



Change of Command

After five years at the helm, City Manager Jim Scholl retired, handing the tiller to Bob Vitas. For most of July, the two worked in tandem to ensure the smoothest transition possible. Then, on July 28th, Mr. Vitas assumed his full duties. Mr. Scholl, already a retired Navy commander, is retiring after five years with the City.

Mr. Vitas brings a wealth of experience to the City. He is a leader who strongly encourages teamwork, organizational excellence and who promotes community prosperity. He comes to the island city from the Village of Lake Zurich, Illinois where he served as village administrator. He has a long career in government management and consulting.

Mr. Vitas holds a Master of Arts degree in Public Affairs and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science, both from Northern Illinois University.

The first weeks of his initiation as the City's lead administrator included dozens of meetings with City Commissioners, department heads and community leaders. It's a steep learning curve, but our new City Manager is no newcomer to challenge. He has worked in local government, served as a private consultant to government and helped war-torn countries in Eastern Europe rebuild local government from the ground up.



Mr. Vitas says that, with the budget nearly finished, he wants to expedite the development of the park at the Truman Waterfront. He also says, with a glint in his eye, that he's looking forward to his first Fantasy Fest.

Mr. Scholl received a standing ovation from the City Commission, staff and a full house of community members at his last regular meeting of the commission. Mayor Craig Cates presented Mr. Scholl with a plaque from the entire commission, thanking him for his dedicated leadership over the past five years. Mr. Scholl came to the city after retiring from the Navy. His last assignment there was as the Captain at the Naval Air Station Key West. During his tenure with the City he has stressed fiscal responsibility and public safety.

Mayor Craig Cates on July 17 presented a commendation to the Monroe Association for ReMARCable Citizens for the more than 30 years that MARC clients have been providing landscaping services in the Key West Cemetery.

The MARC House provides numerous services such as client training and support that enhances individual abilities to understand daily community routines and learn social, self-care, vocational skills. The long-standing arrangement has been beneficial for the City and for the clients of MARC.

In 1982 work for the MARC House in the cemetery began with clearing and uncovering graves that had been lost to the overgrowth. Over the course of three decades the MARC House services were the stable force in maintaining the cemetery landscaping. As the needs of the Historic Cemetery have evolved, the excellent service of the MARC House is unfortunately no longer required.



CITY OF KEY WEST

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City Manager

Bob Vitas

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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.

Employee Service Awards

The City of Key West has a hard-working and dedicated group of people whose service ensures city residents and visitors a clean, safe community. The following City staff hit some important milestones in the month of July:



Michael Chaustit

Detective

Key West Police Department

7/2/07

5 years



Noel Diaz

Telecommunicator

Key West Police Department

7/2/07

5 years



Jim Scholl

City Manager

City Manager's Office

7/2/07

5 years

One of Key West's most community-minded residents was met with a standing ovation by the packed chamber at Old City Hall during the July City Commission meeting. Robert Walker, who was being recognized for his many years of selfless contribution to the city, said he was humbled by the moment.

Mayor Craig Cates proclaimed July 18th as Robert G. Walker Day in honor of his contributions to the community. Walker has been a teacher, a guidance counselor, assistant principal and school principal. He was then elected as School Superintendent.

When he retired from the School District in 2001, Mr. Walker joined AIDS Help,

Inc. as executive director where he provided the necessary leadership to provide life-sustaining services, affordable housing and hope for hundreds of men, women and children living with HIV/AIDS.

Mr. Walker has served honorably and with merit as secretary, treasurer, vice-president and president of the board of the Key West Rotary Club. In addition, he has served on the Board of Directors of the Key West Art and Historical Society, the Board of Area Health Education Center, the Board of the South Florida Health Foundation, and many other charitable organizations.



Department~Sponsored Cadets Become Officers



Seven new officers were sworn in during a graduation ceremony at the San Carlos Institute in July. They successfully complete the Police Academy at the Florida Keys Community College. The officers - Edward Cutie, Anna Dykes, David Fraga, Michael Pettee, Alex Rodriguez, Dennis Ryan and Billy Vazquez - were sponsored by the Key West Police Department. Capt. Scott Smith swore them in and presented them with their badges.

The San Carlos Institute hosted the ceremony, and the auditorium was filled with friends, family and colleagues. The graduation of Class 48 was presided over by the newly appointed presidents of FKCC, Dr. Jonathan Gueverra.

“These new officers are locals who have put down roots in Key West,” said Police Chief Donie Lee. “Sponsoring them is an investment in the future of this community. Seeing them successfully gradu-

ate the program and become officers makes me proud. It's a rigorous program, both physically and academically, and I'm confident each one of them will be an asset to the Department and to the community they are about to serve.”

The seven newest members of the Key West Police Department are:

Officer Edward Cutie, Jr. graduated Key West High School, then served in the U.S. Navy and remains a Navy reservist. Cutie is also a certified police officer with the Navy.

Officer Anna Dykes has served as a civilian employee of the Key West Police Department for the past seven years as a dispatcher, a position that has honed her understanding of the community's needs and the role of a Key West police officer. She holds a Bachelor's degree from Miami University in Springfield Ohio, her home state. Officer Dykes was honored during the graduation with the Top

Gun Award for her outstanding marksmanship.

Officer David Fraga is a native of Key West, and the son of the current Chief of the Key West Fire Department, David Fraga. He holds an Associates degree from the Florida Keys Community College. In addition, Officer Fraga is one class away from earning his Bachelor of Science degree in criminal justice.

Officer Michael Pettee hales originally from Delaware, but he has been working as a dispatcher with the Key West Police Department for several

months before attending the Academy. Officer Pettee was elected by his classmates to serve as Class Captain. During the graduation ceremony, he was honored by FKCC Public Safety Director Marc Halvorson for both his leadership skills and his academic achievement.

Officer Alexander Rodriguez was born and raised in Key West and holds an Associates degree from the Florida Keys Community College. He is one of several generations to grow up in Key West.

Officer Dennis Ryan is originally from New York, but has worked for the past two years as a teacher for the Keys Center Academy. He has also taught in several New York schools. He holds a Bachelor's degree and is close to earning his Master's degree in special and elementary education.

Officer Billy Vazquez is joining his father - Lt. Alfredo Vazquez - as a sworn member of the Key West Police Department. He earned an Associate's degree at FKCC and holds a Bachelor's degree from the University of Central Florida in Orlando where he majored in criminal justice.



Fire Chief David Fraga and son Officer David Fraga



Lt. Alfredo Vazquez and son Officer Billy Vazquez