

# WEEKLY MANAGER'S REPORT

## TOWN OF LADY LAKE, FLORIDA

By Bill Lawrence, Town Manager

April 10, 2025

### DEPARTMENT MANAGER'S REPORT (William Lawrence):

Julia Harris - Employee Newsletter

**Julia Harris** continues to do an outstanding job by putting together the monthly employee newsletter. The newsletter includes important updates like birthdays, work anniversaries, promotions, and new hires. This month, she also highlighted an essential health and wellness topic on stress awareness. Additionally, Julia keeps us informed with safety tips and upcoming events. Great job, Julia.

**Training Officer Robert Chausse - Active Shooter Preparedness Presentation.** His mix of seriousness and humor likely kept the staff engaged while discussing a critical and sensitive topic.

### Lady Lake Commission - Efficient Meetings

We are fortunate to work for a commission that runs highly efficient meetings. Last Monday, Mayor Freeman read three proclamations, and the commission approved 13 agenda items, allowing public comments and giving their reports—all within an hour. Excellent work, Mayor Freeman, Mayor Pro Tem Treva Roberts, and Commissioners Regan, Gurlie, and Sage!

### Lake County Charter County Initiative

The Lake County Board of Commissioners is exploring the possibility of becoming a Charter County. As part of this effort, two volunteers will be selected from Lady Lake to join the Lake County Charter Committees. The County has expressed concerns over the municipalities' growth and seeks to control annexation to curb expansion. Some comments have been made suggesting municipalities don't know what they are doing and blaming growth for the damage to county roads. I find these comments offensive, as we are professionals who understand exactly what we are doing. Economics and infrastructure costs will eventually limit growth, and I have full confidence in our planning board and commissioners to make informed decisions on annexation. They've already rejected one annexation proposal, showing their careful consideration.

### Department Manager's Meeting - Preparing for Budget Season

During this Tuesday's Department Manager's meeting, we discussed preparations for the upcoming budget season. A key topic was the creation of a program that will show how property tax dollars are spent, aimed at increasing transparency and value for our citizens. We also engaged in meaningful discussions about how to enhance citizens' engagement with local government.

**CLERK'S OFFICE (Nancy Wilson):**

No report this week.

**COMMUNICATIONS (Elisha Pappacoda):**

Per discussions with the Town Manager and department heads, Communications has created a draft educational communications plan to showcase the value of staff and the services the town provides. This will be an ongoing program across all channels.

Our Facebook views for March 12 - April 8 are 67.9K, which is an increase of 19%. Our Facebook reach for the same time period is 24.6K, which is an increase of 15%. We received 100 new followers during this time.

Total views of meeting livestreams in March was 51. The top-viewed video on YouTube was the police drone video of the apprehension in Lady Lake of Leesburg murder suspect Neville Muirhead. Susyn's "Green Your Routine" water conservation video series has also gained traction on YouTube.

We released a flyer, press release, and social media promotions for "[Shred It and Forget It](#)," which has been picked up in [Lake & Sumter Style](#) and the Villages Daily Sun.

We updated the [police website](#) to include a message from the chief, a new bio for Deputy Chief Brough, and March statistics.

This weekend, we will attend and gather content of the Easter festivities at Snooky Park. We sent two text alerts to 76 subscribers to help promote the event. (This is the most text subscribers we have ever had for an event – and we are told larger entities average only about 50 at most.) We earned a good deal of advanced coverage on both the adult and children's Easter events:

[Children can hunt for eggs and snap photos with Easter Bunny - Villages-News.com](#)

[Easter fun for all ages | Triangle Sun | midfloridanewspapers.com](#)

[Easter events and activities in Central Florida](#)

[Adult Easter Egg Hunt - Orlando Sentinel](#)

[Your Community in Brief: Lake County events and news, starting April 2](#)

[Your Community in Brief: Lake County events and news, starting April 11](#)

[Town of Lady Lake to host an adult Easter scavenger hunt - Gazette News The Villages](#)

[Some bunny loves you at Easter 2025 events in Lake & Sumter County](#)

[12 fun things to do in Leesburg, Lake County and Sumter County](#)

Shoutout this week goes to Training Officer Robert Chausse for his engaging active shooter preparedness presentation.

**FINANCE (Pam Winegardner):**

At the next Commission meeting, we are writing off bad debt for our utility billing. In the state of Florida, if a tenant's bill is delinquent and they leave town, the bill cannot be held against the landlord or apartment complex. If it is an owner that does not pay their water bill, the town files a lien on the property after serving them a 30-day warning letter.

The write-off due to bad debt is comprised of tenants' bills that go uncollected. We find a lot of time, there is a leak at the rental and the water bill goes sky-high. If and when the owner of the property fixes the leak, the excess consumption due to the leak should be covered by the property owner unless the lease contract says differently. This is not the case most of the time. The tenant then leaves, and the town, after a couple of years of trying to collect it, we must write off the bill.

I contacted our code enforcement officer, and the department head a month ago to take action as our (LDRs) Land Development Regulations address property owners and actions against poor maintenance of utility lines. Customer Service has been collecting information on these accounts that had leaks and were not fixed or not timely fixed, and we are moving forward to take these property owners to the Special Magistrate and fine them. We first send a warning letter. The result so far is that the warning letter has spiked action with favorable results. The penalty, besides court costs, is the equivalent of the excess cost of the leak.

Years ago, I took action (again thanks to the LDRs) against tampering with the meter when it is shut off due to non-pay, and that was successful! We will continue to combat the delinquent bills and to protect the town's assets.

A shout out to our landlords who quickly fix the leaks and also address the excess leak consumption with their tenants!

**GROWTH MANAGEMENT (Thad Carroll):**

At Monday night's meeting, the Town Commission voted to approve the Walmart Neighborhood Market site plan. This project will be located in the vicinity of the intersection of Cherry Lake Road and Highway 466. A rezoning and future land use amendment were also approved for a 52-acre parcel located on Hartsock Sawmill Road. The property has been downzoned from Commercial Tourist (CT) to Agriculture Residential (AG-1) and will permit a maximum of two residential structures.

Revised site plans were submitted for a proposed storage facility to be located on Griffin Road, west of Teague Trail/CR 25. This project includes a three-story mini storage warehouse and six smaller, one-story storage buildings.

A new grading site plan application was submitted for the expansion of Lady Lake Crossings located at the intersection of North Highway 27/441 and County Road 25. This project includes the expansion of the existing inline stores as well as five outparcels. A site plan for a 3,490 square foot bank with a drive-thru proposed on one of the outparcels was also submitted.

A final plat application and plans were submitted for Boulevard Oaks. This 160-unit subdivision is located on County Road 25 near the Marion County line and is currently under construction.

Construction Plans for the new Walmart Fueling Center located at 1210 Highway 466 have been approved. Town staff are waiting for the general contractor and subcontractors to be named.

A building permit application and plans for the Paradise Recreation Center Pool Building located at 1411 Paradise Drive was also received this week, as well as building plan revisions for the La Salle Building. The scope of work includes exterior facade renovation and interior demolition; the project is located at 998 Alverez Avenue.

Staff received plan revisions for the Villages First Floor Sales & Information Suite and renovations including restrooms, offices & other reconfiguration spaces located at 1120 Main Street. A building permit application and plans for streetscape improvements- sidewalks, lighting & landscaping were received for the 1120 Main Street location.

Finally, plan revisions were received for the renovation of the existing CFS coffee shop located at 1002 Alverez Avenue; the work includes painting walls and changing flooring.

One hundred building permits or revisions were received this week, and fifty permits were issued. One hundred and eighty-six inspections were conducted in the field. This week code enforcement opened ten new cases, closed sixteen cases, and conducted fifty-nine inspections. Twenty-five signs were also removed from the Town's right-of-way. Code Enforcement would like to also give a big shout-out to Public Works for always having our back when it comes to removing prohibited signs from utility poles and within the public right-of-way. Your support helps keep our community looking clean and safe. Thank you for all that you do!

**HUMAN RESOURCES (Tamika DeLee):**

No report this week.

**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (John Pearl):**

Staff are involved in multiple ongoing enterprise software, infrastructure and information security projects.

Budget preparation efforts are underway. Staff met with Bill on Tuesday morning to receive direction on budget preparations for fiscal year 2026.

Patrick, Jacob, and Tanner continued GIS collection of Town's water infrastructure this week.

Howard continues to advance our "Human Firewall" training program. I am looking forward to his voluntary Lunch-and-Learn series beginning next month.

The Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Implementation Team (Finance, Andy and John) will meet this afternoon to review various topics in anticipation of a vendor meeting next week.

Year two of the FiberWAN construction project is scheduled to begin next week. Staff will meet with the construction and construction management companies on Wednesday to complete a project site walk.

The IT Department currently has Systems Analyst position opening. Please see the Town's website or contact Human Resources for more information.

**LIBRARY (Aly Herman):**

With the weather heating up, our AC units are starting to work overtime. Unfortunately, one of them has stopped working. We were given two options: repair the unit for \$27,000 with a 6-month warranty or replace it entirely for \$30,000 with a 7-year warranty. After consulting with Ted Williams, we've decided that replacing the unit is the better long-term investment, especially with the extended warranty. In my annual budget, I typically set aside two \$15,000 emergency funds for AC replacements. However, the cost of services and materials has nearly doubled, so I'll be taking a closer look at the budget as we plan for the upcoming fiscal year.

Be sure to check out this month's display by Sierra—*The Great Gatsby* is celebrating its 100th anniversary.



Exciting progress is being made—the flooring installation has begun on the second floor in the multipurpose room!

Want to see how things are coming along? Visit our Library Facebook page and check out the latest video update!



A big shoutout this week to Truman, Mark, and Phil for sprucing up the landscaping around the library—what a difference! Spring has officially sprung, and it's looking beautiful out there.

We're getting ready for the Easter Eggstravaganza this Saturday! Be sure to stop by the library booth, where Ms. Kourtney and Ms. Sam will be hosting a fun game with prizes. Right next to us, our Friends of the Library will have an art table set up, decorate an egg on the spot, or take one home to enjoy later. We can't wait to see you there!

Here are the youth program stats for this week:

- Scavenger Hunt: 17
- Craft Corner: 30
- Tiny Tots: 20
- Family Crafting: 14
- Storytime: 60!
- Reading with Scarlett: 8

[www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225](http://www.facebook.com/lakelakelibrary225)

#### **PARKS AND RECREATION (Mike Burske):**

The Parks and Recreation Department had a busy week preparing for the Easter Egg Hunt this weekend, painting the sign at the Town Hall, hanging the centennial banners while mowing and keeping the parks in safe condition.

Vicky and Sam did an incredible job in revamping the sign at Town Hall. This is the last sign of this type that needed a color change. A simple \$50.00 investment made a world of difference.



Last Friday we bade farewell to half of the Lady Lake Scout Hut. This hut had served the Town for decades and was once the library for The Villages. The tongue that was welded on by the buyer's contractor failed when hooked up, so they are delayed in moving the second half. I will keep you informed as the last of the Scout Hut moves on to Dixie County to be used as a rental property.

The Centennial Signs are continuing to pop up around Town in our parks and Town owned property. I want to thank Elisha and the rest of the team who worked on this as it looks amazing. The next phase will be installing them on the field light poles in the parks. We will count the balance of the signs and decide which Duke Energy Poles that we want to seek permission to install them on.

We had a great concert last weekend as we had our "Sounds of the 70's" band come and help us get our groove on. We had around 250 people show up for the event. As common with any of our events, the residents thank us repeatedly for the Town stepping up our event schedule.

I have coordinated with Musco Lights, and we will see the new lights at the soccer fields go up after June 1<sup>st</sup>. These much-needed lights will finally give our children and parents the chance to be able to participate in their programs with lighted fields.

On Wednesday April 9<sup>th</sup>, I was invited and attended the Lady Lake area Chamber of Commerce Board Meeting at the Waterfront Inn. I was in attendance with the Mayor and was educated on what is new with the Chamber.

We saw the air conditioner fail at the Log Cabin late last week. It is not fiscally responsible to fix it at this point and we budgeted for a new unit this year as we saw the coils begin to fail in the old unit. The old unit lasted well for the last 17 years.

**POLICE DEPARTMENT (Chief Steve Hunt):**

Patrol had a busy weekend investigating several retail thefts, a few traffic stops that resulted in arrests, numerous criminal trespass notices along with the usual car crashes. All our squads do a great job with both reactive and proactive activity.

The U.S. Marshal Service arrested an Out of State Fugitive wanted for a domestic violence offense at one of our local hotels. We assisted with transporting the suspect to the jail on their behalf. Another "bad actor on the 441 corridor".

Another week of meetings, Commissioner's, Managers's, Village Center Community Development District Supervisor's and monthly Lady Lake Command staff.

Officer Chausse received rave reviews for his presentation to town staff on Active Shooter response. Rob is a gifted instructor and brings knowledge combined with humor and empathy to make him an effective teacher.

We worked with Elisha to make a few updates to our website and to promote our upcoming shredding event.

Good news, two more officers have accepted job offers. Both are local officers who are working through their two-week notice periods and will be starting with us soon. I will introduce them at that time. One more position to fill!

#### **PUBLIC WORKS/UTILITIES DEPARTMENT (C.T. Eagle):**

##### **Administration (C.T. Eagle -Director and Peggy Smith – Admin Assistant to Director):**

We have positions open here at Public Works; open positions can be found here:

<https://www.ladylakefl.gov/210/Human-Resources>

Information regarding current Town Projects can be found here:

<https://www.ladylakefl.gov/167/Town-Projects>

Updated information regarding the FDOT US 27/441 Road Widening Project can be found here

<https://www.cflroads.com/project/238395-5>. Questions and concerns can also be submitted via the website.

##### **Maintenance Department (Ted Williams, Supervisor):**

Performed driveway apron inspections.

Coordinated repair and replacement HVAC units at the Library and Log Cabin.

Coordinated removal of honeybees from Snooky Park.

Continued monitoring retention pond water levels and storm drains throughout the Town.

##### **Streets (Kon Scott, Travis Lacey, and Justin Wallace - Lead Operators; Todd Foster – Operator II):**

Performed litter pickup along roadways in Town. Continued cleaning or replacing street and stop signs townwide. Cleaned storm drains. Patched potholes and road cuts.

Mowed Town maintained rights of ways.

Trimmed trees on Guava St, and 1<sup>st</sup> St.

Cleaned up fallen tree at W Lady Lake Blvd.

Removed snipe signs in the right of way for Code Enforcement.

Continued removing and replacing bad sections of sidewalk on Fennell Blvd.

Sprayed and weeded medians, curbs, and sidewalks on CR 466.

**Facilities Maintenance (Truman Henson - Lead Operator, Mark Walls - Operator II, and Phillip Perna - Operator I):**

Staff completed multiple work orders at Town facilities. Repaired sprinklers at Town Hall and PD. Mulched and planted flowers at the Library.

Continued performing groundskeeping at Town Hall, PD, and the Library.

Moved equipment from Town Hall to the Community Building for IT.

**Motor Pool (Billy Kohler - Lead Mechanic):**

Finished prepping surplus PD vehicle for transfer to Growth Management.

Ongoing repair and maintenance on Town Vehicles and Equipment.

**Utilities — Water and Sewer (Thomas “Butch” Goodman – Supervisor, and Mary Levesque -Staff Assistant to Supervisor):**

Coordinated with multiple contractors, engineers, vendors, developers, and other departments regarding future and current in process projects going on around Town.

Current project coordination with Hammock Oaks (Multiple Phases), Boulevard Oaks, Lake Ella Estates, and Green Key Village phases 5 and 6.

**Distribution and Collection Systems Field Operations (Robert Barnes, Lead Operator):**

Coordinate and complete various work orders, working on new accounts, meter reading, and re-reads.

Performed service line repairs on Lady Lake Blvd.

Completed 811 dig ticket location requests. Coordinating new fiber optic line locations.

Completed FDEP submittals, Water/Sewer/Reuse physical availability requests, Utility Quotes, CO inspection requests, and required back-flow device verification audits.

Performed weekly fueling and testing of emergency equipment, pumps, vehicles, and generators.

**Water and Wastewater Treatment Plants (Daniel Myklejord – Lead Water Plant Operator, Darryl Flanders – Lead Wastewater Plant Operator, and Steve Pfouts – Treatment Plants Operations Manager.)**

Phase Two of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Modifications Project is approaching final close out. Both plants are in service and doing well. Continued work on punch list items and final inspections.

Phase Two of the Well #4 and Well #5 Water Treatment Plant Expansion Project is also approaching final close out. All new systems are online and operating well. Final punch list items and final inspections remain.