



November -- 2009

Happy Holidays!



As November winds down, the city's Community Services Department is putting the finishing touches on the holiday season. Festivities kick off with the tree lighting ceremony in Bayview Park. This family favorite this year features the Horace O'Bryant Middle School band.

The city's elves have been busy creating a little North Pole magic right here in Key West. The Community Services department created all of the decorations, including Santa's workshop, his sleigh, and the gorgeous array of presents surrounding the 25-foot high tree. These wonderful hand-crafted decorations not only give the park a festive air, but they ended up saving taxpayers' money!

On Saturday, the other family favorite -- the Holiday

Parade -- gets underway starting at 7 p.m.

Throughout the month of December, the Key West Police Department will be collecting toys and money in order to assure a special holiday for disadvantaged kids.

Toys for Tots drop boxes can be found at the Key Ambassador, Margaritaville, Key West Chemical, Keys Federal Credit Union, and the Key West Police Department.



For the second consecutive year, Key West's bus drivers have been named among the safest in the state. The Key West Department of Transportation received the Safest Driver award for the Class III division - systems that run fewer than 20 buses per day.

The city has been recognized many years prior in second and third place, but last year's first place award was an important honor. Earning this first place recognition again made DoT Manager Myra Wittenberg very proud of her team, she said. In the attached photo, Dennis Boyd, transit operations coordinator; Manager Myra Wittenberg; driver Julian Butler, Assistant Supervisor Rogelio Hernandez; Superintendent Ben Gibson; and driver Robert Frost show off the Safest Driver plaque awarded to the Key West Department of Transportation by the state of Florida.



Wayne Owen, secretary of the firefighter's union, presents a check to KWPD's Charnette Valdez for the Toys for Tots drive.



The 2008 Toys for Tots campaign collected hundreds of gifts for over 300 Key West families. The gifts were delivered by the KWPD's own Santa.

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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 acrean@keywestcity.com. This newsletter is a publication of the City of Key West.

A tree with legs?

No, but this full sized gumbo limbo did move this month, with the help of the city's Urban Forestry Program Manager Cynthia Domenech-Coogle and a landscaping crew. Ichabod Crane Service lifted the tree away from a construction site on Lazy Way. The crane operator lifted the enormous root ball and repositioned it across the lane where it will provide shade for years to come. Native Landscape Design provided the manpower to relocate the tree, and Key West Bight management is credited with saving the tree, says Domenech-Coogle.



PAL Puts the Feast in Thanksgiving



The Key West Police Athletic League wanted to be sure that families whose kids participate in the numerous programs sponsored by PAL didn't miss out this Thanksgiving.

On the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, PAL Director Frank Lalama (center) - with the help of Key West Police Officer Danyle Gray and city staffers William Stafford, Kenny Knowles and Charles Major - handed out complete turkey dinners for 25 families.

Recycle!

GLEE held its third annual R4 Fair, educating people about ways to Reduce, reuse, recycle and rot. More than 400 people took part in a series of displays featuring fun and creative ways to save the planet. The Key West City Commission in January passed a recycling ordinance with the goal of improving the community's rate of recycling. GLEE, a group of dedicated volunteers, plays a big role in that education process.



Veteran's Day

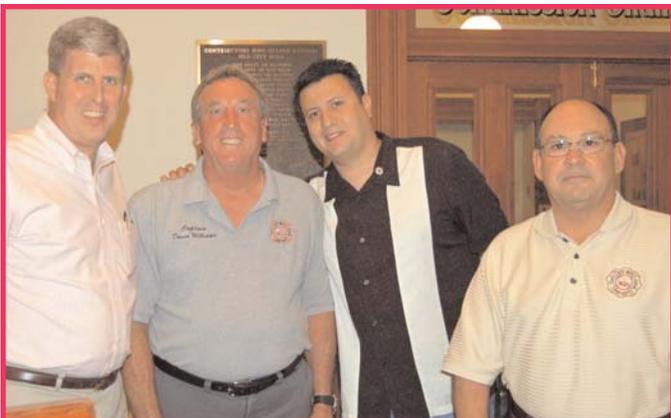
The Key West Police Department headed up this year's Veteran's Day Parade on Duval St. with the Motor Unit and the Mounted Unit.



25 Years of Service

Key West City Manager Jim Scholl, Fire Chief David Fraga and firefighter Omar Garcia honored Capt. David Williams for 25 years of service to the Key West Fire Department. The recognition came during the Nov. 4 meeting of the Key West City Commission. Garcia called Williams a leader as well as the go-to guy when anyone in the department has a problem or question.

Left to right: City Manager Jim Scholl, Capt. David Williams, firefighter Omar Garcia, Fire Chief David Fraga.



Hotel Donates Safety for Families in Need

Joel Meisel, the owner of the Santa Maria Suites in Key West, has donated 30 fire extinguishers to families in need.

The hotel's General Manager Steve Mungall met with Key West Fire Chief David Fraga and Fire Marshall Marcus Del Valle to make the donation. The Fire Department will be distributing the extinguishers throughout the community.

"We appreciate the donation from Joel Meisel, Steve Mungall and the Santa Maria Suites," said Fraga. "We will be working with organizations in

the city to ensure these extinguishers are placed in the homes that need them most."

Fire Marshall Del Valle says he appreciates the way that the Santa Maria is benefiting the public's safety.

"This is a classic example of individuals coming together for the betterment of the community," said Del Valle.

The time of year is particularly appropriate as home fire hazards tend to increase with the holidays and cooler weather. Candles, space heaters, and even increased home cooking can all increase the chances of fire.

"In this time of giving, it's good to support the community," said Mungall. He said he hopes this donation will spur others to give the gift of safety and hope to the community.

The firefighters' union donated over 20 of the extinguishers to

the Wesley House.

Wesley House Family Services is a non profit agency that provides an array of services, from child care to foster homes. The extinguishers will make homes safer for families who might not otherwise be able to afford these vital fire prevention tools.



Nicole Cates Canalejo, Intervention Prevention Services Manager for the Wesley House, and Wesley House CEO Doug Blomberg, firefighters' union secretary Wayne Owens and Captain/Inspector Peter Malott.



Steve Mungall (center) presents Fire Chief David Fraga (left) and Fire Marshal Marcus Del Valle with home fire extinguishers.

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TELEVISED PUBLIC MEETINGS

City Commission: Dec. 3

HARC: Dec. 8

Code Compliance: Dec. 16

Planning Board: Dec

Pocket Park Cleanup



The Grinnell Street Pocket Park is much more inviting these days, thanks to some dedicated neighbors who turned out for a major cleanup. They were joined by Key West Landscape Coordinator Cynthia Domenech-Coogle and Rudy Molinet, who chairs the city's Tree Commission. In addition, they trimmed the trees and removed invasive vines that were choking many of the trees. Over the next few weeks, the crew will be mulching the beds with natural mulch provided by the city of Key West.