



Deltona, DeBary, Enterprise and Osteen

Working for you

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Volusia County Council District 5
COUNTY COUNCIL UPDATE
DECEMBER 2014

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve this county and the people of Volusia for 20 years in elected service. It has been the highlight of my professional life. My term of service as your District 5 representative ends at midnight on the 31st. With the beginning of the New Year, District 5 will be well represented by Council Member Elect **Fred Lowry**. Please get to know him and share with him your hopes and dreams for our county.

While I will miss serving the public, please know that I do not intend to go home to retire to a rocker in front of the TV. I hope to continue to serve this county and our community in other ways that are equal in importance as the work I did on the dais. There is still lots to do.

Max Dupree, in "Leadership is an Art", said the first responsibility of a leader is to define reality. The last is to say "thank you" So let me first begin with saying my thanks to you, dear reader, for your interest in what was happening in our beautiful county and in District 5. I have enjoyed hearing from you, whether it was while picking out tomatoes at Publix, walking the trail at Gemini or taking your call, text, email or FB message, you always found a way to communicate and to let me know what was on your mind. It will be

important for you to continue that dialogue with the Council and to stay engaged in our community. It is you who, individually and collectively, can make a difference in how we grow, how we define our quality of life and what we will look like 50 years from now.

Whether your interest is in education, the environment, economic development or something else, never hesitate to speak up and speak out. Elected officials at the local level really do listen to what you have to say.

I want to also say thank you and to express my support for the County Council members have I served with this term or in previous years. And in general, to acknowledge the hard work and the role of local elected officials. With few exceptions, the men and women who have served our county and cities as elected officials have served with the highest level of integrity and commitment. I salute them all. They have my thanks and gratitude for stepping up and serving.

It's a different County government today than when I started my council service in 1993. District 5 did not have any municipal government then. We were strictly unincorporated relying exclusively on county government for our services. I was very proud and pleased to provide guidance to the people of DeBary ('94) and Deltona ('95) as they became the newest cities in Volusia County. It was both fun and momentous to "turn the keys" over to DeBary Mayor Don Smith and Deltona Mayor John Masiarczyk as they took the reins of their newly formed government.

In the 90's we elected our Chair within the body politic and I was honored to serve as the Chair in 1996 and again in 1999. During that time we adopted the Volusia Conservation Corridor, that wild and rural heart in the center of our County. Now almost all in YOUR ownership, it will be forever preserved for future generations to recreate in and will be an environmental legacy to all those thoughtful members who worked hard to secure the land for tomorrow.

And YOU made it possible with the passage of Volusia Forever. You decided to tax yourself to secure the future both in land and with the passage of Volusia ECHO, ensure our quality of life would not be compromised. Thank you for that.

We also removed cars from the beach in Daytona Beach to support the redevelopment of the beach side. It was the right decision then and we should have the courage to continue to continue to remove cars and support redevelopment of our beachside. More importantly, we are driving cars through a playground. The practice needs to end.

Work also began on our Showcase Trails system. We started with one mile, across the front of Gemini Springs Park, and now have about 26 more miles on the ground with another 50 or so left to build to complete the Spring to Spring Trail and the Central Florida Rail Trail, both important connector pieces to the statewide initiative known as the Coast to Coast Trail. It's been my honor to work on our trails from day 1 and to have a segment of the system named for me was deeply moving this past month as the Council unanimously approved the Manager's recommendation to set aside a 5K section, aptly marked, with my name.

And finally, SunRail service into our County was a Big Hairy Audacious Goal (BHAG) that with the start of service just this year proved that we were ready for a new way to commute. Our station led the ridership numbers when we started and continues to be one of the mostly highly utilized stations along the corridor. I don't want to say I told you so, but I will! 😊 I was confident from the beginning that SunRail was right for our county. Now it's on to Daytona Beach with an alternative analysis considering options for transit.

Here's where reality bites. There is still work to be done on a number of fronts: Water will be an important issue for District 5 especially, as we are an important part of the Blue Spring watershed. We cannot grow economically if we don't have both quality and

quantity of water to sustain our population. Pay attention to how the legislature enacts the newly passed Land and Water amendment to the state constitution. We are a county surrounded on three sides by water. Insist that we get our fair share of the proceeds to protect and enhance our supply. Hold our representatives feet to the fire on this important voter driven amendment.

And it isn't just water that I ask you to be concerned about; it's the state of our environment generally in Volusia. Past Councils were diligent in ensuring that we grew in a smart way; that we protected those special places; that we honored the environment. Make sure that commitment remains with the incoming Council.

Of course, the Trails! Next month the Council will be cutting the ribbons on two new pedestrian overpasses that will fly over two busy roadways. In between those two bridges is about 16 miles or so that, while funded for construction, are pending council approval for design - build. I will be watching and prodding from the sidelines, but help me make sure their commitment remains firm.

Don't forget about the last missing links on the Spring to Spring Trail, a small piece in Council Member Patterson's district 1 and the larger segment around DeBary. One of my last actions this month was to convene a meeting with Duke Power to set the DeBary alignment. It's going through approval now with both organizations. It cannot get lost in the bureacracy...don't let it be forgotten!

Our county survived the great recession and came out of it a stronger, leaner government and more focused on our core mission. Today, we are a more vertical organization as a result of the need to ensure that decision making during this stressful time was well placed and accountable.

But I believe it's now time to begin to shift back to a more horizontal organization and would encourage my colleagues in the coming year to again become more horizontal,

less vertical. We have a building full of thoughtful and smart employees that given the opportunity, always come through for the folks who call Volusia home. They are talented and eager to engage in governing and decision making. It is time to let them be creative and resourceful again.

Dupree also said that joy is an essential ingredient of leadership. And that leaders are obligated to provide it. I hope that I brought some joy to my council service. And that my decision making was always that of a servant leader.

So...I am not going to say goodbye... I am just going to say Adieus, Adieu, Vaarwel, Auf Wiedersehen, Ciao, Arrivederci, Sayonara, Adios, Hasta la vista, dear readers, friends and constituents.

HAPPY NEW YEAR



**STAY IN TOUCH!
FRIEND ME ON FACEBOOK OR LIKE MY 365
GRATEFUL PAGE.**

And I am regularly posting content on
Twitter: [www.twitter.com @pnorthey](http://www.twitter.com/pnorthey)

Listen monthly as I will continue do a radio program called the Volusianaires on WNDB Radio. Listen live this January 21st - 4-6pm as Holly Hill City Commissioner Arthur Brynes, retired school board member Candice Lankford, Public defender Jim Purdy and I discuss the issues of the day. Always a fun and lively show, listen live at am1150 or catch it streaming on your computer at www.marcbarniersshow.com.

PLACES TO GO AND THINGS TO DO!

We are blessed to live here in Volusia County. The weather is perfect this time of year. Now is the time to get out and explore our county. There is so much to do right here at home. Begin by going on line and check out our county web site. www.volusia.org. You can use the drop down menu to explore our beaches, our trails, parks, libraries, and historical places.



**Be sure to check out the free outdoor adventures!
I will be enjoying them with you.**

Please note: This has been a monthly newsletter, written and edited by yours truly, updating you on what is happening in District 5 and in the County. This is a public record and is intended for broad distribution. It may be shared. It has been my honor and delight to produce this newsletter.

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