



BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISPATCH

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Fostering Creativity at Sugar Sand

Andrea Virgin's experience that helped shape Sugar Sand Park's Science Playground is now helping to mold her creativity-boosting venture.

As a second grader at St. Joan of Arc school in the early 1990s, Virgin and her friends were part of the group of children who shared their ideas about the features they'd like to see incorporated into the playground being created at Sugar Sand.

"All of the sudden I realized that kids' ideas have value, that kids' ideas can come to life, that there's no crazy idea out there," Virgin said. "To know that adults sought out kids' ideas back when I was in second grade was something that stuck with me ever since."

Many of the ideas generated by those children became mainstays within the playground.

"Seeing some of my friends' ideas come to life, like the light that you could race the animals and the eye that would be able to see like how inside your brain sees things, the whole maze idea, you know, these were all kids' ideas," Virgin said.

[READ MORE ABOUT SUGAR SAND'S IMPACT ON CREATIVITY](#)



Patch Reef Pickle Praise

Since its opening in October, Patch Reef Park's covered pickleball complex has become like a second home for avid pickler Sherise Ralston.

"I love that we have a little picnic area, so I bring snacks," Ralston said. "We'll stay two or three hours, my friends and I. We play and we snack and we socialize. This is our meeting point now. Instead of a bar, we come here."

Ralston learned before most that the newly renamed Patch Reef Paddle and Racquet club offered something special. She was one of the first players ever to serve and smash on the new courts.

"I came to the ribbon cutting ceremony and I come everyday," she said. "It's like my place to have zen and peace. It's beautiful - and it's covered."

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Court Rebuild Underway

With the new 18-court covered pickleball complex now open for play, crews in early November began rebuilding the open-air tennis and pickleball courts at the Patch Reef Paddle and Racquet Club. Conducted in phases, the project began with the rebuild of the existing outdoor pickleball courts and some tennis courts. Rebuilding of the remaining tennis courts will follow. Conducting the project in phases allows for some of the tennis courts to remain open for play. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2026.



New Outdoor Classroom

Campers and students at Sugar Sand Park will soon be able to learn about nature while seated in the great outdoors.

Crews are completing construction of a covered outdoor classroom behind the community center which will be used for some new programming along with some that already exists. The classroom is expected to become operational in mid-December.

Dubbed the Chickee Lab – Chickee in the Seminole language means "house" - the classroom is a raised platform, with four cypress pillars at each corner supporting a Palmetto thatch roof. .

"We wanted it to denote that learning takes place here, but we want to keep the cultural significance ties to it as well," Sugar Sand Science Center Curator Kate Lasher said. "We didn't want it to be too big."

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Second Skatepark Workshop

Representatives from Plant-A-Park and the American Ramp Company will hold a second public workshop on Dec. 3 at 6 p.m. inside the Boca Raton Community Center annex room for the skatepark proposed to be located within North Park. In August, the District held a workshop to gather input from the hundreds of Boca Raton community members who attended to tell which features they'd like to see within the skatepark. At the upcoming workshop, Plant-A-Park will show how they incorporated those ideas.



Chills and Thrills

Witches, goblins and superheroes gathered at District-owned and -funded parks throughout October for Boca Boo Days events and parties. Sugar Sand Park's community center served as the site for the Little Boos Bash and the Pumpkin Pals Party. Gumbo Limbo also hosted two events, Halloween By The Sea and Haunted Heights – which made Jacob's Outlook even spookier at night. Once again the Boca Raton Swim Center held its Monster Mash, which has grown into an annual community favorite. A photo gallery containing the costumes and decorations from all five of those events [can be found here](#).



Jolly Time Of The Year

The City of Boca Raton is about to launch its Boca Jolly Days holiday celebration, and District parks will again be the site of several highly anticipated events. Half of Boca Jolly Days events will be held at District Parks, including Ornaments Naturally and Gumbo Limbo Aglow at the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center, Do You Want To Paint A Snowman? and the Noon Year's Eve Party at the Sugar Sand community center, and a holiday-themed round robin tennis tournament at the Boca Raton Racquet Center. [Follow this link](#) to view the complete list of events, dates and times. You'll have a jolly good time!

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MONDAY DEC. 1

**Commissioners' General
Public Meeting, 5:15 p.m.**

MONDAY DEC. 15

**Commissioners' General
Public Meeting, 5:15 p.m.**

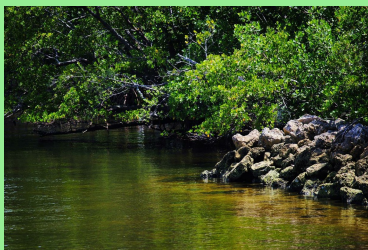
MONDAY JAN. 5

**Commissioners' General
Public Meeting, 5:15 p.m.**

**Meetings at Boca Raton Swim & Racquet Center
21618 St. Andrews Boulevard Boca Raton, FL**

Ode To Open Space

“Nature gives to every time and season
some beauties of its own.” – *author*
Charles Dickens



LINKED INTO BOCA RATON

Looking for something to do with the children during the upcoming winter break from school? The City of Boca Raton hosts a slew of winter camps designed to entertain and educate. Follow the link below for the list of camps.

[View The Winter Camps](#)

**GREATER BOCA RATON
BEACH & PARK DISTRICT**
Phone: (561) 417-4599

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