



# THE MAILBOAT



VOLUME 12 NO. 1 1st QUARTER 2006

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

## SPECIAL EDITION

**T**his special issue of the Mailboat concerns all citizens in Malabar. The information within will affect each household in our community. Please take a few minutes to read this issue thoroughly. After reading, please fill out and return the survey regarding police protection included in this newsletter. Please fill it out whether you are a homeowner or you rent your current home. Police protection effects everyone.

The Town is in a situation where a decision must be made and **your input will directly effect the outcome**. We cannot stress enough that every Malabar citizen will be effected by this.

### Sheriff Protection or Create a Malabar Police Department

*From the Desk of Ed Booth, Town Administrator*

Police protection affects all of us, homeowners and renters alike, so I'd like to ask that all renters bear with me on the discussion of taxes and still respond to the enclosed survey. Every input is considered valuable.

For some time now the Brevard County Sheriff's Department has been *requesting* that the Malabar Town Council pass an ordinance to allow a special tax on all taxpayers in town. This special tax is called a MSTU (Mult Service Taxing Unit) and would cover Sheriff protection in Malabar. Currently Sheriff protection in Malabar is limited. At this point in time, Brevard County has stopped *requesting* and has

Also, this issue has important information regarding controlled burns. It is imperative that you contact Deputy Chief Mike Foley, with the Fire Department, at 725-1030, to make arrangements for a burn permit. This issue contains information on how to obtain a burn permit.

We hope the information provided in this newsletter will enable you to complete the survey with a better understanding of what is happening in our community.

begun *demanding* that Malabar 'pay its fair share' for Sheriff protection. The current MSTU rate for sheriff protection is .9960 for every \$1,000 your property is valued at. All other municipalities using the Sheriff for police protection pay the same MSTU rate.

The MSTU rate is unlike Malabar's current stormwater assessment fee. The stormwater fee is a flat rate each year that rarely changes. A MSTU is different than the fee in that it is based on a percentage of the value of your property. A MSTU is subject to all the same regulations as your property taxes and can go up or down each year.

(continued on page 2)

It is the responsibility of the Town Council that the citizens of Malabar have adequate police protection. The time has come for the Council to make a decision but before doing this, they want citizen input. This article is designed to provide you with highlights of either paying the MSTU, creating a Malabar Police Department, or possibly doing nothing at all.

The Brevard County Sheriff's office has two types of officers, general fund officers and MSTU officers. They use the general fund officers mainly for administration, there are very few general fund officers with patrol cars. The Sheriff uses MSTU officers for patrol. Currently all the deputies responding to calls in Malabar are MSTU officers.

While attending the November 7, 2005 Town Council meeting (minutes on the web at [www.townofmalabar.org](http://www.townofmalabar.org)), Sheriff Jack Parker stated that if the Town Council did not pass the MSTU ordinance, he would restrict the response from the Sheriff's department in Malabar to the very few general fund deputies. Parker said this could mean up to a thirty (30) minute delay in response to being called out. When asked what additional protection Malabar would receive if the MSTU passed, Sheriff Parker stated that he could not promise anything but would look into adding additional deputies for this district.

It was at that time the Town Council directed me to do a study on how much a small police department would cost. Which is how we came to the enclosed survey. In order to make a decision Council will need to know if the citizens feel safe. Which is why your participation is very important.

These are the items that the citizens of Malabar should consider:

1. The MSTU of .9960 mills will cost a property owner with a house valued at \$200,000 an additional \$200 per year in taxes.
2. The County's Environmentally Endangered Lands (EEL's) committee has purchased about 1,100 acres of land in Malabar and with an acre selling for as much as \$100,000 that equals 110 million dollars in property that can no longer be taxed. Malabar has asked the County if they are willing to give us a credit for this land and the answer was no. In addition to taking the land off the tax roles, the land in question has cost the Town considerable monies for policing and securing the areas.
3. A very small police department of two (2) officers could be started with costs under \$100,000 and an annual budget under \$100,000. The increase in property value in the town would raise the taxes to a level to support the police department. The staff would have to

freeze the budgets for the other departments for several years.

If the citizens and the Council want to establish their own police force, this could be accomplished within six (6) months. Below you will find additional information on this issue. Please complete the enclosed survey and return it to Town Hall. If you have any questions or comments, please call my office at 727-7764, ext. 11.

## RETURN YOUR SURVEY

Mail: 2725 Malabar Road, Malabar, FL 32950  
Drop: at the above address, there is a mail slot in the front door for after-hours drop-off

### Background

1. 2003 – the County determines that the Town of Malabar is receiving sheriff protection without paying MSTU. Former County Commissioner Nancy Higgs indicates that she would ask the Town for payment for past years. When being informed that the Town would be asking for some sort of reimbursement for all the land the County had purchased and taken off the tax rolls, she indicated that she would not support the County taking such action.
2. 2003 – Town Council voted not to approve the MSTU.
3. 2004 – The storms at year-end put everything on hold.
4. 2005 – The County Manager, Sheriff and County Commissioner Voltz make a presentation to the Town Council of Malabar. The Sheriff indicated that Malabar was receiving minimal police protection. Without the approved MSTU, the Town of Malabar would continue receiving minimal police protection.

### Existing Service

#### Brevard County Police Service

First response to burglaries, auto thefts, crime against persons

#### Eagle Corps

Citizen patrol to report any unusual activity

#### Town of Malabar Code Enforcement

With no patrolling in town, the Code Enforcement often is used to investigate some complaints that the police would investigate in most cities.

## Proposal by Sheriff's Department

1. The Town of Malabar pass the ordinance in favor of a MSTU. The current millage rate is .9960 mills, and with the 2005 Town of Malabar valuation at \$2 million dollars, this would amount to \$199,200 in additional taxes to the citizens of Malabar. For a house valued at \$200,000, this would amount to a \$200 increase in taxes per year.
2. The Sheriff has promised that if the Town of Malabar accepts the MSTU, he will restructure the district to allow for patrolling in Malabar and to take a more pro-active approach to Malabar's needs.

## Proposal to Create a Malabar Police Department

### **1. If the Town Council recommends adopting the County MSTU:**

The County would like to separate the issue of sheriff protection and the negative financial impact they have had in the Town. The bottom line is the County needs to contribute to the MSTU for the property they took off the tax rolls. The only way for Malabar to participate in the County's MSTU is at a reduced rate. In addition, the Sheriff needs to put in writing an agreement of additional protection.

### **2. If the Town of Malabar Town Council establishes a Police Department:**

- A. A recommendation is for the Town to wait until the total town valuation reaches \$3 million dollars. At the present time, the valuation is just over 2 million. In 2002 the valuation was just over \$1 million the Town Administrator estimates that within three (3) years, the value will reach the \$3 million mark. And with the additional population, it will greatly off-set the cost of the police department. This depends on the millage rate remaining the same and future Council's not taking the roll-back rate (total ad valorem taxes collected by the town would increase).
- B. We should establish a citizens committee. This would provide representation from the citizens and help answer any questions.

## Open Burn Issues from the Fire Department

As the weather in the sunshine state grows colder and humidity begins to drop, the threat of brush fires becomes greater. It is during this time of the year that we must take extra precautions to prevent accidental ignition of fires. In addition to properly disposing of cigarette butts and matches, proper grilling techniques must also be used. Malabar has a open fire (burning) ordinance that prohibits most open burning. **Any person(s) wishing to conduct open burning must obtain a written permit from the Malabar Fire Chief or his assigned designee.**

### As of December 2005, only the following open burning is permitted:

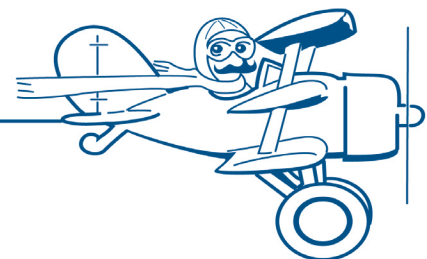
- Only those persons who are involved in a FIRST time land clearing for future construction purposes or agricultural and silvicultural burns will be considered for burning permits.
- Winds > than 10 MPH requires a notice from the Fire Department the day of the burn.

### The following burns are not permitted:

- Celebratory fire, bonfires and open cooking fires (other than approved barbecues) are prohibited unless approved as indicated above.
- Yard trash fires are prohibited.
- Burning of household trash is prohibited.

If you are unsure, please contact the Malabar Volunteer Fire Department between the hours of 8am and 4pm at 725-1030. Please call Deputy Chief Mike Foley at 863-0615 after the hours listed above. Additionally, the Division of Forestry can be contacted at the following address and telephone number:

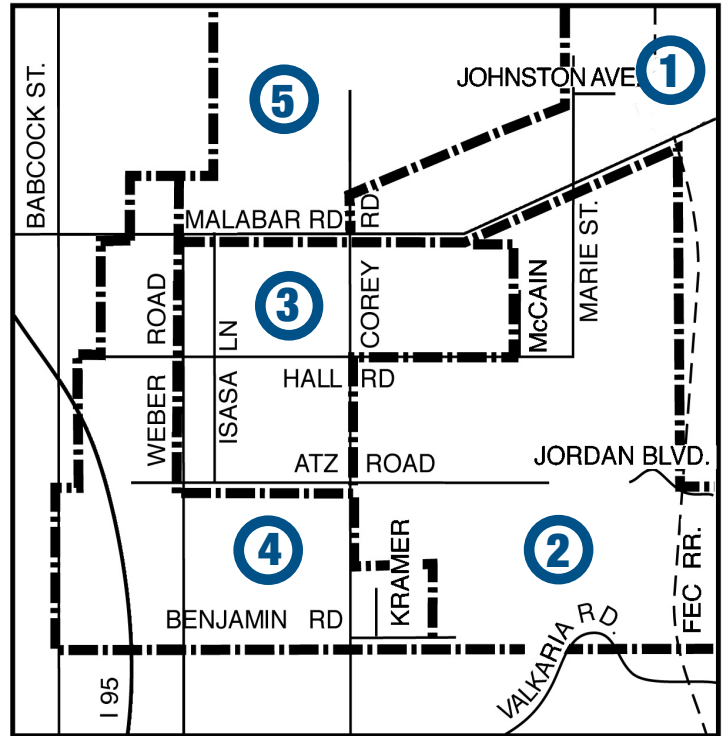
Division of Forestry  
Orlando District Office  
Florida Division of Forestry  
8431 S. Orange Blossom Trail  
Orlando, Florida 32809  
407-856-6512



## Know Your Representatives on Council

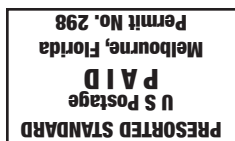
The following Council members represent these districts:

District 1	Frank Hickson 2490 Nord St.	722-3882
District 2	Brian Vail 2700 Smith Lane	952-9110
District 3	Steve Rivet 2005 Rivet Lane	956-6551
District 4	Bobbi Moccia 3135 Kramer Lane	722-3447
District 5	Pat Dezman 1670 Country Cove	724-5817
Mayor	Tom Eschenberg 2835 Beran Lane	724-1007
Town Administrator	Ed Booth Town Hall	727-7764 x13
Town Clerk/ Treasurer	Susan Kabana Town Hall	727-7764 x12
Town Fax		722-2234
County Comm.	Helen Voltz, Dist. 3	952-6300
St. John's River Water Mgmt District		<a href="http://www.sjrwmd.com">www.sjrwmd.com</a>



Editor - Susan Kabana [www.townofmalabar.org](http://www.townofmalabar.org)

The printing of this newsletter was generously donated by Data Management.



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