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Happy New Year!

This year, I will continue improving our schools, keeping taxes low, and looking out for our community. I believe in this community, that we have some of the brightest and hardest working individuals in all of Florida. That's why I have championed increased funding for our schools and worked hard to protect our natural resources. I want to keep our community the best place to live and raise a family, and I really believe it is.

As always, it is a great honor to serve and represent you and the members of District 8. Share this newsletter with your friends and family so that they too can stay informed with our community updates and future legislation.

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Community Updates

PUPS, PJS, AND PUPCORN



The Humane Society of Marion County is hosting a Pup, PJs, and Pupcorn event at the local Ocala Drive-in. Enjoy some of your favorite movies and vendors with friends, family, and an abundance of dogs!

WHEN: January 16th, at 7:00 PM

WHAT: PUP, PJS, and PUPCORN

WHERE: The Ocala Drive-In, 4850 S Pine Ave. Ocala, FL 34480

TEACHERS ASSIST TEACHERS \$2,500 CONTEST FOR INNOVATIVE IDEAS



Teachers in Florida are invited to submit their innovative teaching ideas. State Farm Teacher Assist will accept 200 submissions and select 40 grant recipients. Each winning teacher's school will receive a \$2,500 grant to be used for the creative project submitted by the winning teacher.

The program's application period opens Jan. 11, 2021, at 4 p.m (local time). It concludes with receipt of the 200th submission or Jan. 15 at 11:59 p.m. Teachers can prepare now.

Please help share this opportunity with Florida teachers. For details, visit: StateFarm.com/TeacherAssist.

Statewide Updates

FLORIDA RURAL BROADBAND EXPANSION

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has awarded \$191 million to Florida internet providers to expand their infrastructure in rural Florida. This funding was awarded through the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF), a program established to expand high-speed, low broadband networks into unserved rural areas.

Phase One: Includes the FCC directing up to \$20.4 billion over 10 years to finance broadband internet expansions. This specifically targets areas where there are no providers offering connections faster than 25 megabits per second (Mbps).

Phase Two: RDOF will target partially served areas, where locations lack access to 25 Mbps broadband.



FLORIDA MODERNA VACCINE UPDATE

Governor Ron DeSantis provided the following update regarding the progress Florida has achieved in its vaccine disbursement. You can review the full press release [here](#).

[State of Florida Vaccine Accomplishments to-date:](#)

The opening of hospital vaccination sites along with these four new actions are a timely complement to our first three weeks of vaccinations, which included the following accomplishments:

Florida was the first state in the nation to:

- Begin offering vaccines to staff and residents of our over 4,000 long-term care facilities.
- Begin offering vaccines to EMTs and paramedics; and
- Mobilize our county health departments and county emergency managers to actively vaccinate seniors in the community.

Four New Actions To Continue Florida's Proactive Approach to Vaccinations:

- 1) Expanding access to vaccines with additional state-supported sites.
- 2) Deploying the vaccine into underserved communities.
- 3) Reinforcing vaccination efforts with additional staff.
- 4) Continuing to prioritize long-term care facility residents.

PARTNERSHIP WITH PUBLIX TO OPEN COVID-19 VACCINATION SITES

Governor Ron DeSantis announced that the Florida Division of Emergency Management (FDEM) and Florida Department of Health (FDOH) have partnered with Publix Supermarkets to establish COVID-19 vaccination sites. Governor DeSantis made this announcement at the first Publix vaccination site in Ocala.

Through a partnership with FDEM and FDOH, Publix is receiving 15,000 doses of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to launch a new pilot program at 22 select Publix Supermarkets, beginning Friday, January 8. Appointments can be made beginning Thursday, January 7.

The 22 pilot locations will be open in three counties: three in Citrus County, 11 in Hernando County, and eight in Marion County.

All vaccinations by Publix at their select locations will be by appointment only. Beginning Thursday, January 7, qualified individuals can make an appointment by visiting www.publix.com/covidvaccine.

DEPARTMENT OF FINANCIAL SERVICES HIGHLIGHTS SUCCESS

The Florida Department of Financial Services highlighted the Top 20 Successes of 2020. Throughout the year Chief Financial Officer (CFO) and State Fire Marshal Jimmy Patronis worked to support Florida families and businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic, fought fraud and held scam artists accountable, advocated for Florida's brave firefighters and first responders, responded to a historic hurricane season, provided record-breaking unclaimed property returns to Floridians, and advocated for Florida consumers and businesses.

- Supported Florida Families and Businesses during the COVID-19 Pandemic
- Tackled Fraud and Rising Insurance Rates in Florida
- Supported Florida's Firefighters & First Responders
- Navigated a Historic Hurricane Season and Assisted Florida's Insurance Consumers
- Returned \$357 Million in Unclaimed Property to the Pockets of Floridians

You can review the Chief Financial Officer's Press Release [here](#).

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**RESURFACING FROM NW 20TH ST. - U.S.
301/U.S. 441 MARION COUNTY**



**U.S. 301/U.S. 441 Resurfacing
from NW 20th Street to the
U.S. 301/U.S. 441 Interchange
Marion County**

Financial Project Identification (FPID) No.: 441136-1



Project Description

This project encompasses nearly 8.7 miles of U.S. 301/U.S. 441 (Pine Avenue), north of downtown Ocala.

The purpose of this project is to increase traffic efficiency and enhance safety in the corridor between NW 20th Street and State Road (S.R.) 326 and to extend the life of the existing roadway by repaving the road from NW 20th Street to the U.S. 301/U.S. 441 interchange.

The proposed improvements include median modifications from NW 20th Street to S.R. 326 that will convert full median openings to bi-directional medians in some locations and close median openings in other locations. Information about the project was mailed to residents in July 2020.

The project will also add or extend some left-turn lanes and add bicycle through lanes at some intersections.

Project Status and Estimated Costs*

Design:	Completion spring 2021	\$ 1.85 Million
Right of Way:	Within existing	—
Construction:	To begin summer 2021	\$ 17.8 Million

*Subject to change

Contact:
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CFLRoads.com

Legislative Updates

COMMITTEE WEEKS

Starting this Monday, January 11th, I will begin traveling from the district to Tallahassee for the first week of committees in preparation

for the 2021 Legislative Session. I look forward to serving as your state Senator once again this year. Below are the dates for the upcoming committee weeks:

- Week of January 11 - January 15th, 2021
- Week of January 25 - January 29th, 2021
- Week of February 1 - February 5th, 2021
- Week of February 8 - February 12th, 2021
- Week of February 15 - February 19th, 2021

Do you have events, accomplishments, or local news that you wish to share with members in District 8?

Please email your submissions to Perry.Keith.Web@flsenate.gov

It's an honor to represent you in the Florida Senate. Thank you for your continued support, input, and patience as we work together to make lasting impacts in our community. Please do not hesitate to contact my office with any questions, concerns, or thoughts at any time. We are here for you!

Sincerely,



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