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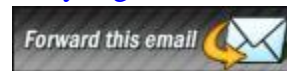


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Palm Bay Community Center to be Renamed in Honor of Anthony J. Rosa

Palm Bay- The Palm Bay Parks and Recreation Department would like to invite the media and members of the community to attend the ceremony to officially change the name of the Palm Bay Community Center to the Anthony J. "Tony" Rosa Community Center. The ceremony will take place on Saturday, September 17th, 2016, at 9:00 a.m. at 1502 Port Malabar Blvd. NE. Palm Bay.

On April 5, 2016 the Palm Bay Recreation Advisory Board, at its regular meeting, unanimously voted in favor of renaming the Palm Bay Community Center for Anthony J. Rosa. Palm Bay City Council unanimously approved their recommendation. Mr.



Rosa was the City of Palm Bay's first Parks and Recreation Director, starting the department in 1968, and was the department Director until 1978. He was the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department during the planning and construction stages of the Palm Bay Community Center and retired shortly after it opened in the summer of 1978.

Mr. Rosa was a mentor and coach to the youth of Palm Bay and was responsible for starting several youth sports programs in the city. He was one of the founders of the Brevard County Youth Football League which is still operating a quality program throughout the county. Mr. Rosa's vision to build the Community Center and the acquisition of the funding for construction, was a pivotal point in not only the growth of the City's Parks & Recreation Department, but that of the city as a whole. The Palm Bay Community Center became the premier recreational facility in the county and transformed the department from a small operation to a full blown recreation department.

Current Parks & Recreation Director, Fred Poppe, was hired by Mr. Rosa in 1974 as a maintenance worker. Rosa developed Poppe's passion for recreation by letting him go beyond parks maintenance, allowing him to help out with programs on the recreation side of the department. "Tony instilled in me the desire to work for my community and to serve others. He truly cared about the Palm Bay community, especially the kids. He loved being a coach and

mentor, and he knew the importance of providing recreational opportunities and discipline for them," said Poppe.

Troy Cox, Recreation Division Manager, was also hired by Mr. Rosa in the 1978. Cox remembers Rosa as a no nonsense guy who was always upfront and honest. "That came from his time in the military" Cox surmised. "He was a no nonsense guy, but he encouraged you to follow through on your ideas and he didn't interfere or tell you how things should be done." Mr. Cox also cultivated his desire for a career in recreation while working under Mr. Rosa.

In addition to his work in the Palm Bay Community, Mr. Rosa was a Military Veteran with 23 years of service to his country. He served in the Navy, Army and Air Force during those years. Most notably Mr. Rosa received the Silver Star in World War II while serving in the U.S. Navy, when his ship was torpedoed and he single handedly saved the lives of 7 of his crew members.

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