



GABLES GOOD GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE



NEWSLETTER

July 2016

GABLES GOOD GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

Founded February 2009

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GGG and City Manager Meet Over Police Hiring

A letter generated by the Gables Good Government Committee (GGG) to Coral Gables City Manager Cathy Swanson-Rivenbark (April 29, 2016) regarding the apparent delay in the hiring of some 20 new sworn Police Officers, became the catalyst for a meeting between the City Manager and GGG. President Debbie Swain and GGG Board Members Susi Davis and Juan Carlos Diaz-Padron met with Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark on June 21, 2016.



In a nearly two-hour meeting, City Manager Swanson-Rivenbark gave a detailed explanation of the hiring process for the Coral Gables Police Department, which has a goal of hiring nine new officers by the end of 2016. (This number is substantially lower than the needed number of new officer hires shown on the home page of the Coral Gables Fraternal Order of Police website.) The City Manager gave a comprehensive overview of the

City and Police Department's outreach recruitment strategy, the stringent qualifications required of officer candidates, the extensive background investigations made on final candidates, and the various training programs required for an inexperienced hire versus an experienced hire. Newly hired officers do not serve the community immediately as they must attend Police Academy training of various lengths of time based on prior experience.

GGG's questions targeted several areas. The City Manager was asked about the recent lack of available police officers to work private events for Coral Gables residents. Ms. Swanson-Rivenbark did confirm that there has been a shortage of officers available for this service on occasion, but believes it will be remedied with the hiring of new officers.

Police Hiring Continued on Page 2.

Gables Good Government Committee website:

<http://ggg-news.wix.com/ggg-news> or

<http://WWW.Facebook.Com/GablesGoodGovernment/>

Gables Good Government Committee was organized to support issues and causes that preserve and improve the quality of life in Coral Gables and promote the effective and efficient management of its government.

Police Hiring Continued from Page 1:

Another question focused on over-time pay. GGG had determined that the annual allocation for over-time pay had been exhausted in the first six months of 2016. The City Manger's solution as to how this short fall will be covered involved the transfer of funds from other areas of the Police Department budget.

Additional concerns for Coral Gables residents such as low staffing of marine patrol, bike patrol and motor-men units were mentioned. The City Manager stated that these units were currently adequately staffed and that additional layers of public safety protection are being provided by two new initiatives, the Neighborhood Team Policing and Neighborhood Safety Aides and the new Crime Intelligence Center.

The new Neighborhood Safety Aides program will be operated by uniformed civilians and will be supporting the zone officer and Neighborhood Team Policing leader. This is a new layered approach to policing im-

plemented by the City administration. Aides will be driving electric GEM cars with an amber strobe light, continuously patrolling an individual neighborhood zone. The Neighborhood Safety Aides will be trained in CPR and First Aid. They will also perform crime

-prevention functions, such as hiding home package deliveries that may be visible from the street. While vehicles have been purchased for the program and were parked in the Police Station at the time of this meeting, only one individual had been interviewed for an aide position and none had been hired.



"Burger Bob's" Receives Coral Cube Award from the City

After 20 years with the Miami Heart Institute, having served the greater part of his career as the Director of Food Services and turning out over 3,000 meals a day for patients, staff and visitors, Robert "Burger Bob" Maguire retired. That lasted about 6 weeks. Now after 23 years at his present location, in between the two halves of the Granada Golf Course, Maguire still holds court at one of the most popular eateries in Coral Gables. Serving, arguably, the best Chili in town and his great, signature hamburgers, this is the place, as they say, where, "The elite meet to eat (*and greet*)."

Recently, the City of Coral Gables chose to honor Burger Bob's with the new and unique award of recognition for popular local restaurants, The Coral Cube. Bob would be the first to say he couldn't do it without the help of his "A-Team." Rita Tennyson, with 22 years of working at Bob's elbow, does it all, with the biggest smile in



town. Arriving well before opening time at 6 AM, Rita and Bob put on the coffee and fire up the grill, most often with eager customers already waiting out side. The team's other stalwart, Rosy Diaz, with her 16 years of serving everyone with energy, accuracy and wry sense of humor, completes the terrific trio. Hundreds of people who are citizens of The Gables, Coconut Grove, Westchester, Pinecrest and even visitors from other countries, rely on these great folks, every day, to get them started and keep them going. Congratulations to the entire crew!

Left: Rita Tennyson, "Burger Bob" Maguire and Rosy Diaz with The Coral Cube.

Meet your GGG Board Members

As your representatives who observe and interface with the local city government regarding the Coral Gables political scene and the issues which affect us all, we would like to have you know your GGG Board members more personally. Therefore, from time to time we will include current biographies of those who serve on the Gables Good Government Committee.



The current President of GGG is Deborah (Debbie) Swain. Swain is the Vice President and Principal of Financial and Management Consulting Services for Milian, Swain & Associates, Inc., with 35 years of experience specializing in utilities, including management, financial planning and modeling, accounting, utility rate regulation

and water resources.

Deborah is active in the community, with particular interest in environmental stewardship, including alternative transportation. Ms. Swain serves as Vice Chair of the Coral Gables' Transportation Advisory Board, and has recently served for Miami-Dade County Mayor

Carlos Gimenez on the County's "Safer People Safer Streets Local Action Team". She is one of the founding members of Bike Walk Coral Gables, a pedestrian and bicycle rider advocacy organization. Ms. Swain is the founding President of the Miami-Dade Architects & Engineers Society, Past President of Citizens for a Better South Florida, an environmental education organization. She is Past President of the Rotary Club of Coral Gables, where she was named Rotarian of the year 2015-2016.

Ms. Swain is a native Floridian, lives in Coral Gables with her husband, John, and has two grown sons, Michael and Adam. She has family roots in Miami - her paternal grandmother was one of four students in the first graduating class of the University of Miami.

Coral Gables City Hall...? No its.....

Gable-ites, Ralph Perez and daughter, Isabella, discover the prototype for the Coral Gables City Hall. No, its not in Spain! Do you know where it is? *

The Coral Gables City Hall, circa 1928, was designed by architects Harold Steward and Phineas Paist. The next time you are close to City Hall note the motifs of tropical flora and fauna which adorn the capitals of the columns around the rotunda.

*See Page 4 for location of building at right.



HOW TO JOIN GGG

Send a letter to: Gables Good Government
1825 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Box #448
Coral Gables, FL 33134 or
Email: GablesGoodGov@Gmail.Com

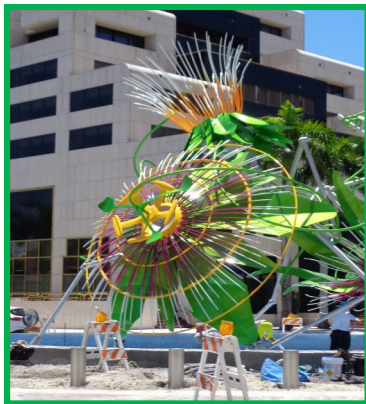
ANNUAL DUES LEVELS

\$50 Individual / \$75 Household
\$250 Sponsor or Advertiser / \$500 Donor
\$1000 Corporate Donor

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New Life in North Gables?

This tidy, little, eight unit, multi-family building, located at 114 Menores, could become one of the few Bed and Breakfast businesses in Coral Gables since the 1920's. It was designed by H. George Fink, prominent Coral Gables architect. According to the Historic Designation Report relevant to this structure, "The building appears to retain the majority of its original historic fabric including its original wood windows and doors." Additionally, new recommended changes in the zoning code, require that buildings used for bed and breakfast operations be designated as historic. It has been nearly 25 years since the zoning code was changed to allow bed & breakfast establishments in the North Gables area.



Love 'Em or
Loath 'Em,
They're Here!



COUNTY
WIDE
ISSUES

AUGUST PRIMARY ELECTION, Aug. 30, 2016

- ⇒ Early Voting: Monday, August 8 - 28, 2016
- ⇒ Deadline to Register: August 1, 2016
- ⇒ Deadline to Request Vote by Mail Ballot: August 24, 2016

View Customized Sample Ballot:

<http://www.miamidade.gov/elections/sample-ballots.asp>

GET UP AND GO!

Located directly across from The Palace, at 2 Andalusia Avenue, the beautiful new **Adult Activity Center (AAC)** is ready to go. After nearly 25 years, the **Coral Gables Over 50 Crowd** has a dedicated space for socializing, exercising, creating and generally interacting with folks of their own age group. Though the location may be somewhat unusual, according to Fred Couceyro, Director of Parks and Recreation in Coral Gables, the new generation coming to the age of 50, is more likely to value the urban setting which the new center enjoys. Its proximity to The Palace also has advantages as there is an agreement with that facility which allows



the patrons of the AAC to use The Palace swimming pool. Parking options include the availability of The Palace valet service or free parking in the attached City garage with an AAC validated parking ticket.

Letty Ellis, the Adult Activities Coordinator and a Coral Gables resident from Connecticut, has worked with the City of Coral Gables for several years seeking a dedicated space for the kinds of activities now offered in this special place. For information phone 305 461-6765.

Left: Marilyn Morcate, Guest Services Representative and Right: Letty Ellis, Adult Activities Co-Ordinator

*Designed by architect, William Strickland, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, this is the 19th century Philadelphia Exchange Building.