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AVENTURA *update*

VOLUME 10 | NUMBER 1 | FEBRUARY 2007

*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.



State of the City 2007

On behalf of the City Commission, staff and employees, we wish our community a very happy and safe new year for 2007. During the past two years, the City Commission and I have focused our attention on updating our zoning codes to lower density and the height of buildings for future development and addressing traffic concerns. Many important projects and initiatives will be addressed throughout this upcoming year to insure our quality of life and maintain our City of Excellence. Many of these projects respond to concerns expressed by our citizens and community groups. The following is an overview of some of the major projects and initiatives:

WATERWAYS PARK EXPANSION PROJECT

This new 7 acre park project is currently under construction and will include a multi-purpose sports field, playground, basketball court, fitness trail, parking and restroom facilities. The park is scheduled for completion in December 2007 and will provide additional recreational facilities for our growing younger population.

MIAMI GARDENS DRIVE EXTENSION PROJECT

The construction of the important extension of Miami Gardens Drive east to NE 185th Street is underway and is scheduled for completion in September 2007. This roadway, which will facilitate traffic flow improvement in the southern portion of the City, will include four lanes, street lighting and intersection improvements at Biscayne Boulevard.

FOUNDERS PARK IMPROVEMENTS

A new splash pad will be added to the park that is designed as a children's water play area. This is scheduled to open in May of this year.

911 SYSTEM

In April of this year, the City's Police Communications Center will become a Public Safety Answering Point to improve emergency response times to our community. This means all 911 calls made within the city will come directly to our dispatch center rather than to the Miami-Dade County dispatch center and then relayed to our Police Department. By eliminating the "middleman" we can respond to emergency calls faster than in the past.

AVENTURA EXPRESS SHUTTLE BUS SERVICE EXPANSION

Over 13,000 riders a month use our free shuttle bus service which reduces the number of cars on the road in the city. Continuing the City Commission's efforts to provide alternative transportation, the City's shuttle bus service has added new routes and increased the number of stops. In addition, the redesigned Aventura Express logo was added to all buses to enhance the appearance and condition of the shuttle.

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THEATER EXPRESS



The City of Aventura is now offering a new "Theater Express" series as part of our Cultural Arts Theater & Leisure Program. In addition to the regular programming, we are offering additional excursions to the smaller theater performances as productions become available. Many of the smaller theaters we visit are either planning their productions or don't have tickets available when we go to press with our Cultural Arts Theater & Leisure Program brochure. This program allows the City to reserve additional productions by local theaters and other events as they become available. If you are interested in being contacted when a theater production becomes available to us, please contact the Community Services Department at 305-466-8930. ☺

Continued from cover

TRAFFIC VIDEO MONITORING SYSTEM

The first phase of this project, which is designed to improve traffic management by integrating video monitoring devices at key intersections throughout the City, is operational. The Police Dispatch Center monitors cameras that provide video from locations along Biscayne Boulevard at Williams Island Road, Miami Gardens Drive and the Lehman Causeway intersections. This allows the police to respond quickly to traffic accidents and problems. This project will be expanded to Ives Dairy Road and NE 213th Street during the year.

TRAFFIC COUNTDOWN PEDESTRIAN CROSSING SIGNALS/ TRAFFIC ADVISORY BOARD

Traffic countdown signals were installed at all major intersections in the City. This will enhance safety of our residents as they cross the intersections by indicating the time that is allocated to safely cross the street. The recommendations that were made by our Citizens Traffic Advisory Board, have been accepted by the City Commission and will be implemented in a timely manner in cooperation with the County and State.

AVENTURA CITY OF EXCELLENCE SCHOOL EXPANSION

The start of the 2007/08 school year in August 2007 will mark the further expansion of the city's charter middle school grades with the addition of the eighth grade. The total number of students attending the K- 8th grades school will grow to 800 in the fall of 2007. The school is an "A" rated school based on the State of Florida grade system.

PROPOSED PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

Last year the City agreed to manage the reconstruction of the County Library Branch on Aventura Boulevard that was destroyed by Hurricane Wilma. This provided the City the opportunity to respond to requests from numerous residents and explore the possibility of constructing a Performing Arts Center in conjunction with

the Library. A 300 seat facility that would provide a variety of performing arts and cultural programming for all age groups was proposed. This would provide opportunities for our residents to enjoy a variety of events within our community. A nationally known consultant was retained to prepare a feasibility study and business plan. It is estimated that the facility would cost \$10 million to construct. Due to the availability of other funding sources such as grants, impact fees, bond funds, savings from completed capital projects, only about 17% of the total amount would be needed from the City's reserve funds. Based on the fact that the construction operating costs had little impact on the city's long term financial plan, the City Commission agreed to continue to move forward on the project and obtain public input. It is important to clarify that based on the studies, the facility will not require a tax increase or incur additional debt to the City.

As you can see 2007 will be a busy and exciting year for your City. I am excited and proud of the state of our City as we embark on enhancing our great community. We can look forward to additional parks space and the possibility of adding a new cultural venue to enable our residents to enjoy more activities here at home. The City Commission, staff and I welcome your input throughout the year and appreciate the participation of residents at the various City functions and meetings. ☺

~ Mayor Susan Gottlieb



Ribel Retires – Steve Steinberg Selected as New Police Chief

Tom Ribel, who served as Aventura’s first Police Chief for over ten years, retired on February 2, 2007. Without his leadership and vision, the City’s Police Department could not have become one of the finest agencies in the State. He will be missed; however he will never be forgotten because of the strong foundation he and his staff have built for others to follow.

City Manager Eric M. Soroka is pleased to announce the appointment of Steven Steinberg as the City’s new Police Chief. Chief Steinberg has served with the City’s police department as its deputy police chief since 1996. He has been in law enforcement over 31 years. He has a master’s in Criminal Justice Policy and Management from Florida Atlantic University and graduated from the FBI National Academy.



“Through his efforts and experience, I am confident that he will be an effective leader and maintain the high standards of service that our citizen’s expect from our police department” said Soroka. ☛

ePermits Gives Easy Access to Building Permits



Check the status of building permits and inspections right now from the comfort of your home or office 24 hour a day, 7 days a week. Try our new ePermits system accessi-

ble from the City’s website. The system has been customized to give you instant information in an easy-to-use format.

It’s simple to use. Just visit the City’s website (www.cityofaventura.com) and press the ePermits button on the homepage to access the system. Then you only need to type in your Permit or Application number to get started. The current status is then displayed on the screen and options to view further details appear in the menu once the permit is retrieved.

Using ePermits saves time and streamlines the permitting process. Day or night, you can see the details of your permits and inspections online.

For more information on Building Permits, visit our website under the Community Development Department section or contact the Building Division at 305-466-8937. ☛



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AVENTURA UPDATE



> MAYOR Susan Gottlieb

> COMMISSIONERS

Zev Auerbach • Bob Diamond

Harry 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

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE!

According to the City Charter, a general election is held in each odd-numbered year on the first Tuesday in March.

On Tuesday, March 6, 2007, City of Aventura registered voters will have an opportunity to cast their ballots for Commissioners in Seats 1, 3, and 5.

Additional information regarding elections can be accessed at the City's website, www.cityofaventura.com, or by calling the City Clerk's office at 305-466-8901. 🗳️

March Movie Night Enjoys the Thrill of "Cars"



On Saturday, March 24th, The City of Aventura will show the G-rated animated hit, "Cars," at Family Movie Night at Aventura Community Recreation Center located at 3375 NE 188th Street. From 4-6 PM the children can participate in CARS themed events and games and the movie will be shown in the gymnasium with festival type seating at 6 PM. Be sure to bring blankets and pillows to be comfortable.

Event parking will be at the Harbour Centre Garage located at the corner of NE 188th Street and 29th Ave where a shuttle service will bring your family to the Community Recreation Center. Vendors will be on hand selling your favorite snacks and of course, there will be plenty of popcorn! 🍿

The Splash Pad Sprayground

*The City Proudly Announces
a New Feature at Founders Park*

This summer, residents will stay cool playing at Aventura's newest addition to Founders Park. Children have always loved playing in the sprinkler, but with this new type of water themed playground, they can play with water jets, spinning showers and bursts of water blasting the summer heat away.

As children romp through these activities, parents will be able to keep an eye on their children from benches along the perimeter, if they can resist joining in the fun.

The splash pad will offer a safe water environment as it is a zero depth water feature

playground, or sprayground! More like a play ground than a pool, children can play at the various activities on a non-skid waterproof surface with a shock absorbing layer of foam underneath. In addition, a lightning detection system will be installed to protect against those afternoon thunderstorms.

The City is looking forward to opening this newest recreational activity for the residents of Aventura in the early summer as a new destination for refreshing fun. 🌊

Community Events Round-Up

VETERANS DAY

On Friday, November 10, 2006, the City commemorated the honorable men and women of the armed forces past and present. Community leaders, veterans, heroes and neighbors attended the morning's ceremony. Speaker Colonel Terrance C. Holliday of the United States Air Force Reserve gave a moving speech and the Aventura Police Honor Guard performed the 21 gun salute with Staff Sergeant Larry Morse playing taps. The Aventura Point East Jewish Veterans and the United Veterans of the United States of America, along with the Baker Company Second Infantry Living History Group, participated in a wreath ceremony. In addition, Baker Company brought WWII armored vehicles and memorabilia to make the event extra special for the veterans of that war.

WINTER HOLIDAY FESTIVAL

Over 1,300 people came out on Sunday afternoon, December 10, 2006 to enjoy winter activities including snow and a visit from the Aventura Snowman. There was also a full program of festive dance performances. Children from the Aventura City of Excellence School dance team, the Aventura Community Recreation Center dance classes, The Aventura Dance Academy, Peaches Dance Studio and the Arts Academy of Hollywood performed every style of dance from classical ballet to urban funk.

YOUTH ATHLETICS

Founders Park and the Community Recreation Center both had great seasons of flag football and basketball respectively. Flag football had 168 eager participants who played games each week with increasing enthusiasm. They learned to work as a team as they improved their skills. The basketball league increased its participation by nearly fifty percent this year. The league taught 146 children shooting, passing and dribbling skills. They also learned the value of team work as they played games each week.

GOVERNMENT CENTER CONCERTS

The City of Aventura was pleased to present a concert by pianist, Jeannette Claudine Romeu on Sunday evening, November 5, 2006. Jeannette and her guest artists performed a concert of classical and jazz music to a full commission chamber. Mirtha de La Torre put on a stunning performance on classical guitar and accordion legend Zulema Romeu dazzled the audience with her zesty playing. Jeannette Claudine Romeu, a fifth generation musical protégé, played a marvelous set of jazz classics to an appreciative audience. Aventura audiences got a second treat this fall season with the Dranoff International Two Piano Competition Concert. The concert was held in the evening of Thursday, December 7, 2006. Once again a packed chamber enjoyed tremendous talent, this time the music of two award winning piano duos, Duo Antithesis and Duo Turgeon. The Murray Dranoff Foundation has had a wonderful and accomplished presence in South Florida for the past twenty years and the City of Aventura is proud to have a continuing relationship with them.

CULTURAL ARTS, THEATER AND LEISURE PROGRAM

Hundreds of Aventura residents enjoyed the Cultural Arts, Theater and Leisure Program this winter. In addition to attending the piano concerts at the Government center this fall, many came out on afternoon trips. Groups have traveled to see theater performances including "Chita Rivera" at the new Carnival Performing Arts Center and the updated Gilbert and Sullivan classic "The Hot Mikado" at the Broward Stage Door Theater. Often trips include a meal at one of the many excellent restaurants throughout the area. This ongoing program is a great way to stay current with cultural activities while getting out and socializing. Be sure to watch for a new programming brochure this spring!

For information about any of the Community Services programs, please contact the department at 305-466-8930, visit the web at www.cityofaventura.com or call the events hotline at 305-466-8951.

11TH ANNUAL FOUNDERS DAY CELEBRATION



Over 5,500 people enjoyed this year's anniversary celebration. Founders Day began in the afternoon with numerous entertainment options. Children and adults found fun games, magic shows and juggling acts at the entertainment tent. Meanwhile local Aventura residents revealed their many talents at the fourth annual "Aventura Star Competition" finals. There was something for all ages including a toddler town for the little ones and bounce houses and a 28' rock wall for youth and teens. A DJ kept the day moving until the afternoon wrapped up with the "What's the Deal" game show and "Bingo" where many prizes were won. The concert featured the Grammy Award winning band "America" who performed with "Beatlemania Now!" This year, the weather was gorgeous and both acts performed to an enthusiastic crowd.

MAYOR ON THE MOVE



Mayor Susan Gottlieb and City Manager Eric Soroka are making themselves available to all Condominiums/Homeowner Associations in the City for informal presentations and meetings. If your association is interested in scheduling such a meeting, please contact the City Manager's Office at 305-466-8910. We look forward to having the opportunity to respond to residents concerns.

ACES Offers More

Traditionally, many K-8 schools offer smaller class sizes and more individualized attention, but have limited extracurricular activities and programs. Aventura City of Excellence School's Middle School Program offers more!

ACES outperformed most Florida schools, ranking at the top, as number 6th in the state for K-8 combination schools. The Middle School Program offers academic rigor in conjunction with an extraordinary selection of extracurricular activities and elective programs plus state of the art technology, a safe learning environment for students' and an award winning Character Education program. ACES students have the opportunity to enroll in high school level Spanish, Algebra and Geometry courses and to select one of six elective courses. These elective courses include Television Production, Guitar, Graphic Arts/ Web Design, Journalism, Team Sports and Drama.

ACES INTRAMURAL ATHLETICS

ACES Volleyball



ACES Basketball



Excitement filled the air as the ACES Middle School boys and girls basketball league kicked off its' inaugural season. Faculty members, students, coaches and families look forward to the new addition to ACES.

Over 50 ACES students joined up to participate in hopes of honing their basketball skills and enjoying the season. Although competition is not the main focus of the league, the games will be stirring and intense. Coach Goldberg says, "Our hopes are to prepare the participants for future athletic endeavors, and to build a solid foundation based on

hard-work, commitment, and team building." Basketball games will take place on Tuesday nights at the Aventura Community Recreation Center from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. beginning January 30, 2007. The season will ultimately culminate in a Championship Play-Off's game on March 20, 2007.

To the delight of ACES students and families, ACES offered intramural volleyball in the fall with over 50 middle school girls that participated in this program.

ACES EAGLES DANCE TROUPE BEGAN IN SEPTEMBER OF 2006.



This exciting program has been offered to all 6th and 7th grade students. The talented and dedicated group of dancers practice weekly, each Monday and Wednesday to the rhythms of the Rumba, Salsa and Hip-Hop. They have performed at City events, on the ACES AM TV Show and will perform at the fourth annual ACES Showcase to be held on May 10, 2007.

ACES MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS BREAK GROUND ON SCIENCE GARDEN PROJECT



The ACES Middle School has joined together with the City's Parks and Recreation Department to create a project that students, families and community members alike will appreciate.

The ACES Eco-Literacy curriculum includes the design and implementation of a school garden that focuses on the study of Science while crossing the Middle School Curriculum covering all subjects with every student participating. The garden will be used to study different aspects of science, including life, earth and the physical sciences while incorporating language arts and math in both indoor and outdoor activities. This program is designed to exceed the required standards for the Florida Sunshine State Tests. "This instructional approach uses best practices by engaging ACES students' in Project -Based Learning, allowing students to apply science concepts to real world applications." said Ms. Alm, ACES Acting Director.

According to Ms. Lendick, sixth grade Science Teacher, Garden Project Leader extraordinaire, students actually beg to stay longer to work in the garden. They are very excited and involved in this project and their studies. Students now know first hand that science is alive!

"This project is an excellent example of what teamwork can accomplish," said City Manager, Eric Soroka. The ACES Eco-Literacy Program provides high interest hands-on activities for students and visually benefits the school and community. Luke's

Landscaping, A & W Nursery, and ACES parents have all been crucial components to the Garden Project's success."

ACES STUDENTS LEARN INTERNET SAFETY AND WIN FBI CONTEST



In December 2006, ACES 7th grade students learned Internet Safety through an FBI Web Site Program, with contributors such as Nova University, the Common Knowledge Scholarship Fund, the Miami Dolphins, Dell Computers, Bleibtry//Glass Foundation and the Deaver Foundation.

ACES students gained practical information, safety tips and resources to help them become more aware and proactive about Internet Safety. "The goal of this contest was to provide a fun and challenging method that would enhance ACES students' awareness of the dangers associated with the Internet", said Ms. Pearl, ACES Technology Teacher.

In addition, ACES Students participated in an online Scavenger Hunt from the FBI-SOS website to assist them in learning Internet safety skills and tips. After the Scavenger Hunt activities, they took the FBI-SOS pre and post quizzes to demonstrate what they knew previously and what they had just learned from this program.

In December, ACES 7th grade students won the FBI contest for achieving the top scores in the country. ACES is proud to offer this project and of the 7th grade's performance. 🎉

LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS



In January 2007, the City Commission completed the two year process of holding public meetings to study and prepare an Evaluation and Appraisal Report of the City's Comprehensive Master Plan. Major issues that were addressed in this report were development and redevelopment, housing, emergency management, transportation, intergovernmental coordination and quality of life. While this process was underway, the City Commission put in place a moratorium or temporary hold on development to ensure that no development approvals were issued that conflicted with the new growth management policies. Corresponding growth management regulations were adopted as amendments to the City's Land Development Regulations. Once all policies and regulations were in place, the moratorium was lifted. The new Plan and regulations provide a cohesive blueprint for development and redevelopment of the City by addressing strategies to accommodate growth while maintaining neighborhood integrity, ensure appropriate height, transitions and linkages and limit the intensity of future development and redevelopment in a manner that is consistent with current development patterns and that minimizes further negative impacts to the City's infrastructure and quality of life. 🏡

CITY COMMISSION MEETINGS

Commission Meetings are held
at 6:00 pm:

Aventura Government Center
Commission Chambers
19200 West Country Club Drive

Next Meeting
Tuesday, March 13, 2007

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!



- > February 26 – March 10 YOUTH T-BALL/SOFTBALL REGISTRATION
- > March 6 GENERAL ELECTION
- > March 24 FAMILY MOVIE NIGHT
- > April 2-6 SPRING BREAK CAMP
- > April 27 ARBOR DAY CELEBRATION – BEAUTIFICATION AWARDS CEREMONY
- > May 12 SENIOR PROM: BLACK & WHITE BALL



CITY OF AVENTURA GOVERNMENT CENTER
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