



# The Leon County LINK

Connecting Citizens  
with Leon County  
Services

## Leon County Catastrophe Fund Created by County Commission County Accepting Applications for Tropical Storm Fay Disaster Assistance through October

The Leon County Board of County Commissioners has created the Leon County Catastrophe Fund to provide eligible residents assistance towards the payment of Leon County Solid Waste and Leon County Building/Growth Management fees for damages associated with a local declared state of emergency.

A large portion of the Leon County community was significantly affected by Tropical Storm Fay and the associated flooding. In the aftermath of the storm, the Catastrophe Fund serves as a source for assistance to residents that are rebuilding their lives. In order to receive assistance, residents must demonstrate that all other means, including, but not limited to, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Individual Assistance and property insurance, have been exhausted prior to seeking assistance from Leon County.

In the case of a successful application, qualified residents' Leon County Solid Waste and/or Leon County Building/Growth Management fees will be paid through the Catastrophe Fund. The County will not provide payment and/or reimbursement for property repair.

To apply for disaster assistance, residents should complete the Leon County Catastrophe Fund application which is available at the following locations:

- Leon County website, [www.leoncountyfl.gov](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov)
- Leon County Courthouse
- LeRoy Collins Library (Main Library)
- Branch Libraries
- Leon County Growth Management, Renaissance Center, 435 N. Macomb St.

The County will be accepting applications through Friday, October 31, 2008. For additional information on the Catastrophe Fund application process, please visit the Leon County website or contact Shington Lamy, Leon County Special Projects Coordinator, at (850) 606-5300 or by email at [lamys@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:lamys@leoncountyfl.gov).

## Leon County Invites All to "Come Join the Parade" on Veterans' Day

Leon County is sponsoring this year's annual Veterans' Day Parade on Tuesday, November 11, at 11 a.m., and the Leon County Veteran Services Division would like to invite all local and regional veteran groups, and other interested parties, to participate. Those that participated in last year's parade will be sent an application package and those new to the event should call 850/606-1940 to request parade information.



Completed applications and appropriate documentation should be mailed to the address noted in the application package. If you choose to hand deliver your application, the Leon County Veteran Services Division is located in the Amtrak Building at 918 Railroad Avenue.

Applications can also be found online at [www.leoncountyfl.gov/vets](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov/vets) and should be submitted by November 1. If you would like a chance to give back to Big Bend veterans, volunteers are needed from 8 a.m. to noon to serve as parade marshals and custodians. For more information, please contact Veteran Services at 850/606-1940.

## Title Wave Used Book Sale

The LeRoy Collins Leon County Public Library System is holding its 2008 Title Wave Used Book Sale, a benefit for the Friends of the Library, on Saturday, October 11, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Sunday, October 12, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the garage of the Main Library, facing Bronough Street. This annual Fall event is billed as the area's largest used book sale. Great prices will be available for used books, videos, DVDs, and more! For more information, please contact the Main Library at 850/606-2665 or visit [www.leoncountyfl.gov/library](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov/library).



## Few Days Remain to Register for FEMA Individual Assistance

Leon County homeowners, renters, and businesses who sustained damage or loss from Tropical Storm Fay have until Friday, October 24 to apply for disaster assistance through the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Individual Assistance program. Federal and state disaster recovery officials are noting that loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for disaster-related losses to personal property must also be submitted by that date.

Those who have not applied are urged to do so immediately by calling the toll-free number at 800-621-FEMA (3362) or registering online at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov).

## Fiscal Year 2009 Budget Adopted County reduces total budget by 6 percent

The Leon County Board of County Commissioners adopted the fiscal year 2008/2009 budget on Tuesday, September 16. After the second of two required public hearings on adoption of millage rates and budgets for FY 2008/2009, Leon County adopted a \$267.4 million budget, which represents an approximate \$17.3 million budget reduction from last fiscal year. The countywide millage rate was adopted at 7.850 mills – \$7.85 for every \$1,000 in assessed property value – and the aggregate millage rate was set at 8.350 mills, which is only 2 percent over the aggregate rolled-back millage rate of 8.1853.

In spite of an initial approximate \$9.87 million revenue reduction and associated financial constraints as a result of Amendment 1 tax reform legislation, which failed by 64 percent in Leon County, the Board's action to adopt 7.850 mills for FY 2008/2009 represents a return to the FY 2006/2007 millage rate and a lower rate than FY 2005/2006. This vote also granted the median Leon County homeowner a reduction in their county tax bill for the third consecutive year.

In a spirit of collaboration and compromise after much citizen input through two public hearings, the Board continued its dedication to creating a more lean and efficient government by deferring a great majority of projected capital improvement projects, including parks and libraries, to future years' budget processes.

The Board, while acknowledging the importance of basic services such as law enforcement, emergency medical services, primary healthcare, and mosquito control, placed a special emphasis on stormwater and transportation improvements. An allocation of approximately \$5.1 million was included in this year's budget to assist in addressing potential vulnerabilities in the county's system and long-term flooding issues that were identified by severe weather and unprecedented rainfall levels caused by Tropical Storm Fay.

As a result of the Board's consistent philosophy of fiscal restraint, the focus on preservation of services vital to the quality of life for residents remained constant from preliminary budget workshops and a Board prioritization process that began in December 2007.

Compared to other Florida counties, Leon County has the fifth lowest budget per capita, ranks the seventh lowest in employees per capita, and has the eleventh lowest property tax growth rate of all 67 counties.

For detailed information on the adopted Fiscal Year 2009 budget, please visit the Leon County website at [www.leoncountyfl.gov](http://www.leoncountyfl.gov) or contact the Office of Management & Budgeting by phone at 850/606-5100 or by email at [omb@leoncountyfl.gov](mailto:omb@leoncountyfl.gov).

## Leon County Extension FALL OPEN HOUSE

The Leon County Extension Office will be showcasing its Master Gardener landscaping on Saturday, October 18, from 9 a.m. to noon, at 615 Paul Russell Road; the agricultural center across the street from Jack L. McLean, Jr. Community Center. The public is invited to leisurely walk through the demonstration gardens or participate in one of the seven guided tours. For more information, please contact Leon County Extension at 850/606-5218.

## CANpaign 2008 A Community Recycling Challenge



Show support for your favorite public or private school by collecting aluminum cans for cash! Save cans and bring them to Home Depot, located on Capital Circle NE, on Saturday, November 8, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Participants can receive 40 cents per pound or donate proceeds to the school of their choice. For more information, contact Solid Waste/Recycling at 850/606-1827.

## EMS Receives Industry Leadership Award

Leon County EMS has received written confirmation of its selection for the EMS Magazine Gold Award. The Gold Award is presented for industry leadership and excellence in Emergency Medical Services. The EMS team, one of two services chosen in the nation, will be formally presented with the award at the opening ceremonies of EMS EXPO in mid-October. **Congratulations, EMS!**

## October 2008 Board of County Commissioners Schedule

- 14 Board of County Commissioners Workshop on the 2009 State and Federal Legislative Priorities, 1:30 p.m.  
Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting, 3 p.m.  
Board of County Commissioners Public Hearing, 6 p.m.  
County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers
- 20 Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) Meeting, 12 p.m.  
City Hall, 2nd Floor, Commission Chambers, 300 S. Adams Street
- 28 Board of County Commissioners Regular Meeting, 3 p.m.  
County Courthouse, 5th Floor, Commission Chambers

The Link is produced by the Leon County Public Information Office,  
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