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CAPTAIN PENEY CATALYZES SECURITY PATROL

By Eric Berkowitz

This past June, those beachfront members of the Galt Mile Community Association located within the City of Fort Lauderdale initiated a neighborhood security patrol. The patrol is comprised of active Fort Lauderdale Police officers contracted to patrol the beach and Galt Ocean Drive north to Galt Towers before turning around and returning south. Organized as a private professional police unit, the patrol is supervised by Captain Todd Peney, a highly decorated FLPD officer. In addition to the training and experience imputed to all FLPD police officers, they have special familiarity with our unique needs. The patrol is not an experiment in neighborhood policing. It is an extension of an existing security program that has successfully lowered the crime rate in the Lauderdale Beach neighborhood just south of the Galt Mile community.

After suffering 45 reported crimes and hundreds of "incidents" in 1999, the Lauderdale Beach Homeowners Association, along with L'Hermitage I and II, hired active Fort Lauderdale Police Officers to man an ATV (All Terrain Vehicle) for the beach and a Police Jeep to patrol the street. The success of similar patrols organized by neighborhood civic groups depends primarily upon how they're administered. When the civic sponsors of any plan decide that they are adequately knowledgeable about operating a security patrol, they quickly learn that they are mistaken. To properly utilize the skills of active police officers, they must be organized under an equally professional chain of command – not a group of concerned, yet inexperienced, homeowners. After exploring their alternatives and interviewing candidates, directors of the Lauderdale Beach Homeowners Association met Fort Lauderdale Police Captain Todd Peney, the recipient of 23 Departmental and 57 Public Commendations. Currently assigned to the Patrol Division in Police



Captain Peney and former Governor Bush promote 2001 police safety bill

District 3, Captain Peney has proven to be the catalyst they needed to develop a successful program. One year after implementing this program, the number of reported crimes dropped precipitously – to two.

While tracking the number of reported crimes or "Part One" crimes is a legitimate method of measuring the success or failure of a security program, it doesn't accurately illustrate the crime problems faced by the Galt Mile community. At a February 16, 2006 meeting of the Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board, Major Mary Negrey of the Fort Lauderdale Police Department reported that her District One unit (covering the Galt Mile) was primarily beset by "Quality of Life" crimes.

She explained that police resources are prioritized according to the need exhibited by each neighborhood. In every major municipal police force, manpower and equipment are allocated primarily to neighborhoods victimized by high crime rates and/or significant crimes. Given that the City wasn't about to take officers from high crime areas to monitor the Galt Mile beach and sidewalks, she explained the Department's strategy for areas like the Galt Mile. They hand out pamphlets in shopping areas, community centers and similar venues alerting residents to avoid leaving valuables in plain sight of their unattended vehicles.

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Peney..Continued

The Captain also explained the mysteriously mobile empty police car. Each of the patrol officers has an assigned fully equipped City police cruiser which is organized by the officer. If available, they prefer using their own patrol car instead of the Association vehicle upon reporting for duty. When this occurs, they randomly park the extra patrol car along Galt Ocean Drive, affording the neighborhood association an additional "pro bono" deterrent. Captain Peney exhorted, "Don't be confused if you see the cruiser in the same location for several days. It is moved during almost every shift. After using the patrol car, an officer may park it in the same spot that he picked it up." Peney assured members that its value as a deterrent is enormous, "The vast majority of bad guys will move on if they think a police officer is nearby."

Council Chairman Pio Ieraci told members that participants would receive copies of the daily activity reports depicting the hourly location of patrol officers during the course of each shift. Pio said, "Instead of watching the beach while someone else watches the street, these activity forms will provide a daily confirmation of the patrol schedule." Since the existing checklist activity forms currently only list locations in the Lauderdale Beach neighborhood, the officers must write in Galt Mile activity. When additional forms are printed, the Galt Mile locations will be added.

Captain Peney exclaimed that the Fort Lauderdale Police Department is engaged in performing an ongoing study of neighborhood crime rates. Captain Raul M. Diaz is charged with maintaining the relevant crime statistics for each Fort Lauderdale community. Prior to his appearance before the Presidents Council, Captain Peney requested an official crime stats update for the Galt Mile patrol area in Police District 1. Captain Diaz reported that crime on the Galt is down from this same time last year. He indicated that there were 13 crimes during this period in 2006 as compared to 11 this year. Crime stats are also low in the adjacent Lauderdale Beach patrol area. However, the number of crimes afflicting almost every other local neighborhood association – such as Coral Ridge to the west, Imperial Point to the north and the Central Beach Alliance just south of us – is significantly higher than in the Galt Mile community.

Following a promise to update the Council again in future meetings, Captain Peney received an ovation from attending association officials. After thanking the Captain for attending on the heels of an 18-hour day, Council Chair Pio Ieraci explained that any evaluation of the program's progress must be rooted in facts. GMCA will carefully follow the neighborhood crime statistics, changes in the crime environment and criminal activity rates in surrounding communities to ascertain the effectiveness of the security patrol. He admonished that baseless "pool talk" and unverified anecdotes are virtually worthless for that purpose.

He also stated that GMCA was considering the formation of a security committee composed of neighborhood residents charged with acting as a liaison between the patrol and the neighborhood association. They would recommend relevant improvements, investigate suspicious incidents and consider requests for expanding the patrol's jurisdiction. Hopefully, this will help the security patrol evolve into its most effective incarnation prior to the expiration of the 12-month evaluation period. When the City assumes responsibility for the project, it will also assume full control, which leaves the Galt Mile community about nine months to tweak the project into its final form. •



Police Chief Bruce Roberts joins GMCA officials FLPD patrol officers at Galt Mile Security Control kickoff event

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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Allison Weingard Muss

954-292-6553

galtnews@yahoo.com

Art Director: Gio Castiglione

Ad Sales: Allison W. Muss

Editor: Eric Peter Berkowitz

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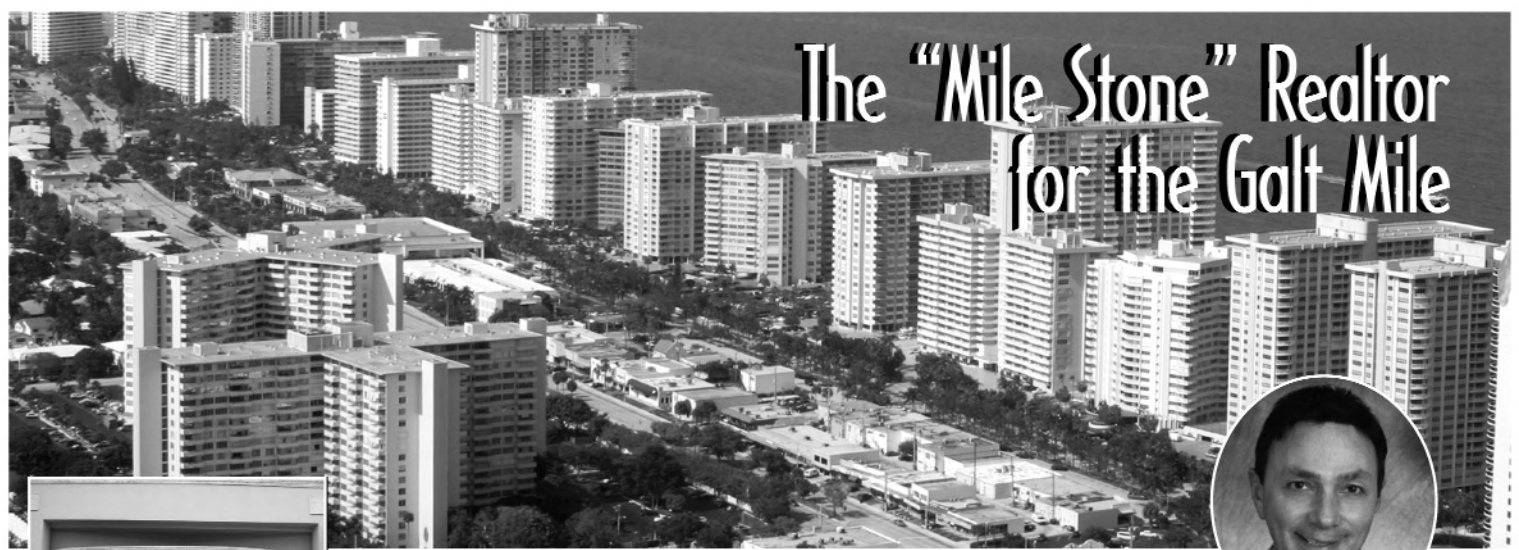
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Peney...Continued

The City's failure to coordinate decommissioning the street lights with the installation of their turtle-safe replacements precipitated an overwhelming influx of vagrants to Barrier Island beach areas. Not surprisingly, crime skyrocketed. The significant police presence ordinarily assigned to the Las Olas area was barely adequate to protect tourists from the unexpected onslaught. However, beachfront communities north and south of the protected Main Beach area were inundated.

Captain Peney reported that the patrol has succeeded in clearing the Galt Mile Beach and Lauderdale Beach of transients seeking to occupy the darkened beach on a nightly basis. The beaches north and south of this "demilitarized" zone are experiencing understandably heightened incident rates. In contrast, those rates for beach areas policed by the Security Patrol have decreased.

The Captain said that although incidents were for the most part fairly evenly distributed along the Galt Mile Beach, the areas proximal to the Ocean Manor and Ocean Sky hotels experienced heightened activity. Among the issues regularly confronted by the patrol officers are swimmers in distress, behavioral disturbances by hotel guests or Tiki Bar patrons and "trespassers" masquerading as hotel guests, condo residents or visitors.

The Captain also expressed concern about local sites identified by FLPD as "hot spots" — areas and/or buildings in which crime proliferates and criminals congregate. Evidence of prostitution, drugs and stolen goods has attracted active monitoring of some motels on the west side of A1A. Captain Peney said, "Perpetrators congregating in those locations to engage in illicit activity don't necessarily stay there all day.

Continued on page 17

Peney...Continued

Holding up a flyer she brought to so demonstrate, she read, "Be careful not to leave your keys in the car or your cell phone on the car seat!" Aside from official exhortations to be mindful of our surroundings, she made it clear that we were already receiving the level of protection statistically commensurate with our needs. If we wanted to address the burglars, thieves and muggers committing these "Quality of Life" crimes, we were on our own. Those unfamiliar with Major Negrey have since asked whether she is a credible authority. Suffice to say that she was subsequently promoted to Assistant Chief of Police.

To support his contention that taxes are too high, Mayor Jim Naugle's annual address to the GMCA Advisory Board admonishes that the Galt Mile neighborhood contributes as much in taxes as the downtown business district. Angered by the City's refusal to break with proven police theory and reallocate resources to neighborhoods according to tax base instead of need, some association representatives endorsed a strategy based on the enigmatic proposition that if we did nothing to protect our residents, the City would have to shift police personnel from high crime areas to the Galt Mile. After three decades of applying political pressure to elicit adequate neighborhood security (screaming, threatening, crying, "negotiating", posturing, etc.), the truth of Major Negrey's explanation has become inescapable. Notwithstanding our annual tax contribution, no administration would ignore time-tested police theory and strip protection from high-crime "battlefield" areas to protect wealthy strollers from perpetrators often misidentified as "homeless" persons and absent-minded shoppers from thieves. For decades, civic leaders were constrained to gnashing their teeth while neighborhood residents were subjected to a half dozen incidents every week.

In 2004, the neighborhood association finally decided that angrily refusing to do anything while family, friends and neighbors suffered muggings, robberies and assaults was futile and pointless. They voted to launch another investigation into creating a private security patrol. The final product would have to meet a tough set of criteria. To accommodate representatives upset with the principle of paying for any manner of incremental police protection, the cost would have to be negligible to the average Galt Mile resident. Conversely, hiring a squad comprised of uniformed senior citizens and inexperienced part-time college students might actually invite more crime.

A real cop in a police vehicle or an ATV could cover the beach and/or the street more effectively than 4 rent-a-cops on foot. Hiring off-duty Fort Lauderdale police officers had an added value. Whenever an officer has cause to assert authority, he/she is automatically classified as "on duty". If and when a suspect is cornered, they don't have to contact FLPD to make an arrest. They are automatically empowered to detain and arrest alleged perpetrators. They also have unlimited access to FLPD's substantial support services — at no additional cost.

When the highly successful plan implemented by the Lauderdale Beach Homeowners Association was initially considered, the high per/unit cost paid by the Lauderdale Beach homeowners weighed against it. However, when two previously overlooked factors were considered, the plan was reevaluated. Since the Lauderdale Beach community is composed primarily of single family homes, their per unit cost is substantial. By spreading the expense over the Galt Mile community's high density demographics, our minimal cost for a reasonable level of protection drops to a meager \$20 per unit annually. Secondly, during the 5 years since they initiated the patrol, the Lauderdale Beach Homeowners Association had outfitted their participating professional police officers with substantial resources. They built a headquarters housing a high-tech communications network and purchased a police car to patrol the street and an ATV to patrol the beach. In addition to facilitating access to both the street and the beach, the fully equipped security HQ is conveniently located right down the block.

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Peney...Continued

When the GMCA Advisory Board met with assorted city officials during 2005 and 2006, members took the opportunity to elicit input about the neighborhood's security alternatives. In addition to Major Mary Negrey, association representatives queried then Assistant Chief of Police Stephen Robitaille, City Manager George Gretsas, City Commissioner Christine Teel, Major Paul Kiley (Major Negrey's replacement upon her promotion to Assistant Chief of Police) and Assistant City Manager Kathleen Gunn. Assistant Chief Robitaille and Major Kiley spoke to the advantages attendant to using professional police. Aside from the training and experience that each officer brings to the patrol, it eliminates a communications bottleneck that diminishes the effectiveness of community policing. The seamless access to Departmental resources uniquely available to active police officers is invaluable and irreplaceable.

At a March 16, 2006 Advisory Board meeting, members asked City Manager George Gretsas for guidance about our security dilemma. After learning the details of the neighborhood security plan, he stated that "the plan might be eligible for municipal support." Gretsas explained that if we implemented the plan and were able to demonstrate a successful outcome, we could apply for municipal resources to underwrite its fiscal future. When asked if the City would consider financing the security patrol immediately, Gretsas responded, "Why should any City Commissioner risk supporting a neighborhood program untested on the Galt Mile? It must have a successful track record to earn eligibility." He explained that when he evaluates any program or system in city government, he applies a simple rule, "If it works, it stays – if not, it gets replaced." The City Manager clarified, "If the plan is implemented and after a reasonable period the participating associations agree that it works, the City would have a basis to support the program." He recommended that we evaluate the program after it has been operating for a full year by asking each association if the patrol satisfied its expectations.

To avoid inflaming local fears and concerns in high-end neighborhoods like the Galt Ocean Mile and Lauderdale Beach, incidents are deliberately handled with discretion by FLPD. Ironically, this policy has deluded some residents into believing that they don't occur. Similarly, well-intentioned Association Board members and security personnel, seeking to allay security concerns of association building residents, follow FLPD's example and treat these incidents with extreme discretion, bordering on secrecy. As an unfortunate consequence, the number of officially reported crimes does not accurately reflect the area's level of criminal activity. For decades, the beachfront area from the Palms Condominium and the Ireland's Inn north to the Fort Lauderdale City line near the McDonald's on A1A actually experienced from 6 to 12 "incidents" every week. Despite FLPD's best efforts, embarrassing information is regularly leaked to the media, creating a skewed impression that the target association is a security risk. Since the patrol officers are active FLPD, participating associations and their residents that are victimized can freely file police reports without risking public embarrassment or exposure to any threatened "retribution" – if they so choose.

At a June 10th Advisory Board kickoff event in the Galt Ocean Club, Fort Lauderdale Chief of Police Bruce Roberts applauded the Galt Mile Community Association for establishing a neighborhood security patrol. Reinforcing the sentiments previously expressed by FLPD officers Robitaille, Negrey and Kiley, he agreed that staffing the patrol with active FLPD personnel should significantly heighten its effectiveness. The Chief also complimented the participating associations for seeking to proactively protect their residents against the type of neighborhood crimes that ordinarily slip between the cracks.

Defining the patrol's jurisdiction, Captain Todd Peney said, "The total patrol area extends from the lower North Beach hotels and condos, includes the Lauderdale Beach single family residences and penetrates the Galt Mile beachfront Associations north to Galt Towers. Your officers will patrol the beach and the local streets." Captain Peney added, "We've just

Continued on page 8

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Keechl...Continued

Of the 6 Associations still reliant on their outfall pipes last year, Fountainhead has already installed cooling towers, relieving them of further dependence on their outfall pipe. Plaza East representative Ismet Baker told the Commissioner that his association plans to install cooling towers on their roof to ensure operational continuity of their Air Conditioning once their beach is enlarged. Ocean Club, Plaza South, Ocean Summit and Edgewater Arms are in varying stages of researching functional replacement of their outfall structures. Since it could take almost a year from initial investigation to final installation of various replacement alternatives, the sand-search delays will give those associations adequate time to get the job done.

When Andy Surdival of Plaza South asked Higgins last year about the fate of the existing outfall pipes when Segment II actually begins, he responded, "The County would have to remove them prior to installing the sand." Since the existing pipes all extend past the mean high water line into State-controlled jurisdiction, their independent removal would ordinarily require associations to negotiate a mind-numbing DEP permit process marked by extraordinarily expensive engineering costs and a complicated underwater demolition. Commissioner Keechl noted that the County's intention to remove the structures means that each of those associations will save \$hundreds of thousands.

The Commissioner then changed his focus, transitioning to another of his priority planks, fiscal responsibility. A longtime advocate of tax reform, he explained that Broward County was required to apply a 5% tax reduction to comply with the new tax law. While applauding the tax reform legislation passed with unanimous bi-partisan support, he expressed serious reservations about some of the other proposals knocking about the State Capitol, including the constitutional amendment on the January 29th ballot. If passed by the Florida electorate, property owners would be offered the opportunity to exchange their "Save our Homes" tax cap for a Homestead Exemption on steroids.

The additional tax benefits contingent on the amendment's passage would inure predominantly to property owners already enjoying Homestead protection. Commissioner Keechl explained that one of the primary motives for tax reform was to extend protection to non-homesteaded property owners and businesses, neither of which will be achieved by passage of the amendment. He remarked that most Broward citizens expressed a willingness to sacrifice certain services to help rescue the State from an impending recession. A sizable tax cut built around a formula that brought tax assessments into better balance was overwhelmingly prescribed by economists, bankers, realtors and property owners. In fact, the only organized opposition to this strategy came from some local government officials unwilling to relinquish control over their annual tax windfalls. Since the amendment's benefits are largely limited to some homesteaded properties with marginal relief for certain waterfront businesses, it does nothing to rebalance the tax burden. Instead of slowing the growing exodus of non-homesteaded property owners and businesses from the County and the State, it will likely inflame the culpable tax disparities.

Since the amendment treats school districts no differently than any local government, even its supporters concede that its implementation will loot educational funding of approximately \$3.5 billion. During the past decade, the monolithic cohesion that powered South Florida legislative delegations to dynastic regional achievements has splintered into a handful of loosely allied local partisan fiefdoms. The resulting political vacuum was quickly filled by North and Central Florida lawmakers whose rural inland agenda was largely intolerant of urban South Florida's problems. Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties have been systematically short-changed for educational resources. Budgetary adjustments to offset South Florida's higher cost-of-living impact on teachers' housing, educational materials,

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Keechl...Continued

Keechl also spoke to an obstacle first revealed by Higgins in his August update, the County's search for sand. The project documentation that formed the basis for the State permit designated the waters off Deerfield Beach as "Segment I", wherein the project's sand "borrow sites" were all located. Higgins said, "Borrow area No. 1, which has enough material with which to construct Segment II, now has a higher percentage of rock in it after removing sand for Segment III. We'll need to investigate that. We'll also look for additional sand offshore, but I'm not confident that we'll find any significant new deposits. Accordingly, we will also be looking for more remote sources of domestic sand (e.g. offshore central FL and in the Gulf of Mexico) and for non-domestic sand, with emphasis on Bahamian aragonite. When we find the sand we're going to use, if it's different from the sand we had proposed to use in our previous plans, we will have to do some re-engineering of the project and redo some of the permitting."

Commissioner Keechl said that Beach Administrator Higgins described another sand alternative, recycled glass sand. While conjuring a vision of walking across a gauntlet of broken beer bottles, the reality is actually quite reassuring. Glass is primarily silicon dioxide, which is also the main component of sand. It is technologically feasible to create glass grains of any size, shape and color, allowing for a blend aesthetically indistinguishable from and chemically compatible with Fort Lauderdale sand. Test plots have already been installed in the upper beach. The next phase of testing in the surf zone is expected sometime in 2007 - 2008.

While acknowledging that the additional delays wrought by the unanticipated sand hunt are understandably frustrating, the Commissioner remains optimistic, intimating that delays are to be expected for a project as extensive and complex as the multi-stage Broward County Beach Renourishment. Keechl confirmed Higgins' estimate that construction on Segment II wouldn't begin until fall of 2009.

Commissioner Keechl asked the members for input about a beach renourishment technology known as sand bypassing. He specifically voiced concern about its impending implementation at the Port Everglades inlet. In a nutshell, Sand bypassing is the act of capturing sand from the updrift side of a stabilized inlet and mechanically transporting the material to the beaches on the downdrift side of the inlet. Why? Sand ordinarily migrates south along the coastline until it arrives at certain inlets that interrupt the flow, creating "erosion hot spots" that evacuate at a heightened level. Installing erosion control structures (groins) designed to slow the sand loss postpones the need for future renourishments, saving tens to hundreds of \$millions.

The Commissioner said, "When I look down the beach, I would prefer not having my view spoiled by huge concrete construction elements and similar man-made structures." Upon bringing this objection to Higgins' attention, our Beach Administrator told the Commissioner that he would investigate the viability of installing devices that weren't visually disconcerting. He recently completed a feasibility analysis of bypassing at the Port that examined system limitations, installation constraints and a review of potential alternatives. Keechl expressed the hope that "they could find some way to incorporate the technology into an unblemished shoreline environment."

A project issue of particular importance to several Galt Mile Associations is the County's concern about their antiquated outfall pipes. Recognizing the significant part played by the Galt Mile Community Association in supporting the Broward Beach Project, last September Mr. Higgins met with the 6 member associations still dependent on these structures. Whether the pipes were used to evacuate A/C condensate or well discharge, he recommended that they commence investigating alternative technologies to replace their respective functions.

Over the years, many beachfront associations whose A/C depended on these outfall pipes upgraded to a more efficient, less expensive technology based on cooling towers. While several of their obsolete remnant outfall structures remain offshore, these Associations no longer need them.

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<p>11 4th Annual Ladybug Release Museum of Discovery & Science 12 p.m. & 3 p.m.</p> <p>Fantasy of Lights 5K Run Tradewinds Park 6 p.m. Info.: 954-978-1135</p> <p>Fall Home Design & Remodeling Show Broward Convention Center (Through 11/12) Info.: 954-765-5900</p>	<p>12 GMCA President's Meeting Soutpoint 7:30 p.m.</p> <p>The Radio City Christmas Spectacular starring the Rockettes, Broadway Broward Convention Center (Through 12/2) Tix.: 954-462-0222</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>Bonnie Raitt Hard Rock Live Tix.: 954-523-3309</p>	<p>15 GMCA Advisory Board Meeting Nick's Italian Restaurant 11 a.m.</p> <p>Broward County Fair Fort Lauderdale Stadium (Through 11/25) Tix.: 954-922-2224</p>	<p>16 21st Annual Riverwalk Blues & Music Festival (Through 11/18) Info.: 954-523-1776</p> <p>Jazz on the Square The Village Grille Commercial Blvd. & A1A 7 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092</p>	<p>17 Pizza Fusion - Kids Organics Class 10 a.m. Info.: 954-427-5353</p> <p>Holiday Fantasy of Lights Tradewinds Park (Through 1/1) Info.: 954-968-3885</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Vice Mayor Teel Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033</p>	<p>20 Ft. Lauderdale City Commission Meeting</p> <p>Moonlight Tour Fairchild Tropical Gardens 7 to 9 p.m. www.fairchildgarden.org</p>	<p>21 White Party Week BEGINS (Through 11/26) Venue Info www.whiteparty.org or 305-576-1234</p> 	<p>22</p> <p>Thanksgiving</p>	<p>23 Polar Paradise Weekend with 25 tons of real SNOW Museum of Discovery & Science (Through 11/25) Info.: www.mods.org/events/calendar.htm</p> <p>Jazz on the Square The Village Grille Commercial Blvd. & A1A 7 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092</p>	<p>24 8th Annual Downtown Delray Beach Thanksgiving Weekend Art Festival Pineapple Grove (off Atlantic) 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Info.: 954-472-3755</p>
<p>25</p>  <p>SUNDAY JAZZ BRUNCH On Riverwalk</p> <p>Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985</p> <p>Holiday Music at Fairchild Fairchild Tropical Gardens www.fairchildgarden.org</p>	<p>26</p> <p>GMCA President's Council Meeting Place To Be Announced 7:30 to 9 p.m.</p> <p>Vice Mayor Teel Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center 6 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5033</p>	<p>27</p> <p>Christmas on Las Olas Las Olas Blvd. Info.: 954-921-3404</p>	<p>28</p>	<p>29</p> <p>Kelly Clarkson Mizner Park Amphitheater Tix.: ticketmaster.com</p>	<p>30 DNA Barcodes: New technology for exploring and conserving the tropics Fairchild Tropical Gardens 12:10 p.m. www.fairchildgarden.org</p> <p>Jazz on the Square The Village Grille Commercial Blvd. & A1A 7 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 Ft. Lauderdale City Commission Meeting</p> <p>Erev of Chanukah</p> <p>L-B-T-S Christmas by the Sea Commercial Blvd & the Beach Info.: 954-776-1000</p> <p>Gay Life Travel Expo War Memorial Auditorium</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>6</p> <p>Tony Bennett Broward Center Tix.: 954-462-0222</p>	<p>7</p> <p>Jazz on the Square The Village Grille Commercial Blvd. & A1A 7 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092</p>	<p>8</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 Jethro Tull Hard Rock Live Tix.: 954-523-3309</p>	<p>14 Jazz on the Square The Village Grille Commercial Blvd. & A1A 7 p.m. Info.: 954-776-5092</p>	<p>15</p>

UPCOMING EVENTS IN OUR AREA

December 15
Cosi Fan Tutte, Florida Grand Opera
Broward Center
Tix.: 954-462-0222

December 15
Seminole Hard Rock Winterfest Boat Parade
Info.: 954-767-0686

December 21- 23
The Nutcracker, Miami City Ballet
Broward Center
Tix.: 954-462-0222

December 26 - January 15
72nd Annual College Swim Forum
Fort Lauderdale Aquatic Center
Tix.: 954-828-4580

December 29
MetroPCS Orange Bowl Basketball Classic
BankAtlantic Center, Sunrise
Tix.: 305-341-4700

December 29
Foreigner
Mizner Park Amphitheater
Tix.: ticketmaster.com

Las Olas Outdoor Gourmet Market
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Peney...Continued

been supplied with a new police vehicle at no cost to the Galt Mile members." GMCA director Ralph Hamaker from Coral Ridge Towers South asked the Captain if the patrol could be expanded to include the four Coral Ridge Towers coops and the northernmost GMCA Associations located in Lauderdale-by-the-Sea. The Captain explained that since the contiguous patrol area would be preserved, extending the patrol north to include the L-B-T-S associations only requires verifying the absence of any jurisdictional obstacles. Two factors impact patrolling the Coral Ridge Towers complex. The Captain said, "Although their separation from the beach area is an obstacle, the four buildings' proximity to one another is a security advantage. If you want, we can explore extending the patrol in the future." Captain Peney and several of the patrol's police participants explained that patrol officers would informally visit participating associations through the balance of June.

On Monday, October 1st, Captain Peney updated the Galt Mile Community Association Presidents Council at Plaza South. He described the progress made by the security patrol as it incorporated the new Galt Mile territory into its jurisdiction. Captain Peney also explained some of the neighborhood's changing security vulnerabilities and answered questions about the patrol's organization.

At the outset, when asked by Regency Tower President Dott Nicholson-Brown whether the patrol officers visited the participating associations in June, Captain Peney confirmed that they met mostly with available security employees. Since each association's security department is charged with contacting the patrol when necessary, the Captain wanted his officers to familiarize themselves with their personnel and the various Association layouts. He said that since this two-way process was designed to help edify both association and patrol personnel, it would continue.

A member asked how the patrol should be contacted. GMCA President Pio Ieraci explained that each participant was given a contact number that they were supposed to pass on to their security supervisor or manager. Another Association representative asked if the patrol was only for associations. Ieraci responded, "Absolutely not! The patrol is available to every resident of the participating associations." He continued, "Any resident facing an emergency should call security. If appropriate, security will contact the patrol." Ieraci clarified, "We recommended that security have the number because they are always available. While it is logical for on duty Security to be charged with contacting the patrol, each association will decide for itself who should make the call." Ieraci emphasized that the patrol should not be contacted capriciously. He explained, "If the patrol responded to a frivolous call placed by some resident with an irresponsible agenda, it could unnecessarily slow their response time to a real emergency. Since each association's security is likely to be familiar with their residents, they are better positioned than some 911 operator to ascertain whether the call is warranted. However, if there is any indication of a medical issue, 911 should be called immediately."

Captain Peney explained some of the law enforcement issues currently affecting the Galt Mile's crime rate. Several years ago, the City of Fort Lauderdale was one of five Broward County jurisdictions that passed a turtle-safe lighting ordinance. When every beachfront Galt Mile Association unexpectedly received a non-compliance violation notice earlier this year, the GMCA negotiated an arrangement that balanced the survival needs of sea turtles with the security needs of residents. In exchange for eliminating the most egregious lighting violations, Galt Mile Associations were permitted to maintain sufficient lighting to guarantee adequate safety and security. Unfortunately, since neither the city nor other beachfront associations followed our lead, the "Ocean Highway" was plunged into darkness a few months ago.

Southpoint Director Mike Katz expressed his support for darkening the beach areas to lower the sea turtle disorientation rates responsible for confused hatchlings marching to oblivion. GMCA V.P. Eric Berkowitz explained that the city intends to install special lighting that would illuminate the streets without adversely impacting the sea turtles. He asked, "Since the City knew that darkening the local streets would cripple police efforts, why didn't they install the alternative lighting before they pulled the plug?"

Captain Peney said, "Responding to a request from Florida Fish and Wildlife, the Florida Department of Transportation decided to turn off the beachside lighting along A1A before new turtle-safe lighting could be installed by the City." A post-meeting investigation revealed that Ann Broadwell of the Florida Department of Transportation local District 4 office zapped the beachfront street lights. She explained that since FDOT receives huge stipends from Washington, they had to yield to federal pressure to extinguish the coastal lighting. Closer scrutiny revealed that the federal guardians of "The Endangered Species Act" simply implemented precepts from a 2001 paper she authored for the "John Muir Institute for the Environment" that proposed new FDOT Lighting Standards for "Sea Turtle Lighting Zones." Whether caused by this "catch-22" tautology or poor communication, any responsibility for this questionable decision has been absorbed into a political black hole.

Continued on page 16

Keechl...Continued

repair costs, maintenance expenses and construction costs are repeatedly denied, skewing the formulaic distribution of budgeted educational funds and lottery allocations. As such, the educational baggage consequential to the amendment's passage will be disproportionately devastating to Broward schools. Since the legislature's record of low educational spending as compared to other states cannot be divorced from Florida's low graduation rate, it isn't unreasonable to question the credibility of Tallahassee legislators who address this threat to education with a promise to "fix it" during the next session.

Keechl also warned against some of the proposals that relied on an incremental State sales tax to fund local needs. He registered doubts about the Constitutional crazy quilt that would result from 67 individual county sales tax referendums dividing the State into "sales tax counties" and "property tax counties". The Commissioner admonished, "An incremental sales tax will also expose some businesses to double taxation."

Commissioner Keechl expressed pride in having found adequate savings to fund Broward's 5% statutory tax cut and a \$54 million budget deficit. He said, "A majority of the savings were achieved by freezing positions, cancelling projects for which the need was questionable and identifying areas where Broward fees were out of step with comparable jurisdictions." For example, since Broward bus fares were frozen for ten years, it was reasonable to increase them to the level of fares charged by neighboring counties. In describing Broward's lagging fare structure, he referred to the Farebox Recovery - the amount of revenue that a transit agency receives from passenger fares to help finance operating costs. Broward's recovery rate of 24% is the lowest in South Florida.

To put the County Commission's budgetary achievement into perspective, Keechl reminded Advisory Board members that the Commission only exercises control over roughly half of the revenues in the County's operating budget. He said, "Tax revenues allocated to elected County officials such as the Broward County Sheriff, the Clerk of Courts, the Public Defender, the Property Appraiser, the Broward State Attorney, our Legislative Delegation and the Supervisor of Elections are shielded from any Commission cost-cutting. These Constitutional Officers decide for themselves whether they will relieve or worsen the deficit."

Commissioner Keechl also disparaged the disinformation campaign waged by some local officials seeking to preserve an unimpeded access to property tax windfalls fueled by the overheated real estate market. Umbrella organizations for local government officials such as the Florida Association of Counties (FAC) actively instructed their members in the use of fear tactics aimed at swaying public opinion against tax reform. Characterizing their tactics as "despicable", Governor Charlie Crist pledged, "Not one firefighter will be let off, not one police officer; and shame on the local governments who put that fear in you." Commissioner Keechl confirmed that, "Broward County residents will suffer none of the cutbacks to critical police or fire services that were threatened by tax reform opponents."

The Commissioner acknowledged finding some allies on the Commission who were instrumental in delivering the required savings without sacrificing any priority services. He credited Broward County Mayor Josephus Eggleston, Jr. and Commissioner John E. Rodstrom Jr. with "staying the course and making the tough decisions." In March, virtually every County Commissioner responded to the public outcry for tax reform by proclaiming their intention to cut costs. Keechl predicted that most would fall off the tax cut wagon as TRIM Season approached. When given the opportunity to actualize their new-found frugality, some of his peers targeted any commissioner who proposed cutting costs as a proponent of regressive policies. Not surprisingly, they nevertheless took credit for balancing the budget. Although he refused to identify some of his fellow commissioners as disingenuous, his instincts were on target.

Continued on page 19

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KEECHL BACKS BEACH & BUDGET

Article by Eric Berkowitz



On September 20th, Broward Commissioner Ken Keechl addressed a luncheon meeting of the Galt Mile Community Association Advisory Board. Of the myriad County issues he was confronted with during his first term, our District 4 representative on the Broward Board of County Commissioners has repeatedly demonstrated a consuming interest in two areas. Initially key planks in his campaign platform, Commissioner Keechl steadfastly supports sound fiscal and environmental policies.

Prior to running for his Commission seat, Keechl was committed to preserving Broward's remaining pockets of green space. During the 14 years he served as an Assistant City Attorney in Plantation, Keechl's astute management of land use cases prevented developers from gobbling up that city's dwindling municipal green space. In fact, one of the issues grounding his race for the 4th District commission seat centered on a developer's plan to build 61 homes on the 18-hole American Golfers Club. By focusing the disorganized local opposition on what he described as an inequitable sacrifice of an important local asset, Keechl thwarted the project. Adding perspective to his motives, Keechl clarified that while he advocates growth, development must be accompanied by proportional public services, adequate traffic accommodation and environmental balance.

Commissioner Keechl's support for the Broward Beach Protection Project meshed comfortably with this environmental advocacy. Once elected, he familiarized himself with the issues surrounding Broward's effort to reclaim the 21 miles of County coastline considered "critically eroded" by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP). He told the Advisory Board members, "Restoring the beach benefits every Broward resident. Whether you consider tourism our first or second largest local industry, it is clearly dependent on a healthy beach."

At the April, 2007 Advisory Board meeting, members requested that the Commissioner investigate rumored fiscal and political threats to the project. Federal legislation unfavorable to beach renourishment projects and an Administration proclivity to fund military shortfalls with resources allocated to environmental infrastructure cast a shadow on the project's future. In Tallahassee, legislators fighting for budget dollars attempted to redirect the project's dedicated State funds to fuel other agendas. Commissioner Keechl agreed to verify whether or not these alleged obstacles warranted concern. He would request newly elected Congressman Ron Klein's assistance with federal issues, ask District 4 Broward Commission predecessor and former Florida Senate President Jim Scott to look into adverse rumblings in the State Capitol and ask Broward Beach Administrator Stephen Higgins for his unique perspective.

Having since put in the required legwork, the Commissioner painted a positive outlook for the project's prospects. He confirmed that the project financing was intact. Federal and State allocations, while disconcertingly dilatory, were slowly rolling in. This was previously confirmed by Mr. Higgins in August, following receipt of a \$2.8 million reimbursement from the US Army Corps of Engineers for the federal share of preconstruction engineering and design costs for Segment III (the completed South Broward Beach Renourishment-including Hallandale, Hollywood and Dania beaches.)

The Commissioner reminded attendees that the 18-month monitoring period implemented to gather data useful for facilitating the Segment II (the upcoming North Broward beach Rehabilitation-Ft. Lauderdale north to the Hillsboro Inlet) renourishment was completed in September, 2007. Following completion of the Segment III renourishment in March of 2006, monitors from Nova Southeast University Oceanographic Center and a coalition of outside engineers (Coastal Planning and Engineering, Inc. and Olsen Associates, Inc. - a joint venture of coastal engineering consulting firms) joined county scientists to begin examining the environmental effects of repairing the County's shoreline from the Dade County line to John U. Lloyd State Park. The data accrued by these biologists and engineers is being collated and forwarded to the State, where FDEP will prepare a report to the Governor and Cabinet detailing project impacts.



Galt Mile beach

Commissioner Keechl said that the reports appear positive. "I've spoken with Beach Project Administrator Steve Higgins and Jim Scott about the suspected threats to the beach project," said Keechl. "They've assured me that state and federal remuneration has already begun. The 18-month monitoring period is over and the observers seem satisfied. Aside from the usual operational and bureaucratic delays, no major obstacles are threatening to derail the rehabilitation of our beach." Summarizing his assessment of the fiscal and environmental status of the Beach Project, the Commissioner exclaimed, "It appears that there are no fatal flaws!"

Continued on page 9



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Bogdanoff...Continued

responsible proposal, our schools and students will receive more funding this year than they did last year, and K-12 per student education funding will increase by more than 5% over last year's funding. I also believe that it's not just how much you spend, but how you spend it.

Failure to reduce spending now simply grows our budget deficit in future years. Spending one time monies or raiding the state's reserves to pay for today's recurring expenses is a short term fix that is as fiscally irresponsible as someone paying a mortgage they can no longer afford with their credit card - it just postpones the inevitable and makes the situation worse.

Living within your means does not mean looking for other sources of revenues to extract from Floridians. Raising taxes, raiding the long-term savings safety net, or betting on gambling in an effort to keep government spending growing, is no way to strengthen Florida's economy for the future.

If Floridians have less to spend, then government must spend less too. Our children, families and seniors deserve a sustainable, responsible budget.

Please feel free to call me at (954) 762-3757 with any questions or concerns you may have, or I can always be reached by email: Ellyn.Bogdanoff@myfloridahouse.gov. **As always, thank you for the privilege of allowing me to serve as your State Representative in the Florida House.**

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Representative Elyn Bogdanoff's Oct Newsletter

**Following a paper thin victory during her third attempt to embark on a career in public service, District 91 Statehouse Representative Elyn Setnor Bogdanoff has risen through the legislative ranks with unprecedented expedience. Versatile networking skills, a relentless work ethic, a policy of eliciting feedback from opponents as well as supporters and a background rooted in strong legal and fiscal experience quickly attracted the attention of the House leadership and the Governor. Named Majority Whip by House Speaker Marco Rubio in her sophomore term, Elyn's expanded responsibilities include educating herself and her peers about virtually every important issue undertaken by the legislature. These duties were incremental to her active solicitation of input from constituents.*

*Her historical commitment fiscal responsibility provides the framework for her October Newsletter. She describes an effort to contain deficit spending based on soliciting agency proposals for budgetary cost-cutting. She asserts that living within our means is sustainable while spending one time monies or raiding the state's reserves to pay for today's recurring expenses will mortgage our fiscal future. Although painful, our Representative assures constituents that the belt tightening will not undermine adequate funding for healthcare or education. - [editor]**

October Budget Reductions

With the current economic challenges and Floridians having less money to spend, the state's tax revenues are not meeting projections.

We don't have a downturn in our state economy because government isn't spending enough. The problem is that people have less to spend because government is already taking more than they can afford. In order to maintain the state's balanced budget and remain fiscally responsible, state government agencies must do exactly what we have asked from local governments: **live within your means and don't spend more than Floridians can afford.**

That is why every state agency submitted a proposal to cut expenses by 10 percent and the Governor released his own plan to reduce state government spending by more than \$1 billion. The Florida Legislature also engaged in a meaningful analysis of government services and programs and as a result, has provided a thoughtful, targeted approach to reducing the state budget.



Members of both parties worked together to formulate plans to address the shortfalls. Each Council Chair consulted with their members regarding the proposed spending reductions:

Healthcare spending reductions were achieved by maximizing efficiency and avoiding direct service cuts to Floridians who depend on the state for medical services.

No matter how many times you hear it- it's just not true. **K-12 Education is not being cut.** Under our fiscally

Continued on page 15

Peney...Continued

They come out into the neighborhood to shop or get something to eat. If they see an opportunity, they will pounce." Since the "illicit activities" mentioned by Captain Peney, such as prostitution and drug dealing, are conducted 24/7 - the perpetrators are always an active threat to innocent residents who inadvertently draw their attention. It is not uncommon for some "bad guys" to walk or drive the local streets seeking an easy score. He said that residents should try to be aware of their surroundings and use common sense to adapt their behavior to their environment. It is no coincidence that many of the mugged, robbed and assaulted victims broadcast convincing evidence that they were inebriated or carried exposed valuables in a casual, inattentive manner.

Captain Peney described 3 local incidents (2 strong-arm robberies and one armed robbery) that recently took place within a few days. On September 10th, a Plaza East woman leaving the Winn Dixie at 10:45 PM was accosted on the way to her vehicle. A shirtless man threw her to the ground and escaped with her purse. On September 13th, three women who departed the Tiki Bar at 3 A.M. were walking along Galt Ocean Drive when they were approached by 2 men who demanded their purses. In the ensuing struggle, a victim who refused to release her purse tripped and was dragged by one of the perpetrators. They ultimately forced two of the purses loose and escaped. The third incident took place on September 18th. Police followed a car suspected of involvement in a previous local incident to 29th Street and A1A when they were flagged down by a pedestrian claiming to have been the victim of an armed robbery. His description of the perpetrators matched some suspects surveilled earlier. After arranging a felony stop, the suspects were identified as the perpetrators, the stolen goods were recovered and the defendants were taken into custody at the Deauville Hostel & Crewhouse (Formerly the Deauville Inn) at 2916 N. Ocean Boulevard.

Captain Peney said that he was contacted by several neighbors of the women accosted on Galt Ocean Drive. They evidently sent angry emails mischaracterizing the incident. The emails contended that the police took 15 minutes before arriving at the scene. Captain Peney stated that he was at the patrol headquarters when the call came in. He jumped into his squad car and arrived at the described location about 90 seconds later. He immediately established a perimeter and contacted the detectives and the K-9 patrol - two additional police units. Within ten minutes, the arriving detectives started interviewing the victims and K-9 established the likelihood of an unreported vehicle being used in conjunction with the escape.

Representatives of the victim's Association simultaneously sent similar emails to the Galt Mile Community Association repeating their inquiry about the patrol's response to the emergency call and requesting that GMCA investigate the incident. They also asked why a vacant police vehicle is parked in front of one of the buildings. GMCA officials met with the Association representatives after interviewing the patrol participants and collecting the police reports and the activity records. One association representative surmised that the victims were apparently under the impression that the detectives who took their statements were the first responders. They were, in fact, the second of three units that converged on the scene. Inasmuch, the relatively sizable police response was a direct result of Captain Peney's request for the additional investigative units while constructing a perimeter. Times documented in the call records are consistent with the police report. After reviewing all the relevant data, the Association representatives acknowledged that the actual police response was worthy of commendation - not criticism. Since the Association officials thought that some of the data uncovered during the investigation might needlessly embarrass the victims, it was determined that the names of the victims and the Association be withheld.

After responding to questions about other local law enforcement issues, Captain Peney emphasized the importance of getting the facts straight before commenting on an incident. He said, "If anyone is concerned about something they saw or heard, they should notify the neighborhood association and request that they look into it. If we discover a deficiency in the patrol, we will correct it. Very often, however, anecdotal evidence is inaccurate and incomplete. The few minutes it takes to verify some story is time well spent and could save you some unnecessary future embarrassment." When confronted with the violation of a friend or neighbor, every member could easily empathize with the initial feelings of helplessness that quickly turn into anger, fomenting the need to lash out. To everyone's credit, it was unanimously agreed that future incidents would first be thoroughly investigated before critical allegations are leveled.

Continued on page 18

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Commissioner Christine Teel Autumn Newsletter

Drive. This jewel in the park was constructed almost 50 years ago, and like many similar structures, has outlived its life expectancy. Many people have inquired about the fountain, wondering why the city has not repaired it. City staff has examined the structure and in addition to contacting local experts, staff has communicated with a company in Boston that is experienced in the restoration of fountains from this period. They, along with city staff, feel that replacement rather than restoration is the solution to the problem.

This project was presented to the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) committee and I'm delighted to inform you that they have approved the funds to replace the fountain. This project is currently scheduled for the 2008-2009 fiscal year. Assuming that the funds won't be needed for any emergency projects that impact the health, safety and welfare of the residents of Fort Lauderdale, we can look forward to seeing this project underway as scheduled.

The Jack Kaye Park, for those of you not familiar with it, was dedicated to Jack Kaye in 1998. His wife Harriet passed away on March 27, 2007, and the park will be rededicated on January 26, 2008 as the Jack and Harriet Kaye Park, as a memorial for their tireless community service in Coral Ridge, where they resided, and throughout Fort Lauderdale.

Harriet Kaye left her estate to the Freedoms Foundation of Broward County, where she served as president for six terms. Jack and Harriet were actively involved with the Freedoms Foundation for many decades. Located in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, the Foundation hosts four-day conferences and historical tours for students from across the country. All costs are covered by private donations. The Foundation's mission is to "teach Americans about America." Harriet Kaye's generosity will send 100 students to the Valley Forge campus in 2008, and will allow students from Broward County to share this experience for years to come.

Jack and Harriet Kaye Park is adjacent to George English Park on Bayveiw Drive and Sunrise Boulevard. Since the construction is about eighteen months away, Parks & Recreation will be installing a bed of plants and flowers to beautify the fountain in the interim. I hope everyone has an opportunity to visit the park when you're in the neighborhood and enjoy this quiet respite in our flourishing city.

Please feel free to contact me with your questions or concerns. I can be reached at 954-828-5004 or via e-mail at cteel@fortlauderdale.gov.



Fountain in Jack Kaye Park

***In April, Commissioner Christine Teel's Newsletter explained why James D. Camp had a downtown street named in his honor. Her September Newsletter applauds the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) committee for having approved the funds to replace the fountain in Jack Kaye Park on Bayview Drive. Our City Commissioner took the opportunity to edify constituents about the park being officially renamed. Jack Kaye's late wife Harriet will join her husband as the park's namesake next year when the park is redesignated Jack and Harriet Kaye Park.**

Commissioner Teel explains why this honor is being accorded to Jack's recently deceased better half. An ardent civic contributor, Harriet served as the Broward County anchor of a national patriotic organization - Freedoms Foundation. In accord with the Foundation's mission to "teach Americans about America," an endowment she arranged will educate hundreds of Broward students about the historical legacy upon which our nation was built. READ ON... - editor*

From the Desk of Commissioner Christine Teel

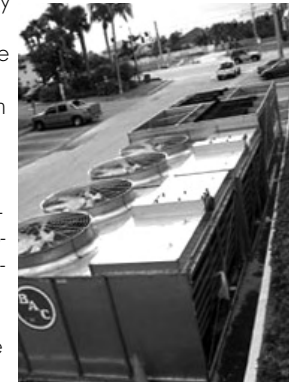
I hope everyone had a pleasant summer and that you had some time to relax and enjoy all that Fort Lauderdale has to offer. The City Commission is back to business after the August hiatus. It looks like it will be a busy year and I'm looking forward to working with my constituents on matters of importance to District I and the City of Fort Lauderdale.

I would like to inform and update everyone on the fountain in Jack Kaye Park on Bayview

Keechl...Continued

Commissioner Keechl focused on one issue that left him scratching his head. For some inexplicable reason, the County Commissioners voted to cut positions in child support enforcement, an area already devastated by vacancies. When parents fail to support their children, the responsibility falls to local government. Your taxes pay for the unfunded healthcare, child care, educational needs, etc. Enforcing child support collection is not only the best way to protect the child's access to necessary resources; it is one of the most morally justifiable actions that our County takes on behalf of children.

Trying to justify the 5-4 vote to thwart child support enforcement, several commissioners claimed that child support is rife with abuse, contending that a woman making \$30 K annually isn't entitled to assistance collecting legal child support. Keechl responded that it was easy enough to find out whether the claimed abuse was real. He said, "I proposed that participants be means-tested." Strangely enough, the same commission majority declined. Since the putative savings are negligible and the forfeited returns are sizable, this action will likely wind up costing County taxpayers a bundle. However, if it protects besieged fathers from having their bowling money expropriated for schoolbooks by their ungrateful 7-year olds - perhaps the 5 anti-child support commissioners are actually civil rights heroes. It is unlikely that this will be the last time a suspicious County agenda falls through the cracks. •



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