

HIPAA

Have You Taken The Test?

There's a new training course that all county employees must take by April 7. It isn't a "if I feel like it" course or even a "when I get around to it" course. It's a "must take now" course that covers the basic requirements of the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

An excellent incentive for getting acquainted with HIPAA is that there are legal penalties – fines and jail time – for people who do not follow the HIPAA law.

Fortunately, the test is only as far away as your computer screen and as easy to get to as accessing COIN. (People who don't have access to COIN can contact 307-3208 to arrange classroom training.)

Just click on the HIPAA Awareness Training under Quick Links on the right

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A National Award

Hillsborough County firefighter Sean VanAtter receives the Public Safety Officer's Medal of Valor from Vice President Dick Cheney accompanied by Attorney General John Ashcroft, right, at a ceremony held in Washington DC on Feb 14. VanAtter was one of 10 individuals who received the new award after being selected from more than 300 nominations. Van Atter rescued a family from a burning car after it collided with a semi on the expressway.

PGM's New CTS Is An A-OK PEP

Because of a new Performance Excellence Program project, Planning & Growth Management staff is just a few keyboard strokes away from being to

track customers who come in, call in, or fax in problems.

The department's new computerized Customer Tracking System eliminates redundancy both for customers and for staff through initiating a file from the first contact, whether it's by a visit, e-mail, fax, or telephone. A property folio number identifies each file.

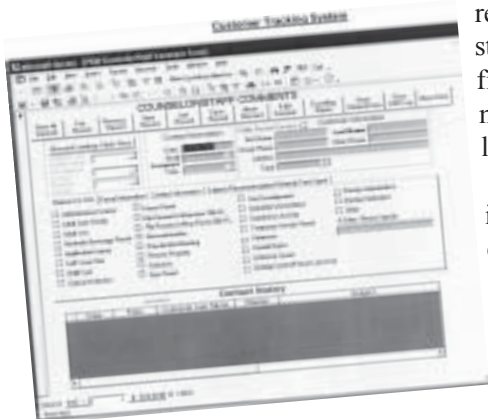
"Previously, customers would come in multiple times with the same request, and there was no way to track the responses," said Shelley Chmil, project manager. "Now we even can track multiple inquiries about the same property."

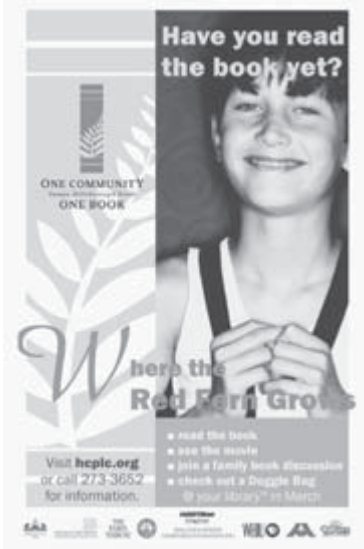
With the goal of improving both

customer service and staff performance, a group formed comprised of zoning, development and information services, staff members, with John Walker, senior planner, as the key person in the department and John Whitlock from Quality Services providing guidance. Paula Harvey, Zoning Administrator, confirmed the need and provided full support and staff time.

Using the computer database program MS ACCESS and the experience of staff members to provide information on the workflow, the committee put together a process, then refined and enhanced it several times until they came

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Literature Unites Community

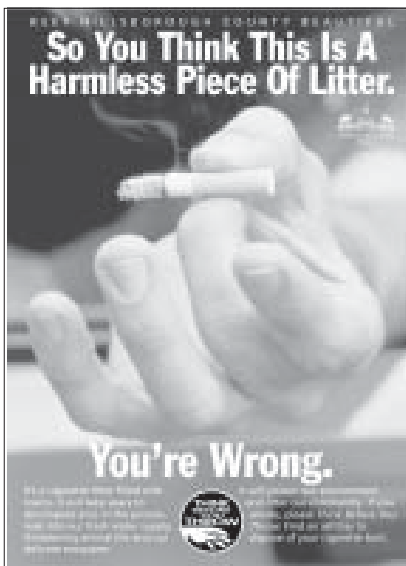
“Where The Red Fern Grows,” a book about a 10 year old and his dogs is this year’s vehicle chosen to cultivate a community-wide interest in reading, as well as encouraging families to read together.

One Community, One Book, a joint effort of the Friends of the Library Hillsborough Inc., and The Tampa Tribune, targets adults and children ages 8 to 18. Story times, book discussions and other programs related to the project are being presented this month at Hillsborough County libraries.

Library staff has created 500 kits, which include a copy of the featured book and three related books for readers of varying ages. Also included are free reading-aloud and book-discussion tip sheets, coloring and activity sheets, snacks and a coupon for a free kids meal.

The project was initiated by Judge John F. Germany when he was inspired by a similar project in Chicago in 2001.

For more information, call 273-3652, ext. 2, or visit the library’s web site at: hcplc.org.



Litter Campaign Hits The Roads

The county's campaign to educate everyone about the problem with litter is popping up on bus benches, in the newspaper, on the radio, and in a plethora of green and white roadside signs.

Directed toward making a permanent change in the way people view litter, advertisements also are running on popular cable channels such as USA, MTV, ESPN, and the Cartoon Channel.



Commissioner Ronda Storms is joined Solid Waste Management Department Director Daryl Smith, left, and Sheriff's representatives Captain Ron Spiller and Deputy Gary Wagner to unveil the first of 100 "Think Before You Throw" road signs that are being installed around the county. "Think Before You Throw" is the county's anti-litter campaign that kicked off in the summer last year.

BRIEFS

Sick Leave Bank

Open enrollment for the Sick Leave Bank is March 3 - 31 for employees in Sick Plan A. Applications are available in Human Resources, 17th floor, County Center.

For information call 272-6216.

Savings Bond Program

Attention all county employees currently enrolled in the Savings Bond program: Effective in February, the minimum holding period was increased from 6 months to 12 months for newly issued Series EE and I U. S. Savings Bonds.

This means Series EE and I savings bonds with February 2003 and later issue dates cannot be redeemed or exchanged for Series HH bonds until they are at least 12 months old.

Accurate and up-to-date information is at www.savingsbonds.gov. Forms to enroll or cancel savings bonds are available in the Human Resource lobby, 17th floor, County Center.

Let's Talk Books

The Four Seasons Author Series offers authors and discourse during luncheons. The next featured speaker is Hilary Hemingway, niece of Ernest Hemingway.

New series participants may join at 12 p.m., on Friday, April 25, for \$25 with the option to continue for the next three at \$75. Proceeds go to support the Tampa-Hillsborough County Public Library System.

For more information call 273-3616.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION —

Stephen Gran, agriculture manager of Economic Development, spoke at the American Farm Bureau Federation's 2003 annual meeting held in Tampa in January, explaining the economic impact of agricultural production in Hillsborough County.

The following Children's Services employees will be honored at a banquet on April 6: Emergency Shelter Care Employee of the Year — **Johnnie Fowler**; Child & Family Counseling Services Employee of the Year — **Kathy Fabbri**; Administration/Clinical Services/Maintenance Employee of the Year — **Cindy Riggs**; Severely Emotionally Disturbed Treatment Program & Department Employee of the Year — **Shilene Buck**; Children's Division Supervisor of the Year — **Mike Bitting**; Children's Division Rookie of the Year — **Jan Kelly**.

LETTERS

Robert Brophy of the Property Appraiser's Office wrote to **Don Shea**, director of Community Improvement: "Let me convey my appreciation for the outstanding work you and your damage assessment teams did during the recent New Years Eve flooding throughout Central & Southern Hillsborough County. As always, your team leaders, **Jim Ellington** and **Dexter Barge**, along with their team members, were on the scene for the next several days working the event, and by Jan. 7, I had a complete, detailed report along with pictures sent to the Hillsborough County Emergency Operations Center and the State Emergency Operations Center. Once again, thank you and your teams for a job well done."

Clement Miller wrote to thank **Ben Hopper** of Planning & Growth Management and members of the Security staff for their help when he visited County Center. As he does not use elevators, **John Walker** came downstairs to talk with him. "**Esther Wolf**, from the Security Staff, was extremely

supportive and helpful," wrote Miller. "I am most appreciative also of the information emailed to me by **Jan Tumbleson** this afternoon."

Valrico resident Joe Havian is a happy customer. When he began having concerns over flooding problems, he called Mosquito Control, talking to **Frank Deese**. Crews sprayed the channel between Valrico Lake and Long Pond and broke up the vegetation so the water could flow, keeping at the problem until it was solved. "I would like to take this opportunity to commend all involved in both the job they did and their continued communication of their efforts at resolution of the problem. That two-way contact by Frank Deese and all of the workers with Mosquito Control is invaluable and should be recognized. Great people to deal with!"

Daniel Decker called the Water Department to say that "**Jorge Mesa** and **Penny Kennan** are two of the nicest people that he has ever dealt with." He

said they were very helpful and professional, and he wanted their supervisor to be aware of the great customer service they provided to him.

Tampa resident Anne O'Hara wrote to **Lelia Blevins**, director of Administrative Services, "Thank you so much for calling to let us know about the BOCC agenda for that afternoon. We were able to participate and to see the meeting on Channel 22. Your phone call was very helpful and we appreciate it."

"My grandmother is 90 years old and was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease last year. I had no one to care for her during the day. I finally had to quit my job to care for her. I found out about Riverside Senior Center and made inquiries about getting her into their program. **George Paulose**, the social worker, met with my grandmother and was so kind with her. While she will never get back what she has lost, Lori Radice and her wonderful staff have given her a reason to look forward to each day," wrote Donna Hollowell.



Local Heroes

Two park rangers received the VITA (Latin for Life) Wireless Samaritan Award at a ceremony held in February. The rangers, **Jesse Cook** and **Karl Siegfried**, helped end a kidnapping situation by using their digital walkie-talkies to communicate with each other and contact the police after Siegfried spotted the alleged kidnapper's vehicle while on his way to work. First presented in 1993, the VITA Wireless Samaritan Awards are given to individuals who exemplify the importance of putting safety first, as well as the important role individuals and wireless phones can play in emergency situations. Pictured are: **Stan Motley**, director of Parks & Recreation, **Cook**, Rep. **Jim Davis**, **Siegfried**, and **Pat Ballage**, Nextel District Manager.

Local Problems Mirror National Complaints

The 11th annual consumer complaint survey conducted by the National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators (NACAA) and Consumer Federation of America (CFA) reveals that home improvement contracting topped the list of consumer complaints filed with state and local consumer protection agencies last year.

Complaints about household goods, such as appliances, furniture, and electronic equipment, were second, followed by auto sales and service.

Home improvement was not only the most common complaint to consumer agencies this year, but was also named as the fastest growing complaint category and the type of industry in which a company is most

likely to go out of business and to reopen under another name.

The top four problem areas were followed by problems with credit/lending, business practices, services and telecommunications. Complaints about collections, pyramids and business opportunities, and recreation and vacations rounded off the list.

"Our complaints closely parallel the top five on the list," said James Sudberry, director of Hillsborough County Consumer Protection. "Recently we have been prosecuting some of the unlicensed contractors engaged in home improvement or repairs. We also get a large number of landlord/tenant problems that we try to mediate or refer to Community Improvement when applicable."

Sudberry said that the department recovered more than a quarter million dollars

in actual reimbursement or additional services for consumers last fiscal year. That was money they would not have received without the department's investigation and intervention.

The national average of 23 percent more complaints was eclipsed by Hillsborough County, which had more than a 200 percent increase. The telephone calls from consumers have gone up almost 300 percent since last year.

"I really can't say if the rate of incidence of consumer problems has increased but I think we are now providing a venue for the resolution of many of them. However, our taking on the criminal prosecution aspect is a mission that was not previously pursued by this agency," said Sudberry.

If you have a consumer problem, call 903-3432.

Ribbon Cuttings Celebrate Projects' Completion

County Commissioner Ronda Storms cut not one, but two ribbons on Feb. 27, marking the completion of two significant Capital Improvement projects in the Brandon area.

The first ribbon cutting, for the Valrico Drainage Improvement project, was held on Valrico Road, just north of S.R. 60. This project included the construction of two stormwater pump stations on Valrico Road. Also, a forcemain constructed from Valrico Road, along Washington Road and 4th Street to Lake Valrico was designed to alleviate the flooding in the vicinity of S.R. 60 and Valrico Road.

The second ribbon cutting was on Providence Road. The roadway has been expanded from two to four lanes from Providence Ridge Boulevard to Bloomingdale Avenue with bicycle lanes, sidewalks and landscaping.



Posing after the ribbon cutting ceremony are: Public Works employee Edward Borsdorf; Public Works Director Bernado Garcia; David Fox, environmental technician; County Commissioner Ronda Storms; Bob Gordon, director of Public Works' Engineering Division; Ed Tapia, engineering manager; Tony Kashani, engineer; and Chungtsung Chen, engineer.

Students Respond To Lessons About Animals

Pinecrest Elementary School students wrote letters after a recent visit from Animal Services' Barbara Bailey and Tags.

Some students wrote reviews on a video about a dog that wasn't redeemed by its owners after being picked up by an Animal Control officer.

Jared: "I liked the video, but I felt sorry for the dog. It taught me a great lesson."

Abby: "I liked the video, it was funny. I learned you have to pick up your animals before 6 days."

Lauren: "I felt sorry for Buddy on

the movie. I wish that didn't really happen. But I guess it does."


Adreona: "Now I really understand why I need a tag and to not let my dog get out."

Other students picked up on specific items in Bailey's talk.

Johnathan: "Thanks for presenting to us how to treat animals with care. Like a dog should have a credit card tag and things like that." (*A budding consumer*)

Jeffrey: "I liked your speech about dogs and yesterday a dog got run over by a symy (semi) and then it ran over and bit another person." (*Top this, Barbara.*)

Darrell: "I really liked your performance yesterday. Do you really work for animal control? Are rabies tags really shaped like telephones?" (*A future reporter?*)

Jessica: "I love you and Tags. How are you doing in work? Are you doing fine? I hope you come back again ." (*Obviously smitten.*)

Jose: "I love you and I want to give you a hug and want to give you XOXOXO and I hope you come back." (*Obviously very smitten.*)

Angel: "I like your colors on you. They are almost like my dog." (*Was this a left-handed compliment?*)

HIPAA

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hand side of COIN. Required by law, the training is simple and to the point, with an overview and three sections. Each section is followed by a couple of test questions, and there is a 10-ques-

tion test at the end.

After you pass the test — and you must take it until you pass it — print out a certificate for your records and to show that you completed the course.

Although HIPAA may sound like a big yawn, it is relevant to everyone. The act protects the privacy of certain medical information, provides you with the ability to find out about releases of information, and, in certain instances, allows you to restrict how that information is used. You also may request amendments to information you believe is incorrect.

Staff in certain departments such as Aging Services, Health & Social Ser-

HIPAA training

- Click on HIPAA Awareness Training under Quick Links in COIN.
- Enter the organization ID: *HC*
- Enter your regular login: *last name, first initial*
- Your password is: *Password*

vices, Human Resources, and Fire Rescue will receive more extensive training to ensure that they know all of the guidelines involved in dealing with protected health information.

Got Questions?

272-5900



Get Answers!

Hillsborough Information Line

PGM

(From Page 1)

to the current system. Chmil said that eventually the amount of data and the user group will outgrow the current system and will have to go to an Electronic Document/Data Management System.

The tracking system not only establishes a case history and prevents customers from shopping for the best recommendation, but it provides statistics on workloads and an awareness of high interest in particular properties. One feature records the time a customer comes into the office and the time he sees a

counselor. Another provides a link to site development information, showing a summary of previous activity on the site which can be used to see if it is compatible with current development.

The system has been in use for a year, logging more than 21,000 records (a record is a customer inquiry). On an average, the department receives more than 500 telephone calls a month, between 250 and 300 walk-in customers, from 70 to 100 faxes, and a handful of e-mails.

CLASSIFIED

MERCHANDISE

MAPLE entertainment center, 3 units. \$600 OBO. Kitchenette set w/4 chairs. \$200 OBO. Call 781-2303.

COUCH, grey tweed. \$300 OBO. Call 610-5724.

BUCS parking sign: Reserved for Buccaneers Fans Only. Metal, 12" x 18", Bucs logo. \$50 OBO. Call 832-6117 mornings & wknds.

TREADMILL, motorized. Not very large. Call 655-5922.

BABY, portable playpen, bassinette, changing table w/ drawers, crib, highchair, rocking horse, more. Like new. Top of line. Prices negotiable. Call 880-8668 or 334-3571.

AMPLIFIER, '73 Fender classic. Tube type, Vibrolux reverb 2-10s. Silver face. \$795. E-mail piico@comcast.net, or call 980-0060.

LAWN MOWER, Sear's Craftman 20 inch., 3.5 HP, adjustable height, side discharge. \$50. Call 251-3472.

HANDS FREE car kit for Nokia 5100 & 6100 series cell phones. Antennae, all installation parts. \$90. Call Earl, 468-0168.

TECHNICS surround sound 100x2 receiver, \$125; 5 disc CD changer, \$80; stereo dbl cass, \$80; 7 band EQ, \$50; 2 Kenwood 80w spkrs \$40; 2 Optimus 50w spkrs w/brackets, \$40. Or all for \$375. Call 453-6123.

SLIDE projector, Kodak Carousel 4600 w/127 mm f/2.8 lens, 3 trays, \$50. Call 985-8962.

PA/DJ sound system, 4 Yamaha S115MTII speaker cabinets, QSR 1400 amp w/cabinet case, 5 channel mixer/equalizer, 2 Sony CD players. \$900 OBO. Call 875-6815.

AUTOMOTIVE

'97 TOYOTA Celica GT convertible. 80K miles. Leather interior, AM/FM/CD, A/C, PW, PB, cruise. Take over pymnts. Must qualify. Cell: (727) 741-7748.

'96 CHEVY Blazer. 4 dr, PW/PL, A/C, CD player, tinted windows. \$4,500 OBO. Call 967-1728.

'02 ACURA RSX-Type-S. BOSE sound w/ 6 disc changer. 6 spd, factory spoiler. 24K miles. Take over pymnts. Call Noah, (863)441-1657, or e-mail connell@htn.net for pics.

'88 TOYOTA 4Runner, 3.0, V-6, 5 spd., SR5 pkg. w/air, cloth, cruise, factory alloys w/ new Bridgestones, silver, 155K, original classic SUV. Toyota dealer maintained. \$4,600 OBO. Call (727)796-2472.

'91 CHEVY S10 w/bed liner. Tinted windows, V6, 4.3 liter. \$1,700 OBO. Call 989-1714, 6 to 8 p.m.

'83 JEEP CJ7. Restored, rebuilt engine/transmission. \$4,800. Call 960-0840.

'02 LINCOLN Navigator, red. 13,300 miles. Let's talk about price. Call 294-1579.

'93 TOYOTA Celica GTS sport. Full power, auto, new tires. 116K miles. \$4,200 OBO. Call 361-5126.

'87 JEEP Comanche pick-up. 6 cyl, 5 spd, cold AC, high miles. \$1,650 OBO. Call David, 817-5216.

'00 CHRYSLER Town & Country LXI. Black minivan, 3.8L, V-6, auto, PW, PL, cruise, ABS. Remote keyless entry. Dual air, climate control. 1 owner. 67K miles. \$17,000. Call Chris, 244-5870.

'95 NISSAN Sentra. Auto, A/C, radio, new tires/battery/brakes. \$2500 OBO. Call 835-8014.

'77 THUNDERBIRD, V-8. \$800 or trade for motorcycle. Call 719-7143.

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

LIVE OAK, 1 acre on west side of Live Oak off US 90. Beautiful trees on a hard road near Suwannee River State Park. \$6,900. Call Darlene, 757-0805, after 6 pm.

PASCO, quiet Lake Bernadette. 3/2, family room, living-dining room. 2 car garage, screened patio. 1,736 sf. Built in 2000. \$139,900. Call (813) 243-4444.

TAMPA, 83rd St., 3/1. Big backyard. New 4-car driveway. Remodeled. 0 down, \$650/mo. Easy qualify. 294 1579.

PETS

AMERICAN Eskimo dog, white. 8 mo., trained, certified, vaccinated. Loves children, playful, energetic. No one home to take care of him. \$400. Cage, \$150. Call Josephine, 920-9330.

JACK RUSSELL terrier, white hair. 18 mo. old male. Neutered, all shots. Great with kids. Good lap dog. Call Dennis, 643-0490.

MISCELLANEOUS

LOST: gold & diamond bracelet in County Center or downtown. Diamonds in flower design. Please call 874-0104.

TRAILER, unfinished 4X10 utility. Almost finished. Have 2,500 lb. axle. You finish. Needs tailgate, wood floor. \$175. Call 948-3534.

WANTED: 200 to 500 acres of land to lease in north Florida or south Georgia. Call 948-3534.

CANOE, 16 ft. Mohawk, Nova 16 model, Royalite R-84, 62lbs. Flatwater to Class II capable. \$350. www.mohawkanoes.com for info. Call 727-796-2472.

'85 YAMAHA Virago XV1000. Purple, new rear tire, battery & leather seat. Jardien 2 pc drag pipes, K&N jet kit. Hwy pegs. \$2,150. Call 468-0186.

'00 KAWASAKI Dual Sport motorcycle. 4 cy., water cooled. Legal on/off road. Low miles. Garage kept. No time to ride. \$3,200 OBO. Call BILL, 886-2820 or 505-5573.

CAMPING trailer, Jayco Eagle 10. A/C, heat, new tires, awning, screened room, 12 volt convertor. Sleeps 6-8. Light to pull, 1350 lbs. \$3,850. Call 689-0975.

BASS BOAT, '91 Prowler. 16 1/2 ft, 40 hp Johnson, drive-on trlr, Garmin fish finder, extras. \$3,500. Call (352) 583-9986.

BOAT, 10 ft, flat bottom, aluminum, \$40. Open utility trlr, 12 ft, \$275. Call 980-1505 after 6 p.m.

STABILIZER stand for fifth wheel RV, \$50. Like new 22k fifth wheel hitch, \$350. Call (352) 567-7004 or (813) 672-4472 after 5 p.m.

JEWELERS display cases, lighted w/storage compartments below. Each approx. 5 ft. \$400 for both. Call 661-3960, lv msg.



Hillsborough County

NEWSLINE

A monthly newsletter published by the Communications Department for Hillsborough County employees.

Communications Department
County Center, 1st floor
Call 272-5314 and tell us your news.

Hillsborough County Board of County Commissioners
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