

March 2007

SoRoPa Neighbors

Neighborhood Meeting March 6th, 7:30 pm - Fire Station

Tentative Topics:

- NW 44 St Connector, NW 21st Ave to 441
- Municipal Elections, March 13th
- Broward Beautiful Grant for Entryway Design?
- Areas of Neighborhood Concern

March 2007



Traffic Concerns

Did you see the article in the Sun Sentinel February 26th & March 4th regarding NW 44th St? The city of Lauderdale Lakes has built a connector of NW 44th St, which runs along the south side of the Oak Tree Golf Course, connecting NW 21st Ave. to 441. This will potentially dump an additional 10,000 vehicles per day onto NW 44th St and NW 21st Ave. This roadway is scheduled to open in two months.

This roadway will impact all of the communities on, and west of, NW 21st Ave as well as bring a huge amount of through traffic trying to avoid the congestion on Oakland Park Blvd. and Commercial Blvd.

This will also potentially encourage the future developers of the golf course property (presently in contention and being pursued for residential developments,) to "extend" the necessary land to the road to allow NW 44th St to become 4 lanes all the way through, which increases the appeal for conversion of the golf course as a residential development and endangers our green space!!!

Our Commissioners have voted to study the matter and a petition is being circulated for presentation to the Broward County Commission. PLEASE ATTEND our March 6th meeting of SoRoPA Neighbors to sign this petition and be informed. If you can't attend but would like to participate in the process, please sign the petition (feel free to share with other interested residents) Call Anne Sallee or your block rep to pick up and add to the collection! We hope to personally present the petitions to the Broward County Commission March 27th.

\$ 50-50 Raffle \$

Join us in a 50-50 raffle to cover cost of our new signs and refreshments!

(and perhaps enrich your pockets!!!)

News of Note:

- New BULK TRASH guidelines. Check the city website:

www.oaklandparkfl.org

Oakland Park Library

Tip of the Day!

- If our city library doesn't stock the book you want, ask them. They will get it through interlibrary loan or purchase it!

Individual Highlights:

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Petition Regarding Lauderdale Lakes
44th Street Connector to SR 7 / US 441

We, the undersigned, residents and business owners of Oakland Park oppose the proposed 44th Street Connector between NW 21st Avenue and SR7/US441 between Oakland Park and Lauderdale Lakes. We urge Broward County Commission, Broward County Traffic Engineering, the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization, and City of Oakland Park, to exercise their discretion to stop this project in order to protect the affected neighborhoods and property owners, including but not limited to Montage-by-the-Lake, Mira Lago, Summer Lake, Royal Palm Acres, Lake Emerald, Oak Tree Estates, Twin Lakes South, Lake Pointe Estates.

NAME

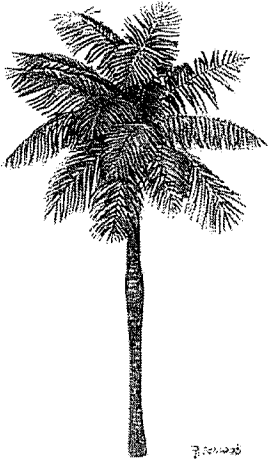
ADDRESS

TELEPHONE

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Message from Oakland Park District's Chief John Bukata

February 2007



Congratulations to Deputy Henry Lopez who has been selected by his peers as the Broward Sheriff's Office Oakland Park District Employee of the Year for 2006.

The nomination detailed a wealth of specific incidents initiated by Deputy Lopez during 2006 which resulted in felony arrests, narcotic seizures and forfeiture confiscations. Although no one specific incident could be mentioned which would alone justify the recognition as the Employee of the Year for any of our employees, what was noted in naming Deputy Lopez for this award was his being consistently proactive and tenaciousness over the course of the year. Each of his actions and his work ethic have had a positive impact on reducing criminal activity in the city, and also contributed in the motivation of other deputies bringing them together as a team while patrolling our city.

I would also like to commend the other nominees, all of who were nominated by their peers as Employee of the Year candidates for their actions throughout the year. Although the board, which consisted of a civilian employee, 3 deputy sheriffs and 3 sergeants, had a difficult task in reviewing, analyzing and ultimately selecting just one of the nominees for the award, each of these deputies are also winners and are deserving of recognition as well.

Nominees:

Deputy Raymond Suarez
Deputy James Wilson
Deputy Charles Whatley
Deputy Henry Lopez
Deputy Tally Brown
Deputy Mike Corbett

Investigative Aide Robert Goldberg: (Analytical Support)

Another point of recognition is for two of our midnight shift deputies who are being nominated for an award sponsored by Mothers against Drunk Driving Award (MADD). This award is specific to any law enforcement officer who has made in excess of 100 arrests for DUI during the year.

Deputy Charles Grady and Deputy Rene Mohammed have collectively arrested 239 people for driving while intoxicated on the streets of Oakland Park (124 and 115 arrests respectively). In addition to their primary responsibility of patrolling our city streets searching for criminal activity; as well as handling calls for service, both of these deputies focus additional effort to the eradication of drunk drivers. It is my belief that it is due to the efforts of these deputies, in conjunction with the actions of other deputies assigned to Oakland Park, that there have been minimal traffic accidents with serious injuries or fatalities within the city over the past year even though the cities population has increased and there are more cars then ever traveling on the corridors leading to the major roads in the area.



I hope that when you come across any of the deputies, each of who have brought credit to themselves and to the Oakland Park District that you take a moment to congratulate them for a job well done and encourage them to continue with the quality service that they provide to our community.

Employee of the Month: January 2007

Detective Gerard Charles is recognized for his tenacious and exhaustive investigation in identifying a family of thieves who had been victimizing Oakland Park residents by stealing their portable generators during the month of December 2006.

I am proud to report that on February 9, 2007, Detective Charles was promoted to the rank of Sergeant and will now be assigned to the Central Broward District, which is unincorporated Ft. Lauderdale and our neighbor to the south.

Have you checked out the City website?

www.oaklandparkfl.org

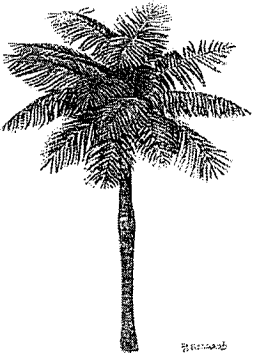
Its chock full of valuable information!

Note - If you are going away, submit a vacation alert. Call (954) 561-6111. BSO will stop by and keep an eye on your home.

Chief John S. Bukata

What's New on Main Street?

By Kevin Bernardi



Oakland Park Main Street, Inc. is best known for developing and producing the City's successful Oktoberfest each Fall. While the entertaining Oktoberfest is the most visual of Main Street's efforts, much more goes on behind the scenes.

The Main Street organization comprises 14 volunteer board members, all highly successful professionals, and Executive Director Siegi Constantine. Among other activities, our nonprofit organization works closely with the City to actively support the City's growth initiatives, attract new businesses to the area, improve the appearance and perception of the Main Street district and to promote responsible redevelopment within the downtown district. Currently serving as Main Street's City Liaisons are Vice Mayor Larry Gierer and the Assistant to the City Manager, Ray Lubomski.

Occasionally, neighbors and other Oakland Park residents express their concern that our burgeoning Main Street isn't undergoing its transformation as quickly as they expected. In a nutshell, there are always two components to redeveloping a district. The first component relates to the public sector, the City of Oakland Park. The City first had to complete rezoning requirements and establish design guidelines for redevelopment to occur. They are now engaged in building the necessary infrastructure and attracting desirable revitalization. Once in place, the private sector can enter the picture and replace decaying real estate with beautiful, mixed-use residential/retail developments.

The unfortunate regional downturn in real estate following Hurricane Wilma has temporarily dampened most projects. As soon as this market regains its momentum, the stage is set for desirable redevelopment resulting in a Main Street we all will be proud of.

A most promising interim project is Main Street's Façade Improvement Program. The organization assists business and property owners with attractive architectural plans and recommendations and contributes some funds for approved exterior renovations. The first building to benefit by this joint venture is the home of Oakland Park Main Street located just north of City Hall on NE 12th Avenue.

Presently plans are underway for a new, exciting event. ***"Meet Me on Main Street,"*** scheduled for Friday, **April 13, from 6:00PM to 9:00PM.** It is conceived as an exhilarating outdoor street fest of hot Reggae rhythms by renowned musician Eugene Grey, trendy food stations, a wine and spirits zone, acrobats, jugglers, contortionists, power kippers and a fun midway.

I have been serving on the Oakland Park Main Street board for the past several years along with other residents, merchants and developers. Each of us is committed to volunteering our time and expertise to keep the interest high in future focal points of our city. If you have interest in becoming a member, volunteer or committee member, please stop by the Main Street office at 3714 NE 12th Avenue, or call Siegi at 954-565-2627 or send us an email: Info@OaklandParkMainStreet.com. You are also always welcome to call me at R&S Realty Group, 954-895-8941 for additional information.

"It's All About Property Taxes" By Broward County Commissioner Ken Keechl

During my campaign for the Broward County Commission, I made several fundamental promises to you. First and foremost, I promised you that I would never vote to increase your property taxes. I intend to keep my promise.

Let's start with the basics. Just exactly how can you determine if the Broward County Commission is increasing your property taxes for its next fiscal year, 2008? It's simple: Look for the soon to be published state-defined "rolled-back" millage rate. This "rolled-back" rate is determined yearly in Tallahassee. It is determined by the total amount of property taxes in the current year's budget, plus an increase in estimated new taxes from new construction growth.

If the Broward County Commission votes to establish a millage rate for the fiscal year 2008 higher than the "rolled-back" millage rate, it's a tax increase. Period.

Our budgeting process is now underway. We have completed our first budget workshop and it seems to me that most of the County Commissioners recognize the high level of anger and frustration felt by the average Broward County taxpayer. Based on the Broward County Office of Management and Budget's rough estimate, we have been told that we must eliminate approximately \$54 million dollars from our \$3.7 billion dollar budget in order to establish a budget that doesn't raise property taxes. Obviously, it can be done; however, the real question is whether 5 of the 9 County Commissioners have the will to do so.

Trust me. As a Broward County Commissioner, I've already learned it's easier to say "yes" than to say "no" when someone is requesting money.

From now until September you will hear the Broward County Commission "educate" you with regard to the difficulties the Commission will face in eliminating \$54 million dollars from our budget. Fair enough. You will learn that about a third of the budget revenues come from "enterprise" funds. These are revenues generated by the airport, seaport, garbage collection, and the water department which cannot be utilized for any other purpose. You will also learn that about half of the budget is comprised of funds requested by Broward's Constitutional Officers (such as our Sheriff, Property Appraiser, Supervisor of Elections, etc.) You will learn that it is procedurally difficult (but not impossible) to force these elected Constitutional Officers to tighten their own budgets. All of these facts are undoubtedly true.

Nevertheless, it is without question that you elected us to make the hard decisions. As one of my colleagues often says, "If you can't make the hard decisions, you don't deserve to sit up on the dais." He's right; it's time to listen to the voters and make these necessary budget cuts. We must tell our Constitutional Officers that they, too, must tighten up their budgets and share in our burden. We must slow down, if not decrease, the size of Broward County's governmental workforce. We must eliminate-and refuse to fund-services that aren't absolutely necessary. We must stop capital projects that aren't essential, unless they can be constructed without increasing the amount of ad valorem property taxes. We have to determine our priorities and fund accordingly.

Again, the budget process is just beginning. Obviously, I can't predict how my colleagues will vote with regard to the upcoming fiscal year 2008 budget. But I can again tell you how I will vote. After all, campaign promises should be kept by elected officials.

Until next month...

Ken Keechl, Broward County Commission, District 4.

Block Representatives (Contact your rep with questions & comments)

32nd Ct. - Karen Nagy, 1980 NW 32nd Ct., (954)609-8845

31st St. & 32nd St. – Dennis & Gwen Cox, 1851 NW 32nd St , (954)
730-7254

33rd Ct. - Richard & Jean Bernhardt, 1851 NW 33rd Ct, (954) 486-4057

33rd St. - Hope Gold, 1940 NW 33rd St, (954) 684-0638

34th St. - Anne & Steve Sallee, 1971 NW 34th St, (954) 717-3090

35th & 36th St. - Al Wakefield & Marshall Belmaine, 1920 NW 36th St.,
(954) 714-0758

21st Ave. - Paul Spearing & Louis Weinberg, 3520 NW 21st Ave, (954)
733 9871-H & (954) 579 9662-C

What is SoRoPa Neighbors?

South Royal Palm Acres Neighbors United is a neighborhood group focused on improving crime prevention awareness, strengthening spirit and fostering pride in our community in order to provide a safer, organized and more beautiful place for all of us to live.

The mission of South Royal Palm Acres Neighbors United is...

- *To encourage and promote community pride in our neighborhood by providing a forum for neighborhood activity.*
- *To be a voice for our common neighborhood interests by acting as liaison with governmental bodies and with institutions.*
- *To serve as a focal point for maintenance and improvement of institutions and facilities serving our neighborhood, including parks, schools, and public safety services, and to provide an avenue for neighborhood social activities.*
- *To encourage and facilitate vigorous citizen participation in all issues affecting our neighborhood, including land use, zoning changes, traffic patterns, and street modifications.*
- *To promote the welfare of the community.*
- *To Have Fun!*

Please Join Us!

**Your Neighborhood Organization meets at the Fire Station
the 1st Tuesday of every month at 7:30.**

If you don't participate in the process, you won't have a voice.
We look forward to your comments and participation.