



BOCA RATON BEACH & PARK DISPATCH

December 2024 | *Official Newsletter of the Greater Boca Raton Beach & Park District*



GOODBYE 2024!

A Year's Worth of Accomplishments

From launching projects to opening new park features, District Commissioners guided the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District to one of the most impressive 12-month stints in its 50-year history.

Many new beginnings highlighted 2024 – none with a better view than Jacob's Outlook. Named for Jacob Kosowsky and made possible by a gift from the Kosowsky family, the Jacob's Outlook observation deck sits atop the new 44-foot tall Gumbo Limbo tower, which opened to the public in June. ADA-accessible Jacob's Outlook provides a 360-degree view of Boca Raton, including the Intracoastal and the Atlantic.

March of 2024 marked the 50th Anniversary of the District's creation, and Commissioners – along with the City of Boca Raton - invited the entire community to celebrate.

[READ MORE ABOUT THE DISTRICT'S 2024 ACCOMPLISHMENTS](#)



Boca's Community Connection

A bond with members of the Boca Raton Community and the responsiveness to residents' needs are two traits that have been a source of pride for Commissioners throughout the Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District's first 50 years.

Commissioners not only welcome feedback from the community, they enjoy and encourage it.

Twice a month – usually on the first and third Mondays – District Commissioners hold a public meeting where the community is invited to address the board with their concerns, needs and ideas for the Boca Raton community.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Photo Courtesy Aerial Boggs / Gumbo Limbo

The Bananaquit Surprise



The Honor is All Ours

For 50 years, Greater Boca Raton Beach and Park District Commissioners have dedicated themselves to creating some of the best possible parks and recreational facilities for the Boca Raton community.

The results of those efforts have not gone unnoticed – or unrewarded.

District-owned or funded properties consistently win awards for their amenities.

Sugar Sand Park is among the most acclaimed attractions in South Florida. In 2007 the National Park and Recreation Association named Sugar Sand one of the “Best of the Best Parks” in the country.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



Year Of The Month: 2025

An unexpected visitor from a foreign land caused quite the stir at the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center. Late in the fall an eagle-eyed bird enthusiast spotted a feathered friend that had no business flying around the nature center's butterfly garden. Since then bird watchers have flocked to Gumbo Limbo for the chance to see and photograph the Bananaquit, a small, yellow breasted bird native to the Caribbean. Birders from as far away as New Hampshire, New Mexico, Virginia and Tennessee were among the early December visitors. Gumbo Limbo officials aren't sure how the bird came to Boca. Speculation includes having been blown to the area by a late summer storm or hitching a ride on a cargo ship. The Bananaquit could often be found near the garden's Firespike plants, which it presumably likes for their sweet nectar.

Way back in March the District turned 50 years old. Each month since, this newsletter highlighted a different impactful year from that first half-century. We're going to end this series by looking ahead to 2025. Next year is one of the most anticipated in District history. If everything holds to schedule, we'll be opening the new, all-accessible playground (design pictured above) and the new covered pickleball complex at Patch Reef Park. Both projects are already under construction. With the North Park site design already approved by the City of Boca Raton, the city's newest park will begin to fulfill its potential. North Park will ultimately include walking trails, bike trails, the Boca Paddle indoor pickleball facility and more. And upgrades at other parks are in the works, too. It's shaping up to be another great year for the Boca Raton Community.



Boca Jolly Days In Full Swing

December is always a wonderful time to be in Boca Raton, and this year's Boca Jolly Days events continue to make the season more festive. Upcoming events at District parks include **So You Want to Paint a Snowman?** and the **Noon Year's Eve Party at Sugar Sand Park**. And every Friday evening in December the Gumbo Limbo Nature Center holds the Gumbo Limbo Aglow! holiday party (above photo). Scenes from parties earlier this month can be enjoyed in [this photo gallery](#). The fish and turtles come alive when Gumbo Limbo lights up at night, and children enjoy free games and refreshments. For a complete list of Boca Jolly Days events, follow the link below.

[BOCA JOLLY DAYS](#)



Sugar Sand Art In The Park

What was once a bland, hardly noticeable wall abutting a Sugar Sand Park pavilion is now the site of a stunning mural that honors South Florida's vast and unique ecosystem. On Dec. 6 District Commissioners, City of Boca Raton officials and world renowned artist James Prosek [held a ceremony debuting the work](#). The naturalist mural is a combination of Prosek's many works and features images of South Florida animals and plants. It's located on the side of the Sugar Sand family pavilion between the community center and the Science Playground, facing the carousel. More than 217,000 half-inch tiles compose the mural. Prosek's masterwork is the first Boca Public Art project to be featured within a District Park.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

MONDAY JAN. 6

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

TUESDAY JAN. 21

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

MONDAY FEB. 3

**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

“Parks and playgrounds are
the soul of a city.” — *Marty
Rubin, author*



LINKED INTO BOCA RATON

The spring edition of The Recreator, the official programming guide to the City of Boca Raton Recreation Services, is now available for the Boca Raton community. It contains news about upcoming camps, programs, classes, events and more. Check it out!

[View The Recreator](#)

**GREATER BOCA RATON
BEACH & PARK DISTRICT**
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Keep in Touch!



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