



February 2025 | Official Newsletter of the Greater Boca Raton Beach & Park District



## Ogman, Ehrnst Become Best Buddies

Jordan Ogman found a new way to get his kicks while he awaits completion of the Patch Reef Park playground he inspired.

Every Saturday for the past several weeks Ogman found himself on a soccer field running, laughing and smiling as part of the Soccer Association of Boca Raton's TOPSoccer program.

"We never thought that Jordan could actually play soccer in an organized league; then we heard about TOPSoccer, which is a soccer league for special needs kids," said David Ogman, Jordan's father. "As soon as we heard about it we ran out here. It's been tremendous so far."

In TOPSoccer, special needs children – Jordan was born with a rare genetic disorder that stunts physical and mental growth – are paired with volunteers who guide them through soccer drills and teach them the game.

"This is tremendous for Jordan," David Ogman said. "He likes being out around other kids, around people who like to play sports with him. It gives him something he can do that's accessible."

Accessibility can be an issue for children like Jordan.

In 2023, the Ogman family petitioned District Commissioners to create a new all-inclusive playground at Patch Reef Park where children of all abilities can play. Late in 2024 construction crews began work on the playground that will replace Pirates Cove. The playground is expected to open this summer.

Now 9 years old, Jordan takes the field with other players his age and their buddies at City of Boca Raton's Woodlands Park.

Jordan's buddy, 17-year-old Eric Ehrnst, also has special ties to the District. He's Commissioner Craig Ehrnst's son.

Commissioner Suzi Vogelgesang, a top administrator within TopSoccer, arranged for the pairing.

"Eric worked with this age group last year and did such a good job that I thought he'd be the perfect match for Jordan," Vogelgesang said.

Late in Jordan's fourth practice, David Ogman's face showed surprise when learning of Eric's relationship to Craig Ehrnst

[READ MORE ABOUT OGMAN, EHRNST AND TOPSOCCER BUDDIES](#)



## Volunteer: Hill Of A Job

Mikaela Hill looks at Sugar Sand Park's butterfly garden and sees something different than most people.

Rather than looking for the vibrant colors of exotic butterflies fluttering from flower to flower, she's interested in finding something a little more down to earth: bugs.

"Because they're just so silly looking," Hill said with a smile. "They look nothing like you would normally expect from nature. That's why I also like deep sea creatures. They just look so alien. And I love it!"

Hill's curiosity and dedication make her one of the most valued volunteers at two of Boca Raton's most acclaimed parks.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



## Super DUPR Pickleball

The Patch Reef Park Tennis Center is making it easier for Boca Raton pickleball players to determine how they match up with fellow competitors and friends.

In recent weeks teaching pro Jane Wadsworth began conducting hour-long pickleball clinics that include providing participants with a rating.

The goal is to pair players of the same skill level in ladders, tournaments and even open play, thereby making a pickleball outing more enjoyable for everyone.

Using a standard objective rating system rather than a self-reporting system generally produces more accurate analysis and competitive matches.

[CONTINUE READING](#)



## Sugar Sand Face Lift

Workers recently completed the Sugar Sand Park Community Center's face lift and scheduled maintenance upgrades that not only make the building more attractive, they also made it safer. The upgrades began in 2024 with the Community Center's roof replacement. Late last year crews began repairing some of the columns that support overhangs at building entrances. Last up was a fresh coat of paint on the outside of the building. Those new coats were completed in recent days. You're invited to stop by the Community Center and see everything it has to offer, including the Science Explorium and the Willow Theatre.



## Spring Break Kids Camps

Patch Reef Park will be hosting racket sports camps that coincide with Palm Beach County schools' spring break. Registration is open for Patch Reef's junior pickleball camp and junior tennis camp. Both run from Monday, March 24 - Friday, March 28. Parents can choose full day (9 a.m.-3:30 p.m.) or half day (9 a.m.-12 p.m.). Full day camps cost \$260 for District residents (\$315 non-residents), while half-day camps are \$172 for residents (\$215 non-residents). For more information, contact the Patch Reef Tennis Center.

[SUGAR SAND SPRING BREAK CAMPS](#)



## Love At First Dink Tourney

Love - along with volleys and overhead smashes - filled the air on Sunday at the Patch Reef Park Tennis Center when the District-owned park served as the site for a Valentine's Day pickleball tournament. Nearly 60 pickleballers took the court for the six-hour tournament. Heath Cohn and Craig Fichtenbaum (photo, above) won the 3.0-4.0 men's doubles division – the tournament's highest level. Emely Skiff and Jonathan Greenberg teamed to win the 3.0-4.0 mixed doubles. Janet Carlson and Eileen Grew won the top women's doubles division.

[PHOTO GALLERY](#)

## When Irish Rackets Smile

The Boca Raton Racquet Center will be getting even greener in a few weeks when the clay courts are the site of the St. Patrick's Day mixer. Participants are encouraged to wear green and speak in their best Irish brogue for the Sunday, March 16 mixer that runs from 9 a.m. - 11 a.m. The event is designed for male and female tennis players rated 3.5-4.5 (intermediate to advanced). Registration is limited to 40 players. The entry fee is \$30 for District residents, \$37.50 for non-residents. Winners will receive bragging rights, but rumors that the prize also includes a leprechaun's pot of gold appear to be unfounded.

# UPCOMING MEETINGS

**MONDAY MARCH 3**

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

**MONDAY MARCH 17**

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

**MONDAY APRIL 7**

**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

"The parks are the Nation's pleasure grounds and the Nation's restoring places." - *Horace McFarland, president, American Civic Association.*



## LINKED INTO BOCA RATON

Love airplanes or simply looking for a little something different to do with children? The Boca Raton airport recently opened an observation area where visitors can watch planes take off and land while listening to live audio from the control tower. To access the area, enter FAU's campus via the Spanish River Blvd. entrance.

[View Airport Observation Page](#)

**GREATER BOCA RATON  
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