

City of KEY WEST

February/ March -- 2009

DOING IT OLD SCHOOL AND SAVING MONEY



Sometimes doing things the old fashioned way is more efficient -- and sometimes it even saves money. That's why the city of Key West is turning back the clock by using seaweed washed up on its beaches to fertilize landscaping.

This week landscape foreman Tony Boza spread seaweed on one of the ball fields at the Wickers Field Complex to fertilize the grass.

"Years ago, people used seaweed on their lawns to keep them green," says Community Services Director Greg Veliz. "Fertilizer is expensive, so we're going old school. Seaweed is an effective fertilizer and it costs us nothing."

Over the next several weeks, the new fertilizer will be spread on other fields maintained by the city. The switch from store-bought to home-grown could save taxpayers thousands of dollars, according to Veliz.

VIEW FROM THE TOP



We are now one third of the way through our fiscal year 08-09. At the end of the first quarter (Oct-Dec) the financial review and analysis showed a significant shortfall in revenues. The general fund revenues pay for the majority of the City's personnel and operations that are the most visible to the public. My challenge now is to compensate on the expense side of the budget to make ends meet at the end of the year. The only way to do this without borrowing from future years is to reduce expenses by the same amount as the revenue shortfalls. Initial actions included a hiring freeze, reductions in overtime and curtailed travel for all departments. Additional actions may be necessary as we continue to evaluate the budget impacts. In order to have some planning factors, the Commission asked that we look at a 5 percent and 10 percent revenue shortfall and develop action plans for each of those contingencies. That is in the works. The real bottom line is Key West is not immune from the financial ills that affect the entire country.

The hiring freeze means no vacancy will be filled unless that position is considered essential and approved for hiring by the City Manager. Overtime reduction means just that, no overtime unless absolutely necessary and approved ahead of time by the City Manager or Assistant City Manager. Travel will be approved only for travel that is necessary to accomplish essential training, certification or to conduct business that cannot be done by any other reasonable method.

It will get tougher. I assure everyone in the City that we are looking very hard at all options to reduce expenses. I can also assure you that the workforce reduction option is the last on the list. Everyone can help by focusing on getting the job done efficiently and effectively during normal working hours. Avoid overtime. Conserve resources. If we work together, team, focus on the financial facts and make reasonable sacrifices we'll get through the challenges in good shape. THANK YOU ALL for what you do.

CITY OF KEY WEST

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Questions? Comments?

If you have information for the next City newsletter or would like to see something added to the publication, please contact Communications Manager Alyson Crean at acreat@keywestcity.com. This newsletter is a publication of the City of Key West.

TWELVTH AMBASSADOR ACADEMY CLASS UNDER WAY



are 22 of them all told and they're a diverse lot with one thing in common: they care about Key West.

This is the 12th group of residents who have donated one afternoon a week for 14 weeks in order to become Key West Ambassadors.

The academy is built on the principle that an educated citizenry is the bedrock of a well-functioning democracy. It was that basic tenet that started the first class in 2003.

Participants learn about budgets, engineering, sewers, the workings of

A retired police officer finds a seat between a banker and a student. They're pretty well acquainted by now, having spent the past several weeks together. There

the Fire Department. They ride along with a police officer. They attend City Commission meetings. They learn how decisions are made and how public money is spent.

Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson and City Manager Jim Scholl welcomed this newest group at the first session in January.

Everyone, said McPherson in his welcome, has a different view of what Key West is and should be. "But the city's best asset," he said, "is its people. We want to be a role model city."

The list of graduates of the programs looks like a who's who of Key West movers and shakers, and their interests range from non profits to leaders in business.

The new class is already asking the tough questions, and their scrutiny is welcomed by city staff. If they don't know the answer, they'll get it.



City Manager Jim Scholl made the opening remarks to a large and eager class. Mayor Morgan McPherson also welcomed the new group.



LOCAL GROUPS GREEN UP BAYVIEW PARK



Who knew that digging holes could be so much fun! Members of the Trophia Foundation, the Key West Garden Club and Key West public works staffers took up shovels to celebrate Arbor Day and plant 11 new trees at Bayview Park.

The new trees are possible thanks to donations from the Trophia Butterfly Foundation and the Key West Garden Club.

Both organizations have been working to plant native species all over the island city.

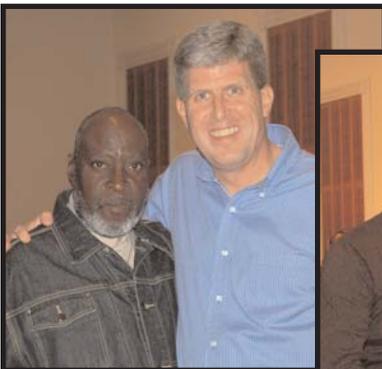
During the ceremony, a wild tamarind tree was dedicated to Fran Ford, whose environmental work in the community is legendary.

“Fran is one of the longest serving and most dedicated members of the Key West Garden Club,” said Cynthia Coogle, the city's urban forestry program manager. Ford has been instrumental in planting more trees than people can tally, and also organizes the Garden Club's annual scholarships.

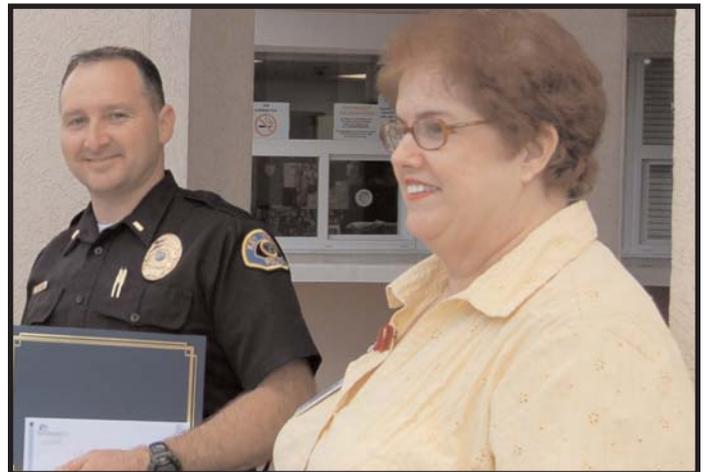
Jimmy Olson, president of the Trophia Butterfly Foundation, announced his foundation's \$1,400 gift for planting the trees during a January City Commission meeting. The Key West Garden Club donated another \$500.



Clockwise: Members of the Trophia Foundation and the Key West Garden Club plant trees; Cynthia Coogle and landscaping employees do the heavy work; Fran Ford has dedicated many years to the island city's trees.



City Manager Jim Scholl recognized two city employees for their long-standing service to the City. Equipment operator Abraham Baker has dedicated 25 years to city public works (left). Engineer Wayne Owen was recognized for 20 years of service on the Key West Fire Department (right).



Lt. David Smith was named the 2008 Officer of the Year. Criminal Investigation Unit Coordinator Ellie Barker was named the KWPD Civilian of the Year. Key West Police Chief Donie Lee made the recognitions on Feb. 12.

STATE OF THE ART PARKING

Street parking just got easier with the installation of Pay and Display parking meters. These one-stop pay stations clear up precious space along city sidewalks by taking the place of the old fashioned pole meters that stand at every parking space.

Ten new stations will take the place of 280 old fashioned single head parking meters. The machines accept coins as well as credit and debit card payments, and customers can purchase up to eight hours of parking in a single transaction.

The meters run on solar power, and require far less maintenance that did the

single pole meters.

The new parking meters will be located in the following areas:

- City Hall parking lot at Angela St.,
- 700 and 800 blocks of Caroline St.,
- United St. between Duval and Simonton,
- Southard St. between Duval and Simonton
- 200, 300 and 400 Block of Whitehead Street
- 1300 block of Duval St.
- 1400 block of Simonton St.



Key West Mayor Morgan McPherson and the Key West City Commission took time out at Tuesday's meeting to honor Key West High School basketball star Keith Valdez for his talent at throwing free-throws. The shy sophomore threw 44 free throws, breaking the record of 38.

TELEVISED PUBLIC MEETINGS

- City Commission: Feb 18
- Planning Board: Feb 19
- HARC: Feb. 24
- Code Compliance: Feb. 25
- City Commission: March 3
- HARC: March 10
- City Commission: March 17
- Planning Board: March 19
- HARC: March 24
- Code Compliance: March 25

FEBRUARY/MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- Danny Blanco - Fire Department - February 2
- Gerzale Curry-Hill - Building & Zoning - February 2
- David Hall - Police Department - February 2
- Ashley Monnier - City Planner - February 2
- Megan Wilcox - Police Department - February 3
- Sharron Bennett - Garrison Bight Ops - February 4
- Heriberto Dominguez - KW DoT - February 4
- Albertha Miller - Finance Department - February 5
- Arvin Ramsey - Recreation - February 5
- Jorge Galvan - Fire Department - February 6
- Renel Nelson - KW DoT - February 6
- Mark Bacon - Mallory Square - February 7
- Charles Major - Recreation - February 7
- Steven Wells - Fire Department - February 7
- Jeffrey Berman - Code Compliance - February 11
- Leandre Washington - Recreation - February 12
- Frank Sauer - Police Department - February 13
- Adriana Gomez - KW DoT Operations - February 15
- Karl Wagner - Fire Department - February 15
- Douglas Bradshaw - Outer Mole - February 17
- Alberto Vazquez - Public Works - February 17
- Richard Thomas - Police Department - February 19
- Manuel Menendez - Police Department - February 20
- Antonea McDowell - Recreation - February 21
- Andy Harris - Fire Department - February 23
- Lars Pedersen - Project Construction Team - February 23
- Anthony Roberts Jr. - Recreation - February 23
- Nicholas Richardson - Sewer Testing - February 26
- Ralph Major - Recreation - February 28

- William Funnye - Transfer and Fill Ops - March 1
- Rodney Corriveau - City Planner - March 2
- Robert Bartlett - IT - March 3
- Kuniko Keohan - Police Department - March 3
- Jonathon Catena - Fire Department - March 4
- Portia Navarro - City Manager Office - March 4
- Gladys Abreda - Recreation - March 5
- Rita Murphy - Police Department - March 5
- John Newcomer - Transfer and Fill Ops - March 6
- Raynor Knowles - Recreation - March 7
- David Pascale - Mooring Fields - March 7
- Matthew Haley - Police Department - March 12
- Gary Hansen - Outer Mole - March 12
- Jaime Baker - Engineering Services - March 14
- Sean Brandenburg - Police Department - March 14
- Danyle Gray - Police Department - March 15
- Richard Wiggins - Marina & Ferry - March 15
- David Black - Police Department - March 16
- Carolyn Walker - Building & Zoning - March 17
- David Williams - Fire Department - March 17
- Paula Hodges - Police Department - March 21
- Robert Burns - Key West Bight - March 22
- Sandra Gilbert - Human Resources - March 24
- Melissa Larmel - City Manager Office - March 24
- Shirley Sealy - Finance Department - March 24
- Susan Harrison - City Clerk - March 25
- Amy Kimball-Murley - Planning - March 25
- Edward Perez - Fire Department - March 26
- Jessica Strader - Police Department - March 26
- Stacia Winter - Police Department - March 26
- John Padron - Police Department - March 27
- Michelle Stolka - Garage - March 27
- Jean Willy - KW DoT Operations - March 27
- Mark Tait - Key West Bight - March 28
- Hollis Wood - Police Department - March 28
- Michael Chaustit - Police Department - March 30
- James Mahon - Transit System - March 30
- Marie Charles - Police Department - March 31
- Kevin O'Connell - Police Department - March 31

