

March 2012

Vol. 21 Issue 2

507 Ocean Avenue  
Melbourne Beach  
Florida 32951



**TOWN OF MELBOURNE BEACH**  
BREVARD COUNTY'S OLDEST BEACH COMMUNITY • ESTABLISHED 1883

**BEACH COMBER**

**TREES AND SHRUBS:**

This is a gentle reminder regarding the planting and maintaining of trees and shrubs. Recently, we have noted that there are trees and/or shrubs that are either planted in the right-of-way, or extending through the right-of-way obstructing the view of vehicle operators. There are also areas in Town where the height of a tree and/or shrub is extending over the roadway creating a height clearance issue for our emergency vehicles. Over the next few weeks, the Code Enforcement Official, in concert with the Fire Department will be identifying those trees/shrubs that represent a safety issue for the operation of emergency vehicles. Similarly, trees and/or shrubs that obscure the safe operation of vehicles will be identified. The property owner will then receive a notice of violation and given 15 days to correct the violation. If the violation has not been corrected by the property owner within the noted corrective action period, the Town will take corrective measures, the property owner will be billed the cost to remediate the action, and the property

will be sent to the Code Enforcement Board for possible fine. Additionally, tree trimmings are not to be placed in gutters and or on or next to stormwater intakes, as this will cause there to be a backup of water flow in the event of heavy rain.

Town ordinance §50-2 states: “No trees or shrubs shall be planted on any right-of-way without written permission from the Public Works Director. This prohibition does not apply to grass or similar ground cover, which can be cut by a mowing machine. Any application to plant trees or shrubs on a right-of-way shall be made to the Public Works Director stating the type and proposed location of each tree or shrub.”

**Elected Officials**

**Mayor Tom Davis**

**Vice Mayor April Evans**

**Comm. Jean Marshall**

**Comm. Jay Gurecki**

**Comm. Rocco Maglio**

**Town Staff**

**Town Manager**

**Bill Hoskovec**

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**Town Clerk**

**Rhonda Danielle**

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**Police Chief**

**Dan Duncan**

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**Public Works Director**

**Daniel Rocque**

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**Town Accountant**

**Jennifer Howland**

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**Fire Chief**

**Jim Hunter**

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**Building Official**

**Bob Phoenix**

## ART SHOW AT OLD TOWN HALL HISTORY CENTER

By popular request, another Art show will be presented in March. This will be the third annual “Facets of Florida Art Show”.

It is described as “an eclectic mix of media and artists, depicting what makes Florida unique.”

The History Center will be open all five Saturdays of March from 11:00—3:00.

The location is 2373 Oak Street across from Spessard Holland Golf Course. Admission is free.

For information, call 536-3336.



Here are some questions that I have recently been asked in regards to cell phone use and texting.

1.How dangerous is it to send a text message while driving?

It is very dangerous; there have been recent studies that have shown those who resort to texting while driving are 23 times more likely to be involved in an accident. Another study indicates that texting while driving is even more dangerous than drunk driving.

2.Under what conditions does it become most dangerous to use a cell phone while driving?

All conditions can be dangerous to use a cell phone while operating a motor vehicle. Driving in the city alone requires a driver to constantly be aware of there surroundings. This includes traffic flow, red lights, stop signs, pedestrian, and bicyclists. Taking your eyes off the road to make or answer a cell phone takes away from your concentration of driving.

3.What makes using a cell phone while driving so dangerous?

It's a known fact that driving requires a fair amount of concentration, judgment and precision. Impairment of any of these abilities can put you in grave danger. When you use a cell phone, your concentration is greatly shifted from the road to the cell phone, while dialing or receiving a call.

4.How has cell phone use changed over the past few years and how has that affected drivers?

More teenagers now have cell phones that are equipped with texting. More advanced technology with cell phones encourages people to use them more frequently. Cell phone popularity has grown rapidly and the use of these devices has doubled. Individuals are making calls, texting, visiting web sites all while driving.

5.In your experience, which demographic is most likely to use a cell phone while driving?

In the city, business people are on the move, to meet their business needs and to have constant contact with their peers. In large cities, people tend to use their cell phone while they are driving, which attributes to our accidents.

6.What laws pertain to using a cell phone while driving in the State of Florida?

None

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7. What laws regarding using a cell phone while driving can be expected within the next few years?

There are only eight states that now prohibit all drivers from using a handheld cell phone while driving. The Federal Government has begun to take action and is conducting studies in cell phone use while driving, the Federal Government is also coming up with committees to prepare and address laws concerning cell phone use.

8. In any states where texting or talking on the phone is prohibited while driving, how are law enforcement officers dealing with offenders?

Traffic citations are issued in those states, however the jury is still out if the citations are legal to issue. Several cases have been taken to court and are still not resolved. That's why the Federal Government has started the initiative to take action on this issue.

9. Are there any trends relating knowledge of the dangers of using a cell phone while driving to a decrease in accidents caused by distracted driving?

In fact, the existing laws aren't reducing crashes, even though we know that such laws have reduced hand-held phone use, and several studies have established that phoning while driving increases crash risk. So, should use of cell phones be totally banned while driving? The answer is still out there to be determined and is in limbo.

10. How important do you consider the issue of cell phone use while driving to be?

Very important, the rapid rate of cell phone use while driving is astronomical. The distraction alone has caused major serious accidents, even death by using a cell phone while driving. Being in Law Enforcement for thirty years, it's sad to see these accidents could have been prevented by simply putting your cell phone down and not using it until you safely pull over to a parking lot or waiting to get to your destination to use the cell phone. Drive safely and drive smart!

Message from Chief Dan Duncan

## Town of Melbourne Beach Police Department

Topic: Emergency Alert System

Details:

The Melbourne Beach Police Department is pleased to announce a new electronic notification service to our residents and visitors. Residents can sign up to receive emergency alerts, including text messages or e-mails that can provide life-saving information. The service provided by Nixle Connect allows police agencies to communicate with the public via SMS, e-mail, and/or internet posts, at no cost. Communications can range from emergency alerts to routine day-to-day information (traffic and missing person's reports, safety tips, crime information, community outreach programs, special events, etc.)

Citizens can register to receive messages from Melbourne Beach Police and other local agencies by sending a text message with their zip code to 888777. Online registration is also available at [www.nixle.com](http://www.nixle.com) . There is no charge for registering to receive these public safety alerts, but standard text messaging rates associated with your mobile phone service will apply.

“This is another effective tool for our department in our communication efforts with our residents. By providing information directly to the public we have a stronger partnership with the community and our officers in our effort to reduce crime and increase public safety in our neighborhoods.”

Contact Person: Chief Dan Duncan

Contact Phone Number: 321-723-4343

Contact e-mail: [dand@melbournebeachfl.org](mailto:dand@melbournebeachfl.org)

## **Railroad Water Tower To Be Removed And Relocated**

**The water tower which once served as a water source for the railroad which ran from the pier to the beach and now sits on the east side of the Melbourne Beach Volunteer Fire Department will be diligently dismantled in the coming weeks. Once removed, the many parts and pieces of the wooden cistern and elevated platform will be restored and re-erected in Ryckman Park. The exact location in the park has yet to be decided.**

**The water tower is considered by many as one of the many historical icons which exist in Melbourne Beach today. The railroad built in 1889 by Captain Alfred Wilcox, transported people arriving by ferry at the Melbourne Beach Pier to the world class beaches where Sands Restaurant stands today.**

**If you or someone you know would like to assist with the restoration process, please call Dan Rocque, Public Works Director, at 724-5860 or email him at**

**[drocque@melbournebeachfl.org](mailto:drocque@melbournebeachfl.org)**

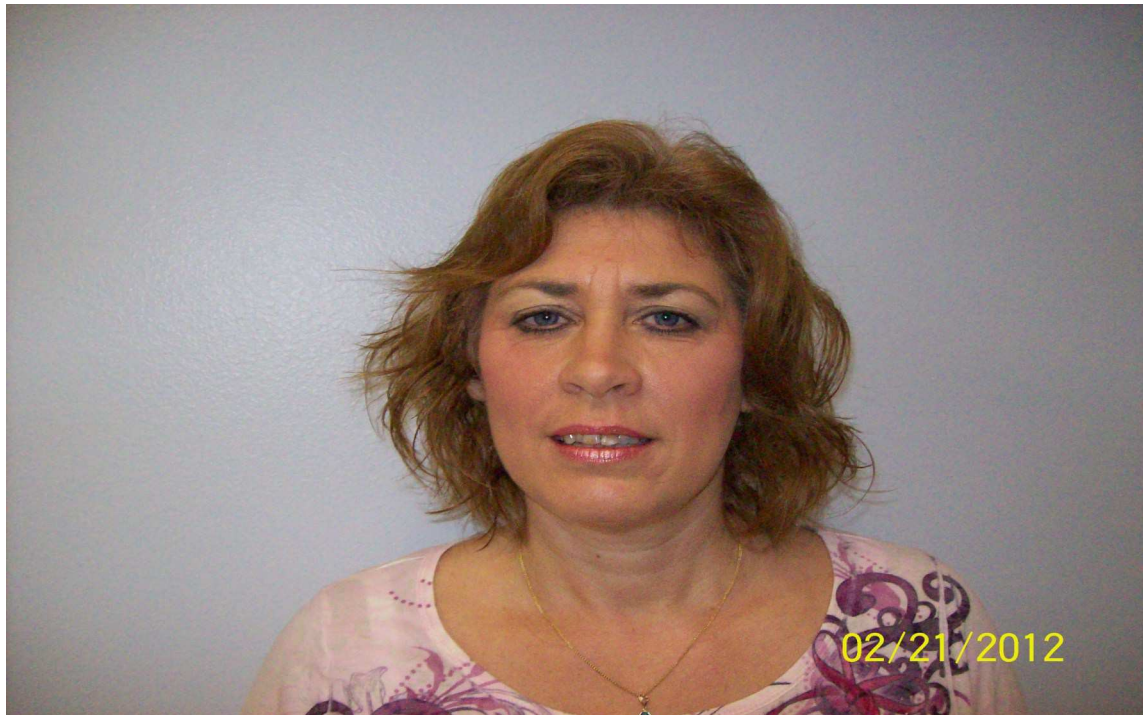
## Fund Drive update from the Melbourne Beach Volunteer Fire Department.

This is the time of year we reach out to the Town residents and business owners for their financial support. The letters went out a little later this year but we are well underway (\$10,000 to date).

Any given year, we'll receive donations between \$18,000 and \$25,000. The money supports expenses not covered by tax dollars like the purchase of the squad mini pumper, marine rescue, recruitment and retainment, special events, education and more. Your generosity and appreciation are significant motivators to our members who volunteer their time to train and protect the Town we live in. Thanks you so much!

As always, our members are men and women of all walks and ages and we are always looking for new members. Applications are available at the station and you can find more information about us at [www.mbvfd.com](http://www.mbvfd.com)





I would like to take this opportunity to introduce our new Deputy Town Clerk, Ms. Marie Fox. Marie comes to us from Keller, Virginia, where for the past twenty-seven years she worked for the Accomack County Department of Building and Zoning, where she managed an assortment of responsibilities as the assistant to the Department Director. Needless to say, Marie is a welcomed addition to our team, an excellent find for our Town and will be a true resource to the Town personnel. We all look forward to having Marie compliment our administrative team and we encourage you to stop by Town Hall and welcome her to our Town.