

## Message from the Administrator: Coming together in a time of crisis

Four weeks ago, Hillsborough County was staring into the face of a potentially devastating disaster when Hurricane Charley was forecasted by the experts to deliver a direct hit to Hillsborough and Pinellas County by coming right up Tampa Bay from the south. We were so fortunate that the storm turned and we had virtually no impact as a result. I was proud of the professionalism and helpfulness that county employees displayed throughout and after the event.

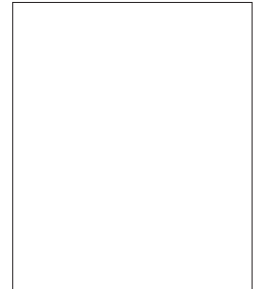
When the hurricane showed signs of approaching Florida, our Public Safety staff sprang into action, providing daily reports on Charley's progress, activating necessary staff from other departments, and extend-

ing hours at the Emergency Operations Center. Staff from that department could be seen giving interviews to the media late at night and then early the next morning before most of us had even left for work.

On Friday, the EOC became a flurry of activity as county employees, city employees and others came together as a team to make sure our community was as ready as possible for Charley.

As the storm neared and looked to be coming ashore in our backyards, staff from all over the county put their emergency plans into action. Computer files were backed up, essential equipment was moved out of harm's way, and plans were made

**Pat  
Bean**



regarding contacting staff over the weekend. Public Works and Fire Rescue staff began helping residents fill hundreds of sandbags. County facilities were secured, shelters were opened, and special needs citizens were moved to safety.

In addition to the folks working at the EOC, a command center was set up at NetPark by eight county departments to be ready to dispatch 400 available workers after the storm to remove the expected debris. Some county road crews even spent the night at their units in case they were needed immediately after the storm. Employees from many departments who had volunteered to staff the Citizens Response Center at the EOC took their posts and answered the phones, receiving 150+ plus calls per hour from worried citizens. Also at the EOC, representatives from most departments and agencies filled every seat in the command room, coordinating their organization's response. These employees literally agreed to leave their families and let themselves be locked inside the EOC during the storm, in order to be ready to help with preparations before, during and after the storm.

With their facilities closed, Parks, Recreation & Conservation Department

(See *CRISIS*, Page 2)



### **MLK Scholarship Committee Thanks Employees**

Charles Davis, president, Clarence Fort, second vice president, and Gerri Freeman, board member, of the Hillsborough County/City of Tampa Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund Committee recently presented County Administrator Pat Bean with a plaque, thanking her on behalf of the employees that donate to the scholarship. Since 1989, the committee has awarded more than \$423,500 to deserving students.

## They Light Up Your Life

Haven't we all had the experience of driving down a busy road, hitting red light after red light, and wishing we could turn them all green? Or wished that we could hit a button and speed up the cycle of lights at an intersection? Well, tucked away in the County Center on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor is a center that can do all of that and more.

This Traffic Management Center, run by the Traffic Services division of the Public Works Department, serves as a hub for the county's intelligent traffic system. On the wall, television screens show real-time images of various major intersections around the county, such as Fletcher Avenue/I-275 and State Road 60/U.S. 301. A control center allows employees to zoom and pan around the images on the screen, looking as far away as a mile from the intersection to see what is going on.

Staff uses the information on the television screens and sensors in the ground to change the timing of light signals when necessary. This helps to reduce traffic jams or to clear traffic out of an area where an accident has occurred. Staff from the county and the Sheriff's Office also occasionally visits the center to better understand a traffic problem occurring at an intersection.

In addition, employees run computer simulations to understand how traffic would be affected by changes to a road, such as putting in new traffic lights. This helps them in deciding whether or not to recommend improvement projects for different roads. When residents see these simulations, they are often amazed at how accurate they are in re-creating chokepoints and problems.

Mike McCarthy, acting director for Traffic Services, makes it clear that "job one" for them is optimizing the signals to help people get through roads quickly and safely. The second role of the division, he says, is to gather data that will help them understand how to improve traffic flow.

The Traffic Services division also maintains a variety of other cool devices. In a dozen places around the county, emergency



Robert Wood, engineer technician for the Traffic Services Division, watches over the intersections of the county in the Traffic Management Center.

vehicles have a signal installed that can automatically change traffic lights to allow them to pass through an area. Also at some railroad crossings, sensing devices are installed that detect the approaching train, and will automatically turn the signal red for the cars crossing the tracks, and illuminates a special "no left turn" signal that keeps cars from turning into the path of the train.

Another feature that came online recently is the installation of cameras that can count traffic electronically by sensing the images passing before them. This will significantly reduce the amount of staff time needed to collect road data.

All of these advances are just the beginning for Traffic **(See TRAFFIC, Page 3)**

### CRISIS

(From Page 1)

staff got ready to start feeding the approximately 200 people who work inside the EOC nerve center for however long it was necessary. Public Information staff also worked closely with the media that converged on the EOC from all over the country, ensuring information was continually flowing to worried residents.

As soon as Charley passed our area and we knew our community was clear, county staff from several departments left the area to help other counties not so fortunate. Fire Rescue, Public Works, Animal Services, Parks,

Recreation & Conservation and Housing & Community Code Enforcement all got involved.

Emergency Management sent 9-1-1 dispatchers, and damage assessment teams from various departments were formed to provide their assistance.

The state also set up a Regional Response Center at the Florida State Fairgrounds the following week to coordinate deliveries of donations to affected communities.

This center was coordinated by our Facilities Management section, and staffed by representatives of several other departments.

So many employees pitched in, that

I can not begin to name everyone. But let me say to each and every one of you, you showed the citizens of our county and me that county employees can be relied upon to provide selfless and professional service no matter what the circumstances. I know if we had suffered serious damage, we would have given our all to respond to our citizens. We learned some valuable lessons during Charley's threat. Be sure to incorporate those in our plans as we face future threats like Charley. And as Pete Dabrowski, the county's disaster planner, likes to say in his e-mails, "Think Sunshine!"

## TRAFFIC

(From Page 2)

Services. They hope to be able to build a much larger facility in the coming years that would allow them to expand their Traffic Management Center and network with the Sheriff's Office, Florida Department of Transportation, HARTline and the cities. Some of the cutting-edge plans for the future include illuminated message signs that would automatically warn drivers of traffic jams ahead as soon as they happen and publicize Amber Alerts. In the cities, these signs could tell drivers which public parking garages are full in real-time and direct them to the best places to park.

New electronic controllers at intersections would have Uninterruptible Power Supplies (UPS) like many of us now have on our computers. This would keep traffic signals from going on the blink when they are hit by lightning, keeping them functioning for a few hours until repairs could be made. In the works also are plans for traffic signals to be controlled and tied together on all major roads, so signal lengths could be changed at different times of the day throughout the county.

Hillsborough County is one of the leading governments in the area of Intelligent Traffic Systems. Bernardo Garcia, formerly the director of Public Works Department, saw the promise of this technology several years ago and lobbied the County Commission for funds to provide these upgrades and to seek out federal funds. Today, the department is working on such new ideas, that vendors frequently come to them to try out their prototypes and new software.

So, the next time you are driving through one of our major intersections, smile and wave at the Traffic Services staff who might be watching the cameras. They are working hard to make your commute as quick and easy as possible.

## Celebrate Customer Service Week!

Hillsborough County will be recognizing the many staff members throughout county government who are working with customers every day during National Customer Week from Oct. 4 - 8. Customer Service Week is a national event devoted to recognizing the importance of customer service and honoring the people on the frontlines of the service revolution. Customer Service Week first began in 1988 as part of the International Customer Service Association.

Customer service begins with you and your fellow employees. All employees provide customer service to other departments and the public, but we also have several departments that have exclusive customer service sections that deserve special recognition, such as ITS with its Help Desk, the Water Department, Solid Waste Management, and the Citizen Action Center.

Throughout this week, Customer Service Departments throughout the County will highlight the staff who work so hard to meet the needs of Hillsborough County residents. Displays will be set up in the County Center Lobby. Departments who wish to participate may contact Tom Every, 272-5314, to reserve space for a display or to coordinate a joint display. The space is limited, so call soon. Bring pictures of your staff, lists of the services you provide or giveaways for staff. Let's get together to honor the many caring employees who make Hillsborough County so successful.

## BOCC AWARDS CEREMONY

At left, Martin Montalvo of Public Works was recognized for the Planning Commission Award that the department received for its involvement with the Balm Road Wetland Creation and Stormwater Treatment Project.



HTV22 also was recognized for several awards staff received from the Alliance for Community Media and the Beacon Awards. Shown at left (seated) Cornelia Washington, Sandra Sroka, Ligia Large, (standing) Patrick Dowling, Kevin Hoag, Fran Alessi, Scott Hunt, Tammy Peralta and Ruslana Panov.



Several Parks, Recreation & Conservation Department employees and volunteers were honored for their hard work by the National Association of County Parks & Recreation Officials.



## GOOD NEWS

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Fire Rescue Chief William Nesmith has been elected president of the Florida Fire Chiefs Association, Florida's leading management education organization for fire and emergency services professionals; the professional association specializes in promoting and supporting excellence in fire and emergency services management. FFCA programs help members maintain and develop their management and leadership skills.

Bernardo Garcia, Assistant County Administrator for Community Services, has been selected to receive the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) 2004 International Award in Memory of Orin F. Nolting. The award recognizes a chief administrator who has successfully adopted or participated in a program with another country, furthering the cause of international understanding and cooperation.

The county's Purchasing Department has joined an elite group of purchasing organizations by receiving the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing's Outstanding

Agency Accreditation Achievement Award. While the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing has 2,100 members throughout North America, only 75 governments have received this distinction.

Real Estate's Peggy Hamric was honored in the governmental category of the Tampa Bay Business Journal 2004 Business Woman of the Year awards in a ceremony that was held Aug. 20 at the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center.

Purchasing's Joseph Jackus, has been appointed to the Marketing AdHoc Committee of the National Institute of Governmental Purchasing, a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to helping governments manage tax dollars wisely. The committee develops goals and objectives that relate directly to the institute's strategic plan.

### LETTERS

"As the Service Coordinator for Patrician Arms low-income senior housing, I would like to thank you and the entire emergency service for the great job in our recent hurricane threat. I felt very good on Thursday when you called us to review the special needs residents. Further, you called us for an entire evacuation of our building and to say you would be sending three evacuation busses early on Friday morning. Although we missed the brunt of the storm, I feel Patrician Arms residents would have

been safe under your protection if we were hit. I want you to know we appreciate your efforts and excellent organization," said Rita Bott.

"I wish to commend the director (Bill Studer) for a superb job of information availability, distribution and preemptory evacuation during the Hurricane Charley emergency... I am thankful for the professionals in charge of the Department of Public Safety in Hillsborough County," wrote Apollo Beach resident J. Goetz.

When Larry Ogle's water pressure dropped, Ron Weeks, utility maintenance worker, responded. "Mr. Weeks did an outstanding job. He was professional in every aspect and extremely thorough in his works. Mr. Weeks is a true credit to his job," wrote Ogle.

"We wish to acknowledge Mike Crawford (Planning & Growth Management Department). Mr. Crawford recently responded to a possible code violation by a new home builder. He is an absolute credit to your department and should be acknowledged as such. Due to Mr. Crawford, we are finally able to move forward with an extremely unpleasant situation after several weeks of inaction," wrote James & Kathy Schubert.

Real Estate's Jennifer Swanson was so helpful to David Bartelt, FLD&E Surveying, that he wrote to thank her for the "knowledge and expertise, which she patiently and professionally provided." He wrote, "Jennifer is a very valuable component of your team... you are extremely fortunate to have such an individual with whom you can work."

"Thank you so much for your professionalism, kind advice, and overall attitude toward a client. You are definitely an asset to your workplace, because it is precisely people like you that make long waits for action orders bearable. Your supervisor, Barbara Merritt, should feel very proud to have you on her staff," Terri Krapfl wrote to Lynn Butler of the Citizen Action Center. The action order involved a section of damaged sidewalk.

(See **LETTERS**, Page 5)



### Beloved employee returns for visit

Dot Small (center), returned in August with her daughter, Yolanda (left), for a reception in her honor put on by Pat Bean, county administrator, and employees from the 26th Floor of County Center. Dot, a retired 30+ year employee of the county, had been helping out part-time on the 26th Floor for many years. She was injured during the fire alarm that evacuated the building in March, and had not been able to return to work. We are all glad to see she is doing better!

## MORE KUDOS TO STAFF



## LETTERS

(From Page 2)

Several Parks, Recreation & Conservation Department employees received kudos from Jose Couret, assistant principal at King High School, when they helped with the celebration for seniors. "They demonstrated both professionalism and excellent customer service interacting with students and faculty. Ms. Mary Clements worked diligently coordinating with both organizations to ensure that equipment arrived promptly and was set up properly. Mr. Joe Gibbons designed the wheel chair relay and enthusiastically trained the faculty to run it safely. Mr. Louis Orihuela took the initiative by helping staff facilitate their particular duties. Finally, Mr. Russell Elefeterion managed a stage of the event independently, motivated the students and continuously cheered them on. I commend your department for their commitment to youth and their expertise in the field of professional recreation services."

Consumer Protection's Ben Chapman received a note from Bob and Norma Bray for his help resolving a problem with a swimming pool. "We would like to thank you again so very much for all that you and the Consumer Protection Agency have done for us. Your help in getting this matter resolved has been invaluable and we will be eternally grateful. The knowledge and skills that you possess are a tremendous asset to your agency and they are very fortunate to have you on board."

After Animal Services' Tom Green and Michelle Parisi responded to a request

**Public Works Department was recognized at the recent BOCC Awards Ceremony for two awards they received from the Florida Association of County Engineers and Road Superintendents. Roger Cox, left, was named the Urban Engineer of the Year, and the Community Traffic Safety Team was recognized for their Red Light Running/White Enforcement Light Project. Right, Chief Deputy David Gee of the Sheriff's Office and Mike McCarthy of the Traffic Services Division are recognized by Comm. Pat Frank for the award.**

for help with neglected cats and dogs, Roseanne Pisa wrote to say, "Thank you for listening to me and taking action."

Sun City Center resident and Realtor Dick Randall wrote to Commissioner Ronda Storms: "I would like to commend one your county employees, Ms. Doris Loughlin, zoning technician with Planning & Growth Management, South County Office, Ruskin. I met with Ms. Loughlin on one of her busy days and she took the time to pull out some maps and courteously gave me the information I needed to pass on to my buyer... Ms. Loughlin is an asset to our community."

"I just wanted to pass along the good job that Tom Green, Terrie DiSalvo and staff performed this week on a situation in Dogwood Hills," wrote Brandon resident Eric Bush.

"I would like to extend a thank you, on behalf of the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office, to the Hillsborough County Water Department, specifically to Helen Kephart and Tammy Henry, for the cooperation those employees put forth from their demanding schedules to assist our office with an important shipment of equipment. Our office is extremely grateful for the help your employees provided at a time of need," wrote Major Gary G. Terry after receiving a shipment of 900 personal protection equipment kits.

Human Resource's Grace Burmeister wrote to thank Amin Ghalayini for his help when she dropped her car keys down a storm sewer drain. "Needless to say, I was lost for what to do. I came back to the County Center, and Amin immediately sprung into action. He went to his county vehicle, retrieved some type of instrument used by your department staff to pick up trash. Amin then removed the manhole cover directly over the sewer drain, and retrieved my car keys."

Joel Jackson of Parks, Recreation & Conservation, received this e-mail from Mike Ehrlich: "I read about the opening of the new leg of the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, so I decided to check it out last Sunday (Father's Day). Just wanted to let you know how impressed I am with your work. The trail is exceptionally well designed, constructed, and maintained. You even thought of the convenience of water stations along the way—quite unexpected, and the cold water tasted great! You and your staff have created an exceptional recreational opportunity. Thank you."

**Questions, Problems  
About County Services?**

**Call the Hillsborough  
Information Line at**

**272-5900**

## CLASSIFIED

### MERCHANDISE

EXERCISE: Health Rider, \$250; thigh rocker, \$50; Ab Doer, \$25. Make offers. Call Barbara, 884-8473.

VCR, stereo 4 head, \$20; 5-disc DVD player, \$40. Karaoke machine, \$40. Call (863) 859-2007.

ELECTRONIC air hockey table, 7 ft. \$250 OBO. Call 754-6161.

PATIO chaise lounge chairs w/ pads, \$150 OBO. Metal wheel barrow, \$15. Call 933-6203.

DINING table w/chairs, wood. \$75. Call 754-7376, lv msg.

HOBBY cases, 55X2X2. \$9. See-N-Joy. WhirlyGigs.com, or call 754-7376.

WEDDING gown, new. Size 14, halter style. \$400. Call 924-0050.

ENGAGEMENT ring, 1 ct princess cut center w/diamonds in 14kt gold band. Matching band. \$1,500. Call 924-0050.

DIVING equip, everything goes. \$350. Call 985-5704.

### AUTOMOTIVE

'98 DODGE 1500 Ram Pickup. V8, dual cab, remote. \$8,500 OBO. Call (863) 859-2007 after 5 p.m., or lv msg.

TIRES, truck, 4. Make offer. 48 inch steel bed extender, \$50 OBO. Call 340-2229

'92 CHEVY S-10. V-6, auto. 175K miles. \$2,700 OBO. Call 817-1795.

'97 CADILLAC Deville. 12 CD audio, leather. 86K miles. \$7,500 OBO. Call (727) 481-8875.

'99 TOYOTA Sienna XLE Van, 8 pass. Power sliding door. 63K miles. \$13,500 OBO. Call 931-4115.

'97 FORD Taurus GL. V6 auto. All power. 136K miles. \$2,500 OBO. Call John, 832-3598.

'95 MAZDA 626 LX. 5 spd. 161K miles. \$2,000 OBO. Call 633-0866.

'91 CHEVY Corsica. V6. \$1,200 OBO. Call 272-5140.

'88 MAZDA RX7 SE. 5 spd. 103k miles. \$2,750. Call 948-0582.

'98 DODGE RAM, 1500 dual cab. Full power. \$8,000 firm. Call (863) 859-2007, lv msg.

'04 FORD Taurus SE. V6. On-board info center. \$15,500 OBO. Call Troy, 625-8912.

'91 HONDA Accord LX engine & trans, 4 drs w/pw. 72K miles. Call 265-0634.

'01 RANGER X-CAB Edge. 5 spd, V6. 35K miles. \$10,000. Cell 334-2384.

'69 NOVA SS 350. V8, auto, buckets, mags, new paint, headers. \$8,500. Call Tim, 763-6164.

'98 CHEVY Suburban, 6 dr. Take over pymnts. Must qualify. Call 546-0364 or 899-1907.

PARTS for '90 Chevy Lumina 4 dr. Call 810-6863.

LIGHT BAR, chrome, fits '95

Bronco. Best offer or trade for '02 Toyota Tacoma tail-gate extender or whatever. Call 841-3443.

PARTS for '95 Nissan pick up. Right fender & filler panel, \$100. Front bumper center section, \$50. Fiberglass bed cover, \$125. Call 651-1288.

### REAL ESTATE

VALRICO/Brandon, singlewide mobile home in +55 park. \$233/mo. lot rent. \$9,800 OBO. Call 928-5302.

SEFFNER, dbl wide, '85. 3/2 w/den, screened porch. \$24,000. Call 986-2058.

SOUTH TAMPA townhse, waterfront, 2/2 1/2. Gated. \$145,000. Call 835-0459 for appt.

WEST TAMPA, 2/1. Wood frame, 3402 N. Armenia Ave. \$139,900. Call 230-4629.

### MISCELLANEOUS

'73 BONITO bowrider, trlr. Motor doesn't run. Make offer. Call 340-2229.

'96 HARLEY DAVIDSON sportster 1200. & 6,000. Call 434-5513.

'99 TOWER BOAT, Keylargo 19 ft. w/115 HP Evanrude. Fully rigged. \$10,200 OBO. E-mail at: snookamania@verizon.net, or call Steve, 363-2514.

'03 SUZUKI 4 wheeler. Loaded. Ms chest protector. \$3,800. Call 967-2612 or 920-4079.

'98 HONDA Shadow Spirit 1100cc motorcycle. 22K miles. \$4,500 OBO. Call Jason, 363-5127.

'83 MOBILE home, 1/1, 12X45, You move. \$3,000. Call 643-5050.

### PETS

JACK RUSSELL pups. Ready 9-17. 3 males, 1 female. \$300. Call Robert, 293-0424.

PUPS, 2 free to good homes. 14 weeks. Hound/curr and pit/curr mix. Call Tina, 477-8283 or Bill 277-4657.

COCKATIELS, adult, yellow & gray. \$25 each. Call Wanda, 716-2483.

KITTENS, 2 female tabbys. Free to good home. Approx 8 wks. Left homeless by Hurricane Charley. Call 230-4629.

### WANTED

FEMALE roommate, age 22-25. Brandon 2 bdrm apt. Call 843-8878 after 5 p.m. or wknds.

CARPOOLER from South County area. Call Linda, 641-7143.

GOOD home for Boston terrier. 7 yr. female. Call 664-8931, after 6 p.m.

HOUSE to rent, 1 or 2 bdrm. for 4-6 months. In South Tampa or St. Pete area. Call 727-452-6462.

SEAT for flights, local or long distance. CAP member Tampa. No ticket. Can maintain straight & level. Call 754-7376.



#### 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.

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