



AVENTURA update

VOLUME 11 | NUMBER 2 | SUMMER 2008

A Newsletter Designed to Inform the Residents of Aventura

A COMMITMENT TO COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The City of Aventura's newsletter represents the City Commission's continued commitment to keep the community updated on important issues, including city government and services. This newsletter is published on a quarterly basis and your comments and suggestions are welcome.

MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to join with our community to make Aventura a city of the highest quality and a City of Excellence. We do this by providing RESPONSIVE, COST EFFECTIVE and INNOVATIVE local government services.



Waterways Park Grand Opening



On Saturday, May 3rd, Waterways Park officially opened its gates to Aventura residents in a celebration of sports. Special guests from our local pro teams joined in the fun: Billy the Marlin, TD from the Miami Dolphins, Burnie from the Miami Heat and Stanley the Panther.

The day started with a dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony along with the ceremonial first pitch. Children and adults alike enjoyed basketball, T-ball and softball games, Community Recreation Center activity demonstrations, a rock wall with slide, field games, music, arcade games and complimentary hot dogs and hamburgers.

The new park offers seven acres of facilities for all types of fitness and sports with lighted

multi-purpose athletic fields, an exercise path with 2 fitness stations, outdoor basketball court, and a covered playground. In between activities, park visitors can take advantage of the amenities such as a covered patio with picnic tables and benches and outdoor shelter. The welcome center is staffed and the park is equipped with restrooms and a lightning warning system. With the addition of Waterways, the City now has major parks in all sections of the City.

Waterways Park is located at 3301 NE 213 Street and is open to residents Monday from 8 AM – dusk seven days a week. Aventura Resident ID cards are required for entry. For more information call 305-466-8008 or visit the City's website at www.cityofaventura.com.

CHANGE IN CANDIDATE ELECTION DATES

Through a mail-in ballot election on April 22, 2008, Aventura voters cast their ballots in favor of changing the current date of Mayoral and Commission elections from March of odd-numbered years to November of even-numbered years. This change was recommended by the City Commission in order to consolidate the City's elections with county, state and national elections, thereby providing a cost-savings to the city of approximately \$70,000 per election.

In light of budget constraints levied on municipalities by the state legislature, the Commission and administration has sought ways to maximize costs in certain areas where feasible so that they may be utilized for other services for residents. Holding elections in conjunction with county, state and national elections would serve such purpose. Although the Commission had the authority to make this charter amendment without voter approval, because this change extends the term of the current Commission by approximately 18 months, the Commission determined it appropriate to seek voter approval. Approximately 18,000 ballots were mailed to registered voters in the City of Aventura. Valid ballots returned indicated 2,347 votes in favor of the change and 345 against.

As a result of this charter change amendment, the next City of Aventura candidate election will be held the first Tuesday in November 2010.

New Voting Equipment to Debut in August 2008

Beginning with the national primary in August 2008, the iVotronic voting equipment will no longer be utilized. Voters will make their selections on paper ballots using new DS200 equipment. After shading in

tions may request on-site demonstrations by contacting the Office of the City Clerk at 305-466-8901. Demonstrations will be coordinated by the City Clerk with the Miami-Dade County Elections Department so that



their selections on the paper ballots, voters will proceed to optical scan equipment where each page of the ballot, if there is more than one page, will be hand-fed by the voter into the optical scan machines and votes will be stored for tabulation at the close of the election.

We encourage each of you to become familiar with this new equipment between now and the August primary. The new equipment will be available for viewing at the City of Aventura Government Center at a date and time to be announced through the City's web site, AVTV and via notice to condominium/homeowner associations. In addition, condominium and homeowners associa-

tions may be familiar with the equipment prior to election day.

In addition, in order to avoid waiting at the polls on election day, we would encourage each of you to cast your ballot during early voting hours the two weeks prior to the election or by contacting the Miami-Dade County Elections Department and requesting an absentee ballot be mailed to your home. Questions may be directed to the Office of the City Clerk at 305-466-8901 or to the Miami-Dade County Elections Department at 305-499-8500.

Remember, every vote counts and we encourage you to exercise your right to vote!! Let your voice be heard.

MyAventura Message Center Keeps You Informed

MyAventura Message Center helps you stay in touch with a wide range of topics. Email arrives directly to your inbox whenever there is a broadcast of news and information from the City. Why not try it out? It's free and you can subscribe at any time on any topic. Click

the MyAventura Message Center button right on our home page and see which publications are currently available.



ONE PLAN FOR ONE STORM

Get A Plan and Be Ready for Hurricane Season



Hurricane Wilma photo courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Florida has many valuable resources such as:

- 1,200 miles of sand beaches
- 1,000 miles of rivers, streams and waterways
- Over 370,000 hotel rooms
- Over 1,250 golf courses

But it only takes ONE serious storm to cause a disaster in our community. Having a plan means you will be ready when it

happens. Hurricane experts agree that the relatively quiet 2007 season does not lessen the chance for a hurricane to make landfall in Florida in 2008. Even if we have a below average season, it only takes one major storm to cause devastating effects.

Being prepared ahead of time can make hurricane season safer and less stressful for you and your family.

GET A PLAN

Your plan should include emergency telephone numbers placed by your telephones, a disaster kit with supplies for 14 days and important documents stored in a waterproof container. Several family members should learn basic safety measures, such as CPR and first aid; how to use a fire extinguisher; and how and when to turn off water, gas and electricity in your home. Teach your children how and when to call 911 in the event of an emergency. Learn about shelters and evacuation routes before you need them. Remember to include items that take preparation such as securing a boat or special arrangements for pets. Take the time now while it is fresh in your mind to check your supplies from last year and see which items need replacement.

ACTIVATE YOUR PLAN

When a watch is issued, check your supplies and activate any part of your plan that requires time including evacuation. Once a warning is issued, that means within the next 24 hours the weather is going to deteriorate rapidly and it will be unsafe to leave your home or shelter. At this point, you need to be in a safe location to ride out the storm. Your plan should be in full effect and supplies ready to be used. 🌩️

HURRICANE SHUTTER PERMITS

It is that time again for us to start preparing ourselves for hurricane season. If you are thinking about getting additional protection found in shutters, please start the process as soon as possible due to the high demand for installation.

Beware of unreliable contractors. Please do not hesitate to verify if your contractor is licensed with the State of Florida or Miami Dade County. You can do this by contacting Miami Dade County directly or the City of Aventura Building Department.

For your reference, below are the requirements needed to be able to pull a shutter permit in the City of Aventura. Please do not hesitate to inform your contractor of these updated requirements.

Please submit TWO sets of the following with the Building Permit Application:

- 1) Site specific calculations signed and sealed by a Florida Professional Engineer.
- 2) Sketch of floor plan showing building measurements and height, indicating distances from the corners of the building.
- 3) Schedule of shutters with opening measures.
- 4) Notice of Acceptance MUST be marked accordingly and must be submitted on 11x17 paper.
- 5) Signed Contract between owner and contractor.
- 6) Authorization Letters from Manufacturer and Condo Association.
- 7) Special Inspector Form signed and sealed. 🌩️

AVENTURA UPDATE



MAYOR Susan Gottlieb

COMMISSIONERS

Zev Auerbach ■ Bob Diamond

Teri Holzberg ■ Billy Joel

Michael Stern ■ Luz Urbáez-Weinberg

CITY MANAGER Eric M. Soroka, ICMA-CM

CITY CLERK Teresa M. Soroka, MMC

CITY ATTORNEY

Weiss Serota Helfman

Pastoriza Cole & Boniske

EDITOR Rosie Marquez

CITY VEHICLES GO GREEN



Two hybrid vehicles were recently put into service as part of the City of Aventura's overall effort to Go Green. The Ford Escape was chosen to replace two older City vehicles for its maximum rating of 34 mpg and its ability to run solely on electricity for speeds up to 25 mph. The Ford Escape not only saves money in operating expenses, but it helps the City of Aventura decrease its carbon footprint. The City is working to continually find new ways to Go Green in its day-to-day operations. 🌱

Special Events: Past and Upcoming

ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION

The City of Aventura commemorated its 12th year as a "Tree City USA" at the annual Arbor Day Celebration on Friday, April 18th at the Aventura City of Excellence School. The Mayor and City Commission recognized area businesses, condominium associations, and individuals committed to sustaining our environment through the Beautification Program and the inaugural Go Green Program. The Aventura City of Excellence School students showcased their Go Green efforts through music, special projects and tours of their organic garden. The highlight of the celebration was a unique fashion show where students modeled imaginative clothing they created from organic and recycled items.



SENIOR PROM

Aventura seniors went back in time and celebrated high school memories at the Senior Prom on May 17, 2008! Music was provided by Frank Hubbell's 10 Piece Big Band. It was a night of desserts and dancing for all who attended.

4th OF JULY

The City of Aventura is hosting its 13th annual All American July 4th fireworks extravaganza.

The display can be viewed from any location along the Country Club Drives. The fireworks will begin promptly at 9 PM. In the event of rain, the fireworks will be scheduled for July 5, 2008 at 9 PM. For more information call the Community Services Department at 305-466-8930.

CULTURAL ARTS, THEATER & LEISURE PROGRAM

The Cultural Arts, Theatre and Leisure Program had an exciting season of shows and trips. Participants had a relaxing time sipping tea and eating desserts at the Serenity Tea House and viewed art collections from around the world at the Norton Museum in March. In April, they enjoyed the incredible musical performance of Neil Berg's 100 Years of Broadway. Look for upcoming excursions to Laffing Matterz and Mid-Life the Crisis. In August, shop till you drop at the Sawgrass Mills Mall and in September enjoy the afternoon aboard the Lady Atlantic II yacht in September. For more information on the City of Aventura Cultural Arts, Theater and Leisure Programs, call 305-466-8930.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Campers are enjoying the "Adventures in Time" theme for this year's Summer Camp that started June 9 and concludes on August 15, 2008 at the Community Recreation Center. Campers are participating in games, arts & crafts, swimming and exciting new field trips while diving into activities based on different time periods from prehistoric to futuristic.

Aventura's first sports camp is geared up for aspiring athletes to brush up on basketball, soccer, t-ball and flag football skills. Each week campers will participate in a different youth sport. Sports camp is in session from July 7 – August 1, 2008. This new program emphasizes development of athletic skills, along with building self-esteem, teamwork and good sportsmanship.

For more information regarding Youth Programs at the Community Recreation Center call 305-466-3883 or visit the City's website at www.cityofaventura.com.

ATHLETICS

T-ball/softball season had great participation for both boys and girls. The boys' softball

league was a hit with 175 players! Over 100 girls took part in the City's first girls t-ball/softball league. The girls' league quickly became a success as participants learned the skills to be outstanding athletes. All players learned the importance of teamwork and sportsmanship throughout the season. We look forward to another exciting season next year. 🏆



2008 Law Enforcement Officer Awards: Aventura Wins Three Awards

Three officers from the Aventura Police Department won LEO Awards for their exemplary work in 2007: Lt. Tom Labombarda, Detective Nick D'Arpino and Officer Chris Goranitis.

Lt. Tom Labombarda received the Support Services Award in recognition for his work establishing an E911 system. E911 allows 911 calls to be made directly to the Aventura Police rather than be routed through County 911 call takers. This new system is efficient and enables faster response to the public.

Detective Nick D'Arpino won Investigative Services award for his efforts in a case of armed sexual battery, kidnapping and armed robbery. Detective D'Arpino was able to obtain a full confession from both suspects using sound investigative interview techniques and expertise. Both sus-

pects were also identified in a photo lineup by the victims.

Officer Goranitis received the Crime Prevention/Community Policing award for his efforts to establish two programs: "Clean Streets and "Clean the Triangle, One Home at a Time." These programs addressed code violation problems in his patrol zone. Forming a partnership with the Code Compliance Unit, Police Officer Goranitis and Code Compliance Officer Joe Campodonico went to individual homes and businesses to get property owners' compliance with city code.

The LEO Foundation & The Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police acknowledge outstanding local police officers and support staff with annual awards in nine categories in recognition of professional law enforcement. 🏆

2007 POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR AND POLICE EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR

OFFICER JAIME CHALEM

Officer Chalem won the Officer of the Year award in recognition of being awarded Officer of the Month for three separate incidents in 2007. In February he was nominated for the first two events, one involving a stolen vehicle and the second involving another stolen vehicle containing \$15,000 worth of construction tools. The third award in May was the result of Officers Chalem and Kenneth Sealy being able to connect one burglary suspect to the same description of a known suspect from other reports in the area. The suspect turned out to be the same individual with a history of possession, theft and domestic violence charges.

KATHERINE MAAS

Katherine Maas won the Civilian of the Year award for her ability to think quickly in two incidents during 2007. In March, Police Communication Officer Maas was quick to react during an extremely busy shift on a night when our neighboring cities also had major incidents occurring while our Aventura Police were handling a growing situation at the AMC 24 Theater. Thanks to PCO Maas' quick reaction she was able to swiftly get the officers at the Theater the necessary back-up to keep them safe. Again in July, PCO Maas along with PCO Dawn DeJames coordinated with On*Star to notify Miami-Dade Police of a stolen vehicle's location which eventually resulted in the subject being taken into custody and the vehicle being recovered. 🏆

OFFICER GORANITIS RECEIVES “I CARE ABOUT MY COMMUNITY” AWARD

Officer Chris Goranitis has been awarded the “I Care About My Community” award in recognition for many positive achievements during 2007. He continually demonstrates the ability to translate community problems into practical solutions throughout the community.

Officer Goranitis has shown initiative in supervising the volunteer parking enforcement unit, condominium presentations, “Clean Streets Program”, and “Clean the Triangle” program.

The “I Care About My Community” award was established in 2007 to recognize community involvement by our officers in honor of our former Police Chief Thomas Ribel who dedicated himself throughout his career to give back to the community through fundraising and charity events.

In 2007 the award’s first recipient was Bryan Pegues for his outstanding volunteer work with children participating in a non-profit organization called Bit By Bit Therapy. Bit By Bit provides therapeutic hippo therapy (horseback riding) to disabled children that suffer from various debilitating diseases and injuries such as Autism, Cerebral Palsy and brain injuries. Lt. Pegues and his wife are still very active in this organization. 🐾

Preparing Our Future: Teaching Technology for the 21st Century



Learning to effectively use technology tools is vital for students to succeed in the 21st century. Aventura City of Excellence School promotes mastery of technology by offering a variety of computer courses and infusing technology within each classroom computer center. The skills the students are learning today will not only prepare them for the challenges of high school, college, and future careers, but will also enrich their lives through creative and innovative applications of computer science.

All of the 5th through 8th grade classrooms at ACES include teacher computers, projectors, SmartBoard, DIRECTV, and audio and video equipment. The SmartBoard is an interactive white board and a favorite of students and teachers. It replaces the traditional chalkboard and can display what is on the

teacher’s computer monitor. The SmartBoard uses a set of electronic pens, or even a finger, to write digitally or to move the mouse pointer. The ability to use virtual tools such as changing the screen into graph paper for a math class, completing a virtual dissection of a frog for science class, or animating learning games for vocabulary lessons engages students and stimulates learning.

At the K-5 level, students participate in a weekly technology course. Once considered subjects for middle and high school curriculums, elementary school students now learn keyboarding, basic Microsoft Office skills, and technology terminology. Students also use various computer-based programs both on and off-line to reinforce reading and math skills.

All K-8 classes have computer centers within their rooms. These centers are used to reinforce activities, research topics, access learning games, and complete projects. Fourth grade students are currently using the computers and the internet to complete a weather tracking project on Florida for their science class. The students review weekly weather reports, including temperature and rainfall averages.

In a Math 2 course, students are completing a project using www.explorelarning.com Gizmos. Gizmos are online simulations for math and science learning. The students are required to pick a science Gizmo topic and then complete internet research to build connections on how math relates to the science topic. Students then are required to create a PowerPoint presentation and will teach the lesson to their classmates. One 7th grade student said he enjoys, "combining science and math because it helps us to understand the math behind the science. The technology of the Gizmos is what helps us advance in these classes."

In 6th grade, the students are enrolled in a technology course for a quarter of the academic year. In this class, students advance in their use of Microsoft Office Word and Excel. This class provides a spring board for the 7th grade technology class. This year-long, project-based course synthesizes computer applications with core-content area curriculum while encouraging creative skills. Projects that students have completed include making business cards, business letter writing, research papers, newsletters, PowerPoint presentations on careers, Excel spreadsheets on computer costs, and Access databases on theme parks. One 7th grade student comments: "I'm really lucky to learn technology so I am ready for whatever career I choose." Both of the classes also aim at teaching students to use technology safely and ethically.

Middle school students also have the option to take a Web Design class. In this class, students learn the fundamentals of web design using Microsoft FrontPage and HTML. Students employ their creativity, critical thinking and teamwork skills to understand communication on the web and how the

web works. The web sites the students create typically integrate cross-curriculum content. For example, the most current web sites have been to create a 'virtual field trip' to famous historical events and a page on a recommendation for a book they have recently read. A sixth grade student currently taking Web Design said, "We have fun learning about Web Design because it can help us in the future."

Students also use technology to help them prepare for the reading, writing, math, and science FCAT tests. Study Island, Accelerated Reader, FCAT Explorer, Learning Today, KidBiz/TeenBiz, and Read 180 are just a few of the on and off-line programs that the students use. These programs are able to quickly gauge student ability and can modify the difficulty of content presented along with giving the students immediate feedback.

The K-8 Media Center provides a technology center of eight computers for student access. The students can use these computers to access the online catalog of books in our library, for FCAT preparation software and websites, along with using them for classroom research. Students can also check out books on tape and teachers can check out videos to use in the classroom to help bring learning to life.

By integrating technology in education, ACES is preparing students to become responsible, ethical, and skilled 21st century citizens. These skills will help them to be effectively prepared for their "high-tech" future. ☛



GOVERNMENT CENTER DIRECTORY

- MAIN NUMBER(305) 466-8900
- MAIN FAX NUMBER(305) 466-8939
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- CITY CLERK(305) 466-8901
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- COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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- Mariano Fernandez
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Robert M. Sherman, Director
- FINANCE SUPPORT SERVICES(305) 466-8920
Brian K. Raducci, Director
- POLICE DEPARTMENT(305) 466-8989
Steven Steinberg, Police Chief
- INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY(305)466-8928
Karen J. Lanke, Director
- CHARTER SCHOOL(305) 466-1499
Julie Alm, Principal
- COMMUNITY
RECREATION CENTER(305) 466-3883
- JOB HOTLINE(305) 466-8955

CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS

Commission Meetings are held
at 6:00 pm:

Aventura Government Center
Commission Chambers
19200 West Country Club Drive

Check our web site,
www.cityofaventura.com,
for our next meeting date

For information on upcoming
Commission meetings and work-
shops and to confirm all meeting
dates, times and locations,
please contact the City Clerk's
Office at (305) 466-8901.

Watch for These Upcoming Events!



- June 9 – August 15Summer Camp – Adventures in Time
- July 1 – August 7Sports Summer Camp
- July 4All American Fireworks Extravaganza
- August 4Aventura Activities Registration
- August 18First Day of School
- October 31Halloween Harvest

For event details, visit www.cityofaventura.com



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