



# Flamingo Flyer

Royal Palm Isles Newsletter

I got tired of seeing ugly weeds growing in the little median at our entrance, every time I left our neighborhood, so I decided to do what First Flamingo wrote about in our last news letter -- Be the change you want to see. I pulled the weeds, picked up some spring plants and a bag of mulch then planted, mulched and watered. WE HAVE A SMALL GARDEN! Now when I leave our neighborhood, I see spring flowers and smile. As we all know even a small garden needs tending. So, when my flowers start to lose their color, and the leaves start to droop from the summer heat, I hope someone else will be the change they want to see and keep our small garden alive, for all of us to enjoy. - **Fun Stuff Chick**

## Fourth Issue May 2010

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## 'My Oakland Park' Is A Term Of Endearment

Because I cherish my home, my neighborhood and my community, all of which are in my Oakland Park, I have appointed myself as an authority of all things that affect me in my city. Since accumulating information on the happenings in Oakland Park and sharing it with my friends, neighbors and family became a very time consuming endeavor, finding a more efficient way of doing so became paramount.

Voila! The idea for a new web site. A web site that I am very excited about sharing.

**www.MyOaklandPark.com** is a work in progress, a reflection of my devotion to our city, my appreciation and respect for the community that we live in and the neighborhood that we call home. My Oakland Park, My Community, My Grassroots and My Local Government, are the categories that I have narrowed down, but they are meaningless without you, so I hope that you will join me to share and to log information about Oakland Park, for the greater benefit of our community.

If you haven't already heard, we have an upcoming special election to replace one Oakland Park Commissioner, in August 2010; as well as our regularly scheduled municipal election to replace two Commissioners, in March 2011.

Both elections are very important for all of us to be a part of.

With that said, I highly recommend that each of you appoint yourselves as authorities of all things that affect you, in your city, too!

Please visit **www.MyOaklandPark.com** to see some of what I have gleaned and to share your comments and ideas with some other folks who also treasure where we call home. - **First Flamingo**

## Oakland Park Kiwanis . . . by Bill Tobias and Rick Melillo

Pink flamingos, manatees, swans, orange-shirted trash collectors – we have seen them all in the Royal Palm Community. Orange shirts? Who are these people? All are members of the Oakland Park Kiwanis Club. Our club, part of Kiwanis International, is fifty-six neighbors and friends of the City of Oakland Park. Kiwanis was founded in 1915 with the motto of "Serving the Children of the World."

Some of the projects we support: each week we supply a backpack full of food for needy families at Lloyd Estates and Oakland Park Elementary schools; we provide Thanksgiving and Christmas



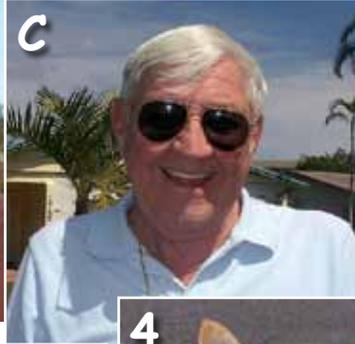
The Oakland Park Kiwanis, along with students from local schools, have collected over 700 bags of trash along NW 39th Street and in the C-13 canal, between NW 21st and 31st Avenues.

*Continued on page two*



# Floyd & Flo: Still Having Fun - Fun Stuff Chick

Can you match the Royal Palm Isles dog walker to the dog? First correct answer returned wins a special surprise! Call our Fun Stuff Chick, Lorri Winner.



## Oakland Park Kiwanis . . . Continued from page one

baskets with full dinners for those in need at our neighborhood elementary schools; we supply school uniforms for families unable to purchase them; each week, members read to the first and second grade classes. You have all seen the Terrific Kids stickers on cars around the city. This Kiwanis program recognizes those students who try to do their very best.

We have adopted a portion of NW 39th Street, making a commitment to keep the street and adjacent C-13 canal clean. To date, by way of motorboat, kayak, wading, and walking, we, along with students at local schools have collected over 700 garbage bags of trash! We also support

Ronald McDonald House by collecting laundry detergent and aluminum tab tops. This year over 350,000 tab tops have been collected. To see other projects we are involved in, visit our web site at [www.oaklandparkkiwanis.com](http://www.oaklandparkkiwanis.com).

We welcome helpers and new members. If you are interested, join us for breakfast, 7:30 am, Wednesdays at Peter Pan Diner or the last Tuesday of each month at 6 pm at Tequila Sunrise. It isn't all work. Come to a meeting, breakfast or dinner, and have some fun enjoying the company of your neighbors in Oakland Park. Help us make a difference in our community.



Welcome to new homeowners/neighbors:  
William and Michael  
on NW 36th Court



The Royal Palm Isles Neighborhood Group always welcomes new ideas, volunteers, and participation in all of our activities. If you'd like to take part, now's the time to start.

# After The Resignation of Vice Mayor Niedwiecki

**Interim Appointment** Applicants for the 3-month appointment are invited to speak at the March 19th Commission Meeting. Commissioners will vote on June 1st. You can let them know your preference. Your opinion does matter. I found this summary on the new www.MyOaklandPark.com web site. Here is part of Dean Davids' post:

... Nine persons have submitted:

1 **Bert Wrains** – A respected long time resident, member of LENA, former City Manager who currently advises several cities on matters of finances.

2 **Jairo Aragon** – A neighbor of ours who aspires to run for a seat in the upcoming elections.

3 **John Adornato** – NANA board member who plans to run for a seat as well.

4 **Larry Gierer** – One of the former commissioners looking to return to the dais ASAP.

5 **Layne Walls** – We all remember former Mayor Walls presiding over the commission that nearly allowed Value Place Hotel to fast track to approval on our corner.

6 **Michael Carn** – An authentic Oakland Park original planning to run again for a seat in the next round of elections.

7 **Robin Bodiford** – A local lawyer with whom I am not acquainted. Robin appears to have served on several city boards and is

currently seated on our board of adjustment.

8 **Michael Nicotera** – Local businessman with whom I am not acquainted.

9 **Stephen Ferrante** – Another fellow who I have not met. His resume reads as a lifetime of social services involvement and relevant studies.

... If it were me, I would respectfully dismiss any of those that are planning to run for the seat in August or for the other seats in March. Among those that remain to be considered, I believe that Mr. Wrains has the most to contribute. . . I feel that he is genuine and sincere; we can always use more of that.

*I encourage everyone to review the applications and send your input to the commissioners that they may consider your point of view when they decide.*

## **The August 24 Special Election**

The Egret believes that whoever wins this seat could be a pivotal voter on many issues that directly impact Royal Palm Isles. Historically, Oakland Park has a very small voter turn-out and this is an odd election date. Therefore, every single vote cast for this Commission seat is heavily weighted and **will** make a difference. Your voting, or not, can make a huge impact on the future of Royal Palm Isles. So, here's some import information:

**The Excitable Egret will always try to keep you informed of activities that impact Royal Palm Isles.**



**Register** Florida voters must be registered at least 29 days before an election to vote in it. You may obtain a voter registration application in person or by telephone at:

The Supervisor of Elections Main office:  
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 102  
Fort Lauderdale, FL, 33301  
Office Number: (954) 357-7050

You may also fill out voter registration form online at <http://www.browardsoe.org/VoterRegistration.aspx>

**Absentee ballots** The request can be made in person, by mail (address above), by telephone (954) 357-7050, or online at <http://www.browardsoe.org/AbsenteeRequest2.aspx>.

Absentee ballots are mailed 2-3 weeks prior to each election. Voted absentee ballots must be received by the Supervisor of Elections no later than 7 pm on Election Day.

**Polling place** Our Precinct D006 votes at the Unitarian Church, 3970 NW 21st Ave.

**VOTE!** It's never been more important to the quality of life in Royal Palm Isles.

## News Shorts & Updates

### **National Wildlife Federation**

A water source, food source, places to raise young, cover for shelter, and sustainable gardening practices are the five basic elements you need to certify your yard with the NWF. Go online to [www.nwf.org/certify](http://www.nwf.org/certify). The goal is for Oakland Park to become

a Certified Community Wildlife Habitat.™ Also, our Royal Palm Park was chosen as a perfect habitat by this mama swan with two eggs due to hatch by press time!

**Adopt-A-Street** RPING has officially adopted NW 38th St. between Royal Palm Park and Powerline Rd. Interested residents should gather at the eastern RPI Adopt-A-Street sign near the I-95 overpass on the 3rd Saturday of odd number months – May 15,

July 17, September 18 and November 20 this year – at 10:00 am.

**Bark Park** Another car at our Bark Park had its window smashed and valuables stolen. It took OP officers over 40 minutes to respond to this non-emergency after two phone calls. After security cameras were installed it seemed that cars were safer there, but it appears crimes of opportunity still thrive.

### **Boat Ramp What did they approve?**

After a series of negative public comments and some debate by the Commission they agreed to spend \$38,935 on design and construction engineering services for (I'm not sure which) either a canoe and kayak launch, or a new 12 ft. wide concrete dock/pad boat launch. This would be on the C-13 canal on NW 39th St. just west of NW 21st Ave. This is the outcome of

initial talk about paddle boats, canoes, kayaks and small sunfish-type sailboats on the lake at Veterans Park, not on the C-13 canal where motorized boats and jet skis could launch and only travel east behind the homes along the canal, including those in RPI. Why is this issue so unclear? When did it change?

I've been told by staff that this launch site will have *locked ballards* to prevent trailers from being backed up to the canal, while allowing canoes and kayaks to be carried down the 8 foot bank to the water. This *sounds* like good news, if it works.

**Powerline Corridor Study** The latest (as of Friday May 7th) from the City on this critical study is that "Staff just met with the consultants and their work is due to us within the next two weeks. Based on their work we would prepare something for the Homeowners sometime in June."

## Calendar

### May 15

RPI Adopt-A-Street clean-up  
10:00 am, gather at the eastern  
RPI Adopt-A-Street sign near  
the I-95 overpass

### June 1

Special Commission Meeting  
to Appoint City Commissioner  
6:30 pm, City Hall,  
3650 NE 12th Ave.

### June 19

Father's Day Weekend Fishing  
Tournament  
7 am - 10 am, Royal Palm Park  
For more info call 954-630-4507

### July 13

Royal Palm Isles Neighborhood  
Group meeting, 6:30 pm, Fire  
Station 87, NW 39th St. &  
NW 21st Ave.

### July 17

RPI Adopt-A-Street clean-up  
10:00 am, gather at the eastern  
RPI Adopt-A-Street sign near  
the I-95 overpass

### August 24

Mark this date on your calendar  
and remember to VOTE!  
Special Election for Oakland Park  
Commissioner Seat 4

### Every Month

Oakland Park City Commission  
Meetings on 1st and 3rd  
Wednesdays, 6:30 pm, City Hall,  
3650 NE 12th Ave.



## Variances... and Exceptions... and Billboards... OH MY!

Are we in the land of OZ or in Wonderland, where fantasy and reality coexist? Or are we in Oakland Park, where Goal #1 is to preserve and enhance single family neighborhoods and where billboards are proposed in public parks? The park location didn't fly so they changed the location to 849 NW 41st Street. CBS Outdoor is proposing that they blight and pollute our neighborhood with a JumboTron® worthy of Times Square. Imagine artificial heat lightning all night every night! This requires a variance and a special exception from the rules because it would be within 500 feet of both a school and a residential neighborhood and because JumboTrons are prohibited. Of course, CBS will act in good faith to keep the brightness down and not flash a different message more than six times a minute. "Ignore the man behind the curtain!"

It has been established fact for over 40 years that billboards represent blight on the community. Four states have banned billboards altogether and two states prohibit new billboards. Digital billboards of the type proposed are banned in eleven other states and in many, many communities. Visit the website of Scenic America, a non-profit, for information on billboard blight.

South Florida has Beautification programs, Green our Gateways programs and Community Appearance programs to preserve the golden goose of tourism and to make this a better place to live. How can they justify this proposal? CBS Outdoor will take down three other billboards on Commercial Blvd. How touching! The JumboTron and a second billboard on the same pole will annually generate in the neighborhood of \$300,000 for CBS Outdoor vs. \$180,000 for the billboards they would take down, almost a 70% increase in revenue. Good deal for CBS! Pollution and blight for us! Goal #1? What Goal?

This is not the first time the City Commission considers variances and exceptions to existing zoning regulations. Remember the too-big industrial warehouse on the too-small parcel with too-few setbacks and too-little landscaping? Why even bother with the time, money and effort to study Community Appearance Standards when the existing standards are routinely subverted with variances and exceptions?

What's the solution? First, let the City Commission know, in no uncertain terms, that this proposal is a non-starter. Second, ask the City to begin a billboard eradication program and run CBS out of town. Third and most importantly, vote in city elections. If they cannot hear our voices in the wilderness, they should hear them at the ballot box. If this billboard goes in, it's "OFF WITH THEIR HEADS!"

*WHOIS IBIS? This commentator has chosen the ibis as his nom de plume. The ibis is the last wildlife to seek shelter before a hurricane and the first to reappear after the storm has passed. It is also the mascot of the Miami Hurricanes. The Implacable Ibis will not be appeased, mollified, or pacified by the rationalizations of city government when it threatens Royal Palm Isles with harm and neglect.*

## Commissioner's Scorecard - First Flamingo

**Inquiry regarding appointment for the upcoming vacant Commission seat, prior to the August special election:**

**Mayor Allegra Murphy:** The person chosen will be determined based on the process. There is no vacancy until May 31st, therefore it is premature to speculate who the replacement will be.

**Vice Mayor Anthony Niedwiecki:** The appointment should not contradict what the voters wanted when they elected me. My hope is that they will replace me with someone who shares my values, wants to work hard, and will listen to residents.

**Commissioner Suzanne Boisvenue:** John Adornato has not yet filed to become a candidate for Commissioner. He has asked me for my endorsement. When he does, Yes I will.

**Commissioner Anne Sallee:** No reply (apparently I have only four commissioners now since publicly opposing Commissioner Sallee's new business club).

**Commissioner Steve Arnst:** We are going to have to see who applies.

*Municipal elections are held every odd year. Oakland Park's population is approximately 42,000 with less than 3,000 active voters.*