




THE MAILBOAT



VOLUME 5 NO. 2 4th QUARTER 1999

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.

JOIN IN THE LAST MALABAR TREE LIGHTING OF THIS MILLENNIUM

Come and join your neighbors and friends on November 27th at 6:30 pm for the 3rd annual Malabar Christmas Tree Lighting. This is an annual event that is held on the first Saturday after Thanksgiving Day. Santa will arrive on a fire truck and will have candy canes for the kids, we'll sing Christmas carols, light the tree, and officially begin the last Christmas season of this millennium. The Malabar Town Council, Town Staff and the Malabar Volunteer Fire Department all invite you to come out, meet your neighbors, and  join in this festive occasion.



Malabar and the Millennium Bug – Y2K

Most of you have heard of the millennium bug, or the Y2K, problem by now. Due to precious memory space in computers 20 years ago the digits representing the year were shortened to the last two characters. Now there is a concern as to how some computer software programs will handle the date change from 1999 to 2000.

As part of Governor Bush's Team Florida 2000 program the Town participated in an audit of our readiness for the coming millennium. We are pleased to report that the Town has achieved the 100% ready status in regard to this issue. You can review a copy of this audit at <http://www.tf2k.org>, which is the website for Team Florida 2000.

Over the past two years the Council has approved the purchase of new computers and new software for the Town. We have been in contact with Palm Bay Utilities regarding the water service for Brook Hollow and Country Cove, and we believe we are ready for the new millennium. If you have any questions or concerns about this issue, please call Town Hall.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Since the last newsletter we have experienced two hurricanes. Floyd left us with minimal damage; however, we were not so fortunate with hurricane Irene. We have spent the last six weeks with an abnormal amount of rain making it difficult to keep up with drainage problems and road grading. Unfortunately, dirt roads turn to mud when it rains, and until they can dry out, we cannot be successful with grading.



I hope you will agree with me when I say our overall drainage has improved considerably since our extensive program during the last year. This is not to say we don't have any more problems, because drainage maintenance is something we will always have to continue. We have partnered with St. Johns River Water Management District on a Town-wide drainage project, with St. Johns providing the majority of the funding. Council is reviewing a yearly stormwater fee of \$36 per resident to match with the St. Johns funding to further enhance the drainage.

Paving of dirt roads is often talked about among residents; however, there aren't funds now, nor in the near future for paving. In the past there have been three attempts on the ballot at election time for the funding to pave the roads. The voters said no, so the Public Works and Town Staff continue to do the best we can with what we have while maintaining the lowest tax rate in Brevard County.

We are still looking for someone to fill the position on the Valkaria Airport Board. Since Malabar borders this airport, we are required to have a representative on the board. Our current representative has decided to step down effective January 1, 2000. This board only meets quarterly on a Thursday evening. If you are interested or can help out on this board, please apply at Malabar Town Hall.

I hope that you have a safe and happy holiday season.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Bill Hall', written over a horizontal line.

Bill Hall
Town Administrator

MALABAR TOWN COUNCIL CONSIDERS TWO NON-AD VALOREM ASSESSMENTS

The Malabar Town Council has begun procedures for the proposed use of tax roll billing for two items. One item is to collect the fees for garbage and trash pick up and the other would collect a proposed stormwater utility fee.

Since June of 1996 it has been mandatory that the citizens in Malabar pay for garbage and trash curbside pickup. Harris Sanitation has the franchise with the Town for this service, and they have petitioned the Council once again to consider tax roll collection for their fees. Other cities in Brevard collect garbage and trash fees on their water bills. Currently, the County uses the tax roll billing system to collect Harris Sanitation fees for homes under their jurisdiction, and it works very well.

The rate will be identical to the current rate; but instead of paying quarterly, you will pay these fees when you pay your yearly tax bill. You will need to continue paying your Harris Sanitation bill for now. You will be properly notified if this program takes effect.

The other issue the Council is considering as a non-ad valorem assessment is a stormwater utility fee. Malabar has had a stormwater utility ordinance since June of 1992; this ordinance allows for a fee, but to this point the Council has not imposed it. Due to our proximity to the Indian River Lagoon the amount of stormwater runoff from Malabar needs to be considered. The Federal Government is currently working on a program which will mandate the cities in Brevard County, including Malabar, to deal with stormwater runoff in terms of water quality and water quantity. The Town will be responsible for how much stormwater runoff ends up in the lagoon and the quality of that water.

How much will this cost you? The fee being considered is \$36 per year for each parcel of land with a home on it. The rate will be higher for commercial parcels and lower for vacant land. This money will be kept in a separate fund to be used only for stormwater projects.

The procedure to adopt these items is lengthy; and if the assessments pass, they would not begin until the 2000 tax roll period. Both of these items will be addressed at the December 6th Council meeting. The only aspect of the procedure that will be discussed that night is the use of the County tax rolls to collect the fees. The decision to adopt these items will not be until early summer next year. There will be legal advertising, as well as a mass mailing, to each landowner that will be affected. The mass mailing will contain information about your parcel as well as the time and place of the public hearing that will be held when Council considers these items for adoption.

Malabar Business Spotlight

This edition our spotlight is on a business that has its own resident mallard duck, several cats and draws its customers from the Malabar, Barefoot Bay, Melbourne Beach and Palm Bay communities. Malabar Acres Nursery at 2460 Malabar Road is owned by Tom Shepard.

Tom made a drastic career change 2 years ago. After retiring from Southern Bell's coin telephone organization, he decided to get involved with plants. Tom has lived in Sebastian since 1995 and has reinvested his earnings at the nursery into plants and improvements to the grounds.

He has a large inventory of plants, gives his regular customers a 10% discount, and works with a local landscaper when his customers need someone to install their plants and provide landscaping ideas. Tom also carries quite a large line of concrete statuary in an unfinished but paintable or glazeable state. Tom has fertilizers, Florida peat, cypress and pine mulch, and recommendations to correct any deficiencies your plants may have

He also has suggestions for a great vegetable crop and lush flowers and bushes. Tom will tell you that if your palm fronds start to turn yellow, your tree is screaming for some palm fertilizer. He may recommend Epsom Salts for those plants that need manganese and magnesium sulfates to thrive.

The most popular plants are ixora, hibiscus, bougainvillea, queen palm, and live oak. Tom's busy season is from January through August but you'll find him there every day enjoying his plants, his duck and the kitties.

CLIP AND USE COUPON

USAF Restoration Advisory Board (RAB)

Patrick AFB's 45th Space Wing is looking for new members from the community to serve on this board for a 2-year term. This position is strictly voluntary and may require the members to meet with community groups. Our current representative is Doug Divers who has served for the last four years.

The Department of Defense recognized the importance of community participation for environmental cleanup activities. Therefore, the 45th Space Wing, which operates Patrick AFB and Cape Canaveral Air Station, formed the board in 1995. This board is intended to improve public participation by involving the community in the cleanup decision-making process.

Members have an opportunity to provide input on environmental cleanup activities, and review/comment on documents relating to ongoing environmental studies and cleanup activities. They also provide input on activities that may help accelerate cleanup.

The meetings are held once a quarter and are open to the public. Membership application forms and more information can be obtained from their web page: <http://www.pafb.af.mil/45sptg/45ces/ce-index.htm> or by contacting:

Ms. Terri Bracher
45CES/CEV
1224 Jupiter Street
Patrick AFB, FL 32925-3343

STANDARD MEETINGS SCHEDULE

The Town Council normally meets on the first and third Mondays of the month at 7:30 pm.

The Planning and Zoning Board meets the second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm.

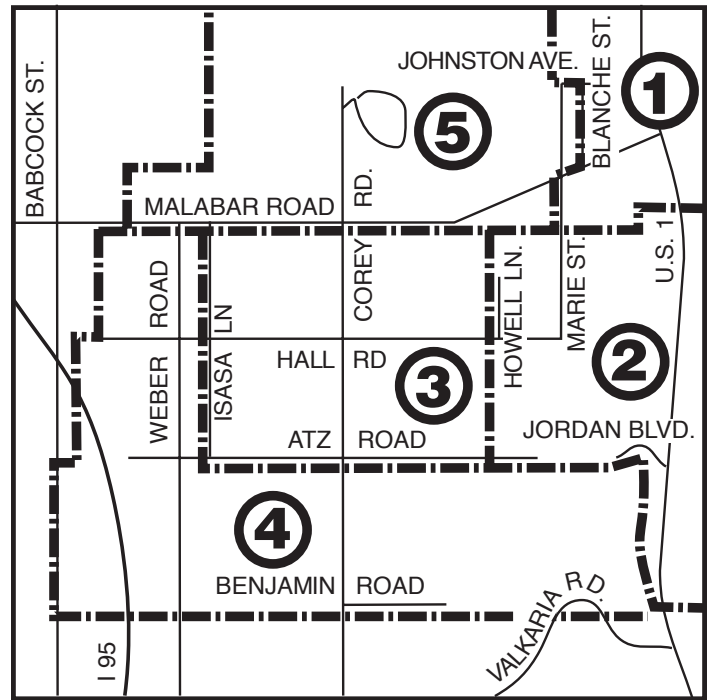
The Park Board meets the first Wednesday of the month at 7:30 pm.

All meetings take place at Town Hall. All cancellations and meeting notices are posted on the sign in front of the Fire Department, at the Post Office and at Town Hall.

Know Your Representatives on Council

The following Council members represent these districts:

District 1	Elizabeth Ritter 350 Camelot Circle	723-5845
District 2	Charlene Horton 2175 LaCourt Lane	727-2194
District 3	John Detwiler 1780 Eva Lane	725-7759
District 4	Tom Eschenberg 2835 Beran Lane	724-1007
District 5	Henry Dekker 1260 Hollow Brook Lane	722-9717
Mayor	Phillip Crews 2480 Johnston Ave.	951-0422
Town Administrator	Bill Hall Town Hall	723-3261
Town Clerk/ Treasurer	Susan Kabana Town Hall	727-7764
County Comm.	Nancy Higgs, Dist. 3	952-6300
State Senator	Patsy Kurth, Dist. 15	984-4951



Town Administrator - WILLIAM HALL 723-3261 FAX 722-2234 Editor - Pat Bennington

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