

For Your Information

FROM THE CITY MANAGER & STAFF
March 20, 2024

Dates to Remember

March 20, 2024 – Firefighter Pension Board Meeting
March 21, 2024 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting
March 21, 2024 – Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services Board Meeting
March 25, 2024 – Special City Commission Meeting
March 29, 2024 – Good Friday Holiday – City Offices Closed
April 15, 2024 – City Commission Meeting
April 18, 2024 – Golf Course Advisory Board Meeting

Office of the City Manager

Citizens, business owners & other interested parties:

The following is a report shared with the City Commission at the March 18th regular meeting that is of important interest to the community:

A. STATE LEGISLATIVE GRANT FUNDING UPDATE

As scheduled, the Florida Legislature adjourned on Friday, March 8th. Thanks to the efforts of our exceptional Legislative Delegation composed of Senate President Kathleen Passidomo and Representative Lauren Melo, it is my distinct pleasure to announce that the City of Clewiston fared very well in the State of Florida adopted budget released prior to adjournment. Legislation sponsored by the Senator and Representative ensured that the approved budget included funding for priority requests impactful to the City of Clewiston. Of course, the legislatively approved budget is subject to the gubernatorial review before becoming final, so appropriations are subject to any changes made by the Governor.

City officials need to recognize the support of our partners during the legislative session for the City's funding requests including the Hendry County Commissioners & staff, the Hendry Economic Development Council and U.S. Sugar Corporation. Also, the City was once again well represented by our Lobbyist Screven Watson in this team effort.

Specifically, the City has been approved by the legislature in the FY 2024-2025 state budget, which is being forwarded to the Governor for review and will take effect July 1st, to receive grant funding to accomplish the following:

i) **Clewiston Harlem Community Water Line Replacement: \$1,700,000**

This important infrastructure project allows the city to replace and improve a water main line that will enhance public water supply to the Della Tobias Street section of Harlem by replacing some of the oldest service lines in the system. Fire protection capabilities as a result will be improved in upgraded areas of the community impacted by the project scope.

ii) **Clewiston Public Facilities Resiliency Project: \$1,777,965**

This project will provide resiliency improvements to critical public facilities from which the City provides a wide array of public services including the City Hall, Police Department/E-911 Communications & Emergency Operations Center (EOC), the John Boy Auditorium facilities, the Community Development office building and the historic Clewiston Golf Course Operations Building. The improvements entail major upgrades including roof replacements and other resiliency enhancements for these aged structures that will make the facilities better able to withstand strong winds and rain produced by major storm events such as hurricanes.

iii) **Clewiston Replacement Fire Truck: \$1,400,000**

The City was approved for funding to replace a 2004 E-1 model custom pumper front line firefighting apparatus with a Quint design 75-78 foot aerial ladder firefighting apparatus including equipment. The City does not currently have aerial firefighting capabilities and this upgrade is necessary to ensure that the Clewiston Volunteer Fire Department meets National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards and also achieves compliance with Insurance Services Office (ISO) requirements.

The City and Hendry County partnered to submit a request that was also included in the FY 2024-2025 approved budget that is positively impactful to Clewiston and its utility systems as follows:

Wastewater Collection Hookers Point Force Main Extension: \$3,500,000

Hendry County will administer this grant project and then turn the utility improvements over to the City for operations upon completion in like manner to the partnership agreed upon for the previously funded Airport force main utility project still in construction.

In summary, these appropriations provide a **cumulative state legislative grant fund total of \$8,377,965 for capital equipment and infrastructure improvements** in several critical service areas.

B. FY24 FEDERAL COMMUNITY PROJECT GRANT FUNDING UPDATE

The U.S. Congress last week finalized portions of the long awaited FY24 federal budget which is typically announced before the end of the calendar year. The City had submitted a request in spring, 2023, for funding consideration through Congressman Scott Franklin's office in the amount

of \$4,708,840 to some degree as a contingency in case the state legislature did not fully fund the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP). If the state provided the necessary basic project funding, the additional request would allow the use of the requested funding to potentially cover any cost estimate overruns, or preferably, if cost estimates held, the federal funding would allow flexibility to consider additional permit capacity expansion and/or provide financial support to extend the distribution system components for the upgraded WWTP wastewater effluent for use as irrigation on city-owned recreational facilities including the ballfields, golf course, as well as, future access to proposed nearby residential/commercial development projects (e.g. the approved Clewiston South planned unit development). Thanks to prior federal funding received via a request through Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart and the approved legislative funding last year, the City currently has \$14,000,000 available for the project for which design and permitting actions are underway.

I am pleased to report that Congressman Franklin's staff have confirmed that after significant cuts to the congressional budget overall before its approval, **the approved FY24 federal budget includes \$2,094,724 for the City of Clewiston WWTP project. This increases the available WWTP project grant funding to \$16,094,724.** I also confirmed that the state funding is an eligible source for the CPF24 non-federal funding source matching requirement which ensures that the City will not be required to pay any local match. This is a fantastic opportunity for the City to accomplish this major and very important WWTP project with the most favorable of outcomes and the least possible adverse impact on utility customers. Of course, thanks to our Congressional and State Legislature elected officials, this also allows the City to avoid incurring any debt for this critical infrastructure upgrade in contrast to the RO Water Plant construction project and other partially grant funded utility projects previously completed.

In summary, **this FY24 CPF combined with the FY 2024-2025 Legislative state budget funding approved provides a cumulative total of \$10,472,689 to the City of Clewiston for important infrastructure upgrades.**

Thank you for your continued support and interest in the City of Clewiston & **MAY GOD CONTINUE TO BLESS CLEWISTON, FLORIDA AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA!**

Randy Martin

Staff Reports

Recreation & Leisure Services Director Lauren McGinnis reports:

The month of February was filled with a little extra love from our community partners, local groups, and the youth sports teams! This month we partnered with the Center for Progress and Excellence to host a clothing and household items donation drop off and shopping day. The support from our residents was something that was truly overwhelming! We also partnered with the Rotary Club to support a community clean-up day at the Sugarland Sports Complex. With the help of the Rotary members as well as several parents we were able to brighten our entrance, add

some plants to the flag pole, and give the dugouts a good clean and a fresh coat of paint. We are thrilled to say that because of their help and donations our complex is looking better than ever!







The Youth Center is open daily for students to enjoy! The hours of operation for students to enjoy our building are 2:30 PM – 6:00 PM Monday – Thursday and 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM on Friday. We invite all of our youth to come and enjoy all of the board games, books, Xbox game systems, and 3D printers at the Youth Center every day after school.

Our 3D printer runs each Thursday. If you would like to be a part of our 3D print club and/or volunteer for the club please call us to find out how. We are always looking for volunteers to help with our clubs and activities here at the Youth Center, if you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering please call us at 983-1492 to find out how you can get involved.

Our sports complex team has been working hard to prepare the fields for baseball season. We have worked to repair the clay, baselines, and the grass from the extended use during the fall and winter months. We would like to thank not only the Rotary Club, but also the CHS baseball team, Clewiston Youth Baseball and softball parents and players, as well as all of the wonderful citizens of our great town who came out to help with the Community Clean Up Day at the Sugarland Sports Complex. We are thrilled to see so many families joining the sport and enjoying our field. **If you would like to use the fields or batting cages but have found the gates locked please call the Youth Center to find out how you can gain access.**

We have upgraded our facility rental process to make it fully digital. This includes a new information sheet that will help us prepare a more accurate quote, and help us find the facility that will best serve you for your event. If you are interested in renting one of our facilities reach out to us as many dates are already booked and we have begun booking into 2025. Our administrative office hours begin at 8:00 AM daily Monday – Friday. If you have questions about our programs or rentals please reach out.

In addition to all of the little things we've been doing to set us for this season's events, our recreation support, maintenance, and sports complex staff have been very busy all across the city! Some things you may have seen and some you may not have, here is what we have been up to this month:

Youth Center

- The Youth Center is open for students to enjoy our building from 2:30 PM – 6:00 PM Monday through Thursday and 2:30 PM – 5:00 PM Friday.
- 97 youth enjoyed the Youth Center game room X-boxes, Mac Books, and 3-D Printers throughout the month.
- We now offer freshly cooked snacks for our students each week in addition to our snack cart!
 - Monday – Pop into the week with FRESH POPCORN
 - Wednesday – Warm your heart with FRESH BAKED COOKIES
 - Friday – Freeze those weekday blues away with FREEZIE POP FRIDAY
- The Youth Center back room hosted 1 private event this month.
- The Youth Center front room hosted 1 little league meetings this month.
- The Youth Center back room hosted 1 corporate luncheon this month.
- Daily afternoon Youth Activity Groups continue to meet with new groups being added every month. If you are interested in any of the classes stop by the Youth Center to get more information on how to sign up.
 - 1st and 2nd Monday of the month – 4H hosts cooking classes
 - 3rd and 4th Monday of the month – DIME mentoring is held
 - Tuesday - Sugar Dolls
 - Wednesday & Thursday - DIME Dance Class
 - Thursday - Boy Scouts
 - Monday, Wednesday, & Friday - Taekwondo classes
- 21 Facility Rental Requests were processed by staff this month.
- Staff landscaped around the facility.
- Staff repaired damaged equipment at Youth Center.
- Staff addressed a safety concern for the Youth Center staff storage shed.
- Staff repaired the door kick on the building's back room door kick.
- Staff addressed a broken leg on the facility furniture.
- Staff reset the GFI outlets around the building.
- Staff worked to address storage concerns and adjust current fixtures to meet the new needs of the department.

John Boy Auditorium and Beardsley Room

- The John Boy Auditorium hosted 2 private events this month.
- The John Boy Auditorium hosted 6 Miss Sugar Practices this month.
- The John Boy Auditorium and Beardsley room hosted 1 non-profit events this month.
- The John Boy Auditorium hosted 1 non-profit weekend retreat this month
- The John Boy Auditorium hosted 2 mobile food pantries this month.
- Staff deep cleaned the flooring in the main auditorium following the heavy event usage.
- Staff deep cleaned stage floor.
- Staff continues to keep facility ready for upcoming events.

Parks

- Sweetest Town Playground and Pavilions hosted 3 private events this month.
- Trinidad Park hosted 4 Sunday Soccer matches.

- Trinidad Park hosted 1 private event this month.
- Staff rebuilt the horse shoe pits at Civic Park.
- Staff disassembled the fencing to Ridgewood Park.
- Staff replaced a broken bolt on a swing at Civic Park.
- Staff addressed a raised sidewalk area in Civic Park.
- Staff made repairs to restrooms at the Lake Okeechobee Boat Ramp.
- Staff maintained the landscape at our beautiful parks.
- Staff continues to inspect all parks, playgrounds, and public areas daily picking up debris and litter so that residents can continue to enjoy a clean and beautiful space.
- Staff cleaned and sanitized outdoor restrooms at: Youth Center, Lake Okeechobee Boat Ramp, Sugarland Sports Complex, and Trinidad Park.

Sugarland Sports Complex and Park Pavilion

- Staff spent 80 hours removing trash and litter from fields.
- Staff spent 80 hours mowing.
- Staff spent 50 hours weeding.
- Staff spent 45 hours fertilizing and top dressing the fields.
- Staff spent 26 hours adding and raking clay to baseball fields.
- Staff spent 32 hours pressure washing bleachers and seating areas around the complex.
- Sugarland Sports Complex hosted AYSO all-star soccer practices.
- Sugarland Sports Complex hosted Rotary Community Clean Up Day.
- Sugarland Park Pavilion hosted 1 private event this month.
- Staff painted soccer fields for AYSO all-stars this month.
- Staff painted baseball fields for the upcoming little league ball season.
- Staff replaced bases on 4 fields.
- Staff rebuilt pitching mounds on 3 fields.
- Staff addressed excess water concerns on 1 field.
- Staff rebuilt the dugout benches for 2 fields.
- Staff pressure washed the bleachers for 4 fields.
- Staff completed painting dugouts on 4 fields.
- Staff completed painted benches on 4 fields.
- Staff has been diligently working to rehab the grass and treat the weeds from the extended use of the fields during the soccer season.
- Staff sprayed round up throughout the complex around the warning tracks and fence lines.
- Staff applied pre-emergent fertilizer to all fields this month.
- Staff assisted electrical contractor in repairing stadium lights in both of the quads.
- Staff cleaned and sanitized all restrooms throughout the park.

C.S. Mott Pool and Splash Pad

- Staff performed maintenance on chemical delivery systems.
- Staff measured and monitored chemical levels of pool water, daily.
- Staff weeded fencing line around pool deck.
- Staff continuously vacuums the pool.

- Staff cleaned pool office freezer.

We are working on organizing more family fun community events, and we would love to know what you would like to see. No idea is too big or small, we want it all from video game tournaments to movies in the park and everything in between. Please send any ideas or recommendations to lauren.mcgininis@clewiston-fl.gov. If you are willing to donate and/or sponsor an event or activity please reach out. We would love to hear from you!

If you have any pictures enjoying any of our parks or facilities that you would like to share please tag us on facebook or email them to lauren.mcgininis@clewiston-fl.gov. We love to see our community enjoying the many spaces we have to offer.

Library Director Natasha Hayes reports:

- Library staff provided ready reference/computer assistance, circulation activities, and patron programming to 1,842 patrons this month.
- This month's programming activities have included:
 - Steam Sphero Bolt program held on February 1st with a total of 15 participants.
 - **"Take your Child to the Library Day"** was held on Friday, February 2nd with a total of 45 participants. We had such a great time discussing STEAM activities and exploring our library learning stations after.
 - Chopsticks Challenge was so much fun with 24 children ages 6-12! Thank you to all who came out for this program.
 - Crafternoon was held on February 7th with a total of 26 participants.



- On Wednesday February 14th, it was all about cupcakes! Children and families enjoyed decorating cupcakes. There were a total of 32 participants.



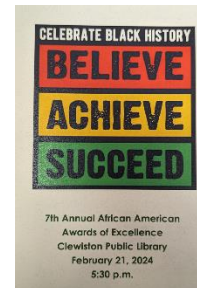
- Our Hendry County Library Cooperative Director, Natasha Hayes, participated in Career Day at the Clewiston High School on Wednesday, February 28th. Each presenter for the day spoke with three groups of high school students who were interested in learning about the presenters career field. Ms. Hayes' first group consisted of 9 students, her second group was attended by 13 students, and the last group consisted of 11 students. The following information was provided during each presentation:
 - Minimum Qualifications to attain the title of Librarian... Students were shocked to learn that in order to attain the title of Librarian, one must not only receive an Associate's or a Bachelor's degree, they must obtain a Masters in Library Science from an accredited institution! Most students thought it only required a Bachelors.
 - Salary range for a Librarian: Low \$37,621, Average \$56,206, High \$83,971
 - Statistical Information about libraries in Florida during the 2021-22 year: ([2021 - 2022 Public Library Statistics & Ranked Data Tables - Division of Library and Information Services - Florida Department of State](#))
 - How many people visit a library **EACH DAY** in Florida? **100,000**
 - # of Florida Residents with Library Cards? 11.8 million
 - How many items borrowed in the state last year? 85.8 million
 - Adult Items borrowed? 57.5 million
 - Children's Items borrowed? 28.3 million
 - Libraries provided access to how many _____?
 - Books? 22.9 million,
 - Audio Items? 11.9 million,
 - Ebooks? 17.8 million
 - DVD's/Movies? 4.4 million

- # of Public Computers available for use? 18,194
 - # of Website Visits on Public Computers? 63.7 million
 - Hosted how many programs? 200,000
 - Attendees at those programs? 4 million
- Needless to say, the students were unaware of all of the services available at our public libraries as well as the statistical information above. It was a great event and our Cooperative Director looks forward to Clewiston High School's Career Day 2025!



- **7th Annual African American Students of Excellence Awards.**

- This event would not be possible without the collaboration between library staff and the amazing teachers at our local schools. Each year the library delivers nomination forms to all schools and asks for teachers to nominate students who are excelling. Staff also circulate the nomination form throughout the community so that individuals may also nominate a community member for recognition as well. This year the library was able to honor and celebrate not only Black History Month, but twelve deserving young students who are striving for greatness each day along with one community member.



- Honorees:
 - Students:
 - Leah Benjamin, Salia Brathwaite, Richard Exilhomme, Terriya Lampkin, John P. McKire, McRyan Velima, Noah Mullings, Emily V. Walker, Amiah White, Nevaeh Wright, Runett Bovell, Cornelius Hudson
 - Community Member:

- Kartrice Monique Greaves
- This event would not have been possible without the following donations of goods as well as many individuals labor and participation:
 - Pastor James Bigham -Master of Ceremonies
 - Andrew Powell-Guest Speaker
 - Pastor Gary McNealy-Introduction of Keynote Speaker
 - Gwendolyn Asia-Keynote Speaker
 - Mayor James Pittman and Mrs. Mary Thomas for their continued library support as they presented the awards to the students.
 - D.I.M.E. for a wonderful musical, dance performance.
 - New Hope Praise Dance Team for a powerful, moving dance performance.
 - Tamera Bailey for blessing the evening with a beautiful soloist vocal number.
 - Popeye’s Chicken for their donation of 75 pieces of chicken and biscuits
 - The Friends of the Clewiston Library for purchasing the trophies and plaque for the nominees, Black History Month library decorations, and additional side items for the meal.



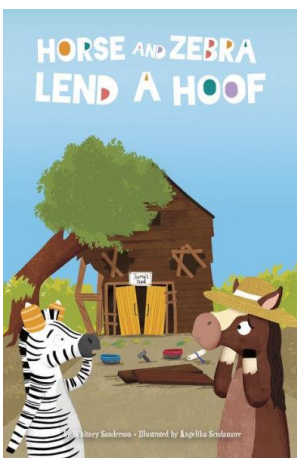
- The Adult book Club met on February 28th to discuss “The Guest List ” written by Lucy Foley. Be sure to join in on the discussions and
- AWE Learning Stations were accessed and used by a total of 90 children. The AWE learning computer will allow young children the ability to learn about Literacy, Math, Science & Nature, Art & Music, and Writing & Computer Skills. Make sure to stop by and let the kids try it out!

NEW FEATURED BOOKS: Place a hold at <https://hendrycl.insignails.com/Library/Home> or call us at 863-983-1493.



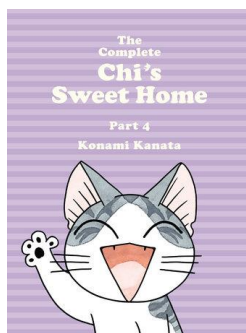
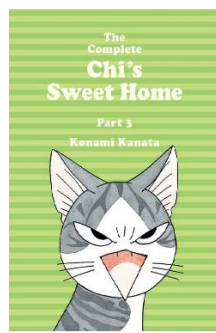
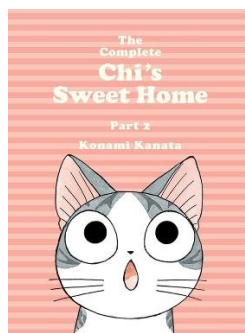
Horse and Zebra are best friends, but they couldn't be more different! While Horse is steady and sensible, Zebra is zany and creative. But what they have in common is that they will always look out for each other, and they're always ready to help another animal in need.

Horse's friend Sheepdog needs someone to watch her puppies while she goes to a sheepherding competition. Horse and Zebra volunteer for the task and soon realize the need to balance responsibility and fun while caring for the puppies.



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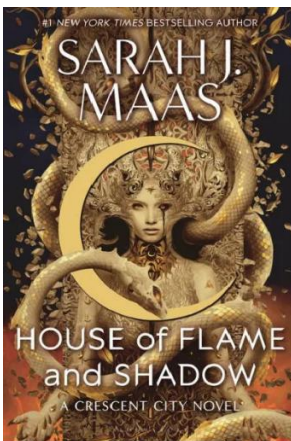
When Llama's shed is damaged in a windstorm, Horse and Zebra want to help him. Horse focuses on fixing the shed, while Zebra works at cheering up Llama. Both learn the importance of thinking about practicality and feelings when helping a friend in



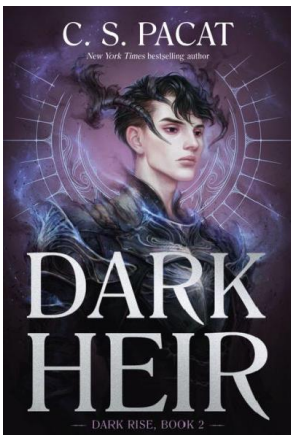
Chi is a mischievous newborn kitten who, while on a leisurely stroll with her family, finds herself lost. Separated from the warmth and protection of her mother, feels distraught. Overcome with loneliness she breaks into tears in a large urban park meadow, when she is suddenly rescued by a young boy named Yohei and his mother. The kitty is then quickly and quietly whisked away into the warm and inviting Yamada family apartment...where pets are strictly not permitted.



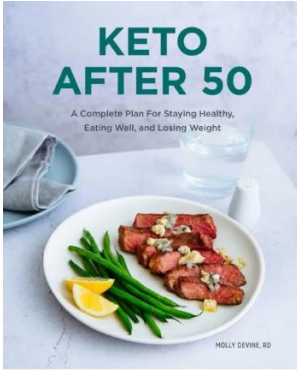
By all appearances, Western Restaurant Nekoya is a normal restaurant serving normal people-but unbeknownst to the regulars, it also attracts an alternative clientele. Every Saturday, all manner of fantastical beings come to dine, and what is familiar fare to humans can be downright exotic for visitors from beyond. To these customers, Nekoya is known by a different name: Restaurant to Another World.



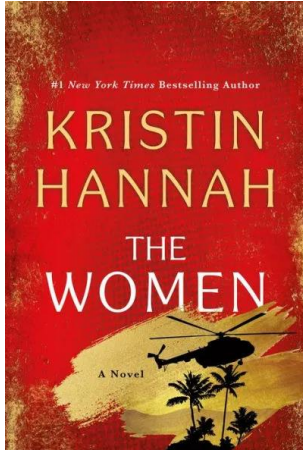
Bryce Quinlan never expected to see a world other than Midgard, but now that she has, all she wants is to get back. Everything she loves is in Midgard: her family, her friends, her mate. Stranded in a strange new world, she's going to need all her wits about her to get home again. And that's no easy feat when she has no idea who to trust. Hunt Athalar has found himself in some deep holes in his life, but this one might be the deepest of all. After a few brief months with everything he ever wanted, he's in the Asteri's dungeons again, stripped of his freedom and without a clue as to Bryce's fate. He's desperate to help her, but until he can escape the Asteri's leash, his hands are quite literally tied.



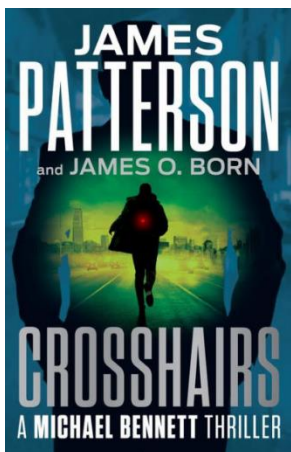
A new threat from the past is rising, and only a handful of heroes remain to fight. Pursued by dark forces, Will and his allies must leave the safety of the Hall and travel to the heart of the ancient world, making new and dangerous alliances and revealing the shocking secrets of the past. But Will is carrying a dark secret of his own—his true identity. Drawn to the beautiful and deadly James St. Clair, Will is pulled ever deeper into the web of the past and finds himself tempted by the darkness within. As the ancient world threatens to return, can Will and his friends fight their fate? Or will the truths they learn tear their world apart?



Discover how keto can work for you! No matter your reasons for changing what you're eating, *Keto After 50* gives you a detailed overview of what keto is, how it can help you lose weight, and the other unique benefits it offers. Set yourself up for success with a satisfying meal plan, helpful shopping lists, and more.



Women can be heroes. When twenty-year-old nursing student Frances “Frankie” McGrath hears these words, it is a revelation. Raised in the sun-drenched, idyllic world of Southern California and sheltered by her conservative parents, she has always prided herself on doing the right thing. But in 1965, the world is changing, and she suddenly dares to imagine a different future for herself. When her brother ships out to serve in Vietnam, she joins the Army Nurse Corps and follows his path.




















A killer uses fearsome precision to take out impossible targets. Detective Michael Bennett teams with a shooting expert—a former Army Ranger and sniper with NYPD’s Emergency Services Unit. But Officer Rob Trilling seems more comfortable with rifles than he is with people. When his new partner begins to log unexplained absences from duty, only Bennett can prove whether the decorated officer is a lonely hunter or a hardened assassin.

HIGHLIGHTED PROGRAMS AND EVENTS:

- Stop by the library to pick up a calendar with a list of events and programs so you can join in on the fun. For more information or to register, contact the library at 863-983-1493.

CLEWISTON PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENTS CALENDAR

MARCH 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>Stop by the library from 10:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. starting March 11th until March 15th for the Leprechaun Quest.</p> <p>For more information or to register, please contact the library at 863-983-1493. Programs and events are subject to change.</p>					1	2
3	<p>4 Manga Club via Zoom @ 3:30 pm Ages 11-16 Registration Required</p> 	<p>5 Gaming Club 3:30 pm Ages 7 & up Registration Required</p> 	<p>6 STEAM Club Survive the Quake 3:30 pm Ages 6-11 Registration Required</p> 	7	<p>8 Dragon Ball Snack Tasting 3:30 pm Ages 9-15 Registration Required</p> 	9
10	<p>11 Manga Club via Zoom @ 3:30 pm Ages 11-16 Registration Required</p> 	<p>12 Gaming Club 3:30 pm Ages 7 & up Registration Required</p> 	<p>13 Create w/ Cricut Zipper Pouch Ages 9-12 Registration Required</p> 	<p>14 Leprechaun Quest Ages 5 and up</p> 	<p>15 Virtual Reality 3:30 pm Ages 9-15 Please RSVP</p> 	<p>16 Friends of the Library Book Sale & Silent Auction 10:00 AM—2:00 PM</p> 
17	<p>18 Manga Club via Zoom @ 3:30 pm Ages 11-16 Registration Required</p> 	<p>19 Craft Corner Strawberry Box 1:30 p.m. (while supplies last)</p> 	20	<p>21 Take & Make Paint by Numbers Framed canvas Ages 5 -12 (while supplies last)</p> 	22	23
24	<p>25 Manga Club via Zoom @ 3:30 pm Ages 11-16 Registration Required</p> 	<p>26 Gaming Club 3:30 pm Ages 7 & up Registration Required</p> 	<p>27 Book Club 2:00 & 5:15 PM</p> 	<p>28 Silly Egg Hunt 3:30 p.m. Ages 3-11</p> 	<p>29 CLOSED</p>	<p>30 Programs provided by the Friends of the Clewiston Library & SWFLN</p>

- **Anime Club**

- **In-Person (Open to 6th-12th graders):** Anime Club meets every Friday from 3:30 - 4:15 p.m. Come hang out and chat with other Anime fans. We will be watching anime provided courtesy of Crunchyroll and talking about your favorite manga.
- **Via Zoom:** We invite tweens and teens to join us every Monday at 3:30 p.m. To register, email library@clewiston-fl.gov to receive Zoom log-in information. If you are under 18, please be sure to have a guardian's permission to participate in this online event.

- **Video Game Club:** You don't want to miss this! Stop in at 3:30 p.m. every Tuesday for video games. We have Super Smash Bro's, Mario Kart, Minecraft, Animal Crossing and the Oculus Quest! Open to all skill levels. Children ages 7 and up. Walk-ins welcome, but registering is always encouraged for better preparation.

- **Book Club:** Come join the fun at our next TWO meetings: Wednesday, March 27th at 2:00 p.m. and 5:15 p.m. to discuss the newest book club title, “*The Hotel on the Corner of Bitter and Sweet*” by Jamie Ford. With lively discussions, this group truly enjoys their meetings as they exchange their thoughts about each new title. New readers are always welcome.
- Need a place to hold a meeting? What about a computer lab to host your organization’s/company’s training? The Clewiston Library offers a classroom and computer lab with a total of 16 computers for use. For more information or to secure the room, please stop in or call the library at any time.
- If you have not done so already, please join our Facebook page (Clewiston Public Library) in order to remain up to date on the library’s events and programs.

Community Development Director/Fire Chief Travis Reese reports:

- Marshall’s is still coming to town! Remodel is taking longer than anticipated, due to unforeseen construction issues and contractor delays.
- Alan Jay Chrysler Dodge Ram Jeep has their Grand Opening scheduled for 03/27/24 to 04/01/24.
- Former Glades Gas building on Sugarland Hwy has received approval from the City Commission to be redeveloped into a Restaurant and Fine Wine and Spirits Tasting Room and Store. The wine store will be called Sugarlake Fine Wines and Spirits.

Code Compliance Supervisor Debbie Clay reports:



**CODE ENFORCEMENT AMNESTY PROGRAM
APRIL 1 – JUNE 30 2024**

The City of Clewiston is offering the Code Enforcement Amnesty Program as an incentive to property owners who may have outstanding Code Enforcement violations to bring their property into compliance with City codes and obtain quick reduction of the outstanding liens. The Program is being administered by the City's Community Improvement Division. Hours of availability are 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily, excluding weekends and legal holidays. You can schedule an appointment to discuss specific information or amounts owed by contacting the Community Improvement Division at 141 Central Avenue, Clewiston, FL 33440 or 863-983-1454. For more information visit:

https://www.clewiston-fl.gov/egov/apps/document/center.egov?eGov_searchDepartment=56&eGov_searchType=63

Golf Course Director Robbie Rush reports:

- Get all information of what's going on at Clewiston Golf Course Facebook.
- Get on our E-mail list by going to the City of Clewiston Website. Go to the golf course division and at the bottom of the page you can sign-up on Constant Contact and get all Clewiston Golf Course information.
- Memberships are available, contact Clewiston Golf Course. A complete listing of all our fees for golf are listed on the City of Clewiston Website
- Guest Rates \$45.00 Plus Tax 18 Holes and \$22.52 Plus Tax for 9 Holes. Tee Times are recommended, we are in season.
- Monday Special 18 holes after 12:00pm \$33.00 plus tax.
- Golf Shop Hours are 7:15am to 5:30pm. The first tee time is 7:30am. Carts are due in at 7:00pm daily.
- Advertise a Tee Sign out on the golf course. If you are interested in advertising your business at the golf course call 863-983-1448.
- Golf lessons and Club Repair are available at the club from PGA Professional Robbie Rush. Contact golf shop at 863-983-1448.
- Clewiston Golf Course can supply all your golfing needs. You can inquire in the golf shop for whatever merchandise you need.
- The irrigation project in the field is done. The new pump station will be put in the first week of April.
- Job opening at the golf course: Maintenance Grounds Supervisor. To inquire about this job, applications are available at Clewiston City Hall.
- February 24, 2024 the CWGA Rally for the Cure Mixed Golf Fundraiser Tournament was held at the Clewiston Golf Course. The tournament fielded 88 players and was the Clewiston Women's Golf Association's 15th Annual Tournament.
- March 9, 2024 V.F.W. Post 10100 LaBelle Scramble was played they had 100 players and raised money for local veterans.
- 2024 Presbyterian Nicaragua Medical Mission Tournament is going to be played March 23, 2024.
- 2024 Clewiston Masters is scheduled for Masters Weekend Saturday April 13, 2024. It will be 4-Person Teams and sign-up is in the golf shop.

For more information call the golf shop 863-983-1448

**Police Chief Tom Lewis reports:
Police Department**

On February 5, 2024, Police Command Staff attended a meeting at the Hendry County Emergency Operations Center on the newly proposed radio towers and VHF infrastructure and equipment. This important partnership will ensure a continuation of operations in the event of a storm impacting our community.

The Police Department held its quarterly *Coffee with the Chief* program on February 13, 2024.



This is an opportunity for any member of the public to have a cup of coffee, a relaxed conversation with Chief Lewis, and get answers directly from him. Tours of the police department were also given.

On February 14, 2024, Chief Lewis appeared on the WAFC morning radio show, *Moorecki in the Morning*. The Chief gave an overview of all the happenings at the police department and animal services.

On February 17, 2024, Chief Lewis and other members of the police department assisted Clewiston High School Criminal Justice Program's annual Camp Out. Many law enforcement-related hands-on topics are covered in this intense days-long event. Chief Lewis provided a presentation on being a law enforcement public information officer.

WE'RE ACCREDITED! Beginning on February 19, 2024, Chief Lewis and Accreditation Manager Ashley Smith attended a week-long accreditation training conference hosted in St. Augustine, Florida. On February 22, 2024, the Clewiston Police Department obtained their first-ever accreditation award. Now, the public can be rest assured that every aspect of the department is operating under best practices and outside experts from the state will have unfettered access to the police department for a continuing assessment. We couldn't be more proud of the men and women of the CPD!



On February 28, 2024, Chief Lewis and Commander Brophy attended Clewiston High School's Career Day. A presentation on the police department and the great careers available was provided to all of the students.

Neighborhood Watch – We’re looking for YOU to get involved! There are many benefits to neighborhood watch such as building stronger relationships between the police and the community we serve, residents becoming more educated about police operations, getting help in reducing the risk of crime for you and your neighbors, working together for disaster preparedness, etc. If you are interested in joining our program or learning more, please email Chief Tom Lewis at Thomas.lewis@clewiston-fl.gov.



Animal Services

In the month of February 2024, Animal Services reported the intake of more than 36 cats and 18 dogs. Our Shelter Manager has been focused on increasing adoptions at the facility. This month, we had 7 dogs and 2 cats adopted!



EXCITING NEWS!

Clewiston Animal Shelter is partnering with 3 of our local elementary schools to raise awareness. They will be showcasing all of the artwork on the walls of the shelter, allowing Facebook followers to name winners, and educating local youth about the important roles we fill here at the shelter. Stay tuned for some awesome artwork and make sure you vote for your favorite one!



Highlighted Training

Beginning on February 3rd and ending on February 25th, 2024 Sergeant Tito Nieves attended and graduated from Defensive Tactics Instructor school. The school was hosted in Avon Park, Florida and will allow us to better train our officers in de-escalation techniques as well as skills to use when de-escalation doesn't work.

During the week of February 19, 2024, Sergeant Willie Roberts attended an applicant background investigations course in Fort Piece, Florida. This was the final leg in Sergeant Roberts' completion of a 240-hour detective academy.

During the week of February 19, 2024, Accreditation Manager Ashley Smith and Administrative Assistant Adelys Valles attended the Accreditation Training Conference hosted in St. Augustine, Florida. A variety of law enforcement topics were covered with an emphasis on maintaining accreditation standards.

Beginning on February 20, 2024, Detective Charles Williams attended a three-day class on Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) to update his skills as he is the agency's leading investigator of all crimes against children. The agency has maintained their participation on the ICAC Taskforce for the past few years.

During the week of February 26, 2024, Sergeant Lionel Conyers attended a Line Supervision course. The course, at no cost to the agency, was hosted by the Southwest Florida Public Safety Academy in Fort Myers, Florida. The class better prepares newly promoted first line supervisors to deal with the complex issues of supervising police officers.

General Services Director Williams reports:

It is a violation of the City of Clewiston Ordinance to connect to a water line within the Clewiston Utility service territory without the city's permission.

Sec. 74-8. - Unlawful water or sewer connections.

No person shall be allowed to connect into any water line or sewer line owned by the city without the written consent of the city, and then the connection with such line shall be made only under the direction and supervision of the city. Any person who shall make any connection without such consent of the city shall be guilty of a violation of this Code.

If you suspect someone is stealing water, please call the Utility Office at 983-1454

• Electric Crew Activities:

- repaired street lights;
- installed street light on San Pedro;
- disconnected services (3) for contractor repairs on meter cans;
- assisted Public Works Department install Air Conditioning unit on Water Treatment Plant roof;
- prepared for sugar festival;
 - repaired (8) outlets for vendors;
 - replaced two rusted breaker boxes;
 - exchanged transformer for larger size;
 - replaced underground cable with larger to address loading issues;
 - replaced underground connections in junction boxes;
 - tested all outlet plugs;

- pruned trees;
- installed new breaker and outlet for USSC tent
- replaced two rotten distribution poles and relocated transformer on Mississippi Street;
- removed old pole from boat basin parking lot;
- closed locate tickets;
- changed transformer at Harlem Park damaged by mower;
- replaced rotten pole on Ponce de Leon;
- changed broken pole top pin on Harlem Academy;

- **Water Sewer Crew Activities:**

- repaired 1” pvc valve coupling on Saginaw Avenue;
- repaired 2” water line under the road between San Jose and E Trinidad;
- repaired 1” service line at Fairgrounds Trailer Park;
- reset bypass valve at liftstation #21 (San Jose and Esperanza)
- repaired wiring in electrical panel for Rodeo grounds lift station;
- investigated customer low pressure complaint;
- installed line stop on Lopez Avenue to change valves;
- replaced leaky 2” galvanized pipe with polyurethane;
- installed new service line on Della Tobias Avenue;
- repaired (3) water line breaks;
- changed meters (10) and replaced meter boxes to new AMI meters;
- installed new shut off valve for 2” water main at Royals Plaza;
- cleared blocked sewer line at La Frontera store

- **Customer Service Department**

Your Utility partners with customers to bring renewable power to the electric grid. If you'd like to learn more about net metering, please visit the FTC consumer information site at <https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0532-solar-power-your-home> .

- Please remember to register with CodeRed (Reverse 911). This system allows us to contact you in case of an emergency or with other informational announcements. You may register by clicking on the CodeRed link at the bottom of the City's website page www.clewiston-fl.gov . You may update your information at any time through the same link.
- If you are considering replacing your air conditioner or attic insulation, remember the City offers a rebate program for those items. Most local contractors participate in the program and can give you more information. You can also visit our website at www.clewiston-fl.gov or call our office.
- *IT'S LIGHTNING SEASON!* Don't forget to sign up for your meter based surge protection! Visit our office today.
- ONLINE BILL PAY IS AVAILABLE on our web site at www.clewiston-fl.gov or www.municipalonlinepayments.com/clewistonfl.
- We're excited to share **our Online Utility Portal is now live**. The portal allows you to access near real-time utility usage data from the newly installed electric meters from our ongoing Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) project. Visit the AMI landing page of the city's website at [Utility System Update](#)

- **Facility Maintenance:**

Staff received training from Johnson Controls for replacing heat sensors

Air condition repairs (3) and filter replacements at city facilities.

Plumbing repairs (4)

Other work:

- Mulched festival grounds, and pressure cleaned buildings, pressure cleaned sidewalks in Civic Park, repaired Kiosk for the Sugar Festival and made signs for the Ball Fields for opening day
- Made facility repairs at warehouse office, RO Plant, and Youth Center
- Serviced the public works entrance gate

- **Street Division:**

“No Parking” signs are being posted throughout the city. City Ordinance Sec. 70-20 prohibits (with the exception of Sugarland Highway and a few arterial feeder roadways), operating or parking a tractor, semitrailer or common carrier vehicle on any of the paved streets of the city, unless for the purpose of making delivery of goods or products within the city. Please call Public Works if you have questions or would like more information at 863-983-1471.

Ongoing:

- shopping carts collected and returned to businesses
- landscape maintenance and mowing
- pot hole repair
- street signs replaced and guard rails repaired
- debris removed from streets, catch basins and welcome signs

Other work

- we are preparing the ground for the 2024 Sugar Festival
- repainting road crossings on the north side of town
- cleaned Royal Palm Avenue bridge

- **Solid Waste:**

- Solid waste material is being transported to Ortona transfer station.
- hauled broken concrete to the Glades County line disposal
- hauled mulch to Sugar Fest grounds

If you'd like to schedule a special pickup service, please call the Public Works Department at 983-1471

- **Central Garage:**

- Maintains the city's fleet.
- Cleaned wash basin in wash bay