



NEWSLETTER



Volunteers and artists teamed up to paint a mural on the AT&T Building. Depicting imagery of life along the St. Lucie River 60 years ago, the work is scheduled for completion in late January.

POWERFUL UNDERCURRENT FLOWS THROUGH NEWEST MURAL FEATURING ST. LUCIE RIVER

Plenty of talented people put the “art” in StuART.

From the multiple murals by various artists to several sculptures by world-renowned wildlife artist Geoffrey Smith—including the city’s public art “water birds” project funded completely with private dollars—the downtown area is alive with various forms of creative expression.

The latest addition—an elaborate mural on the AT&T Building envisioned and overseen by artist Lynne Barletta—provides inspiration and motivation.

With help from the 90 children—many award-winning artists in their own right—of Barletta’s Visionary School of the Arts in Stuart, Barletta enlivened the building on Southwest Akron Avenue. In featuring life in Stuart along the St. Lucie River 60 years ago, the art serves twin purposes; bringing awareness to the ongoing plight of the river and raising funds for the victims of human trafficking.

Barletta also founded the Catch the Wave of Hope Foundation, which works to alert politicians and the public on the hidden-yet-pervasive problem of human trafficking.

Heartbroken at recent headlines about children who had been exploited in human trafficking rings—rescued but left with no homes to return to and few state resources to facilitate their recovery—Barletta doubled down her determination.

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SPECIAL EVENTS

STUART GREEN MARKET
Every Sunday, 9am–4pm
Annex Parking Lot, 121 SW Flagler Avenue,
(772) 233-0297
Produced by: Stuart Green Market

ROCK’N RIVERWALK
Every Sunday, 1pm–4pm
Riverwalk Stage, 300 St. Lucie Avenue,
(772) 370-2030.
Produced by: Stuart Main Street and DBA

STUART BOAT SHOW
Friday, January 12, 10am–6pm
Saturday, January 13, 10am–6pm
Sunday, January 14, 10am–5pm
54-290 North Dixie Highway, (954) 522-5288
Produced by: AISports Productions, LLC

**FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT IN THE PARK:
THE JUNGLE BOOK**
Friday, January 12, 6:30pm–10pm
Sailfish Park, Ballfield 1, (772) 288-5340
Produced by: East Stuart Youth Initiative/City of Stuart

(continued)

SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINUED

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. CELEBRATION

Monday, January 15, 10am–3pm
Parade Route: 10th Street–follow Tarpon
to MLK Jr. Blvd To Georgia Avenue. Ends
at Memorial Park, (772) 283-6321.
Produced by: East Stuart Partnership/
City of Stuart

SHAPE UP AND WIN 5K

Saturday, January 20, 7:30am–11am
Memorial Park Bandshell (Ocean &
Georgia), (772) 287-6262.
Produced by: First United Methodist
Church of Stuart

SFHS KEY CLUB WINTER CARNIVAL

Saturday, January 20, 12pm–6pm
Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd,
(772) 341-1868
Produced by: South Fork High School
Key Club

PJ'S IN THE PARK

Saturday, January 27, 6am–12pm
Flagler Park, 201 SW Flagler Avenue,
(772) 426-8174. Produced by: American
Cancer Society–Centerstate Bank

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT IN THE PARK

Friday, February 9, 6:30pm–10pm
Sailfish Park, Ballfield 1, (772) 288-5340
Produced by: East Stuart Youth Initiative/
City of Stuart

ARTSFEST 2018

Saturday, February 10 & 11, 10am – 5pm
Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd,
(772) 287-6676
Produced by: The Arts Council of Martin
County

GILBERT FEST

Saturday, February 17, 12pm – 3pm
Riverwalk Stage and Annex Parking Lots,
(772) 221-8198
Produced by: Meridian Marina

NEWEST MURAL (CONTINUED)

She's now raising funds to build a home for victims of human trafficking.

In painting fish in the mural's underwater scenes, the young artists contributing to the effort also earn sponsorships to go toward Catch the Wave of Hope's fund to

“What a wonderful way for me to debut a different expression of my artistic abilities and support an issue we all know and care about in the St. Lucie River as well as one that's lesser known—the plight of victims of human trafficking. Thanks to Lynne and her talented young artists, word is getting out—and that can lead to lifesaving change.” — Geoffrey Smith, wildlife artist

house human-trafficking victims. So far, they've raised more than \$10,000.

“It's about mobilizing people,” says Barletta. “And you know what? Art will do that because it crosses all kinds of boundaries.”

Speaking of crossing boundaries, the mural features a painting by Smith, who's known internationally as a sculptor.

Artist Rendering of Finished Mural



COMMUNITY COMES TOGETHER FOR ‘LOVE THY NEIGHBORHOOD’ CLEANUP

So, while it might not exactly generate the elation of a Publishers Clearinghouse Award, several Stuart families were still overjoyed to be selected for the unofficial “cleaning house awards” as the city partners with volunteers from area businesses, churches, and nonprofits to help improve local properties.

Scheduled for February 24th, “Love Thy Neighborhood” will unite nearly 200 volunteers who will work from 8 a.m. to noon removing debris, making needed repairs, and improving yard conditions for 15 East Stuart families.

Volunteers will include city officials, Stuart Police, several local businesses, the Habitat Angels, NAACP, Christ Fellowship Church, among several East Stuart churches.

“We've had a lot of success with programs like this thanks to Habitat for Humanity and others. We wanted to help create a multiplying effect and that's exactly what ‘Love Thy Neighborhood’ will accomplish. The outcome benefits everybody. It's been an inspiring thing to witness.” — David Ross, city manager.

“We have everybody coming out to help,” says organizer Thelma Washington, executive director of Gertrude Walden Community Child Care Center in East Stuart.

Identifying homes that “need help the most,” Washington ensured the free program existed for the benefit of homeowners. When first approached, some homeowners initially expressed resistance and skepticism about the program's true intents, but were ultimately appreciative of the community's desire to help.

Volunteers coming together to lift up neighbors-in-need creates a positive ripple effect, says David Ross, city manager.

EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT: CHUCK ECKHARDT



Chuck Eckhardt

Outside of his time working for the city, Chuck has volunteered for the Boy Scouts and as a coach and assistant for various youth sports teams. In 2007, he also collaborated with community leaders to help develop a unique baseball program for children in East Stuart.

The initiative, as Chuck explains, started with 12 kids on one team practicing and playing at Guy Davis field next to the 10th Street Community Center. By 2010, the program had expanded to include more than 100 children from the community—with multiple teams, age groups, and divisions covered. What started as a small youth program initiative, expanded within a couple of years to include what seemed to those involved like the entire East Stuart community.

When Chuck was off the field, he was making an even greater impact in the city's Community Services Department and in 2011, he was promoted to the position of program leader.

Today, however, you can find Chuck at the city's Utilities Division doing something equally important and rewarding. As a customer service representative, Chuck is responsible with assisting city utility customers with their services. Chuck enjoys and appreciates the difference in work because he is still doing what he does best—help people.

While working hard to expand his knowledge and skills in the public works field, Chuck is also hopeful that he will return to coaching youth sports programs in the future. If the last 15 years of Chuck's career are any indicator, the community of Stuart has just as much to look forward to.

The City of Stuart has changed a lot in the last 30 years as Chuck Eckhardt could tell you—he's been here since his birth at Martin Memorial Hospital in 1982.

Having attended Pinewood Elementary, Hidden Oaks Middle, as well as Martin County High, Chuck is also an excellent source for information on how growth in Stuart and in Martin County changed his life and others.

Hired in 2003 at age 21, Chuck began his long tenure with the city working as an assistant for the recreational summer camp program. And in the following year, Chuck was hired on a part-time basis as a recreation program aid.

"It's a tough battle to get through to everyone, but if you can change one life, it's all worth it. We wanted to give everyone a chance and show the kids something they didn't have the opportunity to see before." — Chuck Eckhardt, customer service representative, City of Stuart

SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINUED

ONE BILLION RISING

Sunday, February 18, 3pm – 5:30pm
Gazebo Park, 80 SE Ocean Blvd. (772) 480-8527

Produced by: One Billion Rising of Martin County

SAILFISH DISTRICT CROSSOVER EVENT

Saturday, February 24, 5pm – 7pm
Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd. (772) 215-0933

Produced by: Sailfish District, Boy Scouts of America

DOWNTOWN STUART ART FESTIVAL

Saturday, February 24 & 25,
10am – 5pm
Downtown Stuart, (772) 286-2848

Produced by: Stuart Main Street

SAFETY FIRST

Sunday, February 25, 10am – 5pm
Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd. (561) 222-5645

Produced by: Total LifeSafety Corp.

SAILFISH SPRINT 5K/10K

Saturday, March 3, 6:30am – 8:30am
Memorial Park Bandshell, 300 SE Ocean Blvd. (772) 288-5389

Produced by: The City of Stuart Community Services Department

TREASURE COAST MARATHON

Saturday, March 3 – Sunday, March 4,
6am – 11am
Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd. (772) 486-3946

Produced by: TC Running

PANCAKES IN THE PARK

Saturday, March 3, 7am – 11am
Kiwanis Park, 451 S Colorado Ave. (772) 286-1616

Produced by: Kiwanis Club of Stuart

SPECIAL EVENTS CONTINUED

LIGHTHOUSE ARTCENTER PLEIN AIR QUICK DRAW

Sunday, March 4, 8am - 2pm

Flagler Park, 201 SW Flagler Ave. (561) 746-3101

Produced by: Lighthouse ArtCenter

FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT IN THE PARK

Friday, March 9, 6:30pm-10pm

Sailfish Park, Ballfield I. (772) 288-5340

Produced by: East Stuart Youth Initiative/
City of Stuart

RELAY FOR LIFE

Saturday, March 24 - Sunday, March 25,

6pm - 6am

Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd.
(772) 562-2272 x2408

Produced by: American Cancer Society

RACE TO THE COURTHOUSE 5K

Saturday, March 31, 7:30am - 9:30am

Memorial Park, 300 SE Ocean Blvd. (772)
240-5445

Produced by: Martin County Bar Association/
Legal Aid Society

EASTER FAIR

Saturday, March 31, 10:00 am - 1:00pm

201 W. Ocean Blvd. (772) 287-7422

Produced By: 1st Baptist Church of Stuart

OTHER CITY NEWS

On November 15, City staff hosted a Town Hall meeting with the Downtown Business Association and Stuart Main Street to discuss the Downtown Streetscape project with downtown business and property owners.

Repairs to the Riverwalk and Courtesy Dock near City Hall are underway with the Riverwalk to be completed by the end of January and the Courtesy Dock finalized by the end of February.

The Kiwanis Park shade structure will begin construction in February.



Rendering provided by Florida Power & Light

FPL SOLAR CANOPY COMES TO KIWANIS PARK

Kiwanis Park is about to get even “cooler”—or at least your car might feel that way.

Florida Power & Light and the City of Stuart entered into an agreement last year for the purpose of constructing a solar canopy above more than 50 parking spaces at the park. The structure will provide valuable shaded parking for residents and park visitors while regularly generating between 130 and 200 kilowatts towards the energy grid.

The FPL “SolarNow” Program is a voluntary enrollment program for FPL utility customers at a cost of \$9 per month.

“Stuart had one of the highest levels of customer participation in the SolarNow program of any city on the Treasure Coast. So, we worked with the city on the best public locations to provide solar power.”

FPL uses these additional funds towards investments in solar projects like the solar canopy at Kiwanis Park. The city is also exploring future opportunities for similar projects in other areas of town.

“The project provides both a direct benefit to city residents who utilize Kiwanis regularly while allowing FPL to invest more in renewable energy sources — Ben Hogarth, city public information officer. “We believe residents will be happy to hear that their optional investment in solar energy on their utility bill each month has already had a direct impact on the community.”

The project is expected to be completed by the end of February, 2018.

