

March 2006 • Vol. XXII No. 6

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BRIEFS

Sick Leave Bank Open Enrollment Begins

The enrollment period for county employees who are not currently members of the Sick Leave Bank is open through the month of March. Only those employees currently in Sick Plan A are eligible for membership.

To join, employees must work at least 20 hours per week, have one year of continuous service and an accrual balance of at least 64 hours (8 days) of sick leave. In addition, new members must donate one accrued sick leave day - or a total of eight hours - to the Sick Leave Bank.

All applicants must complete the *Sick Leave Bank Program Application for Membership*, which should be forwarded to Human Resources, located on the 17th floor of County Center, no later than close of business on Friday March 31. Applications, along with copies of the resolution authorizing the establishment of the Sick Leave Bank, are available on COIN or in the Human Resources Department.

(More Briefs, page 5)



No "I" In Team!

County Administrator Pat Bean's *State of the County* Address Scores Big With Commission

"Entertaining, yet informative," said Commissioner Mark Sharpe.

"That was worth the wait," agreed Commission Chair Jim Norman.

Each was referring to the State of the County address delivered by Hillsborough County Administrator Pat Bean during the March 1 County Commission meeting.

The sports-themed video address features members of the executive team as "players" on Pat's

team, and highlights many of the county's accomplishments during this past year, including keeping the millage rate low; building two libraries and two fire stations and opening the SouthShore Regional Service Center.

The video, which can be downloaded from COIN this entire month, was produced by HTV22.

The annual address is a requirement of the County Administrator.



HTV22 "Bests" The Rest

HTV22 is the best cable access channel in the nation and it's got the awards to prove it.

Hillsborough County's own cable station came out on top last month in a national competition, with more than 500 other cable ac-

cess television entries in a range of categories. Named as the overall *Best Station* in the 2005 Cable Access Guild

Beacon Awards, the honor is the first of its kind for the station.

The Beacon Award Program is administered by the Cable Access Guild, which recognizes government, educational and community access television stations throughout the country for their creativity, budget, production quality and variety of programming.

In addition, HTV22's April Kellogg won for *Best Host*, and members of HTV22's production staff were finalists for *Best Show Open*, *Best Public Service Announcement*, *Best Specialty Video*, and *Best Bulletin Board*.

Kellogg took home the *Best Host* award.

A Grassroots Approach to Storm Preparation

MESSAGE FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

**PAT
BEAN**



Mild weather conditions these past few months have made it easy for us to be lulled into a false sense of security when it comes to storm preparation. As the old saying goes, "Out of sight means out of mind." In reality, though, now is the ideal time to become more vigilant about how we get ready for storms and other disasters.

Weather watchers say this pattern of wild weather between the months of June and November will continue for at least another 10 years. After witnessing firsthand last year's devastation, one of my top priorities is for Hillsborough County residents to know our plans and preparations for getting through an event with lives spared and as little damage as possible.

We've learned through observation that effective coordination before an actual event is key. Over the next several weeks, we'll implement our strategy for helping residents to know and understand which evacuation zones they live in; what actions they need to take to prepare their families, homes and businesses for hurricane season; and

what they need to do if a storm threatens.

We'll be taking our message about storm preparedness to places like churches, grocery stores, barber shops, restaurants and even college classrooms – all in an effort to reach those people who are typically left out of the mainstream communications loop.

As further proof of what a core activity storm preparedness has become for this county, the Emergency Management team will report directly to me in an effort to enhance communications and coordination between our public safety service providers.

On May 15, the county will host a Media Day event, meant to provide reporters with a first-hand view of our preparedness and response plans. They'll get a bird's-eye view into our system of evacuation bus routes, contents of the emergency information kit for citizens, plus radio and television programming messages that expert members of our staff, like Larry Gispert, Emergency Management Director, will be a part of throughout the season.

The importance of reaching our citizens during all phases of this implementation cannot be stressed enough. By working together, we can strengthen our ability to act, and most importantly, to stem losses.

Gulf Coast Community Shares Learned Lessons

Call it Storm Preparedness 101.

County Administrator Pat Bean, along with other Hillsborough County representatives, went on a discovery mission last month, visiting leaders in storm-ravaged Hancock County Mississippi to learn more about improving emergency planning.

Many Gulf Coast communities, including Hancock County, were hit hard by Hurricane Katrina.

During the daylong visit, Bean and her team got an opportunity to witness first-hand the devastating aftermath of a Category 5 hurricane and to present a check for \$100,000 to Hancock County, which Hillsborough County officials consider as payment for an after-action report.

Bean also discussed future assistance from Hillsborough to Hancock County, which was officially adopted by the County Commission after Hurricane Katrina hit in August 2005.



Emergency Management Director Larry Gispert and County Administrator Pat Bean present a check to Hancock County.

Commissioners, Latino Community Continue Dialogue

What is the quality of life like for Latinos living in Hillsborough County? That's a question that members of the Hillsborough County Commission are interested in hearing the answer to as they continue the ongoing dialogue with the county's Spanish-speaking population that began in 2004.

The Hispanic Town Hall Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 14, starting at 6:30 p.m., in the Armwood High School Auditorium, located at 12000 E. US Highway 92 in Seffner.

The forum offers residents an "open mic" to ask questions, voice concerns and talk with county officials about

any county service—from aging to zoning.

The meeting will be conducted in Spanish and later aired on HTV22 with English translation. A newsletter in Spanish summing up the evening's discussion will be mailed to meeting participants afterward.

Longtime ACA Bids Farewell to Hillsborough County

Veteran Assistant County Administrator Bernardo Garcia bid Hillsborough County goodbye last month.

He was responsible for the oversight of many of Hillsborough County's largest departments, including Public Works, Water Resource Services, Housing and Community Code Enforcement, and Planning and Growth Management.

Garcia began his career with Hillsborough County in 1997, where he served as Director of Public Works, interim Director of Planning & Growth Management, and as the Assistant County Administrator of Community Services, now called Planning and Infrastructure, where he led at various times the activities of the departments of Public Works; Water Resource Services; Solid Waste Management; Planning & Growth Management; Parks, Recreation and Conservation; Housing & Community Code Enforcement; Fire Rescue and Animal Services.

During his tenure, Garcia led a number of new infrastructure efforts throughout the county, including the comprehensive inventory of nearly one million transportation and stormwater assets with the use of digital right-of-way imagery, high accuracy GPS-locating equipment and automated pavement condition sensors.

A true believer in workplace diversity, Garcia continually encouraged the hiring of employees of all races and ethnicities, eventually making the Public Works Department one of the most diverse departments in the county under his leadership.

Garcia personally spearheaded a groundbreaking series of information-sharing and cooperation-building seminars among government and education leaders from the United States and the Republic of Mexico through his involvement with the American Public Works Association for which he was awarded the



Commissioner Ronda Storms presents Garcia with a proclamation thanking him for his years of service to the county.

International City/County Management Association's 2004 International Award in Memory of Orin F. Nolting.

In 2005, he also received Hillsborough County's Hispanic Man of the Year Award.

County to Offer Free Tax Preparation

Hillsborough County is offering free tax preparation to households earning \$45,000 a year or less.

The services are available in a variety of locations throughout the county.

In addition, financial education representatives from the National Foundation for Debt Management will be in attendance to answer residents' questions concerning money management.

To get started, representatives will need the following items:

- Photo identification

- Social security cards for you, your spouse and dependents

- Current year's tax package, if you received one

- Wage and earning statement(s) Form W-2, W2G, 1099-R, from all employers

- Interest and dividend statements from banks (Form 1099)

- A copy of last year's federal return, if available

- Bank routing numbers and account numbers for direct deposit

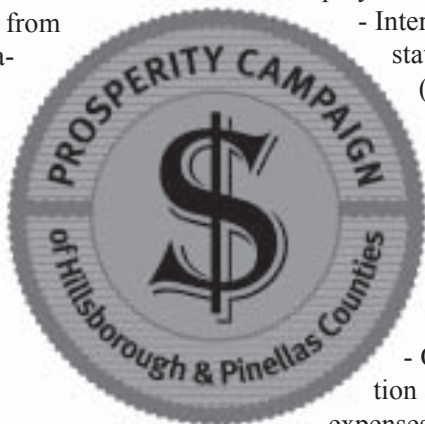
- Other relevant information about income and expenses: total paid for day

care, day care provider's identifying number

_ To file taxes electronically on a married filing joint tax return, both spouses must be present to sign the required forms

It is important that each person use the correct Social Security Number (SSN). The most accurate information is usually located on your original social security card. Each year, hundreds of thousands of returns are delayed in processing or credit/deductions are disallowed because names and social security numbers do not match Social Security Administration records.

A list of Prosperity Campaign sites offering tax preparation assistance can be found on Hillsborough County's Web site at hillsboroughcounty.org/hss/prosperity/.



GOOD NEWS — SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Queen Makes Proud Pop Beam

Mallory Hodge, a senior engineer in the County's Planning and Growth Management department, is one proud papa.



That's because his daughter Hanna recently took the title of 2006 Strawberry Festival Queen.

A junior at Durant High School, Hodge won the coveted title over more than two dozen other beauties competing for the chance to represent Plant City and the strawberry industry throughout the year.

Hannah's grandfather, Raymond Hodge, is a former Hillsborough County employee.

Solid Waste Staff Celebrates Diversity

Solid Waste Management held a "Flag Day" event last month in recognition of the cultural and ethnic diversity of its staff.

Employees designed posters displaying the flag of their native land, along with historical facts, photos, cultural events, and other information.



Winners of County's Fine Arts and Crafts Show Announced

Judging in Hillsborough County's annual arts and crafts show is now complete.

The amateur art show, which allows employees to express their inner artists, was held last month.

Congratulations to the following employees for their winning entries:

BEST OF SHOW

Pamela McCain, Parks Recreation and Conservation, for her acrylic airbrush painting, entitled "Cindy."

1ST PLACE

Martha Bingham, Clerk of Circuit Court, for her mixed media piece, called "Positive and Negative."

2ND PLACE

Ralph Colaianne, Real Estate Department, for his color photo, called

"Sunset Western Alaska."

3RD PLACE

Jimmye Hudson, Payroll Department, for his color photo entitled, "Lady Bug."

Receiving Honorable Mentions were Herm Greenberg, Health and Social Services; Paula Lynch, Parks, Recreation and Conservation; and Karen Crosskly, Library Services.

Additional thanks to Jackie Walker, Parks, Recreation and Conservation, for organizing the exhibition; the Hillsborough County Arts Council; Marcia Mejia and LaQuinda P. Brewington, Communications Department; and Gonzalvo Casares, Clerk of Circuit Court, for their help in making the event a success.

LETTERS

► After receiving a notice of a code violation from the county, Lithia resident Roy D. Salmon wrote a letter thanking staff for their help; particularly **Maricela Medrano**, Planning & Growth Management. "We moved to Hillsborough County after living in Sarasota and Manatee Counties and we never received the type of assistance and caring that this county has offered."

► Major General Lloyd J. Austin, III of United States Central Command sent a letter of gratitude to County Administrator Pat Bean for the county's participation in the Seychelles Disaster Preparedness Workshop. He said, "The briefings by Robert Burr (Aviation Authority), **Pete**

Dabrowski, (Emergency Management), and Peter Miller (Tampa Port

Authority) on airport, emergency operations center and seaport operations were invaluable in helping the government of Seychelles develop a more effective disaster management and emergency response program. Hillsborough County's cooperation with this important Central Command regional security cooperation program exemplifies the spirit of engagement and regional partnership so vital to strengthening our national security."

► "The Consumer Protection Board of Hillsborough County would like to commend **Jim Sudberry**, **Debbie Brown**, **Mike Rossiter**, **Eric Olsen** and **Errol White** for their excellent work in preparation for a Consumer Protection Community Workshop in Plant City. Their contributions are what make Hillsborough County a leader in service to its citizens." —Mac McDowell, Hillsborough County Consumer Protection Board

(See Letters, page 5)

LETTERS

(From Page 4)

- ▶ Gibsonton residents Ricky & Connie Smith wrote an e-mail thanking **Gary Tait** (Public Works) for assistance that led to speed limit reductions on Eastbay Road. "Thank you for having a gentleman like him on your staff."
- ▶ When resident Ollie Darden received stellar customer service from **John Testa** in the Citizen Action Center, she called to give her personal thanks, saying she was "very pleased and happy to learn that (Hillsborough County) has resources that can help her."
- ▶ When the Tucker family of Tampa had to euthanize their injured pet, they turned to the county's Animal Services Department. They said, "Your staff was so sensitive to our sadness and made the whole ordeal better in such a difficult situation. You made our painful experience better and we loved the kindness and care you showed to Sampson up to the very end."
- ▶ After his experience with Mike Kelly's staff in Real Estate, Mac McCraw of Pulte Homes said, "**Kurt Gremley** and **Anthony Haynes** are both very professional, courteous and it is a pleasure to do business with them. **Tom Georgast** also represents your group very well and I will look forward to (working with him)."
- ▶ "You and your committee members are to be commended on the BEST Black Heritage Celebration I have ever attended," MaryJo McKay, Aging Services, wrote in an e-mail to African American Liaison **Joyce Russell**. "With productions like that, everyone will soon realize that we are indeed becoming the best county government (in the nation)."
- ▶ "I believe **Karen Esto** is a tremendous asset to the Hillsborough County Planning & Growth Management department," said

Doug Belden, Tax Collector, in a letter to Craig Mahlman, PGM, about expansion of the office's Falkenburg Road facility. "She demonstrated the highest level of professionalism, dedication and delivery of quality services in the most expedient manner possible while ensuring compliance with all codes and regulations."

- ▶ Other employees also received accolades for a job well done from the Tax Collector's office. They include **Jeff Batten** and **Wendy Raszmann** of the Environmental Protection Commission; **Matt Ceron** and **Darlene Nye** of Fire Rescue; **Rick Cabrera**, **Joe Gilliland**, **Dennis Kline**, **Tony Marco**, **Carla Shelton** and **Craig Mahlman**; all of Planning & Growth Management and **Roy Mazur** of Public Works.
- ▶ A letter received from Debby Keene of Laroyce Keene Builders is indicative of the dedicated and outstanding customer service provided by the Plant City office staff of the Building Services Division, said Mike Knotek, manager. In the letter, Keene said, "I have been dealing with various building departments throughout the state for over 25 years and the Plant City office is one of the best. **Mike Knotek** is very considerate and uses common sense in addressing issues that may arise. **Roberta Campbell**, **Althea Harper** and **Marlene Lecaro** get everything processed quickly and treat customers courteously."
- ▶ Paula Williams, a Head Start parent, sent this letter of appreciation to the staff at Westgate concerning her daughter Cailsy: "Her personality has bloomed and she has become more sociable and interacts well with other children. I am so pleased and thankful for the Headstart Program. The Westgate team has really made a difference in my daughter's life."

BRIEFS

(From Page 1)

County's Elderly get Help from EHEAP

Hillsborough County now offers Emergency Home Energy Assistance Program Funds to help low-income residents 60 years of age or older who have received a past due or final notice for their home energy bill.

The program is intended for those residents that are 150% of the federal poverty guidelines or below. To qualify for assistance, residents must live in Hillsborough County and have a past due or final notice electric bill.

County Approves Housing Grants

County Commissioners recently voted to allocate about \$650,000 in federal funding that the county received for three local non-profit organizations.

The agencies will use their portion of the money to help residents buy their own homes, become more self-sufficient, and make homes more accessible for residents with disabilities.

Self-Reliance, Inc. will use its \$243,320 to help residents with disabilities make modifications to their homes, such as widening doorways for wheelchair accessibility and installing alarm systems for the deaf.

Beth-El Farmworker Ministry, Inc. will receive \$128,746 to provide services to low-income Hispanic households in the Balm-Wimauma area, such as housing counseling, self-sufficiency education, and financial literacy.

And, Florida Home Partnership, Inc., will use their grant of \$281,836 to assist with affordable housing programs managed through the state's Home Investment Partnership Program.

CLASSIFIED

MERCHANDISE

Dining room; 4-ch, rectangular, \$250. Call 385-6663.

Sewing machine w/ cabinet, J.C. Penney brand, like new, \$75. Call 645-8589.

Color television, 36" color television with remote, excellent picture quality, component, s-video, and composite inputs. Must sell. \$400 OBO. Call 323-3048.

Butcher Block Dining Room Table w/ white legs, 48"x30", great condition, \$25; Fisher S2000 DVD Player, \$25; GE side-by-side 23.5cu refrigerator \$200; GE 30" 4-Coil Burner Cook Top \$50; GE 27" Wall Oven \$75, beige w/ owner's manual, (Bundle deal on appliances-all 3 for \$300 or will sell separately). Call 677-5656.

6 chair dining room, china cabinet, creme in color, 3 small tables, hand-painted picture frames & more. Call 888-8454.

Treadmill for sale, like new, barely used, folds down for easy storage. Call 477-8283.

Leather furniture for sale, sofa, love seat and chair, greyish color, good cond. Asking \$300. Call 654-1243.

AUTOMOTIVE

'02 **Honda Accord** Special Edition, 4-dr, automatic, power accessories, excellent condition, 100K mi., \$7,500 OBO. Call 264-4202.

'93 **Jeep Grand Cherokee**, must sell, excellent condition, white, power windows and seats, tow package, \$3,300 OBO. Call 655-0995.

'96 **Chrysler Sebring Conv't JXI**, automatic, great condition, loaded, garage kept, \$4,000 OBO. Call 492-2089.

'98 **Cadillac Deville**, fully loaded, mint condition, sharp, garage kept, very low mileage, full maintenance file available. Can be seen during the day at Falkenburg AWT plant on Falkenburg Road, asking \$8,975. Call 653-0649.

MISCELLANEOUS

'99 **Starcraft popup**, new tires, new cables, sleeps 6, \$2,800, also new 9x12 screen house. Call 363-3386.

Motorized scooter, Pride Mobility Jet 2HD motorized scooter and car rack. Will sell both for \$3,000 OBO. Call 763-5098.

GE appliances, less than a year and a half old, dishwasher and range available, blk, \$200 for both. Call 323-3048.

New or used rims and tires wanted for any type of 4-lug rims and tires that fits a '96 Honda Accord. Call 244-8000.

'90 **Cobra 18m** 7-ft. Cuttie Cabin boat w/ magic tilt trailer, new seats and carpet w/ many extras, \$3,300 OBO. Call 977-1498.

Large indoor jet tub, 5x5 with pump, side covers for two sides.

Light pink with marble-like highlights, \$250. Call 757-0805.

Designer Wedding Gown, ivory, beaded, spaghetti strap, v-neck, full length, very elegant! Size 14, never worn or altered, tags still on dress. Asking \$800. Matching garter belt, never worn, \$10. Call 270-4274.

PETS

Beagle/cocker mix, 6 mos. old, free to loving home, neutered, all shots, very nice dog, loves everyone. Call 991-7433.

American Bulldogs for sale, born Jan. 1 and ready to go, Johnson line, double registered w/ American Bulldog Association and the Continental Kennel Club, \$500, firm. Call 763-4827.

Female white cat, 1 yr. old, free to good home. Litter box trained. Call 270-4274.

Chocolate labs ready 3/24/06, AKC bloodline, 3 females \$650 ea./6 males \$500 ea. Call 244-8271.

REALESTATE

New home for rent, 3/2/2, 1260sq ft., security system, tile, garage door opener, big back yard w/ fence. Also lease w/ the option to buy. Accepting Section 8. Rent is \$1,450/mo. Call 244-8000.

SE Tampa home for sale, \$150K, 5 min. from Brandon and only 10 min. from downtown Tampa. Approx 1,250 sq ft. All new kitchen, bath, carpet, doors

(interior and exterior), paint (interior and exterior), baseboard, stove, refrigerator, remote fans in every room, light fixtures (interior and exterior), and tile (kitchen and bath). No deed restrictions. Call 833-0453.

3+study/2/2, CB/Stucco 2,074 sq. ft. home, 5 yrs. old, convenient to I-75/I-275, formal liv. & din. rms, bkfst nook, screened lanai & pool and much more, \$389K. Call 971-5599.

House for rent, brand new 5/3/2, w/ game room, in the Wesley Chapel area. All appliances, washer, dryer and lawn care is included for \$1,700 mo. Call 713-2423.

Home for rent, Plantation Subdivision/North Tampa, 2BR/2BA patio home, wet bar, tile floors, \$975/mo. Security Deposit \$975. Small side and front yard. Centrally located community has pools, tennis, playground, jogging paths, etc. Call 962-0378.

WANTED

Carpool from Land O'Lakes, SR 54 & Collier Parkway area, 8-5 work hours, free parking in County Center. Call 996-3983.

Looking for a **free treadmill** or at very low cost. Call 301-806-3775.

Looking to buy a **'03-'05 Honda Civic.** Must be in excellent condition. Call 643-1913.



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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