

# Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



JANUARY 2018

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

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## JANUARY INSIDE HILLCREST

### 2017 – GOOD YEAR FOR THE OUTRAGEOUS

What can I say – the comedians are having a field day helping us laugh through our tears and fears. Trepidation and dismay are words that were rarely used until 2017 when opening a newspaper or turning on the news invoked both uneasy feelings. Those who are mean, hateful and enjoy using power over others in the very worst way had a banner year.

### BAD YEAR FOR PERVERTS

As with any new awakening for which public opinion weighs heavily, the pendulum can go too far. Equating sexual battery with obnoxious come-ons can be equally dangerous and unfair. Al Franken deserved what he got but he is not Bill Cosby. Matt Lauer is a hedonistic ass who hurt women's careers because they sexually rebuffed him, but he is not Harvey Weinstein. We need to stay aware of the degree and not brand everyone with the same hot iron of public outcry. If murder has degrees so should sex crimes. Harassment and assault are not the same although both are unacceptable.

Yes, there are women who consent to sex with powerful men who would never do so if they were not powerful. The aura of authority can be intimidating – or exciting and attractive. It is a slippery slope and we are not navigating it well. Those who own up to what they did and apologize are not doing as well as those who lie through their teeth. I have more respect for Louis C.K. and Al Franken than I do for Roy Moore and stone-throwing pussy-grabbers.

I, like many, was so conflicted when the Cosby scandal first came to light. The TV patriarch of a funny, loving, intelligent family was exposed as a monster who caused nightmares for so many innocent women. Who knew that he was just the tip of the proverbial iceberg?

But it is what it is, as they say, and the fallout is far from over – for all of us.

### UPS AND DOWNS

I believe life is great if you have a “live and let live” attitude, a good sense of humor and not too many health issues. Being able to see the humor in most situations is also good for one's mental health. I remember a time I made a remark at work that I had lost 10 pounds and one of the guys said, “Oh yeah? Look behind you.” At least two women were angry and offended, but I thought it was funny. However, I don't think any of us were wrong in our reactions. That is another reason that human interaction is so complicated. Still, I feel that

life is more fun if people can see the humor in almost everything. The following is a story I meant to tell many issues ago and, in light of the recent sensitivity to all things sexual, some would say I shouldn't tell it now but here goes.

Last year I was in one of our buildings checking out a listing and happened to get on the elevator with the Vice-President. Suddenly, the elevator came to a halt between two floors – my first time getting stuck in an elevator. The VP pushed the call button and a voice came on assuring us that help was on the way. As we stood there, we heard a phone ring- it was coming from the elevator panel. We pushed the button and a woman's voice said she was inquiring about the apartment for rent. The VP answered, “Ma'am, we are stuck in an elevator”. She angrily replied, “THIS IS THE NUMBER THEY GAVE ME!” and hung up. We never did figure that one out.

Hollywood's finest showed up within minutes and as we all know they are ALL good-looking. Unfortunately, it wasn't a case of them prying open the door allowing us to step out- the level was too high. It was a matter of being boosted by the VP and pulled through by the rescue team. I told the VP not to look at my ass to which one of the responders said, “If you hadn't said that, he wouldn't have thought to...” Leaving my dignity in the elevator, the poor VP had to boost me up to the landing and two good looking guys pulled me through and stood me upright. One remarked, “It's a good thing you weren't wearing a dress.” I replied, “you're not kidding, I don't wear underwear.” The second one gave me a big smile and said, “What unit are YOU in?” Even getting stuck in an elevator can be funny.

Be sure that although the banter could be considered sexual in nature, it was mutually engaged in by all involved. If one person had been made uncomfortable by it, it should have stopped. I believe we are all much more aware of how damaging some previously “not-talked about” behavior has been for so many women and some men.

### SEXUAL BATTERY AND ME

I started to call this section “Sexual Harassment...” but then I looked up the definition of harassment: “to annoy or bother (someone) in a constant or repeated way” and neither of these stories fit the bill. I was a bit surprised that to be accurate, I had to call what happened “sexual battery.” The difference between assault and battery included this: “Even minor touching can qualify as battery providing it is painful, harmful or offensive to the victim.”

These offenses have been around for years as we all know but I don't think until recently that we knew the extent that some women have been abused. Let's face it, probably 99% of women have been sexually harassed, assaulted, battered or abused in their lifetime. Apparently, according to the legal definitions, I have been sexually battered twice by bosses.

The first time was when I worked for Tony Roma's. A server was late one day, so I was helping light the table candles. Our uniforms were thigh-high and as I bent to light one of the candles, Tony Roma came up behind me and put his hand on my thigh. I told him to get his hands off me. His reply was, “I only touched your leg!” Later, I found out that he directed our manager at the time, Bobby Rubino, to fire me. Bobby managed to put him off until he cooled down and saved my job, so I slept with him. KIDDING! That wasn't the reason I slept with him.

If I had gotten fired, I would have just gone out and gotten another job, but the fact that I ended up with a 28-year career working for Roma Corporation, that one incident could have been a life changer for me.

I can't imagine what it is like for women who feel like they have no choice. From single mothers who work two jobs to make ends meet to actresses and singers with aspirations that fear that they may have their careers ruined, we have learned just how ugly it can get. If I hear one more time, “If it was so bad, why didn't they come forward sooner?”, I will throw a brick at someone (assault). Most of the time the woman feels like she is the only one. How hard was it to believe what we first heard about Bill Cosby? How many of us didn't fully accept it until the number of accusers was overwhelming? Until women feel safe coming forward – and even then, many have been called liars, ridiculed and some have received death threats – the abuser gets away with it.

*Continued on Pg.2*



# INJURED?

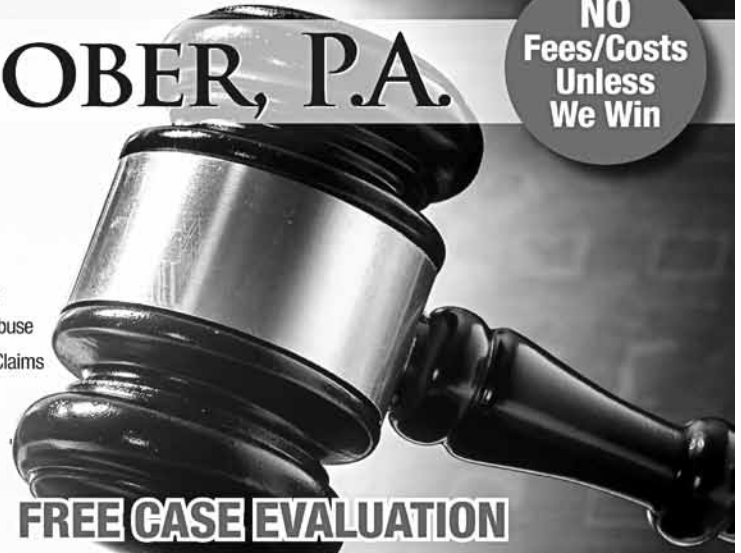
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Continued from Pg.1

The second time I was a victim, it was just bizarre. I don't remember what the issue was that I went to my manager about, but she said I would have to take it up with the owner. I had never really spoken to the owner before; I usually worked weekends when he wasn't around. Then one Sunday I was at work when something got into my eye. I wore hard contact lenses and in those days, as unsanitary as it sounds, we would just pop out the lens, stick it on our tongue and go into the restroom to rinse it off and put it back in. Just as I was headed to the ladies' room, the manager told me that the owner, Stanley, was in the office and would see me. I told her to give me a minute; but she said that he was on his way out the door and if I wanted to talk to him, I should go straight to the office. I went in the office and it took me all of 1 minute to tell him whatever the issue was and for him to say he would take care of it. As I turned to leave, he grabbed me in a bear hug and tried to kiss me. I tried to push him away as he was attempting to put his tongue in my mouth. I managed to push his face away and gasping, I said, "Stanley, my con tact!" He said, "Well, close your eyes, stupid!"

It struck me so funny I started laughing hysterically; partly from shock. He let go of me and his face got all red, he was so angry. I tried to explain about my contact lens being in my mouth, but I was laughing so hard, I couldn't talk. He just opened the door of the office and shooed me out. He never said another word to me for the duration of my employment.

As gross as that was, what is grosser - and surprising to me - is the number of men who expose themselves. Guys, what the hell are you thinking? Your junk may feel good but it sure ain't pretty and looking at it is NOT a turn on for most women. And now we have texting and sexting which has taken this disgusting act to a new level. Although I have never had a man expose himself in front of me, TWICE I have been texted a picture of some stranger's penis. Seriously?! I asked a police officer what recourse I had, and his answer was to just block the sender. He said although it is illegal to text a picture of a sex act, it is not illegal to text a picture of a body part.

As someone who is a connoisseur of great comebacks, here is one for you if heaven forbid, some jerk exposes himself to you. Look him

dead in the eye and say, "The last time I saw something that looked like that - it had an ERASER on the end of it." (Courtesy of a comedian who called herself Andrea Dice Clay - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh29q87QkkY>)

**SOMETIMES YOU JUST GOTTA LAUGH**

To this end, semiannually we publish a joke issue. We received a record number of jokes, stories and cartoons in the past six months and even with regularly hitting the "delete" button, I still had 50+ to review. Thanks to my great neighbors, Elizabeth, Gina and Boodro; as well as my partner in life and love, Brian, who reviewed every dang one of them and rated each one on a 1-3 scale: 3 being "Put it in", 2 being "Only if you need a filler" and 1 being "Dump it". Next joke issue is July, so start sending your best jokes and stories to **inside.hillcrest@comcast.net**.

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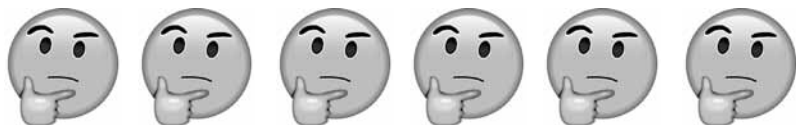
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## Just sayin'...

Just read that 4,153,237-people got married last year, not to cause any trouble but shouldn't that be an even number?

If I had a dollar for every girl that found me unattractive, they would eventually find me attractive.

I find it ironic that the colors red, white, and blue stand for freedom until they are flashing behind you.

When wearing a bikini, women reveal 90% of their body... men are so polite they only look at the covered parts.

Relationships are a lot like algebra. Have you ever looked at your X and wondered Y?

You know that tingly little feeling you get when you like someone? That's your common sense leaving your body.

Denny's has a slogan, "If it's your birthday, the meal is on us." If you're in Denny's and it's your birthday, your life sucks.

The reason Mayberry was so peaceful and quiet was because nobody was married. Andy, Aunt Bea, Barney, Floyd, Howard, Goober, Gomer, Sam, Earnest T Bass, Helen, Thelma Lou, Clara and, of course, Opie were all single. The only married person was Otis, and he stayed drunk.

## BOODROISMS

What issue would be complete without a word (or two) from Boodro, our resident Ragin' Cajun?

There are a lot of people in the world you can mess with, but I am one you should really skip.

Good judgement comes from experience. Experience comes from poor judgement.

I'll never understand how you can take boiling hot wax, pour it onto your upper thigh, rip the hair out by the root, and still be afraid of a spider.

Boodro's favorite bedtime story:

Once upon a time, a Prince asked a beautiful Princess, "Will you marry me?" The Princess immediately said, "No!"

And the Prince lived happily ever after, and rode motorcycles and dated thin, long-legged, full-breasted women, and hunted and fished and raced cars, and went to titty bars and dated ladies half his age and drank whiskey, beer, and Captain Morgan, and never heard bitching and never paid child support or alimony, and dated cheerleaders and kept his house and guns, and ate spam and potato chips and beans, and blew enormous farts, and never got cheated on while he was at work, and all his friends and family thought he was friggin' cool as hell, and he had tons of money in the bank, and left the toilet seat up. And he lived happily ever after. The End.

## MODERN LOVE

Beautifully written and something for all you romantics: An elderly couple had just learned how to send text messages on their new mobile phones. The wife was a romantic type and a retired English Teacher of the Classics. The husband, a retired Navy Chief, was more of a no-nonsense guy.

One afternoon the wife went out to meet a friend for coffee. She decided to send her husband a romantic text message and she wrote:

"If you are sleeping, send me your dreams.  
If you are laughing, send me your smile.  
If you are eating, send me a bite.  
If you are drinking, send me a sip.  
If you are crying, send me your tears.  
...I love you.

The husband texted back to her: "I'm on the toilet..... Please advise."

## PUBLIC SPEAKING – by Cindy Abraham

Statistically, (they say), fear of public speaking is right up there with fear of dying. There are no shortages of public speaking courses and when I was in college, I took a public speaking class. The other day I remembered a funny story about the class, so I thought I would share it with you.

The teacher was a woman – don't remember her name. In the class there was one guy who was a real stoner. He was high on pot all the time and proud of it. He wasn't the most articulate person in the room; his speech was peppered with "like", "man", all the hippie colloquialisms of the time. The assignment was to write about something we felt passionate about. Naturally we all thought he would write about marijuana.

Back story: For those of us who remember cigarette commercials on TV, there was one for Tareyton cigarettes and the tag line was, "I would rather fight than switch." with an actor sporting a black eye and a big grin because Tareyton cigarettes were the "best".

Now it was time for our resident stoner to give his speech. He started eloquently with, "I am sure you have all seen the commercial "I would rather fight than switch". Whether you switch or not, you may still have a fight on your hands – for your life."

Now we are all looking at each other and the teacher because we all know he did not write this speech. He went on: "Smoking has been known to cause lung cancer, heart disease and EN-SA-FEMA." At this point one of the guys let out a guffaw and the rest of us started laughing. At which, stoner raised his voice and insisted, "IT DOES TOO – IT DOES TOO CAUSE EN-SA-FEMA!"

When the laughter died down, the teacher gently told him that the speech didn't sound like he had written it and in the spirit of the assignment, she wanted him to come back the next class with a speech about something he felt strongly about.

Sure enough, next class he started out with, "Why Marijuana Should Be Legalized".



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## WISDOM OF THE AGES

1. My goal for 2017 was to lose just 10 pounds. Only 15 to go!
2. Ate salad for dinner. Mostly croutons & tomatoes. Really just one big round crouton covered with tomato sauce. And cheese. FINE, it was a pizza. I ate a pizza.
3. How to prepare Tofu:
  - a. Throw it in the trash
  - b. Grill some meat
4. I just did a week's worth of cardio after walking into a spider web.
5. I don't mean to brag, but I finished my 14-day diet food in 3 hours and 20 minutes.
6. A recent study has found women who carry a little extra weight live longer than men who mention it.
7. Kids today don't know how easy they have it. When I was young, I had to walk 9 feet through shag carpet to change the TV channel.
8. Senility has been a smooth transition for me.
9. Remember back when we were kids and every time it was below zero out they closed school? Me neither.
10. I may not be that funny or athletic or good looking or smart or talented. I forgot where I was going with this.
11. I love being over 70. I learn something new every day and forget 5 others.
12. A thief broke into my house last night. He started searching for money so I woke up and searched with him.

13. I always knew I would get old. How fast it happened was a bit of a surprise though.
14. Be the reason someone smiles today. Or the reason that they drink. Whatever works.
15. I'm starting to think I will never be old enough to know better.
16. I can't believe how old people my age are.
17. I thought the dryer shrank my clothes. Turned out it was the refrigerator.

### Wedding Day LOL

A father texts his son: "My Dear Son, today is a day you will treasure for all the days of your life. My best love and good wishes. Your Father."

His Son texts back: "Thanks Dad. But the wedding isn't actually until tomorrow!"

His Father replies: "I know."

### STUPID IS AS STUPID DOES

I've got to stop saying, How stupid can you be? Too many people are taking it as a challenge.

I'm sorry I hurt your feelings when I called you stupid. I thought you already knew."

# “Be Mine” Annual Dog Show Scholarship Fundraiser Saturday February 10, 2018

by *Cindy Abraham*



The scholarship fund provided three \$1000.00 scholarships to Hollywood graduating seniors in 2017. The recipients were Zachary Myers, Zoe Dekeles, and Melinda Hebert.

This year is the third year for the show. It will be held at Stan Goldman Dog Park just before Valentine’s Day on February 10, 2018 from 9 – 1 pm. Categories include best trick, best look-a-like, ugliest most unique, most obedient to name a few. The show is meant to be a fun activity for

adults and kids. To encourage pre-registration for the competitions, the \$5.00 fee is being waived until after January 27th. So don’t wait and don’t find yourself on the wait list.



There will be a Chinese auction raffle featuring donated prizes from local businesses, and a silent auction. Vendors will be onsite with dog-related goods and services, as well as, vendors with other goods and services. Entry fee is five dollars per dog per category. Only buckle collars are allowed. No choke chains, shock or prong collars. Dogs must have their vaccinations current.

The scholarship applicants must be residents of Hollywood and graduates of one of the four public high schools: MacArthur, South Broward, Hallandale Beach, or Hollywood Hills. Students who have demonstrated the ability to be successful in school and a commitment to community service are encouraged to apply. Students pursuing vocational training are encouraged to apply. We are looking for at least three candidates from each of the four schools. Please help spread the word.

The Hollywood Council of Civic Associations (HCCA) is the organizer of this scholarship fundraiser for the Peter Brewer Scholarship Fund. Mr. Brewer was a founding member of the HCCA and a staunch supporter of public education.

Anyone wishing to volunteer, become a vendor, donate or wanting additional information on the scholarship program can contact us at [be.mine.dogshow@gmail.com](mailto:be.mine.dogshow@gmail.com). Vendor spaces are \$25.00. If you’re interested in a group class on basic dog obedience, contact Patty at **954-662-3612**. All forms and other information is on our website: [www.hollywoodfloridausa.org/dogshow.html](http://www.hollywoodfloridausa.org/dogshow.html)

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## DOGGONE IT!



A dog lover, whose female dog came “in heat,” was concerned about keeping it and her male separated. But she had a large house and she believed that she could keep the two dogs apart.

However, as she was drifting off to sleep, she heard awful howling and moaning sounds. She rushed downstairs and found

the dogs locked together and unable to disengage, as frequently happens when dogs mate.

Unable to separate them, and perplexed as to what to do next, although it was very late at night, she called her vet, who answered in a very grumpy voice.

After she explained the problem to him, the vet said, “Hang up the phone and place it down alongside the dogs. I will then call you back and the noise of the ringing will make the male lose his erection and he will be able to withdraw.”

“Do you really think that will work?” she asked, skeptically. “Just worked for me.” he replied.



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**Harry & Bess Truman**

Harry Truman was a different kind of President. He probably made as many, or more important decisions regarding our nation's history as any of the other 42 Presidents preceding him. However, a measure of his greatness may rest on what he did after he left the White House.

The only asset he had when he died was the house he lived in, which was in Independence Missouri. His wife had inherited the house from her mother and father and other than their years in the White House, they lived their entire lives there.

When he retired from office in 1952 his income was a U.S. Army pension reported to have been \$13,507.72 a year. Congress, noting that he was paying for his stamps and personally licking them, granted him an 'allowance' and, later, a retroactive pension of \$25,000 per year.

After President Eisenhower was inaugurated, Harry and Bess drove home to Missouri by themselves. There was no Secret Service following them.

When offered corporate positions at large salaries, he declined, stating, "You don't want me. You want the office of the President, and that doesn't belong to me. It belongs to the American people and it's not for sale."

Even later, on May 6, 1971, when Congress was preparing to award him the Medal of Honor on his 87th birthday, he refused to



accept it, writing, "I don't consider that I have done anything which should be the reason for any award, Congressional or otherwise."

As president he paid for all of his own travel expenses and food.

Modern politicians have found a new level of success in cashing in on the Presidency, resulting in untold wealth. Today, many in Congress also have found a way to become quite wealthy while enjoying the fruits of their offices. Political offices are now for sale.

Good old Harry Truman was correct when he observed, "My choices in life were either to be a piano player in a whore house or a politician. And to tell the truth, there's hardly any difference!"



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**AND THE WINNER IS...**

A man was looking for a place to sit in a crowded university library.

He asked a girl: "Do you mind if I sit beside you?"

The girl replied, in a loud voice. **"NO, I DON'T WANT TO SPEND THE NIGHT WITH YOU!"**

All the people in the library started staring at the man, who was deeply embarrassed and moved to another table.

After a couple of minutes, the girl walked quietly to the man's table and said with a laugh: "I study psychology, and I know what a man is thinking; I bet you felt embarrassed, right?"

The man responded in a loud voice: **"\$500 FOR ONE NIGHT? .... I'M NOT PAYING YOU THAT MUCH!"**

All the people in the library looked at the girl in shock.

The man whispered to her: *"I study law, and I know how to screw people"*

**PRESENTS OF MIND**

On the first day of school, the children brought gifts for their teacher. The supermarket manager's daughter brought the teacher a basket of assorted fruit. The florist's son brought the teacher a bouquet of flowers. The candy-store owner's daughter gave the teacher a pretty box of candy. Then the liquor-store owner's son brought up a big, heavy box. The teacher lifted it up and noticed that it was leaking a little bit. She touched a drop of the liquid with her finger and tasted it. "Is it wine?" she guessed. "No," the boy replied. She tasted another drop and asked, "Champagne?" "No," said the little boy, "It's a puppy."

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**THE LOST ART OF THANK YOU NOTES**

Dear Lincoln Elementary,

God bless you for the beautiful radio I won at your recent "Senior Citizens" luncheon. I am 84 years old and live at the Springer Home for the Aged. All of my family has passed away. I am all alone now and it's nice to know that someone is thinking of me. God bless you for your kindness to an old forgotten lady.

My roommate is 95 and has always had her own radio, but before I received one, she would never let me listen to hers, even when she was napping. The other day her radio fell off the night stand and broke into a lot of pieces. It was awful, and she was in tears.

Her distress over the broken radio touched me and I knew this was God's way of answering my prayers. She asked me if she could listen to mine, and I told her to kiss my ass.

Thank you for that opportunity.

Sincerely, Agnes





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## HE HADDA BE HIGH

A man boarded an airplane and took his seat. As he settled in, he glanced up and saw the most beautiful woman boarding the plane. He soon realized she was heading straight towards his seat. As fate would have it, she took the seat right beside his. Eager to strike up a conversation, he blurted out, "Business trip or pleasure?" She turned, smiled and said, "Business. I'm going to the Annual Nympho- maniacs of America Convention in Boston."

He swallowed hard. Here was the most gorgeous woman he had ever seen sitting next to him, and she was going to a meeting of nymphomaniacs. Struggling to maintain his composure, he calmly asked, "What's your business role at this convention?"

"Lecturer," she responded. "I use information that I have learned from my personal experiences to debunk some of the popular myths about sexuality."

"Really?" he said. "And what kind of myths are there?"

"Well, she explained, "One popular myth is that African-American men are the most well-endowed of all men, when in fact it is the Native American Indian who is most likely to possess that trait. Another popular myth is that Frenchmen are the best lovers, when actually it is men of Jewish descent who are the

best. I have also discovered that the lover with absolutely the best stamina is the Southern Redneck."

Suddenly the woman became a little uncomfortable and blushed. "I'm sorry," she said, "I shouldn't really be discussing all of this with you. I don't even know your name..."

"Tonto," the man said, "Tonto Goldstein, but my friends call me Bubba."

## REVERSE PSYCHOLOGY?

I think my neighbor is stalking me as she's been googling my name on her computer. I saw it through my telescope last night.

My therapist said that my narcissism causes me to misread social situations. I'm pretty sure she was hitting on me.

The pharmacist asked me my birth date again today. I'm pretty sure she's going to get me something.

My boyfriend keeps accusing me of being a stalker. Well...he's not actually my boyfriend...yet.

My therapist says I have a preoccupation with vengeance. We'll see about that.

### TODAY'S LESSON IN IRONY

The Food Stamp Program is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. They proudly report that they distribute free meals and food stamps to over 46 million people on an annual basis.

Meanwhile the National Park Service run by the U.S. Department of the Interior, asks us, "Please do not feed the animals." Their stated reason for this policy being that: "The animals will grow dependent on the handouts, and then they will never learn to take care of themselves."

This concludes today's lesson. Any questions?

**Did you know you can make your own face scrub at home using sugar, lemon and honey?**



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### THEY'RE EVERYWHERE, THEY'RE EVERYWHERE...

A public school teacher was arrested today at John F. Kennedy International airport as he attempted to board a flight while in possession of a ruler, a protractor, a compass, a slide-rule and a calculator.

At a morning press conference, the Attorney General said he believes the man is a member of the notorious Al-Gebra movement.

He did not identify the man, who has been charged by the FBI with carrying weapons of math instruction. Al-Gebra is a problem for us', the Attorney General said. 'They derive solutions by means and extremes, and sometimes go off on tangents in search of absolute values.' They use secret code names like "X" and "Y" and refer to themselves as "unknowns" but we have determined that they belong to a common denominator of the axis of medieval with coordinates in every country.

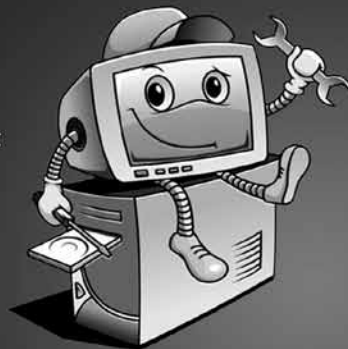
As the Greek philosopher Isosceles used to say, "There are 3 sides to every triangle."

When asked to comment on the arrest, the President's press secretary said, "If God had wanted us to have better weapons of math instruction, he would have given us more fingers and toes."

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Tune-up	\$19	\$65

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## REALTOR HUMOR...OR NOT

A Florida Highway Patrolman pulls over a speeding motorist. He walks up to the window, and says, "Can I see your real estate license, please?" The driver responds, "Don't you mean my driver's license?" "No," says the patrolman. "Not everyone in Florida has one of those."

I had a group of Real Estate jokes all ready for this spot, but I lost my sense of humor when looking up Hillcrest listings. Why do people hire agents who know nothing about Hillcrest when you have at least 7 active agents who live in the community? If you are one of these people, I strongly suggest you look at your listing. Do your pictures look like they were shot with a flip phone? Are there at least 35 pictures in the listing? Buyers want to see full-frame pictures and they don't want to see your toilet seat up and the wrinkled bed spread.

Is the information correct? I am looking at two listings that state, "lease OK" in buildings that do not allow rentals. I am looking at a closed sale for a 3 bedroom that according to the agent, sold for \$196.00. The same agent apparently also sold a remodeled one bedroom for \$98.00 according to the MLS – further skewing our on-line estimated values.

I watch Brian calling agents for his buyers for two or three days before he gets an answer. Then they complain how far they must drive to show the unit – if they show it at all – and cannot accommodate the buyer's schedule. Of course, outside agents can't answer any questions about the building or future amenities.

Statistics don't lie. Hillcrest agents sell for HIGHER than outside agents. We just sold a one-bedroom and a convertible last month in one of the high rises and BEAT the highest comp in that building both times. (I am there for EVERY appraisal and Brian is there for EVERY inspection – the two steps that can derail a sale.)

One seller told me it was because the agent she hired took a discounted commission; her unit has been on the market over four months and the price has been lowered twice. The agent NEVER shows it and takes an average of two days to return a phone call. She sure got what she paid for. Meanwhile the last unit we sold in that building which was "updated" beat two complete remodel sales; one by 5K and one by 7K but she stands to save around 3K using a discount broker...geesh.

Losing money is not funny. Condos that are priced right, staged attractively and shown by a savvy agent sell within 14-67 days. Ours record is 6-50 days for condos and 3-38 days for homes.

**If you want to list your unit, call any agent you want. If you want to sell it, call Keller Williams A Team Florida at 8-HILLCREST.**



# January Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham



In honor of the fun issue, and because we love easy Sheet Pan Chicken recipes that are tasty and fast after a long day, here are two more. The one in the October issue is probably still our favorite but here are two others you may like. The original one we printed had potato and red onion, one of these is made with broccoli and sweet potato and the other with cauliflower and carrots so you can change them up according to what you like. Sumac is worth looking for – I found it at Damascus, the Middle Eastern grocery up the street on Hollywood Blvd. We use it a lot now, and as always, I can drop off a small container to you if you need it.

## SHEET PAN SUMAC CHICKEN

6 TBS olive oil, divided,  
1 TBS sumac Kosher, 1 tsp light brown sugar, 1 tsp paprika,  
¼ tsp red pepper, 1 lb. cauliflower florets  
1 pkg. baby carrots halved length-wise  
4-6 skinless chicken thighs or legs, 1 TBS fresh lemon juice  
1 small lemon thinly sliced into rounds (squeeze out a TBS juice first)  
1 small red onion cut into 8 wedges  
½ cup chopped fresh parsley  
1 TBS dried cilantro  
1 minced garlic clove

### Preheat oven to 425 degrees.

Combine 3 TBS oil with sumac, 1 tsp salt, brown sugar, paprika and red pepper in a medium bowl.

Place cauliflower and carrots on a foil-lined baking sheet. Add half of the oil mixture and toss to coat. Rub remaining oil mixture over chicken pieces and add to pan with lemon slices.

Bake at 425 for 20 minutes. Stir vegetables. Sprinkle onion wedges over pan and bake for 20 more minutes or until done. Mix 3 TBS oil, ¼ tsp salt, parsley, cilantro, lemon juice and garlic in a small bowl. Remove pan from oven and spoon mixture over chicken and vegetables. Serve.

**SHEET PAN “FRIED” CHICKEN – you need 2 sheet pans coated with cooking spray; 1 large bowl, 2 small bowls and 2 shallow dishes.** (I like to have everything prepped and ready to go.)

**In a large bowl toss:** 6 skinless chicken drumsticks or thighs  
1 TBS fresh lemon juice, Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  
½ tsp poultry seasoning, ½ tsp garlic powder

**In a shallow dish:** 2 beaten eggs

**In a shallow dish:** 1 cup panko bread crumbs, 1/3 cup grated Parmesan, 1 tsp dried oregano, 1 tsp dried parsley

**In a small bowl:**

1 large sweet potato peeled and cut into wedges tossed with:  
1 TBS olive oil, ½ tsp paprika, ½ tsp garlic powder  
½ tsp chili powder, Salt to taste

**In a small bowl:** 6 cups broccoli florets tossed with: 1 TBS oil, 1 minced garlic clove, Salt to taste, 1 lemon cut into 6 wedges

**Preheat oven to 425 degrees.**

Place chicken in a large bowl, drizzle with lemon juice and sprinkle with salt, pepper, poultry seasoning and garlic powder. Place beaten eggs in shallow dish. In another shallow dish combine the panko, parmesan, oregano and parsley. Dip chicken in eggs and dredge in panko mixture. (Discard egg and panko mixture). Place chicken on sheet pan. Coat tops of chicken with cooking spray. Put pan in oven and cook for 20 minutes.

Toss potatoes with 1 TBS oil, ½ tsp garlic powder, paprika, chili powder and salt. Arrange on ½ of second cooking spray coated sheet pan. Place in oven next to chicken and cook for another 10 minutes.

Toss broccoli florets with 1 TBS oil, minced garlic and salt. Remove pan with potatoes from oven and turn them over. Add broccoli to other half of pan, return to oven with chicken and bake another 20 minutes. Remove both sheet pans from oven and serve with lemon wedges to squeeze over broccoli.

## Experience Makes Up for Aging Brain, Study Reveals

*Q. I have been bored with my life since my husband died and I am considering going back to work part-time just to get out of the house. At age 72, though, I'm not sure what I can do nor do I have the confidence to know whether I can even survive in the workforce. I had worked full-time in accounting until age 65, but can I keep up with younger generations?*

Here's an encouraging study: Even though aging does cause brain decline, a University of California Riverside study has found that experience makes up for that decline.

The study is believed to be the first to measure decision-making over the lifespan through the lens of two types of intelligence: fluid and crystallized. Fluid intelligence is the ability to learn and process information. Crystallized intelligence refers to experience and accumulated knowledge.

To conduct the study, researchers recruited a group of 336 people – 173 younger (ages 18 to 29) and 163 older (ages 60 to 82) – and asked them a series of questions that measured economic decision-making traits. They also administered a battery of intelligence tests.

These traits included temporal discounting (how much people discount future gains and losses), loss aversion (how much the valuation of losses outweighs gains of the same magnitude), financial literacy (understanding financial information and decisions) and debt literacy (understanding debt contracts and interest rates).

They found the older participants performed as well or better than the younger participants in all four decision-making measures.

Returning to work after retirement can be a frightening prospect. But have confidence in your abilities to make a difference. This might be a great time to try a new endeavor. One part-time career that has proven popular among older adults is that of caring for other seniors.

Healthy professional caregivers are in demand as the population ages and desires to stay at home. Your local Home Instead Senior Care® office trains individuals with caring hearts to go into the homes and communities of older adults to help them with their non-medical needs. Older adults often make great CAREGiversSM since they share many of the interests and hobbies of those for whom they are caring.

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To learn more about Home Instead Senior Care®, contact **Dinah Pickett at 954-505-7957** or go to **HomeInstead.com/773**. For more information about the study, visit [http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub\\_releases/2013-09/uoc--oiw092413.php](http://www.eurekaalert.org/pub_releases/2013-09/uoc--oiw092413.php).

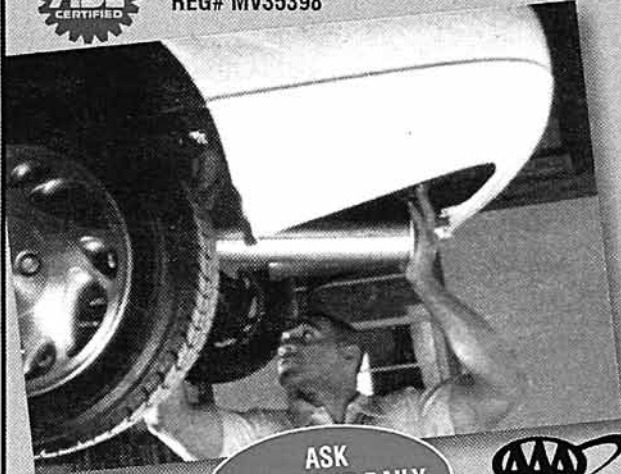


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## HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS LEAD TO INCREASED ENERGY

By Sister Shivani - Submitted by BK Etta Stevens



*Sister Shivani, an internationally renowned inspirational speaker for the Brahma Kumaris Spiritual Organization. Known as the OPRAH of India, Sister Shivani practices Raja Yoga Meditation as taught by the Brahma Kumaris (brahmakumaris.us). This wise and intelligent Sister is always applying Raja Yoga to the common challenges of life. Her unique blend of common sense practicality and unarguable spiritual*

*principles has endeared her to an international audience thirsty for solutions that really work.*

*Sister Shivani has travelled throughout India, UK, Asia Pacific, Africa and Middle East to conduct lectures, workshops, and TV and radio shows on themes such as emotional intelligence, leadership skills, parenting and relationships, self-realization and the practical technique of Raja Yoga Meditation. If you are not familiar with Sister Shivani, a you tube link typing her name and English can show how she brings a spiritual lens to practical issues:*

*Sister Shivani holds a degree in Electrical Engineering and a Gold Medalist from Pune University. She received ASSOCHAM's Woman of the Decade award and is a goodwill ambassador of the World Psychiatry Association. The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual Organization in the US is part of a worldwide network of learning and retreat centers dedicated to transformation through meditation leading to self-mastery. We offer instruction in meditation and spiritual living, free of charge as a community service.*

Relationships are where comfort, happiness, love and respect flow naturally. But sometimes there seems to be conflict, pain and resentment, mainly because of some of our deep-rooted believe systems, which need to be checked. Relationships can be harmonious if we bring about a shift in our consciousness.

**1. From speaking well to thinking well:** Relationships transcend words and behavior, and they depend on the energy exchange of thoughts and feelings. If our words are polite, our behavior is courteous; when our thoughts are judgmental or critical, then we are creating a weak foundation. If our words are of love but our thoughts are of hurt or rejection, we are radiating vibrations of pain to the relationship.

**2. From blame to personal responsibility:** The most common belief is that someone else is responsible for how we feel. Regardless of the nature of the event or the sharpness of the words intended to insult, our response is always our own creation. Their behavior is the stimulus; how we think, feel and behave is our response. We have the freedom to choose our response. We are not machines to react automatically and say, "I will obviously get angry. I will naturally feel hurt ". There is nothing obvious, and we have a choice, always. We need to shift from an automated way of reacting to being aware that even if we are hurt, it is our creation and we have a choice – how long we wish to remain that way. We can choose a response of stability, peace, and love.

**3. From expectations to acceptance:** When we have expectations, it is inner programming: "I want you to be my way. Only then will I be happy. Else I get hurt, and you are the cause of my hurt. "Our expectations are based on our perspective of what is right, which is based on our habits or sanskaras.( a Hindi word) Let us remember that everyone has been on a journey of many lives in different environments, and they may carry sandkaras completely different from ours. They will be the way their habits allow them to be. Trust may be natural for us and, therefore, it is our expectation, but if the other person has faced betrayal in the past, for them trust is associated with pain, and therefore doubt is natural. Accepting people means even when their sanskaras are not to our liking, we do not get disturbed because we understand their journey. This stability radiates love and respect and empowers them; else we radiate hurt and rejection to ourselves and to them.

**4. From holding on to letting go:** Often we go into long periods of silence after a conflict. We feel let down and choose to remain hurt or angry for hours, months or even years. The periods of negative silence deplete soul power and also affect any children in the house. We believe that silence gives us the space to heal ourselves before we return to normal. But a silence in which both are upset only deepens the conflict; but let us not stop talking; let us get back to normal immediately. Being normal is healing for those involved and for all living in the same environment.

**5. From seeking to giving:** We enrich our lives when we come into relationships for giving, not wanting. If we want love, trust, respect, and happiness, let us give it to others. Let us shift from – "give me respect, trust me, understand me" to "I respect, understand and trust you." A relationship is never about give and take. It is always about give, give and give. While giving, we are the first to receive, as the energy flows through us to others.

By giving, we finish dependence and expectations from others. Healthy relationships are a source of energy. Just like the sun brightens every corner of the planet, harmonious relationships light up every aspect of life – spiritual, mental, emotional and physical. The foremost relationship begins when a child is in the mother's womb and receives the parents' thoughts as vibrations. Vibrations of rejection or stress received by a child at that stage make a lasting impact, and may lead to depression.

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## IT Security Tip: Preparing Your Laptop for an Outing!

I know this is the joke issue of IH and you may think I'm kidding, but I am most certainly not. Here's how to get your laptop ready to leave the home network for an outing (for the day or on a trip).

- **Deploy your Firewall:** bad guys hang out at internet cafes just waiting for innocent laptops to pass by. First order of business, turn on your firewall. This is the software built into your computer that restricts how outside computers can link to it. You will find firewall controls under your laptops security settings.
- **Restrict File Sharing:** File sharing from home is okay, it's when you're not home and on public wifi that it's unsafe. Turn off the sharing settings on your computer when you're away from home!
- **Cloak your Computer:** After you turn off your file sharing capabilities, you'll also want to turn off your Network Discovery to make it more difficult for other devices on the Network to find your laptop.
- **Do all of this Automatically:** Having to click away at a laptop every time you leave home can be annoying. Windows makes it easy to automate the process using Advanced Settings. Also, whenever you join a new WIFI network, windows will ask whether you want to add it to your home or public profile (the operating system forgets the public networks when you log off). To do something comparable on a MAC, use the Free-to-download Controlplane App.
- **Use a VPN:** This stands for Virtual Public Network. These route your traffic through a single remote server that has tight security in place. Turn on your company's VPN even for personal use OR consider using a paid service such as IVPN or the free VPN that was recently introduced by Opera web browser.

**Last but not least, fake it!** These days what toddlers aren't entertaining themselves on new tablets or interactive toys? The manufacturers making these toys are geniuses, tapping into the

early market and asking for personal information so they can "grow up" with and alongside your child, marketing to them for life. So, what do you do as a parent? YOU GIVE THEM WHAT THEY WANT! Who said you have to give them the correct information? Bart Simpson, 1234 Sesame Street, Land of Oz, Kansas.

### Be sneaky with a 10-minute email address...

Here is another "this is not a joke" tip. Nowadays, more often than not if you want to check out a website or loyalty membership, you're asked (more like strong-armed) to share your email address. For those of you suckers who comply with this, you've just signed yourself up for a lifetime of marketing emails (SPAM!).

These days everyone wants your e-mail address. So, give it to them! Who says you have to give them a real one? Go to 10minutemail.com and get a functioning email address for as long as you like! When the time's up, your email will self-destruct, sorta like Mission Impossible, but "possible."

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## ITALIAN FIRE DEPARTMENT

One dark night in the town of BAYONNE, New Jersey, a fire started inside the local sausage factory. In a blink of an eye the building was engulfed in flames. The alarm went out to all the fire departments for miles around.

When the first firefighters appeared on the scene, the sausage company president rushed to the fire chief and said, 'All of our secret sausage recipes are in the vault in the center of the plant. They have to be saved, so I will donate \$50,000 to the fire company that brings them out and delivers them to me.'

But the roaring flames held the firefighters off. Soon more fire departments had to be called in because the situation became desperate. As the firemen arrived, the president announced that the offer to extricate the secret recipes was now \$100,000!

Suddenly, from up the road, a lone siren was heard as another fire truck came into sight. It was the fire engine of the nearby Greenville section of Jersey City, N.J. This fire department was composed mainly of Italian firefighters over the age of 65.

To everyone's amazement, the little run-down fire engine, operated by these Italian firefighters, passed fire engines parked outside the plant, and drove straight into the middle of the inferno! Outside, the other firefighters watched in amazement as the Italian old timers jumped off and began to fight the fire as if they were fighting to save their own lives. Within a short time, the old timers had extinguished the fire and saved the secret recipes.

The grateful sausage company president joyfully announced that for such a superhuman accomplishment, he was raising the reward to \$200,000, and walked over to personally thank each of the brave elderly Italian firefighters.

A TV news crew rushed in after capturing the event on film. The 'on camera' reporter asked the Italian fire chief, 'What are you going to do with all that money?'

'Wella,' said Chief Pasquale De Luccinelli, the 70-year-old fire chief, 'de fursta tinga we gonna do, isza fixa de brakes on dat fockinna truck!!'

# JANUARY 2018 REPORT

by Commissioner Dick Blattner



### PARTING SHOTS

I am feeling great and hope you are too. Check out my article in the just released Hollywood Gazette online, or in your mailbox. And make sure to check out my Facebook page. It's "Dick Blattner Hollywood City Commissioner." We post several times a week and the discussion is always lively.

And one final shameless plug. Why not share my email newsletter with someone you know who would like to keep up on what's happening behind the scenes in Hollywood? Forward this report to them so we can grow our loyal family.

No, I didn't forget; just got a little lazy over the holiday. Now back in the saddle and ready to ride. There was only one CRA and Commission meeting in December. There were these somewhat noteworthy items:

- Acting as the CRA Board, we approved the media plan for 2018, which allocates \$700,000 to promote Hollywood, specifically aiming at the tourist market.
- At the following Commission meeting, we celebrated our Moment of Silence to honor Buddy Galvin, who died recently at the age of 95. Buddy was a decorated airman in WWII who settled in Hollywood and Hallandale. He became chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, and later was elected Mayor of Hallandale Beach. Buddy was also a developer who built many homes in south Hollywood. He was a great guy with amazing spirit.
- Approved grants to the Art and Culture Center to continue producing and managing performances at the Hollywood Central Performing Arts Center.
- Allocated \$15,000 to the Police Department to purchase a police canine, replacing one who has aged out.
- Elected Commissioner Debra Case as Vice Mayor for 2018.

### UPCOMING MEETINGS

Our next--and only--January CRA and Commission meetings will be Wednesday January 17. CRA will be at 10:00, with Citizen Comments to follow. Commission meeting begins at 1:00pm with Citizen Comments at 5:00pm

### COMING SOON TO A BALLOT BOX NEAR YOU

The State Legislature has approved a referendum on the November ballot providing an additional \$25,000 homestead exemption. This will be accomplished by exempting the assessed valuation of all homestead property with a value greater than \$100,000 and up to \$125,000. The City estimates this will have the effect of reducing our income by roughly \$3 million, which will have to be made up by all taxpayers. Just wanted you to know.



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## Spotlight on Hillcrest Building 20 - *By Steve Schneider*



To understand why the people in charge view change as necessary, Rad Diaz, vice president, Broward County division, from Miami Management, Inc., said Hillcrest 20 is one of many buildings in the community. To maintain property values, attract new owners and renters, and even increase value, improvements needed to be made, he said. There are 24 condo buildings in Hillcrest, which is comprised of a mix of hi-rise properties such as Hillcrest 20. There are also mid-rise and low-rise buildings, all vying for people who want to live here.

This is the real estate angle to the change that is happening at Hillcrest 20. However, the change also touches on currents as old as this country. This change deals with immigrants who fly across great bodies of water seeking the promise of freedom and opportunity and safety. Sometimes, this search involves a personal journey that takes the traveler from a country riven by political and economic turmoil and violence to the relative peace and prosperity of another land.

Take, for example, the story of Omaira Martinez. She left her native Venezuela for the United States in 2014. A year later, she bought a two-bedroom, two-bathroom unit at Hillcrest 20. In 2016, Martinez joined the Association Board. Last year, she left the Board and was hired by Miami Management, Inc., where she works as an onsite office administrator at Hillcrest 20.

Her experiences in Caracas, Venezuela, her nation's capital, will not be detailed here. But press accounts depict a country beset with street demonstrations aimed against the government. Those reports document skyrocketing inflation, food shortages, violence and repression and street crime.

So, Martinez feels safe here with her daughter, Isabella. She is grateful for the opportunity to use her skills to help her building. In Caracas, Martinez worked for a large telecommunications company, owned by AT&T and a Spanish business, before the government "bought" the company. She served as an administrator in the finance department, and later negotiated health insurance contracts.

David Jesus Delgado also came here from Venezuela. He served as the Hillcrest 20 president from 2016 until about a month ago, when he sold his unit. Delgado said, via email, that "I also left Venezuela due to the complicated situation in the country and to protect the safety of my family."

In addition to Diaz, Martinez and Delgado, the following people gave interviews to document change at Hillcrest 20: Cinthya Mosqueira, who joined the Board in 2017 and serves as treasurer; Rosa Steer, who also joined the Board in 2016; Marcelo Culoffa, a unit owner; and Irma Lotter, a unit owner in the building for about 23 years.



Change started slowly at Hillcrest 20 several years ago when the outside of the building was painted turquoise and white and a special assessment paid to upgrade the elevators. But that change accelerated about a year ago, bringing about a turnaround that can be seen when people walk into the refurbished lobby, move around the aging building and learn about infrastructure improvements.

This change is a nuts and bolts real estate story that deals with unit owners investing money to make the building more attractive and efficient and probably more valuable in a competitive South Florida real estate market. Details about the building renovation were gleaned from interviews with five unit owners, a former Association president who sold his unit about a month ago and an executive at Miami Management, Inc., which was hired a year ago to work with the Board of Directors to manage the property. Here is that information:

Hillcrest 20 was built in 1986. It has eight floors and 107 units; about an equal number of the units contain owners and renters. Change started several years ago under a different Board when the exterior of the building was painted. A special assessment was also passed to modernize the elevators. In 2016, some new members joined the Board, and for about the past year, the pace of change has picked up speed.

The roof was fixed. Water towers that feed the air conditioner systems and fans on the roof were also repaired. New washers and dryers were installed. Now residents use a card to pay to use the machines. They fund the card by putting money into one machine, which is in the first-floor laundry room. The Association also spent money to paint the stairwells, put new tile on the hallway ceilings and install security cameras.

What's more, anyone walking into the lobby can see a concrete example of the transformation taking place: the lobby was redecorated with tile and modern furniture and art work. LED lighting was also installed outside the building. The garbage chutes were updated because they were rusty; garbage had been spilling out of the chutes until the improvement was made. And the storage rooms were organized, with a number placed on each locker to match it with a unit.

Still, work remains to be done. The Board is waiting for permits to make changes to the pool area. Hillcrest 20 intends to install a gazebo, a BBQ and a playground for children. The building also plans to install new flooring in the hallways soon, possibly vinyl planking. Plants and shrubs may be added to the area outside, near the building entrance. Despite ongoing modernization efforts, maintenance was decreased about \$20 a month last year.

## Sister Barbara



Sitting by the window of her convent, Sister Barbara opened a letter from home one evening. Inside the letter was a \$100 bill her parents had sent. Sister Barbara smiled at the gesture.

As she read the letter by the window, she noticed a shabbily dressed stranger leaning against the lamp post below. Quickly, she wrote, "Don't despair. - Sister Barbara," on a piece of paper, wrapped the \$100 bill in it, got the man's attention and tossed it out the window to him.

The stranger picked it up, and with a puzzled expression and a tip of his hat, went off down the street.

next day, Sister Barbara was told that a man was at her door, insisting on seeing her. She went down, and found the stranger waiting. Without a word, he handed her a huge wad of \$100 bills.

"What's this?" she asked. "That's the \$8,000 you have coming Sister," he replied. "Don't Despair paid 80-to-1."

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## How to Make Your Putter Stand Up

Bert, at 85 years old, always wanted a pair of soft spike golf shoes like Freddie Couples, so, seeing some on sale after his round, he bought them. He was so delighted with his purchase, he decided to wear them home to show the misses.

Walking proudly into the house, he sauntered into the kitchen and said to his wife, "Notice anything different about me?" Margaret at age 83 looked him over and replied, "Nope."

Frustrated as all get out, Bert stormed off into the bathroom, undressed and walked back into the kitchen completely naked except for the new golf shoes. Again, he asked Margaret, a little louder this time, "Notice anything different NOW?"

Margaret looked up and said in her best deadpan response, "Bert, what's different? It's hanging down today, it was hanging down yesterday, and it'll be hanging down again tomorrow."

Furious, Bert yells out, "AND DO YOU KNOW WHY IT'S HANGING DOWN, MARGARET?"

"Nope. Not a clue", she replied. "IT'S HANGING DOWN, BECAUSE IT'S LOOKING AT MY NEW GOLF SHOES! Without missing a beat old Margaret replies, "You shoulda bought a new hat."

## There Are Teachers.... And Then There Are Educators.

According to a news report, a certain private Catholic school in Brisbane was recently faced with a unique problem. Several 12-year-old girls were beginning to use lipstick and would put it on in the bathroom.

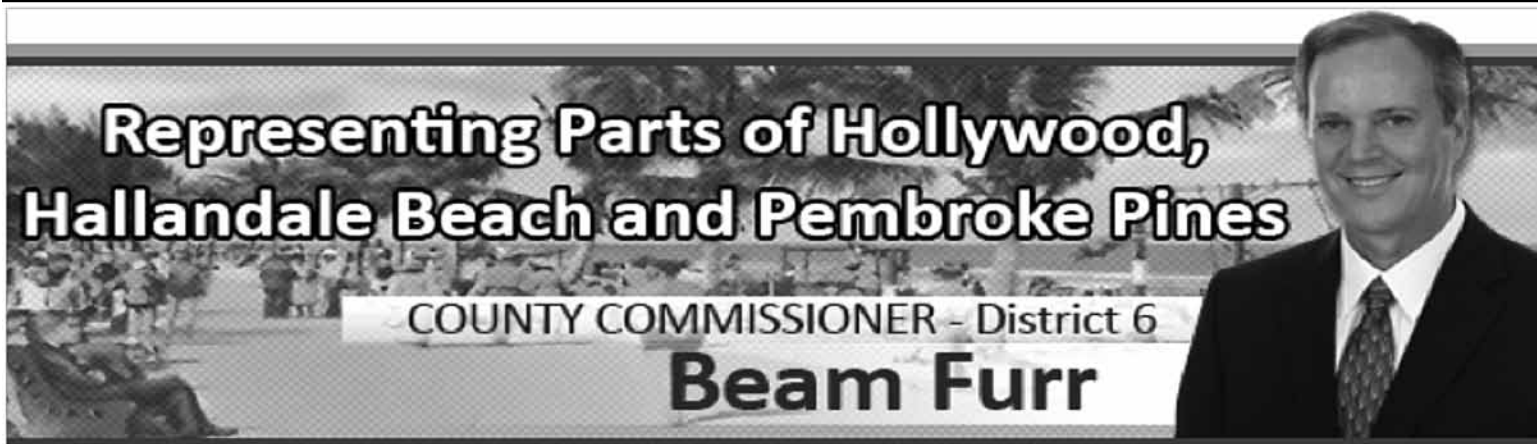
That was fine provided it was of a natural or neutral skin tone, but after they put on their lipstick they would press their lips to the mirror leaving dozens of little lip prints.

Every night the maintenance man would remove them and the next day the girls would put them back. Finally, the principal, Sister Paschal, decided that something had to be done. She called all the girls to the bathroom and met them there with the maintenance man. She explained that all these lip prints were causing a major problem for the custodian who had to clean the mirrors every night (you can just imagine the yawns from the little princesses).

To demonstrate how difficult it is to clean the mirrors, Sister Paschal asked the maintenance man to show the girls how much effort was required.

He took out a long-handled squeegee, dipped it in the toilet, and cleaned the mirror with it. Since then, there have been no lip prints on the mirror.





Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

I am honored to announce that on November 28th, my colleagues on the Broward County Commission elected me to serve, for one year, as the Mayor of Broward County. This new role is in addition to my continued service to you as your District 6 County Commissioner representing parts of Hollywood, Hallandale Beach and Pembroke Pines. I am thankful to Commissioner Barbara Sharief for her great service as Mayor for the past year. I want to thank my colleagues on the Commission - and constituents like you - who have placed their trust in me. As your Mayor, I will strive every day to make Broward County a better place for you to live, work, and play.

Our challenge is not only to build for today, but for future generations of Broward residents. That is only going to happen through partnerships and teamwork. That is why this year I am looking forward to working hand-in-hand with volunteers and community advocates, because when Broward Teams Up, we are the our best. Before I was an elected official, I responded to a County ad. That ad was for Broward Beautiful, a program which gave a \$5000 grant to plant trees in their neighborhood. And my neighborhood could use the help. But this grant required a different kind of matching fund: sweat equity. We would have to work together and all take care of our own trees in order to win this grant and make our neighborhood beautiful again. So I knocked on every door I could in my community, and we came together to take part. Based on that participation, we were awarded that grant. The morning that the trees were going to arrive, I saw excited residents on the street, ready to plant their tree. When we were done, a neighborhood that was once barren looked beautiful.

The next week, a tropical storm came and blew all the trees down. But when I went to check the damage, I didn't see despair. I saw everyone in the neighborhood propping their tree back up. That is the kind of community I want to live in. One where we prop each other up and get stronger.

I am looking forward to working with residents like you as we make a difference. I tell people that this is one of the best Commissions I have ever worked with. This is a Commission that works together and actually listens to each other. I have seen commissioners change each other's minds through the power of a persuasive argument, and put aside their disagreements to get results. We are going to need a great team, because we have many challenges and opportunities ahead. These are just a few of the initiatives that we intend to work on this year.

• Transportation is a critical issue as we move forward in Broward County. Our transportation surtax discussions are a blueprint for

modernizing our transit, including climate resiliency improvements to roads in Hollywood and all along eastern Broward County, traffic light signalization, intersection improvements, and light rail.

- We are going to continue the fight for affordable housing by partnering with developers and homeowners associations to make sure that affordable options are available to Broward County's workforce as well as our retired residents.
- Another major concern is waste disposal and recycling. We need a comprehensive plan for all of Broward County for general waste disposal and recycling solutions. Broward County has just agreed to a major waste management consulting contract that will provide insights into how we can improve our waste disposal. This partnership will generate recommendations for how we can raise our recycling rate to 75% and set the standard for the rest of this state.
- High quality early childhood education is one of the most important issues facing our county. We will be partnering with state and federal agencies to make sure childcare centers seek accreditation to create a high standard of training. This includes the new Gulfstream Professional Development Center, which will provide in-house training and care at the highest level as a partnership between Broward County and the School Board.
- This December, we teamed up with Palm Beach, Miami Dade, and Monroe counties, and the environmental community to sign the Southeast Florida Climate Change Action Plan 2.0 - a model across this nation for regional cooperation.
- We will be launching a new program called Kid Culture, which aims to give children under five and their families the chance to experience local art and literacy events regardless of income. These experiences will encourage a stronger vocabulary and robust discussions for these children.

We will continue to be available to you for assistance of any type. Please do not hesitate to call upon my office at any time. Additionally, I always look forward to any input, ideas or suggestions you may have that will benefit our people or our County. I can't wait to work together to make Broward strong for years to come. Let's get started!

P.S. Hope you had a Happy Holiday!

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