

## District One *Summer News Blast*

Happy July 4<sup>th</sup> – God Bless America!



*Rita and Dan Pritchett and their grandchildren*

We are now well into the second year, and seeing projects completed and many more in the works. It is a pleasure and honor to serve as your District 1 County Commissioner and I appreciate the trust you've placed in me. I look forward to your continued support as we keep working to prosper Brevard County. *It's a great day in Brevard County and especially District 1.*

### *Looking Back...Where We Are....What's Ahead*

Remember when we had the economic downturn and we had to work hard to revive our economy? We are now seeing a harvest of the strategies put in place a few years ago. Property values have increased and the economy is growing. A *very* healthy sign. Tourism revenue was \$1,968,737 for the *month* of March 2018, which was a little more than a 10% increase compared to March 2017 and fiscal year to date is trending at over 16%. I have to extend a thank you to Commissioner Smith for his leadership last year and his initiative to get Brevard County focused to resurface roads and reconstruction projects needed to improve our community. We have a long way to go, however we are reducing our inventory of roads that need attention. We did all of this without seeing a general fund tax increase last year and hope we will not see one this year. Parks and Environmentally Endangered Lands were increased as requested by voters by ballot.

### *What We Are Doing is Working*

A large part of this tourism increase is directly related to USSSA relocating their headquarters to Brevard County and the \$40 million investment they have made in the Space Coast Stadium. Up until last year, the 6<sup>th</sup> cent of tourism tax dollars could only be used for the Stadium in Viera. By vote of the County Commission, this 6<sup>th</sup> cent can now be

used for capital tourism projects in the *entire* county. Some of those projects included; Oars & Paddles Park, tournament soccer fields, Palm Bay's new campground and a youth competition indoor event center, which will host national cheer, dance and other activities to promote family tourist into our great county. These tourist development projects were approved by Commissioners Barfield, Smith, and myself using the tourist taxes paid by visitors to our county. It is a very good return on this investment. An investment made by our tourists.

We will continue to see an increase in tourist numbers and the tourist tax dollar *benefits* as the project at Viera Regional Park is completed. The installation of the new turf on the fields will be used by USSSA to host soccer tournaments, which brings visitors to the area who eat in our restaurants, fill our hotels, not only in Viera, but other areas of the county to accommodate the players and their families. Using the tourist tax revenues in *all 5 districts* brings good family tourism to *all* of our county.

Another sizable benefit to tourists visiting Brevard is the \$40 million surplus in tax money from the half cent sales tax we voted to *Save Our Lagoon*. Thanks to the voters, the Indian River Lagoon tax is bringing in the necessary funds needed to clean up our lagoon. The tourists to our area also pay this tax when they spend money in Brevard. Good tourist development projects help reduce resident's liability and restore our lagoon.

#### *A Note On Our Lagoon*

Although we are aggressively cleaning up our lagoon, we could possibly see more fish kills over the next few years, as only 5% of the muck has been removed, with 95% still to go. We are actively moving from septic to sewer and many other new lagoon projects are still in the beginning stages. Each of us can help in this effort by watching what we put in our water. Don't fertilize in the Summer when there is the highest rain, pick up after your dogs, and do not wash grass clippings into storm drains. I am so proud to be part of Brevard County and our great efforts to clean up our lagoon. We are the only county making a significant financial contribution toward this effort.

#### *Rain Rain Rain*

Again, this year we have experienced an elevated amount of rain fall along with the already high-water tables. The county has been working hard to try to get ahead of potential flooding areas before we could possibly see a severe storm this year. If you have a concern, please call our office and we will try to get good information to help mitigate flooding. *We are praying for all hurricanes to miss us this year.*

#### *District One Rocks!*

I am so proud of the way North Brevard is growing. We have SpaceX, Blue Origin and One Web investing in our community, bringing in jobs, families and boosting our economy. SpaceX plans are to launch every 13 days and have a planned for manned space launch by the end of the year. It was exciting to see the river packed with visitors (over 100,000

people) when Falcon Heavy was launched. **Awesome!** - Space X just announced they will be expanding their footprint at KSC. **Very Cool!** - to have Blue Origin's rocket factory and One Web's first state of the art satellite manufacturing facility in our backyard.

We cannot talk about the space industry without mentioning the Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex, which has over 1.2 million visitors a year. This is the only place on earth where you can view the Space Shuttle Atlantis, see launch areas, meet an astronaut, walk beneath a real Saturn V moon rocket, train in spaceflight simulators and view a live rocket launch. The educational program at the visitor center is worth the day at the complex alone. Stay tuned they have more exciting projects planned.

Our *Playalinda* Beach wildlife refuge has over a million visitors a year. Our Birding Festival, Sea Turtle Festival and Bioluminescence kayaking also bring many tourists to our area. North Brevard has four converging bike trails: Rails to Trails, Coast to Coast Trail, St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop, and East Coast Greenway which has already brought in over 600 cyclists on weekends. The City of Titusville was just recently designated as a Trail Town and is only the second city in the State of Florida to obtain this designation.

I apologize in advance, because I know we will miss some, however I would like to welcome the new businesses to District One Brevard County in the last year:

*Pizza@, Warburton, Third Culture Kitchen, Walmart Distribution Center, Red Canyon Software, Bealls, Little Ninjas, Tecvalco, Titus Nail and Spa, Amazing \$1 Jewelry, Wayback Burgers, E Smoker, MedFast Urgent Care, Lee's Nails, Space Coast Fablab, Pet Supermarket, USA Yacht Stabilizers, Le Crave, Woodgrain Distribution, Woodgrain Distribution, Ulta, The Grand Martini, Tuesday Morning, Coast to Coast Bicycle Shop, Firehouse Subs, Top Shelf Car Wash, Color Bar, Cumberland Farms, Rack Room Shoes, Dunkin Donuts, Epic Theater, Flying J Travel Center, Mojo Miami, Sergio's Tacos*

We could not have accomplished all of this without the successful existing businesses who have contributed to the growing strong economy. And the past and present leadership of our community.

The future is looking pretty good. We will continue to work hard and plan strategically into the future for our success. Thank you for being involved and living in the Great County of Brevard! *I am one happy Commissioner. It is a Great Day in Brevard County.*

*Rita Pritchett, Brevard County Commissioner District One*  
Happy 4<sup>th</sup> of July from the District One Staff...



Rita and Dan Pritchett and family



Marcia and Dennis Newell



Carol and George Mascellino



Amy and Brant Craddock