

# THE BRIDGE

cityofnewportrichey.org

NEW PORT  
RICHEY  
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19th Edition | June 2025

## FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR: CORBIN MITCHELL

Corbin began his career with the New Port Richey Fire Department in 2017. He was chosen for the distinction based on his outstanding work ethic, contagious positive attitude, empathy, and commitment to the mission of the fire department. According to Chief Fitch, the other quality that stands out about Corbin is his willingness to always go above and beyond what is required of him.

In addition to his recognition by Chief Fitch and City Manager Manns, Corbin was also honored by Congressman Gus M. Bilirakis at the Congressional District 12 First Responder of the Year event in May.

Congressman Bilirakis declared that Corbin's extraordinary effort is making a profoundly positive impact on the New Port Richey community, which makes him a deserving recipient of this recognition. Corbin was joined by his wife Olivia and Chief Fitch at the event.

**Thank you, Corbin, for your dedication and commitment to the city and for your continued service of excellence.**



Left to Right:  
Chief Chris Fitch,  
Firefighter  
Corbin Mitchell,  
and City Manager  
Debbie L. Manns.

## Storm Hardening & Hurricane Preparedness

Hurricane season is here. Beginning June 1st and through November 30th, New Port Richey residents are urged to be prepared. According to Pasco County's Disaster Guide, over the past two centuries, 1.9 million lives have been lost to hurricanes, the deadliest type of storm on record. Our community is no stranger to the dangers.

**“As we've seen firsthand, these storms can change course and strength in a matter of hours,” said New Port Richey Fire Chief Fitch. “Being prepared could save your life, and your safety is our top priority.”**

On September 26, 2024, Hurricane Helene passed just 100 miles offshore, causing devastating storm surge, power outages for over 29,000 residents, and major structural damage. Shortly thereafter, Hurricane Milton impacted our area, causing major wind damage. Storms like these can rapidly shift and intensify. Even if the eye seems calm, the outside bands can bring violent winds, torrential rain, tornadoes, and deadly storm surges.

Be prepared. Make a family plan, secure loose items, gather important documents, and build your hurricane kit. If an evacuation order is issued, take it seriously. Emergency responders may not be able to reach you as the storm makes landfall.

Stay informed. Monitor the City of New Port Richey's website and social media pages for updates, or follow weather.gov. Be sure to know your evacuation zone. Find it at MyPas.co/Map.

**DON'T WAIT. PREPARE TODAY. YOUR SAFETY DEPENDS ON IT.**

**For more information, please review the  
2025 Pasco County Disaster Preparedness Guide.**



Photos from  
Hurricane Idalia  
aftermath



Scan  
QR Code  
for more info!

# CITY MANAGER'S LETTER

Dear Residents,

Summer is officially here, and I'm excited to share updates on community events, infrastructure improvements, and upcoming programs that reflect the City of New Port Richey's commitment to both preparedness and celebration.



Our city continues to take proactive steps toward resiliency through storm hardening efforts and hurricane preparedness. Planning is critical as another Florida storm season has begun, and I encourage all residents to take this time to review your emergency plans.

Earlier this year, we welcomed a new member to our City Council and welcomed back a seasoned legislator. Their leadership will be instrumental in advancing key priorities identified during our strategic planning sessions. Together, we will outline goals that will shape future work sessions, budget hearings, and policy discussions, all aimed at strengthening our community by aligning resources with the needs of the city.

Our Construction Services Division of the Public Works Department is hard at work on a number of road projects as well, with schedules in place to minimize disruption while we enhance infrastructure and implement improvement projects across the city, many of which are introduced in this issue of the newsletter. Also, please consider reading the Tampa Bay Water Wise program on the back cover to learn how you can conserve water and save money on future water bills.

Looking ahead, I hope you'll join us on Saturday, June 28th for the city's Annual Red, White, and Blue Hometown Extravaganza in Sims Park. This year's event will feature live music, family-friendly activities, and a fireworks display over Orange Lake. It's one of my favorite traditions and the perfect way to celebrate summer and the place we are all proud to call our hometown.

Warm regards,

Debbie L. Manns, ICMA-CM  
City Manager

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## Thank You, **SHADOW**

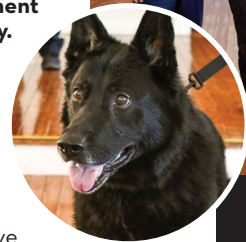
In April, the City of New Port Richey Police Department, along with Pasco Sheriff's Department, said thank you to longtime K-9 Shadow for his service.

**Shadow officially retired after 11 remarkable years on duty. He has been a vital member of the city's law enforcement team, dedicated to protecting and serving our community.**

While on duty, Shadow has apprehended dangerous suspects, located missing persons, and played a key role in locating illegal drugs. He has saved lives and made our city a safer place. His loyalty and bravery have left a lasting impact on the officers he served alongside and the citizens he helped protect.

As Shadow hangs up his badge, he is now headed to live with his handler, K-9 Officer Aaron Eck, fulltime to enjoy his much-deserved retirement. K-9 Officer Eck also handles K-9 Reaper, who, after graduating the academy, will now take over the duties left behind by K-9 Shadow.

Our city extends immense gratitude to Shadow's hard work over the years, and his contributions will not be forgotten. Enjoy your well-deserved retirement, Shadow! We know Officer Eck will take great care of you.



Left to Right:  
NPRPD Police  
Chief Robert  
Kochen, Officer  
Aaron Eck,  
Deputy Police  
Chief Lauren  
Letona, and  
K-9 Shadow



## Upcoming IMPROVEMENT Projects

The City of New Port Richey Public Works Department is moving forward with several important infrastructure upgrades to improve drainage, roadway safety, and the pedestrian experience. Construction has begun and will continue through the summer months. Please see below for project highlights and impacted areas:

### Beach Street Drainage Improvement Project

The City of New Port Richey began work on drainage improvements to the Schwettman Oaks Neighborhood in April. The Beach Street Drainage Improvement Project will involve the installation of approximately 1,750 linear feet of 36" stormwater pipe, the installation of CDS hydrodynamic separators which is a unit that is used to screen and trap trash, sediment and oil from stormwater runoff, new stormwater inlets and road reconstruction. The project boundaries span from the intersection of High Street and Maple Street, east to Beach Street, north to Gulf Drive, and connecting to the Pithlachascotee River.

### Grand Boulevard Multi-Use Path Project

Improvements are being made to enhance accessibility and connectivity along Grand Boulevard between Marine Parkway and Gulf Drive. The first phase of the project was completed in June. Future phases will include more work on Grand Boulevard as the path makes its way to the north and into the downtown area.



### 2023-2024 Street Improvement Project

This project began on Pennsylvania Avenue in May and will continue working south through the following neighborhoods, improving the infrastructure with updated paving, enhancing the roadway conditions for the safety, mobility, and convenience of residents and visitors.

- **Pennsylvania Avenue**  
from Madison Street to Congress Street
- **Central Avenue**  
from Madison Street to Harrison Street
- **Florida Avenue**  
from Madison Street to Congress Street
- **Polk Street**  
from Old Main Street to Indiana Avenue
- **Harrison Street**  
from Old Main Street to Indiana Avenue
- **Grand Boulevard**  
from Sims Lane to Broadway Avenue
- **Marine Parkway**  
from Gemstone Drive to US19 & from US19 to Grand Boulevard

Be assured that the city is committed to minimizing disruptions to travel and will take all necessary precautions to ensure the safety of residents, businesses, and commuters. We appreciate your patience and cooperation as we work to complete these important infrastructure projects. **For more information, please contact the Public Works Department at 727.841.4536.**



# MAYOR'S LETTER

Dear Neighbors,

It is my honor to present to you many updates on things happening in our historic city on the water. Please take a moment to explore this issue of The Bridge for community stories and other important information.

From exciting new businesses opening their doors to important dates of upcoming events and activities, this edition is filled with meaningful updates.

Please take a moment to view the story on page 4 about the dedicated volunteers who serve on our many committees, all of whom play a vital role in advancing the city. You will also find a story on page 2 about K-9 Shadow, a beloved dog who has spent many years serving our Police Department and keeping our community safe.

If you haven't had an opportunity yet, consider trying the Downtown Area Roundabout Trolley (DART) and meet our wonderful drivers. Also, consider participating in the Summer Library Challenge, which brings accessible services and enrichment to residents of all ages.

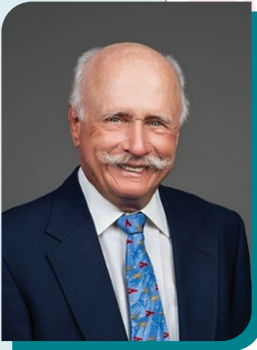
This summer is full of opportunities to engage, spend quality time with neighbors, and explore new city programs. These experiences remind us that connection is at the heart of our community.

Our parks and recreation, our cultural events, and our downtown storefronts each contribute to the environment that makes New Port Richey a truly special place to call home. I encourage you to get involved by attending upcoming events, taking part in volunteer opportunities, and making the most of all the programs and services our city offers.

Sincerely,

Chopper Davis  
Mayor

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# NEW BUSINESSES

Downtown is buzzing with new energy as fresh businesses open their doors and bring exciting opportunities to our community. We invite you to support these local businesses:

## WHAT'S NEW?

**Ela!** - Ela! is an all-new restaurant located at 6238 Grand Boulevard across the street from Richey Suncoast Theatre, serving a variety of authentic Greek-Cypriot dishes, emphasizing fresh ingredients and traditional recipes.



**Hello, Sweetz!** - Hello, Sweetz! is a whimsical candy store with a touch of nostalgia that will take you on a trip down memory lane, located at 6335 Grand Boulevard. They offer a wide range of candy, taffy, licorice, and even sugar free candy.



**Kouro Décor & Furniture** - Kouro Décor and Furniture curates timeless furniture and inspired décor, as well as distinctive artwork to transform spaces into expressions of individuality. Located at 5404 Main Street.



**Rosie's Tavern** - Rosie's Tavern offers delicious craft beer and is located in the heart of downtown at 5728 Main Street. In partnership with SteamWorks Pub, you can go to Rosie's Tavern for a beer and order a bite to eat delivered to your seat! Plus, they have a wall dedicated to the community's pets - bring in a framed photo of your dog with a donation to be given to the local animal shelter to participate. Let the good times brew.



**Lash Lush & Facial Spa** - Lash Lush & Facial Spa is a concept created by Tiffany England, licensed cosmetologist and six-time certified master lash artist. She offers eyelash extensions, lifts and tint, brow lamination and tinting, waxing, and facials, located at 5745 Main Street Suite #202.



Graduating Class of 2024

## FALL CITIZENS ACADEMY

The City of New Port Richey is pleased to announce that applications will be accepted July 7th to August 8th for the 2025 Fall Citizens Academy.

If you are interested in learning more about the city in a forum which is designed to be fun, interactive, and fact based, the Citizens Academy may be a great opportunity for you. The nine-week program provides an in-depth look at how local government is organized, as well as how services are funded and delivered. Classes are held weekly on Wednesday nights from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at different locations throughout the city, including City Hall, Public Works, the Library, Police Department, Fire Station, the Recreation and Aquatic Center, and the Wastewater Treatment Facility. The Citizens Academy is open to city residents ages 21 and up; however, non-residents may apply and be approved at the discretion of the City Manager.

Classes begin September 3rd, 2025. For the complete class schedule and to download an application, please visit <https://www.cityofnewportrichey.org/Government/City-Council/Citizens-Academy>.

## RED, WHITE, & BLUE Hometown Extravaganza

The City of New Port Richey proudly presents the Red, White & Blue Hometown Extravaganza on Saturday, June 28th, from 4:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. in Sims Park.

Bring your lawn chairs, wear your red, white, and blue, and join the fun in the heart of downtown for a festive evening of community spirit, entertainment, and summer celebration!

### FAMILY FUN

4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Bounce Houses | Face Paint | Food Trucks

### HOTDOG & WATERMELON EATING COMPETITION

4:00 pm - 5:00 pm

### LIVE MUSIC

5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

**Rocky Boven** Florida native and hometown country artist, Rocky Boven, is known for his energetic set filled with country-rock and patriotic favorites.

7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**Bay Kings Band** Rocking stages across Florida with their signature blend of pop, funk, Motown, jazz, and tropical-rock, The Bay Kings Band will keep everyone dancing and smiling from start to finish.

### FIREWORK SPECTACULAR

9:15 pm - 9:30 pm





## Spotlight:

# Volunteers

On Thursday, April 24th, 2025, the City of New Port Richey hosted its annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner at Spartan Manor, celebrating the dedicated individuals who give their time and talents to serve our community. The evening was filled with gratitude and heartfelt recognition for the volunteers who help shape the city's future.

Those invited included members from several city boards and committees, such as representatives from the Environmental Committee, Police Pension Board, Firefighter Pension Board, Historic Preservation Board, Land Development Review Board, Parks and Recreation Advisory Board, Library Advisory Board, and the Cultural Affairs Committee. These volunteers play vital roles in preserving our city's recreational assets, supporting public safety, enriching cultural life, and ensuring responsible growth and development.

**Mayor Chopper Davis and City Manager Debbie L. Manns offered remarks, expressing deep appreciation for the countless hours of service these individuals contribute throughout the year.**

New Port Richey is a stronger, more vibrant place because of the dedication of its community members. We extend our sincerest thanks to each volunteer who continues to make this city a place we're proud to call home.

# HOW To Reserve Public Spaces

Whether you are planning a picnic, a party, a meeting, or a special event, you can reserve a public space. Here are the steps to reserve specific spaces in the City of New Port Richey.

### Library Reservations:

All library space reservations are handled directly by the New Port Richey Library. Please contact the Library for more information at **727.853.1279**.

### Recreation Center Room Rentals:

To reserve a room rental at the New Port Richey Recreation and Aquatic Center, please call **727.841.4560**, or stop by the Recreation and Aquatic Center for more information.

### Pool Party Reservations:

To reserve an outdoor shade canopy or private party room with access to the pools please contact Recreation Supervisor, Summer, at [martins@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:martins@cityofnewportrichey.org) or **727.841.4560**. Once availability is confirmed, submit the application via email. After-hours pool parties are reserved through our aquatics team at [aquatics@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:aquatics@cityofnewportrichey.org). Once availability is confirmed, submit the application via email.



### Parks and Outdoor Spaces:

To reserve city park pavilions, gazebos, or shelters, visit [www.nprrec.org](http://www.nprrec.org), call **727.841.4560**, or stop by the Recreation & Aquatic Center.

### Sims Park Bandstand:

Is managed separately by the West Pasco Historical Society. For bandstand reservations, call **727.847.0680**.

### Peace Hall:

Is reserved by contacting the City of New Port Richey's Events Coordinator at [raderw@cityofnewportrichey.net](mailto:raderw@cityofnewportrichey.net) or **727.841.4560**. Once availability is confirmed, submit the application via email.

### Rates and Residency:

All city rentals must be paid in full in advance. There are no holds or payment plans. There are two rates: Resident and Non-Resident. To verify residency within the city's incorporated limits, visit **Pasco County Property Appraiser, search your address, click "Parcel," and check "Jurisdiction."** If it reads **"CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY,"** you qualify for the resident rate. **State/Federal ID is required.**

**Plan ahead and enjoy all that our public spaces have to offer!**

< The Loquat Festival in April 2025

## YOUR CITY COUNCIL

**Mayor, Chopper Davis**  
[davisc@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:davisc@cityofnewportrichey.org)

**Deputy Mayor, Matt Murphy**  
[murphyrm@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:murphyrm@cityofnewportrichey.org)

**Councilman, Peter Altman**  
[altmanp@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:altmanp@cityofnewportrichey.org)

**Councilman, Bertell Butler IV**  
[butlerb@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:butlerb@cityofnewportrichey.org)

**Councilman, Brian Jonas**  
[jonasb@cityofnewportrichey.org](mailto:jonasb@cityofnewportrichey.org)



< Left to Right: Councilman Brian Jonas, Deputy Mayor Matt Murphy, Mayor Chopper Davis, Councilman Bertell Butler IV, and Councilman Peter Altman



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## CITY OF NEW PORT RICHEY

5919 Main Street | New Port Richey, FL 34652

PRSR STD  
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PAID  
EDDM RETAIL

Local  
Postal Customer

# CONSERVING WATER COULD SAVE YOU MONEY

► New Port Richey residents and business owners can take advantage of Tampa Bay Water Wise rebate programs designed to help save water, and money! From installing high-efficiency toilets to upgrading commercial irrigation systems, rebates are available for a wide range of water-saving improvements.

### HOMEOWNERS MAY QUALIFY FOR:

- **HIGH-EFFICIENCY TOILETS:** \$40-\$100 rebate.
- **SMART IRRIGATION CONTROLLERS:** Free or up to \$250 back.
- **SHALLOW WELLS:** Up to \$1,000.
- **CUSTOM PROJECTS:** Up to \$40,000 for multi-family or commercial properties.

Businesses can also receive rebates for restaurant equipment, irrigation upgrades, and plumbing fixtures - up to 75% of project costs.

Apply online to see if you're eligible. Learn more at [TampaBayWaterWise.org/en/npr/](https://TampaBayWaterWise.org/en/npr/), or call 888.491.0033.

Tampa Bay Water Wise is a partnership of local governments helping our region grow greener, healthier, and more sustainable for future generations.

## Summer Library CHALLENGE



► Each year, the New Port Richey Public Library invites readers of all ages to take part in our Summer Library Challenge. This year's theme is In the Spotlight.

**Are you ready to shine this summer?** Join the Summer Reading Challenge and celebrate the creativity, talents, and stories that make our community special. Set your own daily reading goal—whether it's a chapter, 10 minutes, or 20 pages—and earn badges for every 10 days you read. Complete creative challenges, collect activity badges, and increase your chances of winning awesome prizes!

Don't miss this lineup of exciting summer events, including a Poets' Open Mic, Local Artist Gallery, acting classes, karaoke, concerts, and more. There's something for everyone—so jump in, get inspired, and let your talents take center stage!

The Summer Library Challenge runs from June 1st through July 31st. Sign up by downloading the Beanstack app or by visiting [nprlibrary.beanstack.org](https://nprlibrary.beanstack.org).



Scan  
QR Code  
for more  
info!