

GALT MILE NEWS

OCTOBER 2012

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE GMCA

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COUNTY COMMISSIONER CHIP LaMARCA



BROWARD PARKS...& PUTTING FOOD ON THE TABLE

- Aviation Department, 100 Aviation Blvd., Fort Lauderdale
- Child Care Licensing & Enforcement, 2995 N. Dixie Highway, Fort Lauderdale

If you missed an opportunity to soften life for some Broward families by clearing your shelves this year, our voice on the County Board points out that it's not too late. Accompany our County Commissioner on his autumn constitutional. Read LaMarca's October 2012 update below... "My Favorite Time of the Year". - [editor]

My Favorite Time of the Year

By: County Commissioner Chip LaMarca

This is my favorite time of the year. The kids are back to school and we are beginning to settle into our post-summer routines. Football season is starting again. We can almost open our windows and enjoy the drop in temperature to join with the ocean breezes. Summer was wonderful and we all had time to rest and recharge, but this is really my favorite time of the year. While we in South Florida tend not to see the seasons changing like up north, we experience it nonetheless.

With cooler temperatures I encourage you to take advantage of the wonderful natural activities we have here in Broward County-from "Sawgrass to Seagrass". We are fortunate enough to have many wonderful parks in the county, and each offers something different. We all know of and enjoy our greatest natural resource here in South Florida - our beaches, but we tend to overlook our Broward County Parks System.

There is something for everyone at our parks. We have nature centers, water parks and nature preserves. You will find parks with riding horses, parks with airboat rides and alligator wrestling, target ranges, mountain biking, hang-gliding and anything you could ever imagine. For more information on our Broward County Parks please visit their website www.broward.org/parks.

As I mentioned earlier this is my favorite time of year, preparing for the holidays and spending time with family and friends. Many of us have a great deal to be thankful for and many of us are fortunate to be able to enjoy some of luxuries of the holiday season. Yet we sometimes overlook that there are people struggling to provide for their families or even themselves right here in our beautiful county. Would you believe me if I said that there are more than 1 million people in South Florida who rely on our local food banks for food? Well, I am here to tell you that number is shockingly true, and many of those people are children.

Unfortunately, with the demand far greater than the supply or local food banks are faced with a severe problem of empty shelves. In some cases food does not even make it onto the food bank shelves before it is given to those who need it. Broward County is committed to assisting all of our local food banks, and has routinely sponsored food collection drives over the years. In 2009, the county decided that a yearlong food drive would be necessary to meet the incredible increase in demand caused by the economic downturn. As a result, the "365 Food Drive" was launched. All non-perishable food items, such as canned meat, vegetables and fruit, peanut butter, jelly or jam, soups, pasta and toiletries are welcome at any time. Since the launching of the program Broward county has donated 23,527 pounds of food. Broward County works with a great organization called "Feeding South Florida", which was formerly called the Daily Bread Food Bank.

At this time when we give thanks for all that we are fortunate to have, or to provide for our families, I ask you to please consider those who may not be so fortunate. If you know of someone or a family in need reach out to them, search for your nearest food bank, or consider giving to the 365 Food Drive. Also, if you are in the grocery store and see a buy one, get one free sale, consider donating that second item.

Collection boxes are available at the Broward County Main Library and all county branch libraries, as well as the following locations:

- North Regional County Courthouse, 1600 West Hillsboro Blvd., Deerfield Beach
- Water and Wastewater Services, 2555 West Copans Road, Pompano Beach

Thank you in advance for your consideration in helping our neighbors in need.

If there is anything that we can do to assist you, please do not hesitate to contact our office at 954.357.7004 or by email at clamarca@broward.org. You can also stay updated by viewing our website www.broward.org/commission/district4, as well as signup to receive email updates from us. Remember that we have a District Office right in the neighborhood at Pompano Beach City Hall.

As always, it is an honor to serve you.

Chip LaMarca
County Commissioner, District 4

**In his October 2012 newsletter, as Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca takes us on an autumn stroll through our strikingly opulent beaches and parks, he turns our attention to a local reflection of a national disgrace. It boggles the mind that one sixth of the families in the greatest country on the planet suffer from chronic hunger. When people all over the world close their eyes and dream of paradise, most of them envision South Florida. Of the nearly 49 million Americans (32.6 million adults and 16.2 million children) that struggle with hunger, 938,000 live within spitting distance.*

Galt Mile residents have participated in annual food drives for years, delivering tons of desperately needed sustenance to hungry Broward families. Each year, enthusiastic associations help fill the coffers of the Cooperative Feeding Program (AKA LifeNet4Families). To help those living on the edge, our neighbors rifled through their kitchens; bagged, canned, and powdered foodstuffs, baby food, diapers of all sizes, travel-sized hygiene supplies, while topping off their association's collection bag with a healthy layer of cash and checks. Following an initial 5K run and a month of low-key competition, the neighborhood would settle into a well-deserved warm glow.

Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca's October newsletter should resonate with members of every Galt Mile association. Broward County's 365 Food Drive, a perpetual food distribution collaboration with "Feeding South Florida" that anchors LaMarca's autumn update, collected more than 6,775 pounds of food since January. The 2,143 pounds netted in June and July was largely donated by the Cooperative Feeding Program/LifeNet4Families. In addition to the Broward County Main Library (and all branch libraries) and the two District 4 locations mentioned by LaMarca, Collection Boxes are available at:

- Downtown Governmental Center, 115 S. Andrews Ave., Fort Lauderdale
- Government Center West, 1 N. University Drive, Plantation
- Main Courthouse, 201 S.E. Sixth St., Fort Lauderdale
- South Regional County Courthouse, 3550 Hollywood Blvd., Hollywood
- West Regional County Courthouse, 100 N. Pine Island Road, Plantation
- Port Everglades, 1950 Eller Drive, Fort Lauderdale

NEW PLAN TO WIPE OUT



For more than a decade, the Galt Mile Community Association (GMCA) fumbled enforcement of a City promise to maintain in a “Disney-like manner” the self-funded landscape and hardscape assets included in the 1993 Galt Mile Improvement Project. In late 2008, the GMCA Advisory Board unanimously appointed José “Chepo” Vega to perform an ongoing review of these features along Galt Ocean Drive and the surrounding area. The Commodore resident provided two critical ingredients previously absent in attempts to reverse the frustrating municipal neglect - a passionate commitment to unwavering oversight and the dogged pursuit of governmental officials and bureaucrats charged with neighborhood maintenance.

Under his supervision, Parks Department crews trimmed and re-strapped trees that were inadequately supported or cast atilt from high winds, repaired cracked or destabilized sections of the pink aggregate sidewalks that line the block, leveled dozens of street and sidewalk tripping hazards, upgraded receptacles for regular and recyclable trash, replaced rusting multi-color hulks with neatly aligned newsletter boxes, replanted and meticulously maintained sidewalk beds, repainted faded traffic lines, handicap markings, stop lines and delivered dozens of other aesthetic and structural enhancements. An unstoppable gadfly, bureaucratic justifications for any adulterated section of our neighborhood bounced off Chepo. In time, city crews and their supervisors developed a healthy respect for his input. In the vast majority of cases, Chepo’s persistence bore fruit. Throughout his tenure as the neighborhood association’s liaison for block maintenance, one obstacle has proven irresolvable... a local incarnation of a nationwide street blight he dubbed “Utility Graffiti.”

Often misconstrued by angry residents as a form of legal vandalism, the cryptic multicolored ciphers splattered across sidewalks, streets, crosswalks and parking fields on both public and private property aren’t random insults to the neighborhood’s aesthetic integrity. They are the functional by-product of a company parented by the State Legislature, Sunshine State One-Call of Florida, Inc. (AKA One-Call, SSO-COF or its newest moniker - Sunshine 811). While the graffiti-style marks have fueled nationwide outcries by neighborhood activists (One-Call corporations proliferate across the country), local governments and state lawmakers, these unavoidable irritants have become the “devil in the details” of this otherwise indispensable service.

When contractors anticipate tearing up the street, sidewalk, parking field, etc. they must first locate any buried utility lines to avoid disturbing or damaging electrical wiring, telephone lines, fiber optic cable, catch basins, gas lines, transformers, water lines, drainage and sewer conduit and other interred utility components. Prior to commencing excavation, the location of every utility element must be identified and marked with different color marking materials to distinguish tele-

phone, gas, water, electric, etc. Armed with a map of the buried wires, cables, lines, pipes, ducts and conduits, the contractors can excavate without wreaking havoc on local services. Here’s how it works:

The One-Call Dogma

When informed of a proposed excavation anywhere in the State, One-Call notifies member operators with underground facilities in the area of the planned excavation or demolition. Within two business days (except when emergency repairs are indicated), personnel using a pantheon of expensive electronic detection equipment (Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR), GPS locators, etc.) deploy an 8-color palette standardized by the American Public Works Association (APWA) and scores of anagrammatic identifiers to mark the location of interred gas lines, pull boxes, water lines, electrical plexus, telephone linkages, cable conduits and other buried utility components. A similarly marked hand-held map is delivered to the excavator, who can then proceed without disrupting local utility services.

Since this information is valid for a 30-day period, if the marking medium fails to withstand the foot traffic, rain, wind or other erosive elements to which the marked surface is ordinarily exposed, the excavator is required to cease demolition and notify One-Call of the necessity to remark. While the excavator is liable for damages resulting from misinterpretation of degraded or adulterated markings, if the site is fully eroded or functionally unmarked, One-Call risks sharing that liability. To avoid the dilemma, members are tempted to use marking materials chemically concocted to withstand a nuclear winter.

For projects that extend beyond one month, they are supposed to return each subsequent month to map the next 30 days of planned excavation. While this strategy effectively limits the offensive markings a neighborhood must tolerate at any given time, it doubles the mapping delays for a two month project and burdens a year-long project with twelve such postponements. To save mapping time - and costs - operators will flood the street with months of markings while executing a boilerplate apology alleging some unfortunate administrative miscue.

While these circumstances explain the predisposition to use improper marking materials or deliberately overmark a job site, they pale when compared to a far greater source of abuse - competitive bidding. When 5 or 6 contractors bid on a project, to more accurately estimate the costs of avoiding damage to interred equipment, each will place a separate “locate” request with One-Call.

Continued on page 5

Unless one call is somehow made aware of the mercenary reasons for these multiply duplicated "locate" requests, it is forced to finance 5 or 6 marking visits to the same site (with our tax dollars), not to protect buried service lines but to help contractors tailor their bids. When these abuses are occasionally caught by an observant dispatcher or supervisor, the vendors are correctly charged for the service.

In a perfect world, the markings are erased when the construction is complete. In reality, the markings ordinarily survive the attendant project by months – or years. When scores of local governments across Florida passed a wide variety of ordinances requiring that operators apply for a permit, pre-mark the target area, use certain low impact paints or remove the marks when the job was finished, the legislature responded in 2010 by countermanding these local laws and forbidding future local interference with One-Call operations. Lawmakers unilaterally agreed that the uninterrupted delivery of critical resources like water, gas, electricity and communication services outweigh local concerns about a jurisdiction's marred appearance.

When the legislature passed the Underground Facility Damage Prevention and Safety Act, Chapter 556, F.S. in 1993, it failed to provide for removal of the markings required by the legislation. In 2010, Florida Senator Michael Bennett filed Senate Bill 982 to cure that enigmatic omission. Unfortunately, his bill was neutered during an eleventh hour swap for a committee substitute. Instead of requiring facility operators to remove whatever substance they use to mark a designated area, SB 982 encouraged One-Call to educate member operators about the benefits of low-impact marking practices, reducing the bill from a reasonable remedy to a toothless shadow. It additionally prohibited local government from "adopting any conflicting laws."

GMCA, 2 Commissioners and One-Call Set the Table

It also left the bureaucrats who operate the program in the crosshairs of those on both sides of this controversy. Last year, the Galt Mile Advisory Board enlisted Commissioner Bruce Roberts to broker a meeting with Sunshine State One-Call officials and representatives from the local utilities that participate in the program (operators). Following the March 17, 2011 Advisory Board meeting, Galt Mile Officials met with Damage Presentation Manager Cheryl Ritter and South Florida Damage Prevention Liaison Sergio J. Clavijo of Sunshine State One-Call and representatives from AT&T, FP&L, TECO Gas, Comcast and USIC (United States Infrastructure Corporation - a well-reputed marking contractor engaged by Florida utilities without in-house marking capabilities).

Early in the meeting, it became evident that Clavijo and Ritter survive in a state of quiet desperation. The same people who bitterly complain about the street markings would spit blood if their telephone lines were clipped by some non-compliant landscaping contractor or more to the point, if their lives were endangered by an inadvertently ruptured gas line. Consequently, One-Call also takes heat for the actions of member-operators who inflame neighbor-



hood tensions by overmarking excavation sites and fail to remove markings for long-completed projects. During the 19 years spent in futile anticipation of a legislative rescue, all parties to the One-Call system were forced to muddle through without an integral part of their operational playbook.

From their discussion with One-Call and area utility representatives, GMCA officials learned that one obstacle to timely removal of utility markings is a communication lapse at the final stage of the process. Since there is no financial or statutory incentive to remove the markings, utilities have historically assigned a low priority to following up on a project's progress. Similarly, once excavators finish digging their holes, they collect their fees and hit the wind. Because One-Call doesn't have the resources to aggressively monitor the status of excavations statewide, these projects understandably fall through the cracks.

A second systemic stumbling block is the absence of reliable enforcement. Within months of One-Call's 1993 enactment, the corporation's befuddled Board Secretary Larry Lesnett asked Florida Attorney General Bob Butterworth "What enforcement procedures may be used to assure compliance with Chapter 556, Florida Statutes?" After prefacing his Advisory Legal Opinion (AGO 95-04) with "I have not found, nor have you directed my attention to, any legislatively authorized administrative means to enforce compliance with the act," Butterworth concluded "Due to the lack of clearly defined procedures available to enforce compliance with Chapter 556, Florida Statutes, this matter may be appropriate for legislative consideration." In short, Butterworth took 21 paragraphs to say "None."

One-Call is only equipped to address blatant marking infractions with education, a fact that's emboldened chronic violators. To address what the Statute describes as a "non-criminal infraction", a "citation issued by any local or state law enforcement officer, government code inspector, or code enforcement officer" carries a maximum penalty of \$500 (increased from \$250 in the 2010 legislation). While little more than a slap on the wrist to a utility, program supporters thought it adequate for the purpose it was enacted. They place the problem elsewhere. Since the local law enforcement officials empowered by the statute to cite violators understandably assign a low priority to this "noncriminal infraction", few incidents are investigated, and fewer citations issued.

Pleased with the tenure of the meeting and optimistically anticipating that additional progress would be achieved at future gatherings, the meeting was adjourned. At the April 4, 2011 Presidents Council meeting in Playa del Sol few weeks later, after describing some of One-Call's historical problems, Sergio Clavijo and Cheryl Ritter outlined the prospective initiatives being considered. Earlier in the day, they met with City Commissioner Bruce Roberts and Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca at the Beach Community Center to discuss the bureaucratic mechanics of moving the project forward. Following One-Call's Playa del Sol presentation, Commissioner Roberts announced "If successful, the Galt Mile community will have established a prototype that will be duplicated in hundreds of Florida neighborhoods." Unfortunately, since no follow up meeting was convened, the advances established were never implemented, and eventually faded to oblivion.

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COMMISSIONER BRUCE ROBERTS

September 2012
Newsletter



"In his first message to constituents following the summer Commission hiatus, District 1 Commissioner Bruce Roberts serves up an eclectic buffet of events and initiatives. Along with a curiously sadistic methodology for encouraging the removal of illegal signs by torturing scofflaws with "robocalls" and a new venue for participating in the visioning process, he outlines an innovative Police Department tactic that utilizes Nuisance Abatement procedures to deter criminal activity. The Commissioner also describes a planned high speed rail connection between Orlando and Miami and a new technology installed along Broward thoroughfares to help relieve traffic plugs.

However, the Commissioner opens his newsletter with cryptic assurances that negotiations to implement an integrated Public Safety Dispatch System will not jeopardize our neighborhood, despite an impending litigation. If his presumption about your familiarity with "the ongoing dispute" is misplaced, here's how a county-wide effort to comply with a decade-old voter mandate degenerated into the political equivalent of "Monday Night Slammo!"

A mere decade after 80% of Broward's voters mandated a countywide consolidation of emergency dispatch services in 2002, public officials from the county and its 31 municipalities finally acknowledged that doing so would shave precious minutes from the response time to emergencies where the difference between life and death is often measured in seconds. It would also eliminate the delays and dropped calls that result from interstation transfers, enhance responder safety, evolve a uniform set of performance metrics, enable all Broward residents to equally benefit from ever-improving technology and guarantee county-wide closest unit response.

The plan seeks to replace 11 (reduced from 12 when Deerfield Beach merged operations with BSO) mostly flimsy "Public Safety Access points" (i.e. dispatch centers or PSAPs) with three "category-5 hardened", demographically centralized "flee to" sites; each fitted with sufficient communication capabilities, multiple power sources and data back-ups to either share the load or unilaterally manage the entire county. A 2010 Feasibility Analysis anticipates annual savings of roughly \$7.7 million from a 20% reduction in telecommunications the

sonnel, elimination of administrative and support redundancies and the reduced property maintenance cost of servicing 3 integrated dispatch sites instead of 11.

Co-chaired by County Commissioner Lois Wexler and Sunrise Mayor Mike Ryan, a Consolidation Committee charged last November with assessing obstacles and researching options included Roberts, Broward Commissioner Chip LaMarca, Broward Sheriff Al Lamberti, city managers, police and fire chiefs, mayors, city commissioners and Dr. Nabil El Sanadi, chief medical director for BSO, Fort Lauderdale's EMS, and Fire-Rescue. In the subsequent four months, they held 24 meetings and spent more than 300 hours on information gathering, analysis and debate before releasing a March 1, 2012 Final Report that was quickly approved by the Broward Commission.

In the next stage of the process, city managers from participating municipalities, County Administrator Bertha Henry, Sheriff Lamberti, a representative from the Broward County Police Chiefs Association and another from the Broward County Fire Chiefs Association coalesced into The Broward County Consolidation Implementation Advisory Board (BCCIAB), tasked with charting a roadmap to an independent county-wide response system. They will submit a draft report to the Commission by November 15, 2012, and a final report by February 1, 2013.

The single greatest obstacle will be achieving agreement about who pays for what and how much. The Implementation Committee must unravel a Gordian Knot of ad hoc agreements, disparate pricing formulas, and a litany of sub-rosa cross subsidies before grinding out a final plan. This Rubik's Cube contains 7 self-funded municipal programs, 14 Cities that contract with the Broward Sheriff's Office (BSO) for dispatch services while the remaining jurisdictions use BSO "on the cuff", bleeding County taxpayers for their emergency dispatch costs. Last year, the County Commission allocated \$19 million to the BSO for dispatch services. In addition to servicing the County's unincorporated areas, BSO used Broward tax dollars to fund dispatch services in cities without service contracts. Among these municipal deadbeats are Davie, Lauderdale, Hallandale Beach, Miramar's police department (their fire department's dispatch is self-funded) and the opulent towns of Sea Ranch Lakes and Hillsboro Beach.

As cities and towns were incorporated throughout Broward County, the Broward Sheriff's Office sought to bolster its shrinking jurisdiction by marketing a Chinese Menu of Public Safety services. While smaller communities could benefit from contracting for comprehensive dispatch services, other cities could opt to only augment their Police or Fire-Rescue with BSO dispatch. Over the years, the County also bartered services with various jurisdictions, like a 1991 arrangement with Hallandale Beach to provide dispatch services in exchange for certain radio frequencies.

When the effects of these slippery funding practices and pricing policies came to light, a revelation that homeowners in some jurisdictions are double-taxed to provide others with a free ride ignited a political dirty bomb. For instance, while taxpayers in Fort Lauderdale funded their contracted dispatch services in their city taxes, their county taxes were used to absorb the cost of BSO dispatch services for cities like Pompano. This controversial practice quietly proliferates throughout the county. Another misguided BSO financial decision enabled Lauderdale Lakes to run up a nearly \$9 million deficit on its contract for services, forcing every Broward taxpayer to subsidize that City's fiscal mismanagement. If this highly combustible mixture of potent disparities wasn't carefully managed and defused, it would eviscerate any chance of inducing 31 municipal governments to endorse the County plan.

Notwithstanding any common long-term objective, those municipalities whose taxpayers are paying for their services and incrementally subsidizing services for neighboring cities are insisting that the County pick up the tab for their dispatch services as well. Plantation has demanded reimbursement of their contract payments to BSO. On July 16, Fort Lauderdale entered into a "conflict and resolution" period with Broward County, a legal precursor to litigation. Two weeks later, Pembroke Pines threatened to follow Fort Lauderdale's lead.

While County Administrator Bertha Henry has called these actions "premature" because a process to create an equitable funding formula is already underway, protesting cities are unwilling to endure these inequities through 2014, the new system's projected implementation date. Municipalities where taxpayers are taking a double hit want the County to fund dispatch services until the negotiations produce an equitable funding solution.

Fort Lauderdale also has a more specific beef with the County. The City is embroiled in a conflict over whether the City or the County is responsible for paying the 75 BSO staffers at the City's Police Department call center on Broward Boulevard. Since last October, City and County negotiators have each grudgingly contributed to "gap" funding in order to keep the center operational. At the August 22nd "Conflict and Resolution" meeting, when the County agreed to chip in \$2.3 million toward the \$6.3 million shortfall (\$1.5 million less than the \$3.8 million requested by City Manager Lee Feldman), Feldman balked.

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GMCA & One-Call - Round Two

Throughout the next year, complaints stemming from rampant marking abuses along the Galt Mile continued unabated. Finally, on May 17, 2012, the Advisory Board asked Commissioner Roberts to tackle three hot potatoes, a city campaign to close pre-historic building permits, sea turtle survival issues and the explosive proliferation of utility markings throughout the neighborhood. At the June 4, 2012 Presidents Council meeting, Roberts promised to broker the revival of all three derailed processes. His first effort was realized on July 24th, when an impressive roster of One-Call participants came together at City Hall.

Building on the prior year's list of players, Roberts invited One-Call's Damage Prevention Manager Cheryl Ritter and Liaison Sergio J. Clavijo, who serve as buffers between hyperactive excavators, well-meaning albeit cynical utility representatives, bloodthirsty community ideologues and local public officials concerned with politically surviving this two-decade dogma. Representatives from FP&L included State Cable Locations Manager Joseph W Heatherly, Cable Locator (and troubleshooter) Mario Escalona and Cable Tech Angel Larramendi. AT&T sent Damage Prevention Manager Margaret Rodriguez. Speaking for TECO Peoples

Gas were Mylene Arza, Sergio Abreu Jr. (a TECO lobbyist) and M.J. Chamorro. Tomas Fernandez represented the United States Infrastructure Corporation (USIC), the locate contractor for AT&T, Comcast and FPL. Vice President of Subsurface Utility Engineering Greg Jeffries spoke for Craig A. Smith & Associates, another locate enterprise contracted by the Cities of Bal Harbour, Pembroke Park, Davie, Hollywood, Coconut Creek, Oakland Park and other municipalities in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach Counties. FDOT, which grinds out projects rife with abuse all over Florida, was represented by Sara Duffoo (Senior Project Engineer at Target Engineering Group, Inc.), who is also construction coordinator for the AIA resurfacing project and the project's information specialist Miranda Iglesias (Public Information Officer at The Corradino Group).

Joining Roberts was a panoply of City officials and staffers. Since Roberts' popular Commission Assistant Robbie Uptegrove was on vacation, Maxine Singh organized the meeting. City Manager Lee Feldman came with Assistant City Manager Susanne Torriente, Assistant to the Mayor Safeea Ali and Assistant City Attorney Carrie Sarver. Public Works Director Albert Carbon led a boatload of his staffers to the meeting, including Assistant Utilities Services Director Julie Leonard, Public Works Land Development Manager Dennis Girisgen, Public Works Distribution and Collection Division Chief Kris Kmon, Distribution and Collections Systems Manager Mark Darmanin, Distribution and Collection Supervisor Keith Hutchison, Customer Operations Manager Linda Gee. From Susanne Torriente's Sustainable Development family came Code Supervisor Skip Margerum, Detective Jorge Maura and Building Services Manager Terry Burgess.

Although the operators and members supporting this effort know more about the challenges plaguing Sunshine 811 than the lawmakers who shaped its statutory skeleton, until they could access adequate enforcement and a reliable local on-site vehicle for reporting violations, they would remain ill-equipped to mollify the statewide outcry by angry neighborhoods and their public officials. Two of the new project participants were about to change the playing field.

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Graffiti..Continued

Enter Feldman and McCoy

Among the large contingent of Fort Lauderdale officials and bureaucrats was FLPD Detective Eugene McCoy, a specialist in Environmental Crimes with extensive experience in citing One-Call marking violations. McCoy would fill the statutory requirement for a "local law enforcement official" to mete out citations on the Galt Mile. While serving as a wake-up call to scofflaws who'd grown confident that their infractions would continue to be ignored, the \$500 fine threatened by McCoy's citations would have a limited impact as a deterrent - especially when weighed against the \$500,000 statutory liability for inadequately marking the construction site or sacrificing the lucrative productivity boost realized by cutting corners.

City Manager Lee Feldman chimed in, announcing that he had a recommendation that would stiffen the program's limp enforcement deterrent. Feldman remarked, "I think that companies we hire to do jobs for the City should respect our streets and comply with One-Call regulations." As the room fell silent, Feldman continued, "If they are incapable of following these rules, I don't think we should invite them to bid on City jobs." Game, Set and Match! Sergio Clavijo's eyes lit up. Stigmatizing violations with a blackball wouldn't violate the statutory prohibition against local interference in One-Call policy while astronomically raising the table stakes for violators. Feldman said that he would propose this to the City Commission "when their meetings resumed after the summer hiatus." Although the immediate objective was to relieve the problem in the Galt Mile neighborhood, Feldman noted its relevance to every district, prospectively engendering support by the entire City Commission.

There was a broader downside to being locked out of City jobs. To function efficiently, City Managers maintain open communications with counterparts in jurisdictions across Florida and other States. In the vast majority of these jurisdictions, there is no shortage of contractors. A vendor whose reputation is adulterated by confirmed violations would feel the heat all over the State. With a viable enforcement option in the works, the parties adjourned the meeting. Recalling how the fruits of last year's efforts dissolved when the process was allowed to languish, participants agreed to meet again on August 6th, a few weeks later. At the next meeting, they would try to devise a methodology for identifying and correcting violations.

The Plan

Along with One-Call's Sergio Clavijo and the Galt Mile's Pio Ieraci, Eric Berkowitz and Chepo Vega, the guest list for the August 6th meeting was tailored to its newly narrowed objectives. Perceived as indispensable to a resolution was FP&L's Statewide Cable Locations wizard Joseph W. Heatherly and AT&T's Damage Prevention Manager Margaret Rodriguez, both of whom serve on One-Call's Board of Directors. Sergio also invited TECO Energy's Mylene Arza, Sub-surface Utility Engineering V.P. Greg Jeffries of Craig A. Smith & Associates and Tomas Fernandez from the United States Infrastructure Corporation (USIC), whose firm performs "locates" for utilities throughout Florida. After years on the front lines, they were tired of their respective utilities taking a "bad rap" for violations committed by others. For the City of Fort Lauderdale, in addition to some Public Works officials, City Manager Lee Feldman's office was represented by Stephanie M. Denham and FLPD's Gene McCoy would return to address residual enforcement issues.

That these markings persist long after the related construction is finished isn't lost on the local residents of neighborhoods blighted by marking violations. If a community representative could somehow confirm a project's completion and promptly notify the relevant operator, any improper markings could be expeditiously removed. Sergio admonished, "It is impossible to ascertain a project's status based solely on casual observation." For community representatives to accurately assess potential violations, they would have to undergo enough baseline training to interpret the markings. Several operators suggested that a community observer could also report incidents

Continued on page 9

where excavation was underway in the absence of any markings, which could threaten local residents with service disruptions for water, electricity, communications and more importantly, ignite gas escaping from an inadvertently damaged underground gas line. While Sergio volunteered to teach community representatives how to read the marking ciphers and report their observations, each of the operators agreed to equip the community representative with an emergency telephone contact useful for verifying the "legitimacy" of any marking. By the meeting's end, the coalition had pieced together a workable plan to beat back the marking abuse.

To help define the new process, a flow chart outlined by FP&L's "locate" impresario Joe Heatherly was applied to the following scenario. When a community observer identifies markings for a project that was either completed or suspiciously inactive for an extended period of time, after interpreting the ciphers, the appropriate operators will be notified at their emergency contact numbers. Using a camera phone, the observer would also send photos and the address of the suspected violation. After consulting with their proprietary database and One-Call, if the operators conclude that the markings aren't necessary, they will arrange for their removal, dispatch Detective McCoy to commence enforcement protocols, or both.

If no markings are apparent at an ongoing excavation, the observer would contact the emergency number for One-Call. If One-Call determined that the excavation area hadn't first been vetted for underground utility elements, Detective McCoy would be summoned to lower the boom. If McCoy's citations are confirmed as violations, culpable contractors and/or excavators would forgo future opportunities to participate in City projects. Since the impact of such a blackball could conceivably resonate across Florida and to jurisdictions in other States, these scofflaws would soon learn that the adverse repercussions of cutting corners outweigh any potential benefit - by far.

Learning the Lingo

After Feldman guided his blackball proposal through the City Commission and elicited the cooperation of initially recalcitrant FDOT officials, another meeting was convened on September 10th. Before the process could be implemented along the Galt Mile, meeting participants agreed that several GMCA representatives should be taught to effectively interpret the markings. Once trained, they would be equipped with confidential contact data for each utility. A core group of local volunteers agreed to learn the One-Call protocols at a meeting convened at Galt Ocean Club on October 11th.

If the new process successfully reduces violations along the Galt Mile, it will be applied throughout Fort Lauderdale. If the offending markings are abated across this larger jurisdiction, it will become a State template for the scores of neighborhoods that have repeatedly lodged futile complaints with One-Call and the local utilities. The first group of local observers agreed to help train those in other neighborhoods who follow in their footsteps. Not too shabby for a small beach neighborhood filled with sleepy retirees. More to come...•



Galt Mile Utility Graffiti

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Among those watching the proceedings were representatives from 10 other Broward municipalities that plan to demand similar financial concessions from the County. Since Broward officials know that the other cities will pattern their demands on the Fort Lauderdale agreement, County intransigence prompted Feldman to comment "I feel like I'm being pushed into this independent model that I don't want to be a part of." Feldman, as usual, was right. The County Commission set aside \$9 million to grease the squeakiest wheels, including the \$2.3 million earmarked for Fort Lauderdale.

The municipalities threatening legal action have a legitimate cause for concern. After all, it took the county a decade to even acknowledge their voter mandated obligation to create a viable county-wide emergency dispatch system. Despite the County Commission's resolution to finally comply, there are no guarantees that an equitable system will be actualized by 2014 - or thereafter. Why should these cities' taxpayers tolerate being forced to subsidize services in neighboring jurisdictions?

Claims by the victimized municipalities that the county is responsible for funding dispatch operations are founded on bedrock. Article V, Public Safety Section 5.03(A) of the Broward County Charter states "The County Commission with cooperation from Municipalities shall establish a countywide communications infrastructure for fire and emergency medical services. The County shall provide funding for the communications infrastructure and all service providers will utilize the elements of the communications infrastructure. The communications infrastructure shall facilitate closest unit response for life-threatening emergencies and support for regional specialty teams."

After two decades of watching the county scam Peter to pay Paul, City Manager Lee Feldman has taken the lead in challenging the BSO shell game. City Commissioner Bruce Roberts told an October 1 President's Council gathering that it may be less expensive and more efficient to go it alone. As expressed by Pembroke Pines City Manager Charlie Dodge "If everyone paid their way, we wouldn't care. But they're not. There are some cities getting it free and other cities paying their fair share." Simple... but elegant! In the next few months, if the county doesn't come up with something more substantial than 'oops,' it will have to explain its dispatch flea circus to a judge. [Editor]*

FROM THE DESK OF COMMISSIONER BRUCE G. ROBERTS, SEPTEMBER 2012

I hope everyone has had a relaxing summer! Your Commission is in the middle of preparing the City's annual budget for FY 2013. While some improvements have occurred in the economy, they have not been significant, and we still face the same challenges for a fourth consecutive year. A major staff reorganization has followed a large reduction in personnel and pension reform continues. Your Commission has again decided against raising the millage rate and the fire assessment fee, while striving to maintain essential City services. We continue to work closely with our Budget Advisory Board to finalize the upcoming budget. Before adoption, there will be two Public Hearings on the budget: the Regular Agenda Commission Meetings of September 5th and September 18th at 6 p.m.

Public Safety Dispatch System I am sure that you have been aware of the ongoing dispute as it relates to the development and implementation of a county-wide consolidated closest unit response system. First and foremost, I want to assure everyone that this Commission will never risk placing our neighborhoods in jeopardy. We are, however, very concerned about coming to terms with the County on the implementation of an equitably funded system which does not unduly drain our public safety assets. Negotiations with the County are continuing. Failing to reach an agreement will result in litigation. Again, and I cannot stress it enough, this process will not result in diminishing our public safety services.

Implementation of "Robocalling" for Illegal Signs The Code Enforcement Division of the Department of Sustainable Development is tasked to enforce all City Ordinances for the health, safety and welfare of our neighbors. Illegal signs are just one of the issues that affect our City, contributing to visible blight and unnecessary trash and debris within our community. In an effort to reduce sign pollution, staff has looked at other city's efforts to enforce illegal signage. Some jurisdictions are using "RoboCalling" to help in the enforcement of signs. This computer driven software is an automatic calling feature that is used to call the number listed on the illegal sign up to 100 times a day. In the recorded message the City informs the sign owner that the sign is not permitted and must be removed or a citation will be issued. The automated call is made until the sign is removed. In the other cities who have utilized this program, the sign owners generally remove the illegal signs within five days and do not replace them within the City. In addition, implementing and maintaining the RoboCalling effort does not require any substantial additional staff resources, as one employee enters the phone number listed on the illegal sign, and the software automatically calls the number. Once the software has been purchased (anticipated to be less than \$500), staff will deploy a test implementation period for 90-days. I will follow up with more information once the results of the testing are shared with Commission.

Continued on page 11

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NEXTDOOR Website for Neighbors In continuation of our efforts to increase communication with our neighbors as well as communication between neighbors, the City is launching NEXTDOOR, a free, private social networking website for neighborhoods. Nextdoor creates private neighborhood sites off of our existing neighborhood boundaries and allows only those neighbors with addresses within the neighborhood to join. Neighbors are able to use the site to get to know their neighbors; share information about traffic, lost pets, crime and emergency preparedness; ask questions or get advice on babysitters, restaurants, carpet cleaners and more; sell, borrow and give away tools, furniture, bicycles and other items; and receive and comment on important information from City officials! This program has been introduced by City staff to the Council of Ft. Lauderdale Civic Associations where it was well received. All information will be sent to all HOA presidents introducing the program and inviting them to join. For a preview, please go to www.Nextdoor.com. If you should have any questions, please contact Hal Barnes in Neighbor Support (954-828-5065).

Nuisance Abatement Launches Webpage The Police Department's Special Investigation Division just announced the launching of a new webpage to help our residents, neighborhood associations and landlords in deterring illegal activity in their neighborhoods. This webpage has photos and addresses of properties where nuisance abatement warning letters have been sent, and the properties that are currently under the jurisdiction of the Nuisance Abatement Board (NAB) are now available on www.flpd.org under the community tab. The NAB is an advisory board of the City and meets at 7pm in the first floor Chambers on the second Thursday of every month. The Board provides the agendas and minutes of past meetings on their webpage. Some of nuisance reports that are not addressed are noise complaints, barking dogs, and loud music. The webpage provides residents with the requirements for a property to be sent to the NAB and a clear understanding of the process. Residents are encouraged to browse this webpage as there are many links to useful resources to help them stay informed. Anyone interested in filing a nuisance related complaint, should email the following information to the Board (flnab@fortlauderdale.gov): the address of the property, type of complaint (i.e. drug activity, prostitution, etc.) and the time of day which the activity takes place.

Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) FDOT, BC Traffic Engineering Division and BC Transit recently announced the expansion of the ATMS to include Broward County. This is a pilot project that will include 32 miles of arterial roadways in Ft. Lauderdale and six other municipalities. Some of the benefits of this project include signs that will provide travel times and incident information in real time; improved incident response time resulting in 30% faster clearing of incidents that will also help prevent secondary incidents; data collection used to adjust traffic signals; and an overall increased motorist awareness of conditions. Ft. Lauderdale project areas include Oakland Park Blvd. from University to US 1, which started July 2012; US 1 from Broward Blvd. to Oakland Park Blvd. commencing November 2012; Broward Blvd. from University Drive to US 1 commencing January 2013; and Sunrise Blvd. from US 441 to US 1 commencing May 2013. There will be no scheduled lane closures during the morning or afternoon rush hours, 7-9 a.m. and 4-6 p.m., respectively. Construction information and updates are available on the project website at www.d4fdot.com/bcfdot/home.asp.

Miami-Orlando Passenger Rail Project Overview The Florida East Coast Industries (FECI) is building a privately owned, operated and maintained intercity passenger rail system from South FL to Orlando. The system will travel 240 miles (tracks already in place for 200 of the 240 miles); stations will be in Miami, Ft. Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Orlando; will have significant transit oriented development opportunities; and be operational in 2014. One of the positive notes is that it will be faster, cheaper, cleaner, safer and more enjoyable than other modes of transportation. It will travel up to 110 mph with potential service hours from 6am to 9 p.m. departures.

Continued on page 12

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<p>21 Urban Gourmet Market 1201 E. Las Olas Blvd. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p>	<p>22</p>	<p>23 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p>	<p>24 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p>
<p>28 Urban Gourmet Market 1201 E. Las Olas Blvd. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p>	<p>31 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p>
<p>4 Urban Gourmet Market 1201 E. Las Olas Blvd. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p> <p>Sunday Jazz Brunch Riverwalk, Downtown FL 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Info.: 954-828-5985</p>	<p>5</p> <p>Commissioner Bruce Roberts: Pre-Agenda Meeting Beach Community Center, 6 p.m.</p>	<p>6 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p> <p>Fort Lauderdale City Commission Meeting City Hall, 6 p.m.</p>	<p>7 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p>
<p>11 Urban Gourmet Market 1201 E. Las Olas Blvd. 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Info.: 954-462-4166</p> <p>13.1 Half Marathon & 5K 1799 SE 17th St to S. Beach Par (1100 Seabreeze) Start: 6:13 a.m.</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13 BINGO Galt Towers Social Room (4250 Galt Ocean Drive) 7:30 p.m. Info.: Cyndi Songer: 954-563-7268</p>	<p>14 BINGO Regency South Party Room 7 p.m. Info.: Bob Pearlman: 954-547-4063</p>

ADDITIONAL EVENTS

- 10/18: 5th Annual Rocktoberfest, Esplanada Park, 5:30 to 10:30 p.m., Info.: 954-468-1541
- 10/18: Art Walk Las Olas, Las Olas Blvd., 5 to 9 p.m., Info.: 954-258-8382
- 10/18: South Florida Condo & HOA Expo, Miami Beach Convention Center, 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Info.: 952-881-5030
- 10/19 - 20: Haunted Nights at Flamingo Gardens, 7 to 9 p.m., Info.: 954-473-2955
- 10/20: Fright Night Las Olas 2012, Riverside Hotel Lawn, 7 to 11 p.m., Info.: 954-537-1010
- 10/25: Lynyrd Skynyrd, Hard Rock Live, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-797-5531
- 10/26: CAI-SEFL Annual Golf Tournament, Jacaranda Country Club, 11 a.m. Registration, Info.: 954-816-0661
- 10/27: Art for Art's Sake VIP Sneak Peek, Art Serve, 1350 E. Sunrise Blvd, 7:30 p.m., Info.: 954-533-6373
- 10/27 - 28: LBTS Art Festival, Info.: 954-472-3755

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November 18 - January 5
 Holiday Fantasy of Lights
 Tradewinds Park
 Info.: www.holidaylightsdrivethru.com

November 22
 5K Turkey Trot and Paddle
 Fort Lauderdale beach (ATA)
 Registration: 6 a.m., Race Start: 7:30a.m., Awards: 8:30 a.m.
 Info.: 954-767-8866

November 27
 Christmas on Las Olas
 Las Olas Blvd.
 Info.: www.lasolasboulevard.com

November 30 - December 1
 Eddie Vedder & Glen Hansard
 Broward Center for the Performing Arts
 Tix.: 954-462-0222

November 30
 West Palm Beach Antiques Festival
 Aircraft Expo Center - South Florida Fairgrounds
 Tix.: 941-697-7475

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF EVENTS, GO TO THE CALENDAR AT WWW.GALTMILE.COM

18 BINGO
 Southpoint's North Lounge
 (3400 Galt Ocean Dr)
 7 p.m.
 \$5/person for 3 boards

19 Jazz on the Square
 The Village Grille
 Commercial Blvd. & ATA
 7 p.m.

20 Riverwalk Urban Market
 227 SW 2nd Ave.
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Info.: 954-298-5607

G.M.C.A. Advisory Board Meeting
 Nick's Italian Restaurant
 11 a.m.

Ft Lauderdale Int'l Film Festival
 (Through 11/11)
 Tix.: 954-760-9898

Las Olas Art Fair
 (Through 10/21)
 Las Olas Boulevard
 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Info.: 561-746-6615

25 BINGO
 Southpoint's North Lounge
 (3400 Galt Ocean Dr), 7 p.m.
 \$5/person for 3 boards

26 Jazz on the Square
 The Village Grille
 Commercial Blvd. & ATA
 7 p.m.
 Info.: 954-776-5092

27 Riverwalk Urban Market
 227 SW 2nd Ave.
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Info.: 954-298-5607

53rd Annual Ft Lauderdale Int'l Boat Show
 (Through 10/29)
 Info.: 954-764-7642

Bill O'Reilly
 Hard Rock Live, 8 p.m.
 Tix.: www.hardrocklivehollywoodfl.com

**Broward Health Imperial Point
 40th Anniversary Community
 Celebration & Health Fair**
 Broward Health Imperial Point
 Medical Arts Pavilion
 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
 Info.: 954-776-8672

1 BINGO
 Southpoint's North Lounge
 (3400 Galt Ocean Dr), 7 p.m.
 \$5/person for 3 boards

2 Jazz on the Square
 The Village Grille
 Commercial Blvd. & ATA
 7 p.m.

3 Riverwalk Urban Market
 227 SW 2nd Ave.
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Info.: 954-298-5607

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9 Jazz on the Square
 The Village Grille
 Commercial Blvd. & ATA
 7 p.m.

10 Riverwalk Urban Market
 227 SW 2nd Ave.
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Info.: 954-298-5607

Flavors of Ft Lauderdale
 (Through 11/11)
 Ft Lauderdale Beach
 Tix.: 800-653-9563

Cajun-Zydeco Festival
 (Through 11/11)
 Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino
 Tix.: www.cajun-fest.com/site

Fight For Air Climb
 110 Tower - 110 SE 6th Street
 7:30 to 11 p.m.
 Info.: 954-727-0907

15 BINGO
 Southpoint's North Lounge
 (3400 Galt Ocean Dr), 7 p.m.
 \$5/person for 3 boards

16 Jazz on the Square
 The Village Grille
 Commercial Blvd. & ATA
 7 p.m.

17 Riverwalk Urban Market
 227 SW 2nd Ave.
 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Info.: 954-298-5607

Broward County Fair
 (Through 11/25)
 City Center, Pembroke Pines
 Info.: 954-922-2224

Ft Lauderdale Home Design
 & Remodeling Show
 (Through 11/18)
 Broward County Convention Center
 Info.: 954-765-5900

Florida Bluegreen: Wildnight for Wildlife
 Green Glades Ranch, Weston
 5 p.m.
 Info.: 850-922-1066

11/2 - 4: West Palm Beach Antiques Festival, Aircraft Expo Center - South Florida Fairgrounds, Info.: 954-697-7475
 11/3: North Beach Art Walk, Broward Art Guild, 7 to 11 p.m.
 11/3: Light The Night Walk-a-thon, Huizenga Plaza, 5 to 8 p.m., Info.: 954-744-5311
 First Saturday of every Month: Beach Cleanup, Commercial Blvd & the Beach LBTS, 9 to 9:30 a.m., Info.: www.lbts.com
 Second Saturday of every Month: Beach Sweep, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m., Info.: 954-474-1835
 Wednesdays: Yoga in the Garden, Bonnett House, 8 to 9 a.m., Info.: 954-563-5393 ext. 137
 Tuesdays and Thursdays: Yoga with Ali Hecht, Esplanade Park, 6:30 p.m., Info.: 954-732-0517
 Mondays and Wednesdays: Cardio Mix with Josh Hecht, Esplanade Park, 6:30 p.m., Info.: 954-732-0517
 Sundays: Tour-the River Ghost Tour, Stranahan House & Water Taxi, 7:30 p.m., Tix.: 954-524-4736
 Sundays: Urban Gourmet Market, 1201 E. Las Olas Blvd., 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Info.: 954-462-4166

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Meeting in a Box – Our City, Our Vision Do you have thoughts on Fort Lauderdale’s future? Then sign up to host a “meeting in a box.” This is a portable version of a community meeting; it is a chance for you to host a small gathering with your neighbors to get their input on the future of our City. Best of all you can host the meeting at a time and place that is convenient for you. Inside each box are instructions for the facilitators and the participants to guide them through the process of holding the meeting. It is an excellent facilitation technique for thoughtful communication and idea generation for the development of our Vision 2035. Call 954-828-5289 to reserve your box today – you can also go online for more information at http://www.fortlauderdale.gov/vision/pdf/Meeting-in-a-Box_Flier.pdf.

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7:00pm Wednesday, November 28th, 2012

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Marc Bettinger, President of Bettinger Financial Advisors, Inc., graduated Columbia Business School with an MBA and built a successful career over 15 years as a Research Analyst following many companies in various industries. In 2007, he was ranked as the #1 stock picker in the Specialty Retail industry by Forbes.com/StarMine. The result is a keen analytical thought process that focuses on risk and reward, market psychology and security valuation based on information about people, history, psychology, investments, markets, economics and politics.

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4th Annual UPS Store Toys for Tots Holliday Party!!!
Nov. 2nd, 2:00pm, Gateway - 1007 N Federal Hwy
Bring Unwrapped Presents for the Kids!



Join us to Party and Raise \$\$
for the Toys for Tots Foundation!

- Bounce House
- Food & Drinks
- Cotton Candy and Popcorn
- Music and prizes
- Facepainting
- Fun for the whole family!

