



By Lisa Mosca, MPA

Lisa Mosca is the public information officer for the City of Sanford.



## BASEBALL IS A BIG HIT IN SANFORD

*The ball is pitched, the batter swings – it's a home run, and the crowd roars! Baseball is in the air.*

And nowhere is it more alive than at Historic Sanford Memorial Stadium. Built in 1951, the legendary field comes alive every year, filled with a plethora of rich baseball history. Icons such as Babe Ruth visited the site in the 1920s (when it was known as Sanford Field). The legendary Willie Mays played at the stadium as a member of the New York Giants. Located just south of Lake Monroe on Mellonville Avenue, less than a mile from Historic Downtown

Sanford, the stadium is a top-of-the-line facility, with a full-service concession stand and a covered grandstand.

With a capacity of 2,300, it is one of many family-friendly amenities within Sanford, where our community gets the opportunity to watch youth, high-school, and college-level baseball games. It's not unusual to find Major League scouts in the stands, as well, keeping tabs on the most advanced players.

In 2013, Memorial Stadium hosted 559 games, all of which generated an economic impact to the Seminole County region in excess of \$7 million.



For more than a decade, college-level baseball has been an important part of the schedule at Memorial Stadium, where the Sanford River Rats play from June to early August every year. Our River Rats are one of six teams in the Florida Collegiate Summer League (Florida League), a wood-bat baseball league. Recognized by Baseball America as one of the top summer leagues in the United States, the Florida League provides an unprecedented opportunity for college ballplayers to participate in top-level competition, preparing them for a dream career in the Major Leagues. The cost of admission

to River Rats games is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children, and kids six and under are admitted for free.

The River Rats are comprised of college players from around the country. The annual arrival of the River Rats provides our community with a wonderful opportunity to not only promote baseball, but also to offer some local hospitality, as well. The Florida League is always looking for the generosity of local families in the community who are willing to open their homes to host the traveling players. Players arrive during the last week of May and generally stay through the second week of August, at the latest. Mayor Jeff Triplett of Sanford and his family traditionally host traveling players at their home each summer.

Sanford's got it all, including a premier venue for baseball players and fans – a place where dreams really do come true. Catch a game at Historic Sanford Memorial Stadium. It's right here in your own backyard!

For more information about events at the stadium, or about housing an athlete in the summer, contact Gene Manning, stadium superintendent, at [Gene.Manning@SanfordFL.gov](mailto:Gene.Manning@SanfordFL.gov) or visit the website [www.SanfordFL.gov](http://www.SanfordFL.gov).



### IMPORTANT DATES AND EVENTS AT HISTORIC SANFORD MEMORIAL STADIUM

**Saturday, March 1** Babe Ruth/Cal Ripken Opening Day. Over 400 local kids ranging in age from 4 to 18 will rock the field to kick off the 2014 baseball season.

**Saturday, March 9 to Saturday, March 16** Sanford hosts the University Athletic Association (UAA) Conference Tournament. The teams include Brandeis (Boston), Case Western Reserve (Cleveland), Emory (Atlanta), University of Rochester, and Washington University (St. Louis).

**March 17 to 21 and March 24 to 28** The Florida Collegiate Summer League (Florida League) High-School Competition. During these games, ballplayers get exposure to college and professional scouts. More than 30 college recruiters and pro scouts from each MLB team will be in Sanford attending and taking notes.

**April 21 to 25** The Class 8A and Class 8A high-school district Tournament, hosted by Seminole High School. The public is invited to watch these exciting playoff games. The cost is \$6 per person. The tournament has a proud tradition of producing MLB players, such as David Eckstein, Tim Lincecum, Jason Varitek, Rickie Weeks, Jemile Weeks, Brad Rigby, Felipe López, Jonny Venters, Nick Franklin, John Gast, and Luke Scott.

And check out the Sanford Museum's exhibits on sports (mostly baseball) history. The museum is located at 520 East First Street, Sanford. Hours are: Tuesday to Friday, 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.; and Saturday, 1:00–4:00 p.m.

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# Focus

## THE COUNSELING AND FAMILY WELLNESS CENTER

IT'S HARD TO ESCAPE STRESS THESE DAYS, WHETHER IT STEMS from jobs, family issues, or financial concerns. While stress can be an inescapable part of life, many people don't know there are resources to help manage and reduce stress. More importantly, few realize that without help, it is very possible for stress to progress into depression.

Stress management is one of the most popular services offered by Kitty White, a licensed clinical social worker at The Counseling and Family Wellness Center in Longwood.

"It's all about how we think about things," says Kitty. "People will come in to talk about stress at their job, but what they don't realize is that it's not the job stressing them out, but their perception of the job. People will take things personally that aren't meant to be offensive or personal."

The Counseling and Family Wellness Center offers many other services to families, including sand tray therapy and play therapy for children and counseling for individuals dealing with substance misuse. The center also offers counseling for those suffering through grief and loss.

"We like to improve the quality of life for everyone in the community," says Kitty.

The center offers a holistic approach to mental health and also offers bilingual services so all members of the community can receive the help they need.

– Rebekah Riley

## The Counseling and Family Wellness Center

Individual counselors have come together at The Counseling and Family Wellness Center to provide holistic care for our clients. Some of the things we provide are counseling, consulting and educational services for children, adolescents and adults in the following areas:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Emotional Trauma
- Addiction
- Co-Occurring Issues
- Grief / Loss
- Children Services
- Play Therapy/ Art Therapy
- Parenting / Family Issues
- Relationships/ Couple Intervention
- Assessment / Evaluations

Adriana Rueda-Barrera, MS, NCC, LMHC  
 Soni McCarty, MA, LMHC  
 Katharine (Kitty) White, MSW, LCSW  
 Evelyn Rivadeneira, MS  
 Registered Marriage/Family Therapist Intern

[www.TheCounselingAndFamilyWellnessCenter.com](http://www.TheCounselingAndFamilyWellnessCenter.com)  
 1385 W. State Road 434, Suite 207, Longwood, FL 32750