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## CITY PROMISES TO COMPLETE GALT MILE



# LANDSCAPING UPGRADES

Eric Berkowitz



George Gretsas



Rob Rozema



Pro Ieraci

## New Parks Dept Regime Confirms "Continuity"

The extensive neighborhood redevelopment project known as "A Smile on the Mile" was financed by the residents of the Galt Ocean Mile. The terms of an agreement with the city governing the project were uncomplicated. The City would plan the undertaking and supervise its construction. Once completed, the City would maintain the newly rehabilitated street in "a Disney-like manner". In exchange, residents living along the Galt Mile would foot the bill. Ordinarily, the City waits until a neighborhood suffers severe deterioration before committing resources to its rehabilitation. By paying for the project, community residents hoped to bypass that unpleasant prospect.

The results of the project were exemplary. As described by Galt Mile Community Association President Robert Rozema, "The Galt Mile Improvement Project is arguably the most successful neighborhood redevelopment project in the City's history." Overnight, the Galt Mile was again competitive with other elegant high-end neighborhoods in Fort Lauderdale, Miami and Palm Beach. As long as the City fulfilled its obligation to maintain the assessed improvements, the residents could concentrate their resources on rehabilitating their 30 year-old buildings.

The City's maintenance of the Galt Mile had been, in a monument to understatement, disappointing. As part of their permit process, the

Continued on page 5

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Bogdanoff..Continued

aegis of the Broward County Property Appraiser, Lori Parrish. Bogdanoff pointed out that, "No other constitutional officer in Broward has the widespread outreach capabilities of the Property Appraiser's office." Parrish's six existing locations provide easy access from virtually anywhere in the county. Lori Parrish also has a demonstrated penchant for organization, an ingredient that the current Department noticeably lacks. Attending Advisory Board members unanimously agreed that this would be a productive change.

Ellyn Bogdanoff has accrued two years of legislative experience since she narrowly defeated Lauderdale-by-the-Sea Mayor Oliver Parker and 5 other candidates to fill Connie Mack IV's vacated District 91 House seat. In the interim, she has familiarized herself with community concerns and invited reluctant constituents to participate in the legislative process. Ellyn's diplomatic skills, conversance with the law and native intelligence had served to compensate for her initial lack of experience. She has proven herself to be a tireless unrelenting fighter for issues she considers important. GMCA President Bob Rozema asked Ellyn where she finds the time and energy to invest in the dozens of projects that simultaneously require her attention. (i.e., Ellyn recently presiding over Lauderdale-by-the-Sea's Annual July 4th Parade as Grand Marshal.) The full complement of responsible committee assignments bestowed upon Ellyn by the House leadership speaks to their respect for her capabilities and high expectations for her potential contributions. Her success in forming alliances with legislators that share her objectives and establishing communications with those that don't will serve to enhance her future effectiveness.

Her responsibilities require the judicious balancing of her constituents' needs, the State's interests and peer-based networking relationships. Legislative challenges rarely arise wherein all three coexist harmoniously. Situations often dictate the strategic sacrifice of one to the advancement of another. Her future efforts will be judged primarily by the attention she gives her constituents' concerns and secondly by her contributions to the State of Florida. If our Representative continues to demonstrate a capacity to successfully bring fresh perspectives to old problems, she will occupy the seat for years to come. •

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## The Galt Mile News

The Galt Mile News is the official newsletter of the Galt Mile Community. Published 12 times a year, this publication is designed to educate the Galt residents of neighborhood-oriented current events and issues, and to offer residents Galt-specific discounts from various local merchants.



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<b>7</b> Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985	<b>8</b> Public School Begins	<b>9</b> Marlins v ARI Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>10</b> Marlins v ARI Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>11</b> Marlins v ARI Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>12</b> Wilby Wonderful Cinema Paradiso Through 8/18 954-525-FILM Marlins v SF Dolphins Stadium 7:35 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>13</b> Marlins v SF Dolphins Stadium 6:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com Hollywood Philharmonic Orchestra 7:30 p.m. Info/Location: 954-983-6077
<b>14</b> Marlins v SF Dolphins Stadium 1:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> Marlins v SD Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com Day After Day Hollywood Blvd. Theatre Through 8/28 Tix: 954-922-0404	<b>17</b> Marlins v SD Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com System of a Down Office Depot Center Tix: ticketmaster.com	<b>18</b> Marlins v SD Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>19</b> Monster Jam Summer Heat Office Depot Center Tix: ticketmaster.com	<b>20</b> Meet the Animals Day Museum of Discovery 954-463-1MAX Performing Arts of India Broward Center Info.: 954-462-0222
<b>21</b> Latin Fest Hollywood Beach Noon to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-921-3404	<b>22</b> Young Repertory Show Auditions Ft. Lauderdale Children's Theatre Info.: 954-763-6882 (Through 8/23)	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Green Day Office Depot Center Tix: ticketmaster.com	<b>27</b> Florida Beach Volleyball Tour South Beach Noon to 8 p.m. Info.: 954-224-5739
<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> Marlins v STL Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>30</b> Marlins v STL Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>31</b> Marlins v STL Dolphins Stadium 7:05 p.m. Tix: florida.marlins.mlb.com	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4</b> Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985	<b>5</b> Vice Mayor Teel: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center Info.: 954-828-5033 Labor Day	<b>6</b> Ft Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall 6 p.m.	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>

## A l o o k a h e a d

Sept 28 - Oct 29 The Phantom of the Opera Broward Center, Tix.: 954-462-0222

October 1 Luciano Pavarotti Office Depot Center, 8 p.m., Tix.: ticketmaster.com

October 21 Neil Diamond Office Depot Center, 8 p.m., Tix.: ticketmaster.com

November 3 - 6 "The Original" Riverwalk Blues Festival Downtown on the Riverwalk, Info.: 954-523-1776



Landscaping...Continued

City theoretically requires contractors who decimate the street to return it to its original condition. When they demolish the sidewalk, they are supposed to restore the area with the same pink aggregate that we paid for. Upon grinding a trench through a crosswalk, they are mandated to replace the damaged pavers that we paid for. The City has habitually overlooked construction "indiscretions" by FP&L, AT&T, Bellsouth and an assortment of developers as they pock-marked the Galt Mile with tar scars and asphalt patches. Fort Lauderdale's obligation to maintain the improvements in "a Disney-like manner" extended to the landscaping. In the past ten years, the foliage along the block had evolved into a tangled mass of scraggly trees, dead grass and scrub brush. Community expectations had so deteriorated that frustrated residents considered themselves fortunate when graced with the removal of a long-dead tree stump or having the dead grass shaped.

Last November, a Parks Department representative addressed the Galt Mile Community Association Presidents Council, offering a plan to revitalize the landscaping. Bob Fortier, the Parks Department Foreman of the Beach Area, promised to replace the dead foliage with a combination of plants better able to withstand the area's environmental rigors. Jaded by years of broken promises, wary Association officials adopted a wait-and-see attitude.

Surprisingly, the next few months produced a change in the maintenance routine practiced by Parks Department personnel. The Galt "brownfield" was replaced by Gold Mound, Silver Buttonwood and Green Island Ficus. In addition to being saline and wind resistant, Fortier's selection of plants were aesthetically sound. By March, Fortier had installed decorative topiaries and trellises in the swales along the block to complement the new plantings. Dead grass was no longer the area's dominant flora. He kept his word.

Galt residents were delighted. Each day, people would see the tangible results of the City's promise. To applaud the City's efforts, the Galt Mile Community Association unanimously elected to commend Parks Department Director Phil Thornburg, Assistant Director Terry Rynard and City Manager George Gretsas. A letter conveyed our delight with the new landscaping, appreciation of Mr. Fortier's contributions and our gratitude for the City's holding true to its word. More importantly, after suffering a decade of landscaping mediocrity, the letter expressed the Association's sincere wish that the current arrangement be permitted to continue. The City's response was two-fold. First, they answered the letter, stating that they were happy to hear that we were pleased with their efforts. Second, they reassigned Mr. Fortier to other duties, relieving him of his Galt Mile landscaping oversight responsibilities!

Incredulous Council members wavered between shock and anger. Normally passive members threatened to campaign against the re-election of incumbent City officials. Recommendations to sue

Continued on page 7

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Twelve more properties were sold in the Galt Ocean Mile Community:

<b>L'Hermitage #PH2803</b> (3/2.5) \$1,200,000 - closed 7/5/05	<b>Ocean Manor #303</b> (0/1) \$195,000 - closed 7/8/05
<b>Playa Del Sol #809</b> (1/1.5) \$310,000 - closed 7/6/05	<b>Plaza South #15M</b> (2/2) \$660,000 - closed 6/24/05
<b>Galt Towers #9N</b> (1/1.5) \$312,000 - closed 7/8/05	<b>Ocean Club #1409</b> (2/2) \$550,000 - closed 7/11/05
<b>Ocean Summit #1507</b> (1/1.5) \$327,150 - closed 7/11/05	<b>Regency Tower #203</b> (2/2) \$470,000 - closed 6/29/05
<b>The Tides #923</b> (1/1) \$325,000 - closed 6/28/05	<b>Southpoint #510S</b> (2/2) \$565,000 - closed 6/29/05
<b>Playa del Mar #807</b> (2/2) \$570,000 - closed 6/30/05	<b>Plaza South #15F</b> (2/2.5) \$696,000 - closed 6/30/05



### Bogdanoff...Continued

states, "The expansion of gaming at Broward County pari-mutuel facilities will likely produce substantial tax revenues that could resolve the program's revenue shortfall." They add, "The division and Legislature have not yet implemented options for cutting state regulatory costs or revising the distribution of funds to counties." The 2005 session saw legislative attempts to determine which state agency will be responsible for regulation, the resources necessary to support regulation (funds and staff), an appropriate tax rate and an estimate of anticipated revenue. Every attempt was deliberately burdened with onerous provisions that served as "poison pills", condemning the bills to failure.

Advisory Board members were hard pressed to understand the concerns expressed about additional jurisdictional costs. The compensation arrangements made by the various municipalities and the County seem more than adequate to offset any additional public services and appropriate social programs attendant to the incremental gambling. Regency Tower's Dott Nicholson-Brown voiced her support for the slots, concerned primarily about whether they were the bingo-style video machines (Class II) or the popular Las Vegas-style machines approved by voters (Class III). When told that the slots would probably force gambling junkets like Sun Cruises to tank, she responded, "Good!" Ms. Nicholson-Brown lamented



the lack of tax revenues from the "cruise to nowhere" gambling junkets and tax exempt Reservation-based institutions. Ocean Club's Rose Guttman agreed, stating, "Losing all that money to junkets and places like the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino is shameful."

Galt Ocean Club's Pio Ieraci shared an anecdote about Windsor, Ontario's experience when the Canadian municipality was considering casino gambling. Recalcitrant residents expressed similar sentiments about crime, traffic and gambling's anticipated impact on the city's youth. Ieraci said, "After the measure's implementation, none of the daunting drawbacks materialized", although he quickly disclaimed that locations like Atlantic City, N.J. suffered more severe social repercussions. Ms. Bogdanoff suggested that it would be propitious to provide for a statutory "backdoor" to de-authorize the project if, by some chance, her concerns about traffic and crime were realized. While discounting the need for such legal escape mechanisms, many members agreed that it might provide the County with a useful tool. In addition to empowering the County if the project demonstrated unexpected adverse social or financial consequences, it would afford Broward officials leverage to renegotiate more advantageous terms should the actual revenues prove to have been seriously underestimated.

Continued on page 17

### Landscaping...Continued

the City for non-compliance with their contractual obligations proliferated. After years of tolerating inept landscaping followed by the service cutbacks, fee increases and tax hikes from the budget boondoggle, the single request made by the community of the City was roundly denied. Accommodating the neighborhood's wish would have actually saved precious tax dollars.

To mollify trepidations about the block reverting to its prior state of disrepair and cool anger over this blatant disregard for the community's wishes, City Forrester Gene Dempsey addressed the June 6th meeting of the GMCA Presidents Council. His recently assumed Parks Department duties include Fortier's former Galt Mile landscaping responsibilities. At the meeting's outset, he promised to continue the progress Fortier had initiated. He explained that while Fortier was no longer involved in the community's landscaping, he was still in charge of beach maintenance. Regency Tower resident Louise Collins asked why, "Mr. Fortier was uprooted from a job that was finally being done well only to be placed in charge of the sand?" Dempsey explained that the City hired "a professional horticulturist to oversee future Galt Mile landscaping." While the new horticulturist was unable to attend the meeting, Mr. Dempsey promised to bring him to the next meeting when invited. He also repeated his promise to, "personally supervise the block's landscaping." When asked about his plan for the Galt, Dempsey said that he would, "communicate with Mr. Fortier to insure continuity."

Several Council members reiterated that Galt Mile residents were more concerned about the City's intentions than about the internal reassignment of responsibilities. They described to Dempsey the community's disappointment with the City's efforts prior to Fortier's short reign. Although hiring a professional horticulturist appeared to be a progressive idea, Council members were skeptical about whether the promised rehabilitation would proceed on schedule. Stating unequivocally that it would, Mr. Dempsey said that despite his having only recently been afforded the authority to complete the upgrades started by Fortier, he would "take personal responsibility" for their expeditious implementation. Dempsey described his full range of oversight responsibilities as including tree service, landscaping and horticulture. In addition, he maintains the Riverwalk development and street medians throughout the City.

His assurances seemed to quell some of the suspicion surrounding the City's decision to disregard the community's stated wishes. Some members suggested that the City's callous actions might simply be a case of bad timing and poor communication. Others voiced resentment over the Galt neighborhood being adversely impacted by suspected political maneuvering within the Parks Department. While opinions varied about the City's motives, members concurred with Mr. Dempsey's statement

Continued on page 17

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**Bogdanoff...Continued**

Bogdanoff ascribed the legislation's ultimate failure to the C. A. Day event - stating that the Grass Roots demonstration brought the bills' pitfalls to the attention of legislators. She postulated, "There is nothing more effective than people visiting their legislators to put a face on an issue. The legislator is alerted to the depth of their concerns and the constituents learn about the process. I was delighted that you took the time to visit me in Tallahassee. Fortunately, none of the objectionable provisions were enacted as the bills died in Committee."

Several members registered surprise when Ms. Bogdanoff stated that Mr. Robaina, the "Condo Killer" bills' main proponent, was basically "a nice guy simply trying to represent his constituents". Regency Tower's Eric Berkowitz mentioned that Mr. Robaina's District is in Miami, not St. Augustine - referring to the headquarters of a small, politically vested group that Robaina regularly sources to distort "facts" about condo problems. Presidents Council Chair Pio Ieraci offered that, "few of Robaina's Miami constituents have any interest in the workings of Condominium Associations." Ms. Bogdanoff admitted that her colleague was motivated by other political considerations. By staging an artificial "David and Goliath" scenario, in which he cast himself as David, Mr. Robaina could manufacture a campaign platform for repeated re-election. Additionally, he could repay some campaign contributors, such as SEIU, Local 11 in Miami, who stand to profit handsomely from the regulatory blitzkrieg fomented by Robaina's coalition - at the expense of homeowners. By setting up a media-friendly "straw dog", his legislation could effectively be marketed as a "heroic struggle" to those that haven't actually read his handiwork. Mr. Ieraci told Ms. Bogdanoff that he "expects the coalition to try passing more disruptive legislation next year."

At Ms. Bogdanoff's invitation, GMCA officials met with our

Representative prior to this year's session to create a legislative "wish list" embracing a variety of issues ranging from shore protection to self-governance. The meeting produced guidelines designed to trigger communication between Ellyn and the GMCA when any of the considered issues arose in the legislature. Responding to Mr. Ieraci's admonition, Ms. Bogdanoff recommended that we repeat the procedure in October to re-evaluate how she might best assist in achieving community objectives. She pledged to, "monitor the situation and fight any attempt to undermine the interests of her constituents."

Representative Bogdanoff updated the Advisory Board about the progress of certain issues in which she holds a legislative stake. With Representatives Don Davis, Bruce Kyle and Juan-Carlos Planas, Ellyn sponsored the Beverage Law, HB 975, which authorizes direct shipment of wine for personal consumption into this state. The bill died in the House Business Regulation Committee on Friday, May 6th. Apparently, a federal court in Tampa is considering a case wherein they will likely find our current law unconstitutional, clearing the way for another "bite at the apple" next year.

On March 8th, a Special Referendum Election for the purpose of determining whether slot machines should be authorized at existing licensed pari-mutuel facilities located within Broward and Miami-Dade Counties was held and, while failing in Miami, the issue was passed by Broward voters. Dania Jai-Alai, Gulfstream Park in Hallandale Beach, Pompano Park Harness Racing in Pompano Beach, and the Hollywood Greyhound Race Track in Hallandale Beach have stipulated that each pari-mutuel facility shall make a monthly payment to Broward County in the amount of 1.5 percent of the gross slot revenue generated by each and every slot machine. The monies will defray the cost of local government impacts and expenses incurred as a result of the development and operation of the devices. In case the gross slot revenue exceeds \$250,000,000, the percentage paid to Broward County will increase to 2 percent. In addition, each of the "home" municipalities of the pari-mutuel facilities will receive 1.7 percent of the establishment's gross slot revenue. Dania Beach will benefit from their Jai-Alai Fronton; Hallandale Beach will receive their percentage from both Gulfstream Park and their Greyhound Race Track. Pompano Beach will not only receive their 1.7 percent cut, they will also collect a \$250,000 annual "kicker" from Pompano Park. Pompano Beach is also entitled to audit the track's books on demand. Conversely, the harness track will be allowed to sell alcohol 24 hours a day, 7 days a week - subject to legislation restricting the establishment's hours of operation.

Continued on page 13



**Slots...Continued**

The strategy of combining provisions that require the project to meet unreasonable financial expectations while subverting their ability to do so is designed to produce a palpable public failure. By setting up the project to fail, anti-slot interests hope to accomplish two objectives. In addition to creating a basis for requesting that the issue be revisited at the ballot box, they hope to permanently taint future attempts to allow the devices with a cloud of disappointment. The session was peppered with numerous examples.

House Business Regulation Chairman Frank Attkisson, Representative of Kissimmee, offered a plan in March which required sky-high tax rates and limited the facilities to the less desirable "Class II" devices. Attkisson said he endorsed the "lower class of gaming machine that includes video lottery and electronic bingo to help Governor Bush negotiate gaming compacts with the Seminole and Miccosukee tribes." Under federal law, the tribes are allowed to seek agreements that permit them to match whatever kind of gambling is allowed in the state. "I think the state's voters wanted to isolate expanded gambling to Miami-Dade and Broward counties," he said. "If you allow Broward to go to Class III machines, gambling will explode across Florida." Attkisson also expects the slots advocates who vowed to raise \$438 million for Florida's public schools with casinos in two counties to make good on that promise - even though the machines were approved only in Broward County.

Attkisson's concern for the Governor's negotiating stance apparently wasn't his sole motive for the contradictions built into his plan. His demand for Broward to produce twice the expected revenues with the lower class machines has more to do with protecting his business constituents in Kissimmee than helping the Governor or "containing the menace". Attkisson also said he wants to protect tourist destinations in other areas of the state (such as theme parks in Kissimmee) from being "cannibalized" by a South Florida advertising blitz to lure vacationers. To protect his own backyard, he wants a new state board to have the power to yank slot licenses. "We need to make sure that they're going out of state to attract their tourism ... rather than allowing them to cannibalize existing Florida tourism markets that we respect and value so deeply," said Attkisson,

whose hometown is next to what he characterized as "the world's number one family destination" - Walt Disney World. Attkisson's skewed legislation is representative of the delay tactics used by opponents more interested in "turf protection" than in the rationale they've thinly paraded as an abiding concern for "fair competition" or "public interest." The bill was cynically entitled the "Disney Bill" by friend and foe alike.



Frank Attkisson



Randy Johnson

Continued on page 11

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# Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff

Eric Berkowitz

## Post Session 2005

District 91 Statehouse Representative Ellyn Bogdanoff addressed a June 16th luncheon meeting of the Galt Mile Community Association's Advisory Board. She imparted that "since the legislative session's close, I've been busier at home than while in the Capitol." Ellyn is an attorney whose cases and clients must sacrifice a modicum of access during the legislative session in exchange for the "influence" that she brings to the table. "I had to go back to work!" It isn't unusual for politically involved professionals to feel like they're experiencing life in a "Cuisinart" when they return to their "day jobs".

Representative Bogdanoff described a "spillover" that occurs once the session ends. "We were still tracking legislation, and watching to see what passed and what the Governor would veto. Speaking of which, I just experienced my first veto." Admittedly disappointed, Ellyn characterized the Governor's vetoing one of her bills as "a

learning experience". She explained, "My bill passed the House and the Senate. During those frantic last days, members were scurrying about, trying to hook their legislation onto anything that looked as if it may be successful. In the spirit of collegiality, I permitted others to add their language to my bill. When a bill gets too heavy, it tends to sink." Evidently, it sank in the Governor's office. "I'll know better next time!"

At the meeting's outset, Ms. Bogdanoff commented on the "Community Association Day" event in which Galt Mile residents joined hundreds of homeowners across the State to protest legislation damaging to Association members. During the March 30th event, the Galt Mile contingent visited Ellyn, District 25 Senator Jeffrey Atwater and other state officials in Tallahassee to elicit their support. The normally passive homeowners were not only opposed to the bills' unworkable provisions, they were also outraged by the legislation's supporters' spurious claim that they spoke on behalf of the majority of Association members.

Continued on page 12



Rep. Ellyn Bogdanoff Debates Issues on House Floor

### Slots...Continued

Broward voters laboring under the misconception that their decision would be enacted are disappointed with the legislature's failure to pass a legal basis for the project's implementation. Having taken the time to express their will, voters resent politicians who marginalize the result if they disagree with the electorate's choice. Notwithstanding which side of the issue residents find themselves, most of them enjoy the uplifting notion that their vote counts. Residents are frustrated with the insupportable delays and angry that some of their own legislators have opted to participate in what they consider to be a subterfuge. While there is little chance that the unworkable provisions will be passed, their repeatedly having been filed produced the delays sought by the opponents of the project.

The majority of Florida senators have attempted to forward reasonable legislation for use as guidelines for the slots. Most House members also acknowledge their responsibility to create a format that would allow the program to fulfill its potential. After all, as stated by State Representative Randy Johnson, a Central Florida Republican who led the campaign against slot machines, "This was supposed to be about the kids." Lawmakers attempting to skirt the will of Broward residents by destabilizing the project's prospects would do well to keep that in mind. •

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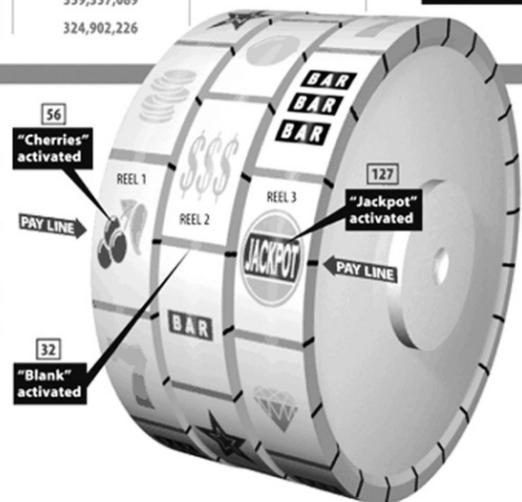
Modern slot machines are controlled by computer formulas that ensure a random outcome for each pull of the lever (or push of the spin button). Here's how a typical three-reel machine works:

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3
The machine's internal processor continuously generates a string of large, random numbers, even when no one is playing.	When a player pulls the lever, the computer records the next three numbers generated.	The numbers are simplified by a mathematical formula to yield three smaller numbers, typically one to three digits long. The new numbers correspond to stop positions on each of the machine's reels.
765,089,354 867,980,435 645,288,068 600,267,295 359,357,089 324,902,226	678,324,987 546,432,435 192,345,986 <b>Recorded numbers</b>	678,324,987 = 56 REEL 1 546,432,435 = 32 REEL 2 192,345,986 = 127 REEL 3 <b>Stop positions</b>

#### STEP 4

The computer rolls each reel into the correct stop position to reveal the outcome. Each reel has 22 possible stop positions, and many of these stops can be activated by more than one stop number (high-payout stops are usually assigned fewer numbers, so the odds of getting them will be lower). While video slot machines don't use mechanical reels, the underlying process is the same.

SOURCE: How Stuff Works  
Staff graphic/Daniel Niblock



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Slots...Continued

Both groups also claimed to be the "voice of the people", each intimating that they truly represented the public's wishes. As such, both sides confidently endorsed leaving the decision to the electorate.

The results of the referenda should have reoriented legislators' priorities. They would no longer decide whether or where slots could proliferate, the people addressed that. Their responsibility would shift to constructing a framework for taxation and the ultimate distribution of anticipated revenues. The recent legislative session has clarified that some lawmakers had no intention of leaving this decision to the people of the state or the county. They are crusading to "save their constituents from themselves." While anti-slot legislators acknowledge that the Broward result represents a setback, they consider the decision of the people to be of minor consequence. As such, they've mounted a two-part campaign. Since they can't undo the public mandate, they aspire to delay implementation of the people's will. The second part is to effect legislation that discourages the project from meeting its stated financial goals. If the project yields disappointing results, a case can be made to question the basis for its



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continued support. The 2005 session saw several confusing pieces of legislation offered that reflect these goals. The legislature spent the session trying to produce legislation to serve as a framework for the program's implementation. Radical anti-slot elements, primarily in the Statehouse, have juxtaposed contradictory provisions into the legislation. One element of this campaign is to write stratospheric expectations into the statute. By setting the bar unattainably high, they are guaranteed it's never being met. The resulting "disappointing" outcome will serve to discredit project proponents. Another provision used to subvert the project's success is the proposed tax rate. Certain House members have recommended astronomical tax rates be applied to slot revenues. They have cynically characterized a rate of 55% (which is among the nation's highest) as reasonable. While this attempt to make slots financially unviable by taxing them into oblivion is embarrassingly obvious, it is, nevertheless, effective. A third tactic is to force the installation of the less popular "bingo-style" video game machines to discourage user interest. These "Class II" devices are currently installed in reservation-based establishments throughout the State. The House removed a provision that would have allowed pari-mutuels to upgrade to the more popular "Class III" Las Vegas style slots if the reservation-based establishments opted to do so. Obviously, games that elicit greater interest are more lucrative.

Continued on page 9

Bagdanoff....Continued

Ellyn is concerned about the installation of slot machines in Broward County. Despite the passage of slots by the Broward electorate, she professed mixed feelings about the resolution's implementation. She took the opportunity to clarify some recent confusion surrounding her position. Hollywood Senator Steven Geller publicly disparaged her for "acting contrary to the wishes of her constituency." In fact, while Broward County voters approved the issue, the measure failed in District 91 - her constituents didn't support the issue. Ethical concerns aside, she harbors some reservations about the blueprint for distribution of revenues expected from the devices. While they've been generally dedicated to education, no provision was made to offset ancillary costs that invariably arise adjunctive to legal gambling. The pari-mutuel locations slated to receive the slots will require additional police and public services to address an anticipated influx of gamblers and the projected expansion of existing facilities. Individuals adversely affected by the increased gambling presence may need access to additional chapters of "Gamblers Anonymous" or similar social rehabilitation efforts. Even the substantial cost of monitoring the locations' adherence to the statute, verifying legitimacy of the actual machines and the bookkeeping required to accurately track the resulting proceeds remain undressed in the existing guidelines. Various jurisdictions might not be fully reimbursed for these expenses, placing an unfair onus on the taxpayer. The last bill designed to clarify these issues was consigned to legislative limbo in the Senate after being passed by the House. Senators had problems with the exigent terms of HB 1901 (the House product). The bill levied a 55% tax rate (one of the nation's highest) and restricted the class of acceptable slot machines to the less popular (and less lucrative) bingo-style video devices (Class II). As a result, guidelines that are usually detailed by the legislature will instead be painted with broad strokes in the courts until the issue is revived next year.

Pre-slots pari-mutuel wagering hasn't exactly had a sterling history in the State of Florida. The laws that currently govern the activity are Ch. 550 (pari-mutuel wagering), Florida Statutes and Ch. 849 (gambling), Florida Statutes. Florida pari-mutuel wagering is regulated by the Department of Business and Professional Regulation's Division of Pari-Mutuel Wagering. Over the last decade, Florida's pari-mutuel wagering industry has declined steadily, with attendance and associated state revenue falling dramatically. The legislature has amended pari-mutuel wagering laws several times in an effort to stimulate the industry. The 2000 Legislature enacted legislation that further reduced the tax rates that affect the pari-mutuel industry and the 2003 Legislature revised the operating conditions for cardrooms at pari-mutuel wagering facilities. Revenue collected from pari-mutuel tax, cardroom tax, and fee collections are deposited into the Pari-Mutuel Wagering Trust Fund. In 2004, division expenditures of \$9.1 million and the county distribution of \$29.9 million (\$446,500 per county), when appropriated from the \$34.2 million in generated revenue, left a \$4.8 million shortfall that was met by a general revenue supplement. However, Industry pundits and State analysts in the Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) anticipate that slot machine revenue and enacting recommended legislation will herald a turn-around. OPPAGA's Report No. 05-28 (April 2005)

Continued on page 14

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Eric Berkowitz

# SLOTS SWEPT UNDER STATEHOUSE RUG

Slot machines are on the way. Florida voters first agreed that the residents of Broward and Miami Dade Counties had the right to decide for themselves whether or not they wanted to host the one arm bandits. They removed the decision from the hands of confessed vested interests in the legislature. The choice wouldn't be made by lawmakers ostensibly working for one side or the other. The electorate clearly endorsed the simple principle that the decision should be made by the people most affected by the decision. The two counties would be given the opportunity to make their will known. The result was a split decision. Miami-Dade voters came out against permitting local pari-mutuel facilities to make a home for the devices. Broward County voters disagreed. The Broward electorate endorsed the placement of slot machines in the county's four pari-mutuel establishments.

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Ordinarily, our representatives are charged with speaking on our behalf. They are given wide latitude in interpreting what their constituents really want. However, when a referendum or special election permits the electorate to express their sentiments directly, there isn't any wiggle room for doubt about the outcome. In our system of government, as the decision making process moves toward the grass roots level, the final decision becomes less open to "interpretation" by elected representatives.

Long before the voters directly expressed their will, legislators were clearly polarized over the slots issue. A veritable Chinese menu of motives compelled lawmakers to choose up sides. Those who find gambling morally intolerable suddenly found themselves aligned with local non-pari-mutuel gambling interests whose business would suffer from the increased competition represented by the new slots. Facing them was another uncharacteristic coalition of lawmakers who either represented the powerful pari-mutuel interests or felt that the slots weren't a grave moral threat from which people needed statutory protection. Lawmakers on either side of the issue shared some common interests. Everyone publicly drooled over the prospect of divvying up hundreds of millions in new education dollars (slot proceeds are earmarked for "education").

Continued on page 8

# A True Rarity: A Lifesaving E-Mail

By Eric Berkowitz

I am often targeted by an assortment of confused individuals who implore that I send out an email to "ten other people" in order to achieve cosmic wealth. My finger has been conditioned to delete these prior to contacting the area of my brain that cognates. I recently received an email from Lorraine Alfano, the concierge at L'Hermitage, which prompted me to alter my usual behavior. It is excellent advice; it saves lives. After sending it off to friends and family, I decided to make it available to everyone. Following is the message contained therein.

"Sometimes symptoms of a stroke are difficult to identify. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness spells disaster. The stroke victim may suffer brain damage when people nearby fail to recognize the symptoms of a stroke. Now doctors say a bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions:

Ask the individual to SMILE.

Ask him or her to RAISE BOTH ARMS.

Ask the person to SPEAK A SIMPLE SENTENCE (Coherently)

(i.e. It is sunny out today.)

If he or she has trouble with any of these tasks, call 9-1-1 immediately and describe the symptoms to the dispatcher."

After discovering that a group of non-medical volunteers could identify facial weakness, arm weakness, and speech problems, researchers urged the general public to learn the three questions. They presented their conclusions at the American Stroke Association's annual meeting last February. Widespread use of this test could result in prompt diagnosis and treatment of the stroke and prevent brain damage.

A noted cardiologist said if everyone who gets this e-mail sends it to 10 people many lives will be saved. My physician agrees; so do I.

Thank You,  
Lorraine! —editor



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### Landscaping...Continued

that we would know soon enough if the upgrades would be implemented and the City's promise kept. Responding to a request by Presidents Council Chair Pio Ieraci, Dempsey agreed to address the Council again next fall, after the rehabilitation was completed. Time, as usual, will tell.

For additional information detailing the overall issue, please go to the Galt Mile Community Association web site ([www.galtmile.com](http://www.galtmile.com)). For landscaping specifics relevant to Galt Mile landscaping, contact Gene Dempsey, Urban Forester, Parks and Recreation Department, 1350 W. Broward Boulevard, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33312 at Phone: (954) 761-5785, email: [gdempsey@fortlauderdale.gov](mailto:gdempsey@fortlauderdale.gov).

### Bogdanoff...Continued

The larger issue derived of the slots controversy is school funding. A formula compiled by the State legislature for the distribution of educational funds portends sizable cutbacks for Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade Counties. The plan fails to distinguish location-based factors that impact schools' operational costs. For instance, it recognizes no distinction between the cost of living in Miami and a small town in central Florida. This affects everything from school supplies, construction and repair expenses, professional services and teachers' salaries. The formula heavily favors the north and central Florida counties whose legislators currently control the legislature. Ms. Bogdanoff explained that, "A court challenge to the inequitable system was recently deflected; the court having found that the existing formula is constitutional." Ms. Bogdanoff continued, "The Republican majority that runs the capitol isn't predisposed to treat 'Democratic' Broward equitably." Curiously, they visited similar abuse on "Republican" Miami. Bogdanoff exclaimed, "We need to resolve this issue on the merits of adequacy for each district and not on the politics of who is in power. I hope to work toward a solution." South Florida legislators have neglected to present the united front necessary to mount credible opposition to the purely political formula that punishes millions of South Florida residents. Until they do, northern and rural Florida legislators will continue to take advantage of South Florida's dysfunctional legislative coalition.

Representative Bogdanoff briefly touched on affordable housing, stating that she opposed Broward's legislation because the County lacked a viable master plan. She explained that Broward had 4 tax bills in play during the past session with "little indication of how the resulting funds would be spent." She said that the issue deserves adequate consideration once the County pencils in the details. Otherwise, "tax monies raised for affordable housing could be redirected to almost anything!"

Changing speeds, Ms. Bogdanoff focused attention on the difficulties faced by Broward residents when dealing with the local Department of Motor Vehicles. Evidently, alternatives are currently being considered to the historically demotivating experience. One such alternative places DMV under the

Continued on page 18

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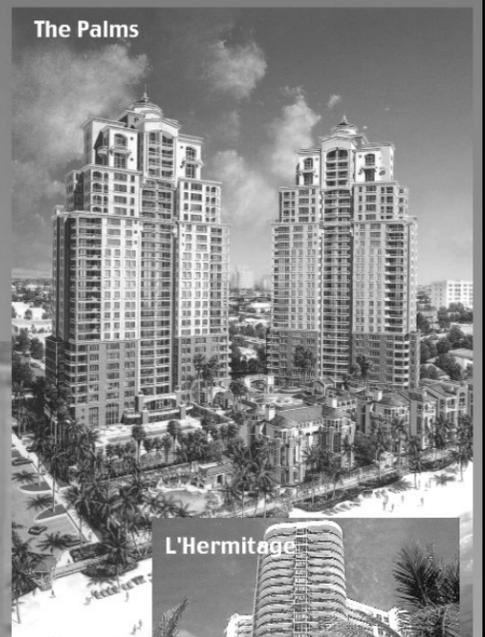
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