keep our citizens and visitors informed. The system is extremely valuable in keeping residents, visitors, government staff, and emergency personnel safe and in-the-know with quick and reliable emergency notifications and public safety announcements about a range of events, such as severe weather, fires, floods, active shooters, or other emergencies. Messages are sent to residents on their preferred contact paths—cell phone, SMS text messaging, home phone, email, and more—to ensure real-time access to potentially lifesaving information. The program is funded entirely by the state, saving Bay County taxpayers more than \$100,000 annually.

AlertBay has certainly come in handy over the last few years during emergency events such as Hurricane Michael and the pandemic. In FY21, AlertBay issued 1,360 notifications between the county, municipalities, law enforcement, and the school district. With 27,270 subscribers, users were able to text keyword "Bayhealth" to 888-777 to get regular updates about COVID-19 and related information, including testing sites, mitigation efforts, and updates on cases. With 25,789 subscribers, users were also able to text keyword "PCB-Flags" to 888-777 for daily updates about beach surf conditions. Some 497 keyword messages were issued.

To ensure notification when a specific location in Bay County is threatened by an event or severe weather, simply register an address and contact information into an AlertBay profile, available at www.alertbay.org. Users may set up a separate profile for each person in a household to ensure that each person gets the message.

Once a message is confirmed, the system will not make any further contact about the event.

With multiple ways to subscribe, the free Everbridge app is the recommended way to receive alerts from AlertBay, as it allows alerts from throughout the state of Florida.

AlertBay is a partnership between the Bay County Board of County Commissioners, the Bay County Sheriff's Office, local municipalities, and the school district, enabling each entity to send out emergency calls specific to their audiences.

Visitors to Bay County can subscribe to AlertBay by texting the keyword **ALERTBAY** to **888777**, and opt in to receive important alerts during their stay.

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK
@ BAYCOUNTYFLEMERGENCYSERVICES**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT
ALERTBAY OR FOR HELP REGISTERING,
CONTACT BAY COUNTY EMERGENCY
SERVICES AT (850) 248-6040.**



WHO WE ARE

Bay County Animal Control is responsible for protecting the public's health and safety and enforcing Florida state statutes and Bay County ordinances related to animal issues and owners' responsibility for animals. Services are provided to all of the municipalities in Bay County, except the City of Lynn Haven, through inter-local agreements. Our goal is to protect the interests of animals, owners, and non-owners alike.

We are also responsible for the operations of Bay County's only open-admission animal shelter where all stray, unowned, and owned animals are accepted. We provide daily care for these animals while working to reunite them with their owners or find them a new home. Our shelter serves as the location for all Animal Control operations.

The Animal Control Division has 14 staff members, all of whom are trained to handle any of the tasks related to our operations.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Due to the many life-altering events of last year, this year has just begun to return to some normalcy for Bay County Animal Control.

- > After closing the shelter due to COVID-19, reopening was a slow and intentional process. We fully intended to utilize what we had learned from the previous year to ensure that our operations were efficient but safe for our staff and the community.
- > Adoption events gave way to "normal" operations as the shelter reopened for adoptions and the community began to come back in looking for their new family members.
- > As our shelter is back open and fully operational, we encourage the community to come in and take a look at our remodeled lobby and see what other changes have occurred since COVID-19, such as our new tunnel and teeter-totter in the dog park,
- > Here at BCAC we retained our appointment-only service for owner surrenders from the community. This allows staff to not only ensure that visitors remain safe while visiting the shelter, but it also assists in managing the population here at the shelter.
- > This year James Sanchez, community member and a member of Boy Scout Troop 317, led his troop on his Eagle Scout project and donated a custom-built outdoor "cattery" for BCAC. The lovely addition was donated in May and since then has seen many of our feline pets able to leave their kennels and enjoy natural sunlight and fresh air. There is even a covered swing for those wishing to enjoy the outdoors with them.
- > Tropical Storm Fred brought minor damage, but the rain was abundant as was the flooding of many streets and roadways. Animal Control officers maintained their presence on the roads and worked tirelessly to assist the community and the many animals that call Bay County home.

For Bay County Animal Control, there have been a lot of tough lessons that taught us what it means to be adaptive and overcoming. We do not take these lessons lightly and look forward to implementing what we have learned to ensure that the citizens of Bay County have an animal control agency of which they can be proud.



employee spotlight

SYDNEY GOULDING

Originally from Atlanta suburb Lawrenceville, GA, Sydney Goulding moved to Bay County two years ago following Hurricane Michael. As Bay County was rebuilding, Sydney began building a new life for herself here as well.

Having worked in animal shelters before, Sydney knew that she wanted to continue working with animals here in Bay County. She quickly secured a position with the county as one of our Animal Control officers.

"I have a great passion for animals and making sure they are properly cared for, safe, and healthy," she said. Sydney says that she continues her work with Animal Control because saving one animal may not change the world, but it will forever change the world for that animal and its family.

When not on the job, Sydney spends her time under the surface of the water. SCUBA diving is Sydney's favorite hobby, and she loves exploring the beautiful world and getting lost in the quiet serenity beneath the water's surface.

Whether she is on the road as certified Animal Control Officer, working in the shelter helping with the many pets that call it home, diving off the beautiful Gulf coast, or staying loyal to her University of Georgia Bulldogs (GO DAWGS!), one thing remains the same, Sydney's dedication to the community she serves.

CONTACT US:

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employee spotlight

RICKY SMITH

Ricky Smith started his position as a Parks worker with the Bay County Parks and Recreation Division in October 2018 after working for several years for Solid Waste. For six years, his continued dedication and work ethic has been an inspiration to his co-workers and supervisory staff. Ricky's skills and knowledge of heavy equipment operation, irrigation, and light construction are impressive, and, to top it off, he is an even greater leader and a real asset to the division.

Mr. Smith has seen many changes for the Parks and Recreation Division in his time in the department and now helps lead the front line of making Bay County's parks the best they can be. Ricky has continued to develop his skill set in his time with the county while branching out from traditional heavy equipment operation to an athletic field specialist. Mr. Smith says the biggest change in six years with the Parks Department is the expansion of services and professionalism of the department.



WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Parks and Recreation Division provides recreational services and facilities for use by Bay County citizens and visitors. The division is tasked with the maintenance and operations of 26 recreational and athletic parks, 21 boat ramps, 44 beach accesses, the M.B. Miller County Pier, and the Bay County Shooting Range. The Bay County Parks and Recreation Division works diligently to understand the recreational needs of the citizens of Bay County, through community outreach, and input, planning, and project development, ensures that these needs are fulfilled.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

During 2021, the Bay County Parks and Recreation Division has continued its recovery from the damages caused by Hurricane Michael, which devastated the county's park facilities in October of 2018. Hurricane repair projects included new LED lighting for the lower soccer fields at Harder's Park. Other major projects that were not storm-related include renovation and repair of the Southport Community Building and the completion of renovation of the Majette Disc Golf Course. In the last year, our service has really started to transition from repairs to operating the facilities for the public's enjoyment. As the community has rebounded, the parks have seen more teams, tournaments, and special events than in years past.

- > All baseball and softball field infields have been reworked and are maintained year-round by in-house staff to ensure safety and optimum playability.
- > The M.B. Miller pier saw a record number of visitors in 2021.
- > The Bay County Parks and Recreation Division's lifeguard staff monitored the beaches at the M.B. Miller Pier and Rick Seltzer Park with no fatal drownings during the summer of 2021.
- > The Parks and Recreation Department has prepared parks for over 1,600 scheduled events this year.

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WHO WE ARE

Bay County Facilities Management provides maintenance and support to the buildings and departments under the purview of the Bay County Board of County Commissioners. Facilities maintains/manages 110 buildings/structures totaling 1.2 million square feet. Services provided by Facilities Management include large/small building improvements, routine and preventive building maintenance, custodial services, project management, and grounds maintenance.

Facilities Management is dedicated to the enhancement of our customers' working environment while remaining good stewards of the facilities that serve Bay County citizens.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Last year was another busy one for Facilities Management as we wound down from our Hurricane Michael repairs and COVID-19 protocols and transitioned to focusing more on routine maintenance repairs, preventive maintenance, and planned projects. In response to our shift in priorities, Facilities Management executed and processed \$960,000 in Hurricane repairs and \$2.25 million in repair, maintenance, and planned projects. Listed below are some of the highlights accomplished over the past year.

Building maintenance:

- > Responded to 257 high priority; 1,535 medium priority; and 227 low priority maintenance calls.
- > Accomplished preventive maintenance on 1,208 pieces of HVAC equipment.

Building improvements:

- > Bay County Health Department – replaced 140-ton chiller.
- > Court Storage Building – resealed 6,500 square feet of metal roof with a high solid silicone coating.
- > Government Center Building – replaced carpeting in the Traffic and Code Enforcement suites, remodeled an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) bathroom in the Property Appraiser's Office, and replaced the flooring in the entrance rotunda.
- > Tourist Development Council – replaced 8,740 square feet of standing seam metal roof.
- > Traffic Engineering – insulated the traffic signal shop and installed the appropriate HVAC system to allow employees to work in a climate-controlled environment.
- > Sheriff's Office – complete a remodel of both the men's and women's employee bathrooms.
- > Medical Examiner's Office – completed hurricane repairs by replacing 7,380 square feet of metal roof.
- > Bay County Jail – completed hurricane repairs of the fire protection system, exterior lighting, and camera systems.
- > Southport Community Building – replaced the hurricane damaged roof on the building and outlying pavilions and made interior repairs to the facility.

Contracted Services

- > Executed a new custodial services contract for Bay County facilities.
- > Executed a new grounds maintenance contract for the Bay County Courthouse and supporting facilities.
- > Initiated a new grounds maintenance contract for Bay County properties.

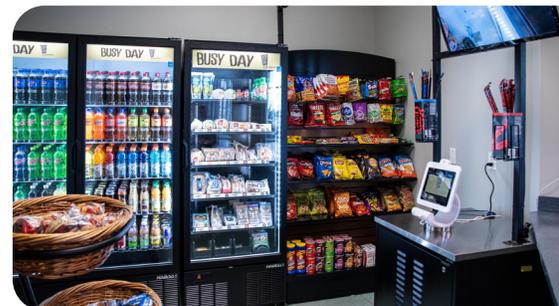
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**employee spotlight****JASON BECK**

Jason Beck is a highly motivated individual who takes pride in his work and can be counted on to get the job done. He has worked for Bay County for seven years, beginning in Roads and Bridges on the concrete/pipe crew, then moving on to Animal Control as an Animal Control officer/supervisor. Prior to working for Bay County, Jason worked 21 years in the structural field as a block/brick mason, so when the opportunity presented itself for a job within Facilities, he applied for and was selected to his current position as a structural technician. Jason has since become an integral part of the Facilities Management team and is a crucial asset in our ability to provide quality service to our customers.

Jason, like many of us, is a transplant to the region, originally hailing from Plains, GA. Growing up on a 172,000-acre peanut farm, Jason loved hearing stories from his Uncle Jimmy as he recounted the memories from his time in Washington, DC. Well alright, that part might not be true, but he is from Georgia (Moultrie) and he has the accent to prove it.





employee spotlight

CHRISTINA RAFFIELD

Solid Waste Heavy Equipment Operator Christina Raffield began working with Bay County as a weighmaster at the Steelfield Landfill, but expressed the desire and aptitude to operate heavy machinery and equipment. She developed her skills and abilities and worked her way into an equipment operator position, and eventually, to her current position operating heavy equipment. Christina can now skillfully operate any of the equipment that we have onsite and is an integral part of the landfill's operation.

In addition to being able to operate any big machine put before her, Christina is the proud mother of two young children, and she and her husband live in the community of Steelfield Fish Camp, and she enjoys a short commute to work with no red lights.

We are so grateful to Christina for her commitment to Bay County Solid Waste, and we consider her an integral part of our team.



WHO WE ARE

The Solid Waste Division provides solid waste disposal, household hazardous material disposal, and recycling services for all of the citizens of Bay County. The division is comprised of the Bay County Waste to Energy (WTE) facility; the Steelfield Road Landfill; Recycling, Household Hazardous Waste and the Small-Quantity Generator environmental programs. The division is also responsible for the long-term care and environmental monitoring of Majette Park, which is a closed landfill.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

New Cell Construction - The Solid Waste Division completed the construction of a new 34-acre lined disposal area. This construction project cost \$17.5 million and created more than 5 million cubic yards of additional disposal space that will provide disposal capacity until 2035.

Closure of the Bay County Waste-to-Energy facility - The Bay County Waste-to-Energy facility began operation in 1987, using municipal trash as fuel to produce electricity, a process similar to that used in coal-fired electrical generation plants. Escalating operational and maintenance costs of the aging facility forced its closure in January 2021.

Reduction in Tipping Fees - The closure of the Waste-to-Energy facility resulted in significant cost savings, allowing the division to reduce customers' disposal costs from \$56.73 per ton to \$36 per ton. Currently, the Steelfield Road Landfill is the only disposal facility in Bay County permitted to accept municipal solid waste.



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www.baycountyfl.gov



Tonnages and Customer Usage – During FY2021, more than 96,493 vehicles crossed the scales at one of our facilities. In total, the division processed and disposed of more than 268,073 tons of material.

Waste Amnesty Days –The Solid Waste Division hosts two waste amnesty events each year, allowing residents the opportunity to dispose of waste and debris from their properties at no charge. Bay County has hosted these events for more than 20 years. During 2021, we had 2,234 customers cross the scales and took in 1,097 tons of waste. We also collected 1,039 tires and 475 appliances.



employee spotlight

TYRUS JAMES

As the newest member of the Human Resource team, Tyrus James is our information specialist, meaning he loves to deep dive into data. We have learned quickly that his trademark feature is the bowtie he wears to work most days.

Moving to Panama City at a young age, Tyrus graduated from Rutherford High School and completed his undergraduate work at Florida State University. He then went on to obtain his Masters Degree in Human Resources Management from Troy University.

Tyrus has a passion for helping people and putting smiles on their faces, which is what ultimately led him to the field of Human Resources.

An avid sports fan, he is especially passionate about college football and the National Basketball Association. Although he graduated from Florida State, he is a “Cane” and not a “Nole”!

Tyrus is always on the lookout for a good basketball pickup game and can often be found at a park shooting hoops with his son who is almost two years old.

He enjoys all things Marvel and DC Comics related and is a collector of anything to do with Batman. His spare time is also taken up with video games, anime, music and most importantly, spending time with his son.

We are excited that Tyrus joined our team and look forward to the many contributions he will make to our HR mission.



WHO WE ARE

The Human Resources Department is made up of six dedicated team members whose daily mission is to serve our more than 600 employees as well as the citizens of Bay County. We provide support and guidance concerning employment, benefits, retirement, continuing education, and more. We are passionate about our goal to provide the highest caliber of workplace experience that values personal growth, fairness, diversity, and mutual respect. In doing so, we can continue to offer a working environment that ensures success at every stage of employment and makes the Bay County Board of County Commissioners a coveted place to work.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

At last we saw promising signs of recovery from Hurricane Michael this past year. For the first time since the storm, we saw a marked increase in the number of applicants for available positions within the county. With a greater pool of candidates, our departments were able to be more selective and hire better qualified employees.

- > HR received 1,883 online employment applications and 65 paper applications.
- > HR reviewed and referred 1,777 candidates and rejected 171 applications from candidates who did not meet minimum qualifications.
- > HR on-boarded 146 new hires.
- > HR processed 85 promotions, 72 resignations, 21 retirements, five probationary dismissals, five involuntary separations and 49 disciplinary actions.
- > HR processed 94 Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) packets.

Performance Management Program

- > Annual performance evaluations are a very important part of our employee/employer relationship and provide our employees with valuable feedback on their work performance each year. Last year Human Resources reviewed 431 Performance Evaluations with an above average score of 3.58 out of 5.

Training and Development

- > Our employees are very fortunate to have a county manager who realizes the importance of ongoing training and we continue to grow our training programs and empower our employees with knowledge.
- > During this past year we honed our Servant Leadership Program and nearly all employees in management roles completed the program, which consisted of three four-hour classes with a total of 46 in attendance. The goal of this program is to develop leaders whose main goal is to put the needs of their employees first by helping them to develop and succeed at their jobs.
- > We also fine tuned our Leadership Development Academy offering 14 classes this past year. There were 22 employees who attended these classes and we will have 13 graduates in the near future. These employees have voluntarily gone through this program to enhance their leadership skills and will no doubt make our organization and the employees they serve stronger.

CONTACT US:

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www.baycountyfl.gov



- > A total of 40 classes were offered in our New Employee Academy with 110 new hires in attendance. These classes provide education on important employment law topics, as well as workplace culture and relationships. New employees must attend all required classes before they are eligible to move to regular status employment.
- > Another learning opportunity for our employees was provided by JT Thompson, our wellness consultant who continued to coach and provide assistance to his clients even during the COVID-19 shutdown. He provided 20 seminars, many via Zoom, onsite interactive training and six offsite events with employee participation.

Major Projects

- > In 2021 the Human Resources Department oversaw the implementation of a new compensation plan. This new compensation plan will better prepare our county for the implementation of Florida's gradual minimum wage increase, as well as enhancing the county's ability to attract and retain a highly skilled, diverse, and innovative workforce.

Wellness Initiative

- > In 2021 we continued to provide our annual health fairs in partnership with FL Blue where the employee receives a free biometric screening and counseling session with a registered nurse. This marked our 17th consecutive year, making us FL Blue's longest-standing customer for annual health fairs in our region. We can see the value of providing this service, along with the free health coaching by wellness Coach JT Thompson, by the continuing decline of employees with critical values at these health fairs.
- > JT saw 354 employees or their spouses in 2021, including 51 new participants. In addition to his one-on-one counseling sessions, he makes himself available throughout the week for his clients.

Giving Back To The Community

- > Bay County employees once again came through for our citizens by participating in three blood drives we hosted in 2021. We are one of OneBlood's biggest group donors and they depend on our employees to provide much needed blood supply for those in need at our local hospitals. We are proud to report that our employees donated a total of 463 units of blood in 2021, potentially saving 1,389 lives.
- > Our wonderful Bay County employees also stepped up to help those in need once again by volunteering at a Christmas-themed mobile food pantry at the Bay County Government Center on Saturday, Dec. 12, 2020. Working alongside other community volunteers we hope we made our citizens holidays a little bit brighter. There were 75 volunteers who handed out 20,000 pounds of food serving about 600 households.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

- > Five employees were recognized for 20 years of service with Bay County
- > Ten employees were recognized for 25 years of service with Bay County
- > Two employees were recognized for 30 years of service with Bay County
- > One employee was recognized for 35 years of service with Bay County



information technology / geographic information systems



employee spotlight

JP MEREDITH

JP Meredith began working for Bay County in May 2021 as the GIS asset management specialist. He oversees both the implementation and technical administration of the county's various work order systems. Additionally, JP works with department leadership to align their goals and ensure their GIS needs are met. JP retired from the U.S. Air Force in July 2021 after completing 24 years of service. His last duty assignment was at Tyndall Air Force Base 601 Air Operations Center as the flight chief for the Imagery Analysis Cell. He has been married to his wife Jen for 19 years, and they have three children together, Nathaniel (23) living in San Antonio, TX; Olivia (18), a senior at Rutherford High School; and Jacob (7) in first grade at Tommy Smith Elementary School.



INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (IT)

WHO WE ARE

The Information Technology Division provides reliable and stable infrastructure for telecommunications and data management, maintaining all computers, video security systems, access control, mobile devices, and other electronic-related systems. IT assists with the technical aspects of our various websites and assists others with reports and technical matters. IT is also responsible for network connectivity, software deployment, database creation and management, email services, and overall information security.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

The Information Technology Division was instrumental in employee work-from-home deployment as part of the county's COVID-19 response. During the year, IT was focusing on recovery and repairs to the county's infrastructure after Hurricane Michael (bringing sites back online), while also continuing daily support of county offices and employees working from home. Last year we:

- > Supported county operations by providing a reliable and stable network with 99-percent up time, making county services available to citizens without delays.
- > Implemented and maintained patch management, keeping the county's data safe and secure. In addition, scheduled enhanced vulnerability scanning is an important component of the IT security program.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

WHO WE ARE

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) provides mapping services and products to internal county departments, the public, and other agencies. The GIS Division functions as a service-focused central resource of geographic information. We provide customer assistance, mapping, spatial analysis, data integration, application development, and deployment of content-specific web-mapping solutions to provide access to geographic data. Our web maps are available 24 hours a day for users to access the information they need.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

- > Continued to provide support and insights to aid county and city departments on Hurricane Michael recovery efforts.
- > Redeployed web-mapping infrastructure to the cloud, ensuring greater reliability and responsiveness.
- > Continued collaboration with Emergency Services to facilitate a major GIS-centric upgrade to Next Generation 9-1-1.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8004 | it@baycountyfl.gov | gis@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov



WHO WE ARE

Bay County Capital Projects provides construction management services on Bay County vertical construction projects (buildings). Capital projects are typically \$250,000 and greater. We work with the Purchasing Department to advertise for invitations for bids and requests for proposals. We also work with architects and engineers in the design phase and manage the project during construction until completion.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2020?

In 2021, we managed approximately \$4 million in vertical construction projects and design, including grant-funded projects, renovations, and construction of new buildings. The new Finance building at 225 McKenzie Ave. was one of the first projects wherein Bay County Capital Projects was the general contractor, pulled building permits, and contracted directly with the subcontractors.

Projects include:

- > Design of the Federal Courthouse
- > Electrical study on the old existing courthouse electrical system
- > Developed programming and a conceptual design on the first and second floors of the existing courthouse
- > Constructed the Sheriff's Office new grant-funded building
- > Completed renovations of 225 McKenzie Ave.
- > Designed the Bay Dunes Community Center Complex



CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8120 | facilities@baycountyfl.gov
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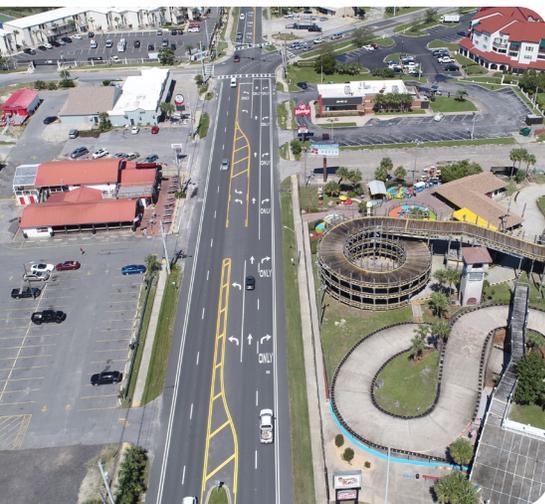


employee spotlight

JOSEE CYR

Bay County Assistant Public Works Director Josee Cyr began working for the county in 1994 as an engineer, moving her way up through the ranks as a stormwater engineer and engineering manager until her promotion to assistant director in 2020.

Josee received her civil engineering degree from the University of New Brunswick, Canada and a master's in business administration from Florida State University. Josee is an invaluable resource to Bay County Public Works with her extensive knowledge of stormwater engineering and her tireless dedication to assisting Bay County residents resolve their drainage and stormwater issues. She has two daughters in college and enjoys vegetable gardening and camping in her spare time.



WHO WE ARE

The Engineering Division is staffed with professional engineers, a licensed professional surveyor, surveying parties, engineering technicians, FDOT-certified inspectors, and administrative staff dedicated to providing quality surveying, transportation and stormwater engineering, and construction management for the citizens of Bay County.

Engineering aims to provide the citizens of Bay County with quality best-value engineering services in support of the construction, maintenance, and repair of Bay County's roads and stormwater management systems and capital improvement projects.

The Engineering Division is responsible for providing program management, design, permitting, inspection, and construction management services necessary to implement Public Works' transportation and stormwater programs. Additional responsibilities include improving the safety and efficiency of the county's transportation and stormwater systems; assisting Roads and Bridges in road maintenance; handling citizen inquiries; managing the Participating Paving Program (PPP); and managing the Adopt-a-Highway Program.

Engineering's priorities include:

- > Assisting the Roads and Bridges Division as needed.
- > Facilitating the Half-Cent Surtax Capital Improvement Program.
- > Completing design of projects generated by Roads and Bridges work requests.
- > Assisting other county departments.
- > Applying for and managing grants.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

In 2021, Engineering:

- > Continued Hurricane Michael recovery, with various roadway repairs and rehabilitation as well as stormwater facility and piping repairs.
- > Continued the implementation of a three-year program to repair paved roadways identified by a previous study.
- > Provided assistance to other departments in surveying, evaluating, repairing or demolishing many county facilities, including lighting at Harders Park, asbestos surveys for proposed building demolitions, preliminary site plans, finish floor elevations, and temporary fire stations.

Engineering has been working on Hurricane Michael-related projects, such as dirt road paving, timber bridge replacements, stormwater improvement, and new shelter facilities.

Engineering also implemented the following Capital Improvement Plan projects:

- > Thomas Drive resurfacing
- > Jenks Avenue widening
- > FY21 local dirt road stabilization
- > Titus Road extension
- > Nehi Road stabilization
- > S. Silver Lake Road stabilization
- > Wildwood intersection improvement
- > S. Silver Lake dirt road stabilization
- > Wiregrass and Smith dirt road stabilization
- > FY20 pavement preservation
- > Jenks Avenue widening
- > FY21 County Road 389 resurfacing
- > FY21 local road resurfacing

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8301 | engineering@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov

WHO WE ARE

The Mosquito Control Division's priority is the prevention of mosquito-borne viruses. We are staffed by professional technicians certified in Public Health Pest Control, licensed through the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, to provide professional mosquito control services that protect the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of Bay County. We have three main areas to our operation: identification, larvaciding, and adultciding. Our main areas of operation are: mosquito sample collection and identification; arbovirus surveillance; and testing, larvaciding, adultciding, and source reduction throughout the county.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Significant precipitation from the previous year came with its challenges and setbacks, and each of our teams worked diligently throughout the year for a positive outcome. As we concluded the year we learned that the county's vegetation has changed tremendously and can no longer withstand long periods of heavy rainfall from the loss of trees since Hurricane Michael. We implemented a new Granular Larvacide Program that allows for greater disbursement of product over a large open area, greatly improving the efficacy of treatments.

As the mosquito season began early in the spring, we moved quickly in our efforts to treat all 25 districts with a special focus on known low areas that are susceptible to holding water. As we transitioned to summer, Hurricane Elsa, Tropical Storm Fred and Hurricane Ida brought an extraordinary amount of 87.94 inches of rainfall. This led to greater challenges to our team as we struggled through constant rain to treat all areas and closely monitor the efficacy of treatments, especially since an abundance of water tends to diminish our proactive measures.

We strategically relocated some of our traps and added four new additional trap sites to obtain enhanced empirical data. The rise in precipitation greatly increased the number of trapped mosquitoes compared to previous years based on our logged data. To ensure public health and safety, we conducted more than 300 randomized triple panel tests in search of mosquito-borne diseases. All concluded in negative results which is a welcomed victory for our team and the citizens of Bay County.

Identification Operations:

- > Deployed, set and retrieved traps 2,038 times
- > Counted and identified 41,241 mosquitoes

Larvaciding Operations:

- > Answered 223 service requests
- > Inspected 5,201 mosquito breeding sites
- > Treated 6,652 sites
- > Stocked 109 pools with minnows
- > Manually back-pack sprayed 90 sites for a total coverage of 29.36 acres
- > Removed 532 abandoned waste tires
- > Performed 99 neighborhood sweeps
- > Treated 4,982 storm drains

Identification Operations:

- > Traveled 17,835 miles
- > Sprayed 1,141 times
- > Treated 648,580 acres

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8720 | mosquito@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov

**employee spotlight****ROBERT NOWACZYK**

Robert Nowaczyk began work with Bay County in 2013. His previous work history gave him the experience needed to become a technician for Mosquito Control. He began his career in the late 1970s with a local pest control company, and later he transitioned to a contracting company that offered mosquito control services for Tyndall Air Force Base. Bob's knowledge of field work and his expertise with mosquitoes continues to translate to this day. He enjoys making contact with Bay County citizens and exceeding their expectations when he treats their mosquito issues. Bob's best qualities contributed to his becoming a senior technician. He is known to be very thorough when he shows up to a site and diligently listens to citizens' concerns. In his free time, Bob is a true outdoorsman and enjoys turkey hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing, music, and light gardening.





employee spotlight

KIM BARBERO

Last year was a difficult year for our Roads and Bridges family. Many of our staff and their families felt the impact of COVID-19. Symptoms ranged from mild cough to extensive hospital stays, and several of our employees lost friends and family members to the outbreak. Sadly, on August 13, 2021, the Roads and Bridges family lost one of our own when Roads and Bridges Material Support Specialist Kim Barbero succumbed to complications caused by the virus. Kim kept our vast material orders up to date while always also keeping a joyful smile and cheerful spirit. She truly was a people person.

During her 16 years of service to the community, Kim helped respond to numerous natural disasters and hurricanes. Her dedication and cheerful laugh will be missed by all that knew her.



WHO WE ARE

The Roads and Bridges Division is staffed by licensed construction operators and truck drivers, skilled craftsman, maintenance workers, customer service representatives, resource accountants, and program managers. Our mission is to provide efficient and high-quality operations and maintenance of county roads, bridges, and stormwater facilities.

The Roads and Bridges Division is responsible for the maintenance and repair work necessary to sustain the county transportation and stormwater infrastructure at an acceptable level of service. When possible, system improvements are made to enhance capacity, improve service, and protect the environment. Work is identified through route maintenance schedules, routine and special inspections, customer service work requests, state inspections, and regulatory requirements.

The division answers customer inquiries regarding the location and ownership of transportation right-of-ways and stormwater drainage easements, and it also responds to commissioner inquiries and assists other governmental agencies when possible. The division manages the Residential Driveway Permit Program which regulates the connection of residential properties to county roadways. The program provides the direction required providing for safe access connections to the county transportation network while maintaining roadside drainage systems.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

In 2021, the Bay County Roads and Bridges Division continued daily maintenance duties while coping with the effects of the pandemic. During this time we also:

- > Received approximately 19,000 requests for service.
- > Maintained approximately 180 miles of county-owned dirt roadways with an 80-percent success rate of routine grading within a 21-day cycle.
- > Inspected and repaired more than 22,000 linear feet of stormwater pipe and 3,750 inlet boxes.
- > Maintained/repared the Public Works equipment fleet. In 2021, Roads and Bridges service technicians completed approximately 1,000 repairs with a value of approximately \$580,000.



CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8810 | roads@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov

WHO WE ARE

The Traffic Engineering Division is staffed by experienced transportation professionals, consisting of engineering, technical, and administrative staff with special expertise in the planning, design, construction, integration, operation, maintenance, project management, and overall support of transportation technology system deployment projects. Such projects include the countywide advanced traffic signal system, the associated intelligent transportation system, and the regional Traffic Management Center (TMC) facility that is located in the Government Center building.

The Traffic Engineering Division is responsible for the design, fabrication, installation, and maintenance of all road signs and pavement markings located on roadways within unincorporated Bay County. The division additionally maintains all traffic signals, school zone installations, and other traffic control devices within Bay County, including those located in the local municipalities. As part of this effort, engineering and technical staff remain responsible for the development, implementation, and fine-tuning of coordinated traffic signal timings throughout the region.

The Traffic Engineering Division also operates and maintains the regional Intelligent Transportation System (ITS), which not only encompasses the network of 180-plus traffic signals but also a diversified array of additional roadside devices that are used to manage the overall transportation network from the remote TMC facility. A primary component of the regional ITS is the administration of all ownership issues associated with 100-plus miles of underground fiber optic cable, including design and implementation of modifications, provision of underground location services required in response to nearly 10,000 locate tickets issued under the Florida Sunshine One Call Program, as well as emergency repairs to the underground cable/conduit facility and network switching equipment whenever necessary. Other components of the regional ITS deployment include 110-plus pan/tilt/zoom traffic monitoring cameras, over two dozen travel-time sensor devices, five dynamic messaging signs, several trailer-mounted portable variable message signs, as well as many other transportation-related roadside devices that comprise the overall ITS network.

The Traffic Engineering Division designs, fabricates, installs, and maintains all road signs and pavement markings located on roadways within unincorporated Bay County – amounting to more than 20,000 road signs.

The Traffic Engineering Division administers many transportation-related grant programs financed by state and federal dollars. This includes identifying grant opportunities, drafting grant applications, managing projects financed by grants, and administration of reimbursement procedures within applicable program constraints.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Traffic Engineering Division staff are all considered essential employees with respect to natural disasters and emergency situations. Hurricanes, tropical storms, flash floods, lightning damage, traffic crashes, and special events are all examples of occasions when technicians and administrative personnel must avail themselves 24/7 to respond to emergencies and address pressing issues that may unfold. Such associated duties and responsibilities are mandatory without regard to the adverse circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic and personnel resource shortfalls. Sign and signal technicians have been able to identify the means to address the necessary maintenance and repair activities while employing techniques that resulted in a safe work environment consistent with Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines.

Traffic Engineering Division staff continued restoration efforts that were initiated after Hurricane Michael to address lingering issues related to that storm damage, as well as storm events that unfolded in the current year attributed to Hurricane Sally, Tropical Storm Fred, and other storm-related flooding conditions.

Throughout the year, TMC personnel and traffic signal technicians made incremental adjustments to traffic signal timings in order to respond to the ever-changing fluctuations in traffic volumes related to the pandemic, seasonal tourist traffic, school schedules, commercial development, and overall growth of the regional economy.



employee spotlight

LINDA GRANNAN

Staff Assistant Linda Grannan joined the Traffic Engineering Division in March 2021. Linda actively solicits information and advice from the network of colleagues in other BOCC cost centers that she is strategically cultivating. She has taken it as a personal challenge to master the challenging Cartegraph software and is a leader in educating division employees on how to better utilize the application for job cost accounting. Her efforts have paved the way for the county to realize an additional untapped revenue stream of at least \$200,000. Linda recognizes potential pitfalls and takes proactive actions to avoid problems or simply improves processes that are not working so smoothly. She is diplomatic, persuasive, and just assertive enough to get things done. As an example, she re-vamped the payroll documentation process within the division and pioneered new processes for job cost accounting while promoting more diligent usage of Cartegraph among other Traffic Engineering Division personnel.

After years of vacationing in Bay County, Linda and her family became very fond of the area and decided to relocate from the Indianapolis, IN metropolitan region. Pictured are Linda, husband Bryan, son AJ, and her daughter Emma.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8740 | trafficengineering@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov

PUBLIC WORKS

infrastructure surtax

Bay County has completed the following projects with funding from the surtax:

RESURFACING:

- > North Lagoon Road with multi-use path
- > Silver Lake Road
- > Center Drive
- > Camelia Street
- > County Road 2302
- > High Point Road
- > Indian Bluff Road
- > County Road 2300
- > East Avenue (State 77 to County 390)
- > Laird Street
- > Allison Avenue
- > Harvard Boulevard
- > Edwards Road
- > County Road 388
- > Frankford Avenue
- > Wildwood Road
- > Thomas Drive

DIRT ROAD STABILIZATION AND DRAINAGE PROJECTS:

- > Bertha Nelson Road
- > Wendy Road
- > Cowels Road
- > Veal Road

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS:

- > County Road 389 and State Road 77
- > County Road 389 and U.S. 231
- > Moylan Road and Panama City Beach Parkway

BRIDGE REPAIR AND REPLACEMENT PROJECTS:

- > Deer Point Dam repair/rehabilitation
- > East Avenue bridge replacement
- > County Road 2297

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION NOTICE OF VIOLATION PROJECTS:

- > Webber Road
- > Sorrel's Drive
- > Old Allentown Road

CAPACITY IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS:

- > Loop Road Phase 2

ROADWAY SAFETY PROJECTS:

- > Laird Street sidewalks
- > Frankford Avenue sidewalks
- > Merritt Brown Road sidewalk

STORMWATER CAPACITY PROJECTS:

- > Allison Avenue Regional Stormwater Facility



ABOUT THE INFRASTRUCTURE SURTAX

Voters approved the Bay County Half-Cent Infrastructure Surtax in 2016 by a margin of greater than 10 percent, with the funding aimed at improving area roadways and infrastructure. Collection of the sales tax began in early 2017. The county collects approximately \$12.5 million annually and works to leverage that funding for grants and partnerships that often double the county's annual surtax revenues each year.

The tax is for use exclusively in Bay County to repair local roads, reduce neighborhood flooding, and reduce traffic congestion. The sales tax generates roughly \$21 million annually split between the county and its cities by a formula based on population. For Bay County, that means about \$12.5 million in revenue each year that must be spent on the estimated overall \$127 million in needed roadway and infrastructure improvements, as mandated by the ballot language. As an added layer of protection to ensure the money is spent wisely, a citizens' oversight committee was empaneled and meets regularly to check the county's progress.

The passage of the tax allowed the Bay County Commission to make good on a promise they made to cut the millage rate in 2017 to offset deductions from the general fund that were being used to supplement road paving, bridge upkeep, and road maintenance. That reduction continued in 2018, 2019, 2020, and again in 2021.

Meanwhile, the increased revenues have allowed the county to address a more than \$57 million backlog in needed road resurfacing as well embark on other infrastructure improvements, including bridge replacements, intersection improvement projects, dirt road stabilization, capacity and stormwater improvements, roadway safety, and more. The dollars raised by the sales tax must be spent inside Bay County on local projects. Tallahassee and Washington, D.C. have no say on how or where the money is spent; however, the availability of funding may make grant applications that require matching funds more competitive.

The sales tax is levied on eligible goods with a value of up to the first \$5,000 of value – the tax is capped at \$25 per item.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8740 | engineering@baycountyfl.gov
www.bayhalfcent.com



WHO WE ARE

The Purchasing Department is staffed with four full-time employees charged with abiding by, upholding, and adhering to the county's Procurement Code and Procurement Manual to guard against the misuse or misinterpretation of those rules and regulations.

The Purchasing Department is responsible for coordinating the county's central procurement system, promoting efficiency, economy, and fair and open competition in an effort to reduce the appearance and opportunity for favoritism or impropriety. We strive to inspire public confidence that purchase orders and contracts are awarded equitably and economically. It is essential for effective and ethical procurement that there be a consistent system of procedures that establishes basic guidelines to regulate procurement activities, contract management, and the resulting distribution of funds.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

In Fiscal Year 2021, the Purchasing Department:

- > Provided management oversight of the county purchasing card program with a purchase volume of more than \$2.2 million and realized an annual rebate of \$34,982.
- > Provided sales and customer support to county staff through ordering goods and services valued at more than \$78.4 million during Fiscal Year 2021 through 1,072 purchase orders.
- > Provided customer support to county staff and vendors through 67 solicitations, resulting in contracts valued at more than \$22 million.
- > Bay County uses online auction services and on-site surplus sales to dispose of obsolete equipment in order to maximize the county's investment. During Fiscal Year 2021, Purchasing conducted two auctions resulting in a return of more than \$15,000.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8270 | purchasing@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov



employee spotlight

SCOTT NABERS

Scott Nabers is the department's contract administrator and moved back to the area in November 2020 to start his new role in the Purchasing Department. He draws on his experience of fleet management procurement with the City of Orlando, FL and City of Charlotte, NC to serve the citizens of Bay County. Scott enjoys living out on the beach and traveling in his spare time. He is working to obtain his National Institute Governmental Purchasing, Inc. certifications to further his career in the Purchasing department.





WHO WE ARE

In July 2012, the federal RESTORE Act (Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act) established a trust fund from administrative and civil penalties related to the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Five “pots” of funds were set up in the federal trust fund.

A portion of funds from Pot 1 and Pot 3 are reserved for Bay County. Settlement payments will be made into the trust fund over a number of years, and will gradually be available to the county. The county’s share of Pot 1 will be approximately \$42 million over 15 years.

Pot 3 will provide about \$11 million. The county will also pursue matching funds. The money can be used to restore and protect the natural resources and economy of the Gulf Coast region.

The Bay County Board of County Commissioners decides which eligible projects to fund. Based on recommendations from a citizens advisory committee, the board selected projects for the first funds available from Pot 1, the Direct Component, and for all funds that will be available from Pot 3, the Spill Impact Component. A grant application must be submitted to the U.S. Department of the Treasury for each Pot 1 project, and to the Gulf RESTORE Council for each Pot 3 project.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Through RESTORE Act Direct Component funds Bay County:

- > Replaced the dilapidated dock at the AMIkids/Panama City Marine Institute. The dock is used as a launching site for restoration projects for the St. Andrew Bay system. Natural resource agencies also use the dock. This project is complete and supports natural resource-related projects in the bay.
- > Updated the county’s stormwater master plan. Bay County Public Works contracted a firm to revise the plan, which will be used to prioritize stormwater management and treatment for the bay system.
- > Evaluated the potential environmental impacts of reopening Old Pass/East Pass, supervised by Public Works, which has contracted a firm to perform the study.
- > Improved access to St. Andrew Bay and the gulf by a City of Lynn Haven project at Porter Park and improvements to Carl Gray Park by the City of Panama City. Both of these projects are complete, improving access to the bay for residents and visitors to Bay County.

RESTORE Act Spill Impact Funds support St. Andrew Bay Watch’s water-quality monitoring and reporting for our bay system. The information from this effort helps guide water-quality improvement projects.

With funding provided by The Nature Conservancy and County RESTORE Act funds, Bay County and Florida State University launched the St. Andrew/St. Joseph Bays Estuary Program [<https://pc.fsu.edu/estuaryprogram>], hosted by FSU Panama City. An Estuary Program is a locally-driven, non-regulatory effort to identify and solve issues facing a bay and watershed, based on objective, scientific information. The executive director is hired, and the community-wide management team is in place. The first major collaborative effort will be to prepare a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan for the bays’ watershed. Water quality demonstration projects are also planned.

The county is also engaged in the Triumph Gulf Coast [<https://www.myfloridatriumph.com/>] process, a nonprofit corporation organized to oversee the expenditure of 75 percent of all funds recovered by the Florida Attorney General for economic damages to the state that resulted from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. The Board of County Commissioners reviews all proposed projects within the county and provides letters of support for projects the board believes would be beneficial to the county. Projects endorsed by the board and funded in Bay County include the Port Panama City Eastern Terminal Development and Intermodal Distribution Center Expansion, the Panama City Industrial Complex, and FSU Panama City’s Advancing Science and Career Education in New Technologies (ASCENT) project, all totaling more than \$53 million in Triumph funds.

More information on RESTORE is available at baycountyfl.gov.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8253 | jmuller@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov

WHO WE ARE

The mission of Risk Management is to do everything we can to ensure the safety and well being of Bay County employees, its properties, and the citizens of Bay County. We do this through a dedication to see that we have a safe work environment for employees, safe facilities for the citizens of Bay County, and proper training for county employees. It is the responsibility of this department to produce and implement safety programs, such as defensive driving and CPR classes, in order to accomplish this goal.

Risk also works to administer the Americans with Disabilities Act program for the county. Under this same umbrella, this department oversees a very successful and long-standing Self-Insured Workers Compensation Program, with more than 900 employees, including three of the five constitutional offices in the program. Included in the Workers Compensation Program is a requirement that the county be a drug-free workplace and have an active safety program, both of which are approved by the State of Florida. Additional programs under the umbrella of Risk Management include the county's property and liability insurance programs, group health benefit plan, hazardous chemical state reporting, incident/accident reporting and claim processing. Risk Management is dedicated to providing the best products, safest environment, and most diligent service to the employees and citizens of Bay County.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

This past year has been a tough one for all Bay County employees due to the ever-changing COVID-19 concerns. Risk Management worked diligently to ensure that all Bay County employees were kept apprised of the changing Centers for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines for COVID-19 and the COVID-19 Delta variant.

- > Risk was heavily involved in the communication of COVID-19 CDC guidelines for testing and return-to-work criteria for employees with confirmed or suspected COVID-19, fielding as many calls or more this year over the prior year due to the Delta variant.
- > Risk recovered more than \$29,834 in third-party claims (these claims are claims collected from the other party's insurance company for damage to county property).
- > The county has maintained a successful High Deductible, Health Savings Account, Qualified Group Health Benefit Plan for the last five years, holding the county's annual rate increases to an average of 3.72 percent over the past five years.
- > The county's 24/7 Call-a-Doc Program through HealthiestYou experienced more than 79.7 percent utilization, resulting in a return on investment of 5.7 percent. This program is a stand-alone program that does not interact with our group health insurance plan, meaning that these virtual visits are not charged against our group health plan, consequently saving an estimated \$278,000 that otherwise would have been charged.
- > Risk Management staff continues to expand its training program by offering quality training to county employees, including such classes as ForkLift, Bucket Truck, CPR, Fire Extinguisher and Defensive Driving.
- > Bay County Risk Management is now an Authorized Temporary Traffic Control (TTC) Provider. Authorized instructor Joey Farrill conducts training for all levels of TTC, including Basic, Intermediate, and Advanced courses.
- > Risk has successfully met the state-regulated Tier-II completion deadline for the 11th year in a row. Tier-II is a requirement by the state of Florida Emergency Response Commission that requires the reporting of all storage and use of hazardous chemicals for all departments.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Risk Management employees obtained certifications for Smith Systems Driving Instructor, Bucket Truck Instructor, CPR Instructor and 4-40 Insurance Licenses.



employee spotlight

MICHELLE RUNYON

Michelle Runyon came to Bay County in 2016, accepting a position as a staff assistant in Solid Waste. In 2020 she accepted a position in the Risk Management Department and we are so glad she did! Michelle is originally from Albany, GA and has lived in Bay County since 2011. Michelle is committed to her education and most recently has completed and received her Master of Business Administration degree. She has also completed courses and passed the state exam and now holds her first insurance license. Michelle is a sponge for knowledge and is always willing and eager to tackle new assignments and projects. She is dedicated to helping Bay County citizens and employees identify and reduce or eliminate risk in their daily lives.

Outside of the office, Michelle is committed to her family and friends. She has two daughters and three beautiful grandchildren, Noah (8), Reese (5) and Dallas (2). Michelle's grandchildren live in Georgia where she travels quite often, making new memories with them. Michelle is known in the Government Center for her amazing cookies! She loves to make homemade cookies and has a lot of fun decorating them. We never miss an opportunity to be the official taste testers. Michelle loves to travel and takes every opportunity she can to see new places. Her bucket list trips include Jamaica and Bali. Risk Management is so thankful to have Michelle as part of the Risk Management family.

CONTACT US:

(850) 248-8230 | risk@baycountyfl.gov
www.baycountyfl.gov



employee spotlight

BOBBY "DINO" WARREN

Mr. Bobby "Dino" Warren began his career with Bay County Utilities in October 1992 as a field technician trainee. During his nearly 30 years of employment, Mr. Warren has remained in the Utilities department holding a variety of job titles such as wastewater maintenance mechanic, wastewater maintenance mechanic supervisor and his current title of Wastewater Collection Technician Foreman. During Mr. Warren's tenure, Bay County's service area for water/wastewater has tripled with the county acquiring the North Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant and the dissolution of the City of Cedar Grove.

Mr. Warren has attended dozens of training courses over the years on topics such as Wastewater Collection System Operator, equipment maintenance, chemical safety and backflow prevention assembly testing and repair. He's even learned to weld to help the county save money by completing projects in-house.

Mr. Warren has received numerous acknowledgements from the County Manager's Office, departmental directors, and citizens for his hard work during hurricane recovery, line break repairs and overseeing utility projects within the county.

Mr. Warren has always taken pride in his work and his staff. He truly is an asset to Bay County Utilities!



WHO WE ARE

For more than 50 years, Bay County Utility Services has provided our community with reliable, economical, and high-quality water and wastewater services. We employ highly trained people and use state-of-the-art equipment while continuing to set industry standards as they relate to procedures, methods, and customer service. Bay County Utility Services is committed to high-level customer satisfaction and is always looking for ways to streamline processes to reduce redundancy and expense. Our customers receive the most cost-effective service to reduce water losses while conserving one of the world's most precious resources.

The Utility Services Department employs more than 80 employees who make up the Water, Wastewater, and Utility Permitting divisions, along with laboratory and administrative staff dedicated to providing quality water and wastewater services. The Water Division treats and distributes drinking water to the local municipalities, Tyndall Air Force Base, and the county's retail customers in the unincorporated area. The Water Division also provides untreated raw water for local industry use in their cooling processes. Utility Services owns and operates a 60 million gallons-per-day capacity water treatment plant, two raw water pumping stations, six water booster stations, 391 miles of retail infrastructure and 194 miles of wholesale infrastructure.

The Wastewater Division provides wastewater treatment services to unincorporated Bay County and the cities of Callaway, Parker, Springfield, Mexico Beach, and Tyndall Air Force Base. Utility Services operates two wastewater treatment plants strategically located throughout the county to provide sewer services to residents. The Wastewater Division also manages the Bay County Environmental Laboratory, which provides short hold-time analysis for the department.

The Permitting Division facilitates the review and processing of plans and permits for the Utility Services Department, which includes water and wastewater construction contract assistance and bid preparation. The Permitting Division performs construction site inspections and project management and performs water and wastewater utility locates for public and private development and construction.

CONTACT US:

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water and wastewater

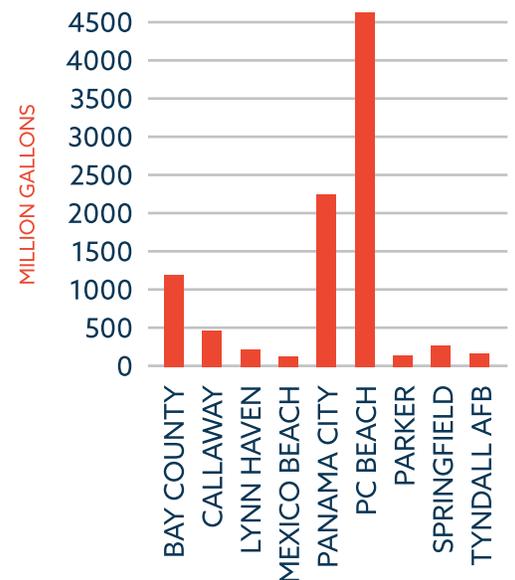


WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Bay County Utilities has consistently provided high-quality service to our citizens while still rebuilding from the storm and navigating the ever-changing world of the pandemic. In 2021, our talented team of employees accomplished the following:

- > The Bay County Lab performed a study for the North Bay Wastewater Treatment Facility to develop local limits for industrial pretreatment. This study helps potential industries moving into the area determine additional wastewater discharge needs. It will ultimately assist in the economic development of Northern Bay County.
- > Train 2 Concrete and Coating Project - \$ 1.3 million. The purpose of this project is to repair damaged concrete and coating on concrete structures.
- > Military Point Advanced Wastewater Treatment (MPAWT) UV Project- \$1.59 million. The purpose of this project is to provide preliminary engineering, design, and construction phase services to support construction and installation of a new UV system at the MPAWT plant.
- > MPAWT Switchgear Project Engineering - \$163,530. The purpose of this project is to provide preliminary engineering, design, and construction phase services to support construction and installation of a new switchgear to replace obsolete equipment.
- > Water and Wastewater System Hydraulic Modeling - \$952,730. The purpose of this project is to build a model of the water and wastewater infrastructure that will allow the county to identify pressure issues, flow issues, pump station capacity and a plan for future capital improvement projects.
- > Annual drawdown of Deer Point Reservoir - Every year the county draws down the Deer Point Reservoir from November - February at the request of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). The annual drawdown aims to decrease nuisance aquatic vegetation, consolidate and release nutrients from the exposed shoreline sediments, improve fishing and boating access, and enhance fish spawning habitat.

2021 DRINKING WATER CONSUMPTION



	FY2020	FY2021
PANAMA CITY	2,118	2,297
PANAMA CITY BEACH	4,951	4,680
SPRINGFIELD	293	279
PARKER	118	119
CALLAWAY	466	462
LYNN HAVEN	195	188
MEXICO BEACH	77	107
TAFB	160	170
BAY COUNTY	1,112	1,109
TOTAL	9,490	9,411

economic development alliance



WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Economic Development Alliance (BayEDA) is Bay County's economic development entity. Publicly and privately funded, BayEDA serves Bay County in supporting existing businesses and recruiting new businesses. BayEDA supports the existing pillars of the economy and is dedicated to growing and diversifying the Bay County economy. BayEDA presents the positive points of Bay County to businesses, industry, and professional leaders in their decision-making process for capital investment and job creation. Whether someone is looking to start, expand, or relocate their business, BayEDA has the tools, resources, and support available to make an informed and smart decision to ensure success in Bay County.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Last fiscal year had its share of COVID-19 woes; however, it was still an exciting year for Bay EDA. With pandemic restrictions relaxing, the Bay EDA saw an uptick in prospect activity throughout 2021. We hosted numerous site visits, submitted 39 requests for information, and attended five trade shows, two of which required international travel. Networking at trade shows with industry partners is a key way to market Bay County's assets and speak directly with decision makers for major companies. After almost two years, COVID-19 restrictions began to relax and industries started returning to normal. Aside from trade shows, relaxed regulation has enabled domestic prospects to visit Bay County and experience the truly great things we have to offer. Of those site visits, four prospects have become "hot" to "very hot" projects, of which we hope to announce later this year. We look forward to the lifting of travel restrictions for international travelers so that we can host more prospects from leads we have been cultivating.

Furthermore, Bay EDA said farewell to two of its longtime employees, Polly Jackson and Garrett Wright, and welcomed two new team members, Katie May and Ben Moorman. The Bay EDA wishes Polly the best in retirement and Garrett a successful career in his new community. Both Katie and Ben were existing residents of the community, which made for an easy transition to fulfill their respective Bay EDA roles.

The Bay EDA worked with the Transatlantic Business and Investment Council and Navigator Consulting to certify Bay County for Foreign Direct Investment. The certification was the result of a three-day site visit and an extensive request for proposals (RFP) that enabled Bay County to achieve this recognition. Only nine communities in the United States have been certified in the program, and we are the only certified community in the state of Florida. Furthermore, Bay County achieved the highest score from any of the previous participants.

As 2021 comes to an end, we are proud of our local economy's resilience and the wins that our community continues to see. We look forward to the year ahead.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Foreign Direct Investment Certification - The FDI certification was born from a partnership between the Transatlantic Business and Investment Council and Navigator Consulting. The certification assures potential foreign investors that Bay County has been vetted and has the necessary components to support their investment efforts.



CONTACT US:

(850) 215-9965 | 5230 West Highway 98, Panama City, Florida 32401
www.bayeda.com

mexico beach community development council

WHO WE ARE

The Mexico Beach Community Development Council's (MBCDC) distinct purpose is to advertise the Mexico Beach area, its accommodations, and attractions in a manner that will invite tourists to come vacation on our beach. Funding stems from a 5-percent tourist development tax that is applied to short-term overnight lodging in Mexico Beach. The MBCDC is able to continuously mature their marketing operations as well as assist in beach nourishment, canal and park enhancements, and community event support.

As Bay County's smallest city, Mexico Beach is less than five miles long, however there is an abundance of activity thanks to the tourism opportunities that are offered. An unconventional beach destination, Mexico Beach provides unique adventures tailored towards an easy-going vibe for visitors year-round.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

As development and regrowth continues to stretch across Mexico Beach, the MBCDC was elated to announce the opening of the new Welcome Center. Sitting in the same location as the previous welcome center that was destroyed due to Hurricane Michael, the center showcases area literature, maps and information pertaining to Mexico Beach, and more. The welcome center offers visitors and residents the opportunity to learn more about our wonderful destination while enjoying spectacular water views. This space marks a turning point for not only the MBCDC but also for the community as Mexico Beach continues to reclaim and enhance the destination.

Marketing

"Love My Beach" paid social media campaign delivered more than 14.9 million impressions and more than 450,000 direct clicks to the website. The campaign received over 173,000 social engagements (reactions, comments, saves and shares) that increased both Facebook and Instagram followers. Spotify audio of sounds of Mexico Beach delivered 10 million impressions and almost 47,000 clicks to the website.

The campaign's deliverables performed well above benchmark average. With this great awareness and highlights to reflect the destination, the MBCDC will continue with the campaign for the next marketing year with updated imagery, call-to-action messaging, and continued branding of the Unforgettable Coast.

Beach Restoration

The MBCDC worked alongside the City of Mexico Beach to implement the Inlet Sand Bypassing Project. The State of Florida Department of Environmental Protection awarded a grant for the Inlet Sand Bypassing Project to the City of Mexico Beach in 2018, but due to Hurricane Michael, the project had to be tabled. With the efforts of the MBCDC, the city was able to execute the project in 2021. The project commenced with full construction in late January and was finalized in early February. A total of 18,750 cubic yards of sand was distributed along the deemed areas in the critically eroded portion of the beach.

The MBCDC assisted the City of Mexico Beach in receiving a \$5 million grant for beach nourishment from the Florida Department of Economics in their Community Development Block Grant-Disaster Recovery funds. These funds will be applied to the beach restoration project that the MBCDC has been steadily working to accomplish. The MBCDC is also set to receive over \$9 million in beach nourishment funds from the State's DEP Beaches and Shores Department. These additional funds have ensured Mexico Beach's beach restoration project to continue to move forward and implementation is forthcoming. An updated feasibility study is underway to survey the entire length of the beach and will be used to assist in additional grant funding opportunities.

The MBCDC continues to partner in the "Stay it Forward" campaign, created by the Panama City Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau. Collectively, Bay County students and winter residents have planted more than 8,000 sea oats and other beach vegetation along the dunes in Mexico Beach. This project has been graciously received and will continue to be implemented in the coming year.

CONTACT US:

850-648-8196 | 102 Canal Parkway, Mexico Beach, FL 32456
www.mexicobeach.com



panama city community development council



WHO WE ARE

Nestled along beautiful St. Andrews Bay in Northwest Florida, Panama City offers an exciting balance of culinary experiences, outdoor activities, and cultural encounters, while radiating a laid-back feel. It's this unique combination that makes Panama City an irresistible destination for individuals, couples, and families. With multiple historic neighborhoods and its own oyster trail, there's always something to see or do in Panama City. As the largest city in Bay County, Panama City serves as the county seat. While other areas of the county have had tourist development taxing districts for many decades, the Panama City tourist development taxing district was established in 2014 with collections beginning in January of 2015. Destination Panama City (Panama City Community Development Council, Inc.) is the official tourism agency for the City of Panama City, Florida and is funded by the 5-percent tourist development tax applied to short term, overnight accommodation rentals in Panama City. From 2015-2018, the tourist development tax generated from this district was about \$1.5 million per year with an average year over year growth of 5 percent. Three years post hurricane, about 85 percent of the short-term rental units are back online. On the tails of Hurricane Michael, the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic in fiscal years 2020 and 2021 created challenges for industries around the world, specifically the travel and tourism industries. Panama City, due to its diversified draw of ecotourism, history, culinary, and culture was uniquely positioned to not only rebound, but thrive during these challenging times.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

As the City of Panama City continues to rebuild from Hurricane Michael (2018) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020-2021) Destination Panama City revamped its promotion and marketing campaigns to emphasize the wide open spaces of St. Andrews Bay and to highlight the proximity of Panama City as one of the closest Gulf of Mexico destinations for the southeastern drive market.



Destination Panama City Visitor's Center and Nearshore Artificial Reef Project - The new, bayfront Visitor's Center was constructed in Historic Downtown Panama City. The facility offers a meeting space available to the public by rent or reservation, and has already hosted numerous meetings and special events. Through diligent fiscal management, the facility was funded with tourist development tax cash reserves without the need to finance the construction through loans. Since the official opening in the summer of 2021, Destination Panama City has hosted signature city events like July 4th Salute to Freedom and Oktoberfest Craft and Seasonal Beer Tasting, as well as kicking off Downtown After Dark, an evening concert drawing thousands to the Historic Downtown area. The nearshore artificial reef project continues to move forward with an anticipated deployment in early 2023. This project will help teach locals and visitors about the ecology of the Bay and the importance of sustainable tourism.

Events - In addition to hosting in-house signature events, Destination Panama City works diligently to support other local community groups that bring positive attractions and events to the city. In 2021, Destination Panama City continued to financially support the Krewe of St. Andrews Mardi Gras and Seafood Festivals, the Public Eye Soar Digital Projection Festival, the Panama City Songwriters Festival, the Gulf Jazz Society's Jazz by the Bay Festival, Panama City Music Association Seasonal Concert Series, and Panama City Symphony Orchestra's Seasonal Concert Series, Second Chance of Northwest Florida's Blessing of the Fleet and Sock Burning, Florida Jeep Jam, Blues in the Dregs, and many traveling sports tournaments.

Attractions - 2021 was a flagship year with the launch of the Panama City Mural Trail. Years in the making, Destination Panama City worked collaboratively with Bay Arts Alliance to support and promote the new mural trail and help bring art to every corner of our community.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

In 2021, Destination Panama City received two MarCom Gold Awards in the categories of "Writing - Brochure" and "Print Media - Brochure" for the 2020 Visitor's Guide and the Bay County Chamber of Commerce Apple of our Eye Award for New Construction for the Destination Panama City Visitor's Center.



CONTACT US:

(850) 215-1700 | 1000 Beck Avenue, Panama City, Florida 32401
www.destinationpanamacity.com

panama city beach tourist development council

WHO WE ARE

The Bay County Tourist Development Council (TDC) and Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) are responsible for marketing Panama City Beach as a year-round tourist destination, funded through a 5-percent tourist development tax applied to short-term, overnight accommodation rentals in Panama City Beach, which equals about 18 million visitor days/nights each year. The tax also pays for beach renourishment, cleaning, and maintenance efforts.

The TDC operates the 13-field Panama City Beach Sports Park, and is working to develop an Indoor Sports Center to further expand and support the sports tourism market and serve as an asset to aid in the county's response and recovery efforts following an emergency event. For more information on Bay County Tourism, visit www.VisitPanamaCityBeach.com.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

With the brand of Real. FUN. Beach., the TDC promotes Panama City Beach as a tourist destination through cutting-edge marketing initiatives and creation of innovative events.

The TDC's goal last year was to support our local economy through increased visitor spending while encouraging those who visited to follow the recommendations of public health officials to keep themselves and our local residents healthy and safe. The TDC reintroduced our Make It Yours creative campaign with fresh versions called "It's What You Make It," and "Make It Shareable." The TDC (Visit PCB) launched two additional initiatives focusing on Celebrations and Sports to provide new ways to experience the destination.

The Return of Special Events

UNwineD June 2021 - UNwineD, the destination's two-day culinary festival, was held in Aaron Bessant Park and featured bites from the area's leading chefs and craft beer, wine, and spirits from around the world to a sold-out crowd.

Pirates of the High Seas Fest - This festival featured several online and in-person activities, including story-telling videos, downloadable themed crafts, a digital pirate costume contest and an in-person treasure hunt in Panama City Beach.

Beach Home for the Holidays - The sixth annual Beach Home for the Holidays over Thanksgiving weekend broke records with a 44-percent increase in attendance for the Friday headliner.

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Florida Festivals & Events Association (FFEA) Awards

- > 1st Place for Photo for Pirates of the High Seas Fest
- > 1st Place for Virtual Contest for Pirates of the High Seas Fest
- > 1st Place for Virtual Event for Pirates of the High Seas Fest
- > 1st Place for T-shirt for UNwineD
- > 1st Place for Radio/Ad/PSA for Pirates of the High Seas Fest
- > 2nd Place for Facebook for Pirates of the High Seas Fest
- > 3rd Place for At Home Event/Activity for Pirates of the High Seas Fest

Visit Florida Flagler Awards

- > The Pirates of the High Seas Virtual Fest won the Henry award for the Special Events category at the 2021 Florida Governor's Conference on Tourism.

Destinations International 30 Under 30

- > Public Relations Manager Lacey Rudd was named one of Destinations International's 30 Under 30 recipients.

CONTACT US:

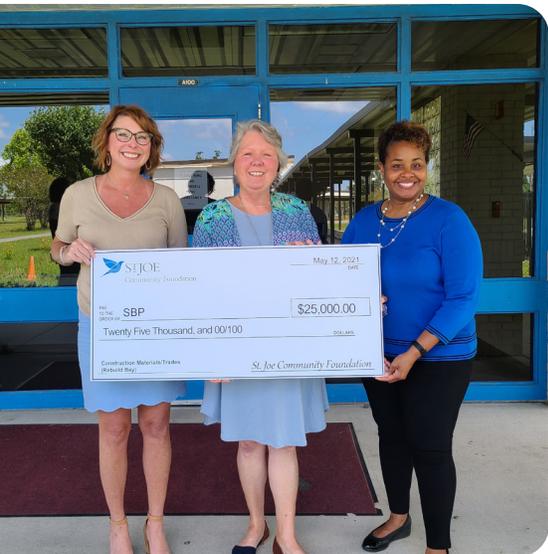
(850) 233-5070 | info@visitpanamacitybeach.com
www.visitpanamacitybeach.com



2020 stats

- > 942k Facebook likes
- > 79k Instagram followers
- > 42.5k Twitter followers
- > 3.7 million website visits





WHO WE ARE

Rebuild Bay is Bay County's Long Term Recovery Organization/Group (LTRO/G) providing critical resources for the Bay County community. We were established to assist residents in their recovery following Hurricane Michael. With the subsequent disasters, including COVID, Hurricane Sally and torrential rains, and the wrap-around services required to assist residents, we have expanded our operations towards a community resilience focus.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 2021?

Hurricane Recovery

- > 167 households served; 337 specific to COVID-19
- > \$262,000 in donated materials distributed
- > 325 volunteers; more than 2,000 hours served
- > \$48,000 in volunteer hours
- > Leveraged \$800,000 in resources (money, manpower, materials)
- > Partnered with other nonprofit organizations on 15 home repair projects
- > Provided construction materials and supplies to other nonprofits and companies repairing residents' homes

COVID-19 Response

- > Partnered with the Black Student Union of Florida State University-Panama City and Gulf Coast State College on 10,000-pound mobile food pantry, servicing nearly 200 households
- > Partnered with the City of Panama City and Family of God Baptist Church on food distribution out of Glenwood Community Center for senior citizens
- > Distributed more than 20,000 pounds of food
- > Partnered with City of Panama City, other service providers and Habitat ReStore for Thanksgiving meals and a clothes giveaway for homeless and other at-risk residents; 300 meals served
- > Partnered with the LEAD Coalition on Resilient American Communities initiative for outreach focused on COVID-19 vaccinations; led outreach workgroup

Community Resilience

- > Partnered with the City of Panama City Community Redevelopment Agency in standing up A.D. Harris Learning Village and Community Resilience Center
- > Partnered with the St. Joe Community Foundation on education and training center
- > Partnered with Florida State University-Panama City on historical artifact preservation project

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Rebuild Bay has been awarded more than \$800,000 in grants this year. Additionally, we successfully proposed case management and program management services for the Bay County SHIP/HHRP program.

CONTACT US:

(850) 320-3211 | director@rebuildbaycounty.org
www.rebuildbaycounty.org
[Facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc](https://www.facebook.com/RebuildBayCountyInc)
Text-2-Donate : REBUILDBAY (to 41444)

BAY COUNTY COMMISSION

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
ADMINISTRATION	248-8140
ADDRESSING	248-8374
ANIMAL CONTROL	767-3333
BUDGET OFFICE	248-8240
BUILDERS SERVICES	248-8350
CAFE	248-8196
CODE ENFORCEMENT	248-8290
COMMUNICATIONS	248-8170
CO-OP EXTENSION	784-6105
COUNTY ATTORNEY	248-8175
EMERGENCY SERVICES	248-6040
EMS	248-6070
ENGINEERING	248-8301
FACILITIES	248-8120
FIRE SERVICES	248-6040
GENERAL SERVICES	248-8732
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS	248-8071
HUMAN RESOURCES	248-8201
HOUSING	248-2465
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	248-8004
LIBRARY	522-2100
MEDICAL EXAMINER	747-5740
MOSQUITO CONTROL	248-8720
PARKS & RECREATION	248-8730
PLANNING	248-8250
PUBLIC WORKS	248-8302
PURCHASING	248-8270
RECORDS MANAGEMENT	248-8278
RISK MANAGEMENT	248-8230
ROADS	248-8810
SECURITY	248-8195
SOLID WASTE	236-2212
TRANSIT	248-8161
TRAFFIC ENGINEERING	248-8740
UTILITY SERVICES	248-5010
VETERANS SERVICES	248-8280

CONSTITUTIONAL

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
CLERK OF CIRCUIT COURT	747-5100
CLERK FINANCE	747-5219
PROPERTY APPRAISER	248-8401
SHERIFF	747-4700
SUPERVISOR OF ELECTIONS	784-6100
TAX COLLECTOR	248-8501

MUNICIPAL

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
CALLAWAY	871-6000
LYNN HAVEN	265-2121
MEXICO BEACH	648-5700
PANAMA CITY BEACH	233-5100
PANAMA CITY	872-3010
PARKER	871-4104
SPRINGFIELD	872-7570

OTHER

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL	233-5070
FLORIDA STATE INFO CENTER	1-866- 693-6748
ONLINE	http://411.myflorida.com
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ALLIANCE	215-9965

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

DEPARTMENT	PHONE NUMBER
FIRE / POLICE / AMBULANCE	9-1-1
BAY COUNTY DISPATCH	784-4000
ANIMAL CONTROL DISPATCH	248-6034
POISON INFORMATION	1-800-222-1222



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- › PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUES

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