



TEAM BRIEF

Social Media Use



High Fives



Mark Your Calendar



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MAY 2010





Newsbriefs

Multicultural Visitor's Guide Celebrates Our Diversity

May 10 - *Tampa Bay Your Way!* is the recently updated multicultural visitor's guide that highlights our area's diversity. Visitors and residents can view it to find out about multicultural restaurants, entertainment venues, cultural festivals and local services. It features an enhanced history section showcasing the area's diverse American Indian, African-, Asian- and Hispanic American heritage and landmarks to visit. In addition, this guide serves as a tool to market and attract minority conventions, conferences and meetings to this area. The Hillsborough County Tourist Development Council funded this project.

Saving Crops & Water During A Freeze

May 4 - A state tax incentive will now be available to farmers who implement practices that encourage water conservation efforts, which will greatly reduce the need for groundwater pumping to protect crops from annual freezes. This tax incentive was a recommendation by the Hillsborough County Agriculture Economic Development Council. County Commissioner Al Higginbotham presented this recommendation to the rest of the Commission for inclusion in its legislative package.

2010 Census Rate > 2000 Census Rate

April 29 - The U.S. Census Bureau announced that Hillsborough County's mail participation rate is 72 percent, which surpasses the 2000 final response rate of 70 percent! Even better news is Hillsborough County still has time to work toward 100 percent participation for 2010 as Census workers continue to gather input during Nonresponse Follow-up (door-to-door). This phase takes place May – July, and residents are encouraged to open their doors as Census workers visit households that did not mail back their census forms. Community Liaisons have been leading the local Census outreach effort since the campaign kicked off in September 2009.

Count Us In



United States
**Census
2010**



www.hillsboroughcounty.org/census

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New Signs Warn Residents About Storm Surge

April 22 - County Commissioners recently unveiled the first of 30 coastal storm surge signs at Williams Park in Riverview. Remaining storm surge signs will be located in unincorporated areas with major risk for storm surge. Signs are posted 13 feet above the ground to show how high the water could rise in that location. This public education campaign was approved by the County Commission in 2007 and is funded by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Planning & Growth Management – Hazard Mitigation Section is the lead in locally coordinating this effort.

Commission Chair Ken Hagan unveils storm surge sign

Clerk of the Circuit Court Makes For Good Government

April 21 - County Commissioners presented the *2010 Ellsworth G. Simmons Good Government Award* to Pat Frank, Clerk of the Circuit Court. Frank's distinguished public service career started with her election to the Hillsborough County School Board. She was then elected to the Florida House of Representatives, then the Florida Senate. Before being elected as Clerk of the Circuit Court in 2004, she served as a County Commissioner. This award was created by County Commissioners in 1996 to annually honor an individual or group that has played a significant role in improving government through leadership and vision.

Commission Chair Ken Hagan and Clerk of the Circuit Court Pat Frank



Gather Go Get

January - Florida now has new documentation requirements for residents renewing or obtaining a new driver's license or identification card. For office visits, you must bring original documents that provide your identity, social security number and residential address. Office visits are required if you are applying for your first driver's license or identification card, when your current license/card expires and you have already used the one-time "convenience" renewal option, or if you legally change your name.

[For more information, visit gathergoget.com](http://gathergoget.com)





Mark Your Calendar



Home Canning Classes

Tuesday, May 18, 1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Extension Office, 5339 County Road 579 in Seffner

Learn about pressure canning of veggies, meats, seafood, as well as making sweet spreads from fruit. Directions, recipes and resource lists will be available to take home.

FREE! For more info: 813-744-5519

Annual Elderly Affairs Day

Thursday, May 20, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Oaks at Riverview Community & Senior Center,
101 E. Kirby St. in Tampa

It's a day of fun for seniors with activities, such as a health fair with screenings, live music, dancing and prizes. This event is sponsored by Aging Services and the Tampa Housing Authority.

FREE! For more info: 813-272-6630

Seniors Prom

Friday, May 21, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Brandon Recreation Center, 502 E. Sadie St. in Brandon

The theme is *Around the World in 80 Days*, and each Senior

Center will represent a country from around the world. The event will have a crowning of King and Queen, dancing, food, games and music.

FREE! For more info: 813-272-6630

2010 Tampa Bay Hurricane Expo

Saturday, May 22, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

MOSI, 4801 E. Fowler Ave. in Tampa

The theme is *The First 72 Are Up To You!* so residents can better understand the importance of preparing your family for survival for three days after a natural disaster as officials are working to re-establish essential services, such as power, water and sewer. Event includes seminars and exhibits.

FREE! For more info: www.tampabayhurricaneexpo.com

Head Start Open House @ Kimmins

Tuesday, May 25, 10 a.m.

1502 E. Second Ave. in Tampa

This open house celebrates a recent \$8.6 million expansion to serve more Early Head Start children.

FREE! For more info: 813-272-5140

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National Senior Health & Fitness Day

Wednesday, May 26, All Day
All Senior Centers

Various exercise and nutrition education activities will be held at all centers.

FREE! For more info: 813-272-6630

Solar Cooking Classes

Saturday, June 5 or Friday, June 11, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Extension Office, 5339 County Road 579 in Seffner

Learn how to save money by using the sun to cook or have hot meals during power outages.

FREE! For more info: 813-744-5519x136

Parenting Classes

June 7 – 22, Mondays & Tuesdays, 6:20 – 9:30 p.m.
Chamberlain High School, 9401 N. Boulevard St. in Tampa

These classes use STEP (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting), which emphasizes improving communications skills, understanding children's behavior and discipline that makes sense, among other topics. These classes fulfill court-ordered parenting class requirements.

\$36 registration fee. For more info: 813-273-3652

Beat the Heat Running Series

June 19, July 17, Aug. 7, 7:30 a.m.
E.L. Bing Park, 7210 N. Taylor Road in Thonotosassa

Features a 5K run and 1K fitness walk. Final race features a pancake breakfast. Awards will be presented.

5K is \$20 for ages 19+ and \$15 for ages 18 and under.
For more info: 813-635-3519



Playbook Reminder: Social Media Use

Social media isn't a fad. Certain sites might have come and gone over the past five years, but the movement toward interactive communities continues, and Hillsborough County is developing itself as an active participant.

Hillsborough County's social media use policy ([Administrative Directive CO-09](#)) was recently developed to provide a dialogue with residents on Hillsborough County programs and services. As a County employee, engaging with residents through social media is acceptable when performed in adherence with your regular scope of work and responsibilities during work time, and if your director has designated you as a social media responder.

It's important to focus on social media efforts that are productive and assist in making your department more efficient. To further engage your department in social media, contact the Hillsborough County Communications Department. Staff can provide assistance with planning for professional, effective social media involvement and brainstorm ways to increase engagement. "We're reaching out to a more diverse group of people, many we wouldn't reach with mainstream media," said Lori Hudson, Director of Communications.

If approved by your supervisor, a good start to increase awareness among residents about Hillsborough County's social media is by including in your email signature links to our social media pages. A simple "Follow us on ... " will do the trick. In addition, remember that Hillsborough County news found at www.hillsboroughcounty.org can be easily shared with others by clicking on one of the social media icons on the upper left-hand corner of the page.

Jon Doe, Employee
Hillsborough County
Department of Departments
813.555.5555

FOLLOW US
[Twitter](#)
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[YouTube](#)
[Blogspot](#)
[News and Info](#)

Remember ...

- Unless there is a special need for independent social media pages that are approved by the County Administrator, Hillsborough County will host only **one** social media site (per social media platform) for use by all departments.
- As with other forms of public communication, such as telephone and email, employees who engage in social media during work hours are personally responsible for the content they publish.
- Social media must be used to further promote County programs and services, not to discuss internal county policies for employees or to air disputes or grievances.
- Most importantly, engaging in social media must be performed in adherence with the employee's scope of work or they must be designated to perform social media functions by their department director.
- Do not erase content posted to social media sites, as it is subject to public records laws.
- Staff should be in continuous contact with the Communications Department about the development of social media sites, especially when controversies arise.
- And of course, material on social media sites that is sexually explicit, racial, obscene, etc., is completely prohibited.



Improving coworker relationships

by developing your skills and increasing your choices

Are you building a bridge or a barrier among you and your coworkers? Below are three skills to develop your language of cooperation:

- **Listen to understand the other person's view**

Listening can be a bit like reading the newspaper. We quickly scan the paper for something that catches our eye and disregard the rest. We are also inclined to scan and delete as we listen, or unconsciously listen selectively and filter out information. Checking with the other person that you have heard correctly is a way to build understanding and giving the other person a deeper sense of being heard. Listen to understand and accept, rather than to justify, judge, advise or argue. By listening in this way, you are likely to bring out the best in the other person.

- **Talk constructively to share your view**

How do you tell your coworker that you feel put upon, misunderstood or that you are hurt and angry? People who are “honest” in expressing themselves can find it backfires and they end up building a bigger barrier. Although honesty is always best, it is important to be honest in a skillful way. Don't communicate indirectly or through humor and sarcasm. Don't accuse the other person of wrongdoing, but instead talk about yourself and how that person's behavior affects you. When our feelings run strong, we often speak in exaggerated terms. It is less provocative and you are likely to be taken more seriously if you make accurate statements and talk in positive terms.

- **Problem-solve for mutual wins**

If the listening phase does not lead to a resolution, it may be necessary to negotiate and problem-solve. Look for what you have in common and focus on solutions that create minimal cost with maximum gain. Create a “yes” rather than a “yes but” attitude. Although you may like directness and are comfortable with counter-arguing, a healthy disagreement means validating your coworker's idea, expressing your reservations and seeking alternatives for problem-solving. Don't forget to write down a specific plan of action at the end of the discussion so you and your coworker can go back to it and stay focused on an agreement.

Quick tips

Listen Acceptingly

- Understand first, respond second, and always be judgment free
- “Yes, buts” indicate argument rather than listening
- Giving the solution is not always the answer
- Take turns in having equal “air time”
- Put yourself in your coworker's shoes

Talk Constructively

- Avoid character assassination
- Talk to the relevant person, not everyone else
- Talk future, not past
- Remember that your body language does a lot of talking
- Solution pointing rather than finger pointing

Negotiate Successfully

- Beware of the quick fix
- Agree before you disagree
- View objections as unfulfilled needs, not as offensive remarks

Information obtained from Conflict Management in the Workplace (2008), by Shay McConnon



High Fives

Maricela Medrano, Planning & Growth Management, received kudos from Lucy Alvarez: “I wanted to thank you for having Maricela Medrano as your employee. I myself have employees that report to me and I must admit that the level of service that Ms. Medrano has offered my parents and I far exceed the common worker – she is exceptional ... She is very knowledgeable in her field and quite willing to help. Ms. Medrano is patient, while being careful to uphold all policies and procedures. She responds promptly and provides direction. It was indeed a pleasure to work with her. Her outstanding performance is what makes difficult situations much more tolerable. I commend you for having someone like Ms. Medrano under your leadership.”

Aging Services received two kind notes:

- “July of 2004 my father Raymond Cruz passed away. His wife (and my mother), Olivia Cruz, was alone and confused about the years to follow. She has a slight case of dementia, and I needed someone or some place that would care for her while I was working. I was informed by a friend that Hillsborough County Aging Services had a program for the elderly. We were interviewed and she was accepted. No person can imagine the impact this service provide. This is the most profound service that Hillsborough County can provide to this community. We need to take care of the people who have walked the past and got us to the future. The impact is immeasurable because the excessive cost for private care would bankrupt people psychologically and financially. These tax monies are not wasted – these are the dues we owe to our grandfathers, grandmothers, mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters. Staff is dedicated and they work hard to maintain the highest quality of service for the elderly. It’s the best group of county employees that I personally have experienced. The person that runs this program should be awarded the best in Hillsborough County. My personal experience is and forever will be that Hillsborough County Aging Services has helped my entire family and I want to thank them.” – Ray Cruz
 - “Many people like me depend upon your services to continue to provide the best possible care to our loved ones. My husband is a veteran who retired after 20 years of military service with the U.S. Air Force. I work for the Department of Veteran Affairs and it gives me peace of mind to know that my husband is being taken care of during the day. I am very grateful for the services they provide, especially the Ruskin Adult Day Care Center where my husband attends. They are extremely professional and very compassionate. They are helping my husband emotionally, mentally and physically with all the activities they do at the center. In fact, my husband loves the place so much that even on weekends he looks forward to going and expects for the bus to come all day long.” – Vicky Martinez
-



Library Services received a high-five from one of its younger patrons, Shorat: “Thank you for doing the summer reading program. One of the programs we did was the theatre program. My sister and I had fun watching it. We also did the music, and when I brought home my morocha, it broke and scattered all over my garden. In a few days, we had a bean plant! I also have the butterfly we made in art. And when we did dancing we made cookies. And the cookie I took home also took a mystery, who murdered (ate) it?! I thank you again for making this summer enjoyable, not only for me, but for my sister as well.”

Code Enforcement received accolades from Rosemarie Middleton of the Twelve Oaks Special District and Twelve Oaks Civic Association: “Words cannot express how grateful I am to Code Enforcement for taking care of the bee problem and clean-up of the property at 6402 Windwood Court. I know it was a team effort to get this job done. Neighbors on the street are pleased and have called to say ‘thank you.’ The clean-up has certainly helped to make a difference in our community. As you know, property values are affected by the looks of abandoned homes in a community. Code Enforcement is one of the most important departments in Hillsborough County. The service provided to older communities like Twelve Oaks is immeasurable. Your help is appreciated more than you know. Thank you.”

Water Resources Services received several recognitions:

- “In a world when we only hear about the negative, I believe we should commend someone who has done a good job. I had a serious sewer problem and was very upset, but **Zedekiah Clayton** assured me that the problem would be taken care of. He was assisted by **Leroy Hale** and **Delroy Campbell**. All three worked hard without stopping until they had the problem until control. They were very professional, courteous and worked as a team.” – Connie Linton
- “I want to thank you for the quick response to my inquiry a couple of weeks ago about an odor in our water. Several people from Water Resource Services have been out to discuss what may have been causing this problem. I think their final result was that the water line from the end of the street needed to be flushed out. (Five of the houses from the main line to the end of the street where I’m located, have not been occupied since March.) When this was done, the problem was gone, and we are very happy with the water and the service provided by your employees.” – Jack Baytos

Kim King, Planning & Growth Management (Building Services Division), received acknowledgements from customer Christine Weber: “I want to thank you so much for the time and effort you put into helping us. You are very special and I enjoy working with you. Thank you ever so much.”



Paramedic Richard Correia, Fire Medic Sean Hessel, Fire Medic Marlon Jones, Captain Charles Musselman, Fire Medic Lester Packard and Fire Medic Ryan Tolley received kudos from Juanita Platt: “Thank you for the quick response in getting to me. It saved my life. Thank you and lots of prayers.”

Loretta Magee, Animal Services, received a high-five from Randi Raaen of Tampa: “A very big thank you to Officer Loretta Magee, who followed up on information that led to the removal of two pit bulls from our neighborhood – they had killed at least 20 cats. I was very impressed by her proactive attitude. Our entire neighborhood thanks her!”

Health & Social Services (Sunshine Line) received several accolades:

- “**Michael Barry** is absolutely wonderful with our staff and clients. He is very friendly and courteous with everyone.” -- Gina Borne of the Plant City Dialysis Center
- “I would like to leave a compliment for **Dominic Rossi**. He was very nice, safe driver. My sister left her purse in the van after he dropped us off. He took the time to return it as soon as he could. I would definitely ride with him again.” -- Sunshine Line riders Toni and Kim Holcomb
- “I have a lot of medical problems and I can’t drive myself or ride the bus. I need help getting to and from the vehicle and **Patrick Delisser** always takes the time to assist me. He is very friendly and respectful. It is because of Sunshine Line and the service it provides that I am allowed to keep a sense of dignity even as I struggle through my daily routine.” -- Sunshine Line rider Bobbi Lundgren



We've Moved!



INFOLINE has moved to John F. Germany Library to join Library Services central call center. This consolidation should not result in any service interruption. Residents may continue to call INFOLINE at 813-272-5900 or Library Services at 813-273-3652 for information on any Hillsborough County service or program, referrals to other local programs and services, and/or library reference questions. Both lines are open seven days a week during the following times:

- Monday – Wednesday, 9 a.m. - 9 p.m.
- Thursday, 9 am. – 8 p.m.
- Friday & Saturday, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.
- Sunday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

9-1-1 Administration has moved to County Center, 13th Floor. Phone and fax numbers will remain the same: 813-744-5911/813-744-5857

Office of Neighborhood Relations has moved to County Center, First Floor. Phone and fax numbers will remain the same: 813-272-5860/813-276-2621

Consumer Protection has moved to 1101 E. 139th Ave

Child Care Licensing has moved to 3101 Clay Mangum Lane, Bldg 39

Children's Services has moved to 3191 Clay Mangum Lane



Junior Scientist's Project Licks The Competition



It's the perfect formula for a winning science fair project: A 12-year-old boy's curiosity, a school assignment, sample lickings from three family pets and two enthusiastic assistants from Water Resource Services.

For his project "Does Dog Saliva Kill Bacteria?" Parker Duet, a sixth-grade student at Tampa Bay Christian Academy, took home a blue ribbon from his school's science fair and a special award at the county science fair. He got the idea from observing his own dog, a Havanese nicknamed "GoGo," and a school lesson about ancient cultures and their belief that a dog's licking could heal wounds.

He had a hypothesis, GoGo and his aunt's two dogs, and his parents would provide all the supplies. But, he lacked two big-ticket items: the right kind of lab where he could incubate the cultures and scientists to supervise him. After a trail of many phone calls and lots of "no's," Parker's dad, Gary, found WRS' Environmental Laboratory.

There, Chief Environmental Scientist Laura Cintron and Environmental Supervisor Sandra Fernandez-McCoin—both dog lovers themselves—couldn't resist the opportunity to mentor a budding scientist. They juggled their schedules to fit in Parker's visits, taught him proper safety techniques, oversaw his work and signed the many related forms.

"I couldn't have asked for a better scenario," Gary Duet said. "The two of them were just fantastic."

"It was nice to be presented with a new problem that needed a solution," Fernandez-McCoin said. "I'm one of those nerdy people who like that."

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One of those problems was collecting saliva samples from GoGo, Rosie and Olive. None of the pooches proved to be droolers, and swabbing their mouths at home didn't collect enough saliva for the cultures. That's how the dogs found themselves in the lab's conference room.

"It was pretty funny – people with blue gloves on, on their hands and knees, scrambling after the dogs and sticking filters on their tongues," said Cintron, who as the owner of two retired Greyhounds, knows a thing or two about chasing after dogs.

Parker, whose favorite subject is science and who likes to play computer video games, ride his bicycle and run track, said his time at the WRS lab was a great experience.

"I really liked the people that helped me," he said. "I thought they were really caring, and they were good teachers."

And the answer to the question: Does dog saliva kill bacteria? Nope – not even by a nose.



TeamBrief is a monthly online newsletter by the Communications Department for Hillsborough County employees.

Communications Department

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E-mail stories ideas and good news [here](#)



Hillsborough
County

Board of County Commissioners

The mission of Hillsborough County government is to provide effective quality service at a reasonable cost with courtesy, integrity, and accountability in a manner that protects and enhances the quality of life of our diverse population.