

Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



APRIL 2018

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 4

APRIL INSIDE HILLCREST

This is going to be an odd cover story but lately my world has been inundated with stupid people. Sometimes it is my fault. Sometimes I put myself in a position where I inadvertently invite them into my life and then the process of extricating them gets messy. Sometimes I like certain people even though I know they tend to have views based on emotion and unfounded internet “news”, and I spend more time with them than I should.

What is my definition of stupid? People who spout beliefs and opinions for no real reason other than they believe them. They don’t want to do any type of research that would possibly prove them wrong.

Almost every sentence that starts with “All men...all women...all (name your ethnic group)...all Republicans/Democrats...etc. come out of the mouths of stupid people.

Another thing that stupid people do is point out the mistakes that others make, taking care that they put out NO effort that would ever result in them making a mistake. Only people who DO can make a mistake. People who stay on the sidelines and make no effort never make mistakes.

I guess I mentioned my recent frustration to somebody and they sent me the article on page 19. I couldn’t have said it better. Although I have no clue what he is talking about when he says “epistemology” or “epistemologically”. However, according to the writer, that doesn’t make me stupid unless I use it in a sentence without looking it up. So, I looked it up: Epistemology is the investigation of what distinguishes justified belief from opinion. Still, I will probably never use it in a sentence. I just didn’t want to confuse it with episiotomy (a surgical cut made at the opening of the vagina during childbirth, to aid a difficult delivery and prevent rupture of tissues.) THAT would be stupid.

IN A RELATED MATTER...

In my State of the Market article, I relate the story about two sellers who just would not listen to a professional Realtor (me) and paid the price. One sold on their own and the other used a discount realtor. In the case of the

former, the husband went against the advice of his own sister, a Keller Williams Realtor in Ohio. In the case of the latter, there was nothing I could say or do to save her from the “you get what you pay for” life lesson or is it the “penny-wise, pound foolish lesson”?

THE REASON THEY CALL IT “DOPE”?

Last month on the cover page, I mentioned an article about the opioid crisis which ended up not making it into the paper. The article is in this issue and is about companies who are scamming the opioid addicts with false claims of “cures”. I naively wrote in a previous issue that I didn’t see why the government wants to spend so much money trying to save opioid addicts. I was looking at the crisis from a human perspective and basically felt like opioids were just “thinning the herd”. I felt guilty that even the most hard-core politicians who care about nobody seemed to be more concerned about these folks than I did. Then I read up on it: “The greatest financial cost of the opioid epidemic, according to Altarum, a nonprofit group that studies the health economy is in lost earnings and productivity losses to employers. Early deaths and substance abuse disorders also take a toll on local, state and federal government through lost tax revenue. The opioid epidemic has cost the U.S. more than a trillion dollars since 2001, according to a new study, (\$504 billion in 2015 alone) and may exceed another \$500 billion over the next three years.” I did not realize that the crisis was costing the rest of us billions in increased use of drug treatment services, inpatient hospital services, medical examiner costs, criminal justice costs, and law enforcement costs.

I guess I had a “stupid” moment myself. Then I read that the White House is requesting a budget of about 13 billion dollars to fight the trillion dollar crisis. Now I feel stupid again, I can’t make that add up even with a calculator.

DOUBLE DOSES

Lucky for us – or maybe it’s not luck, we here in Hollywood are just smart voters - in this month’s issue we have TWO articles each by Broward County Mayor Beam Furr and Hollywood Commissioner Dick Blattner. One is on the personal side and the other an update. Both men are thoughtful and articulate and a pleasure to read.

PARKVIEW AT HILLCREST

Also, in the last issue I said we would have a Spotlight On...article about some of our new Parkview at Hillcrest neighbors (although I wrote Parkland at Hillcrest – hard to get that tragedy off the brain). We will have the article for you in the next issue.

3710 HILLCREST DRIVE

What’s going on with the property adjacent to Hillcrest Drive in front of Building 26 coming in from Park Road? See page two. In a nutshell, Tobin is building his NEW office there. First floor will be a parking garage, second floor will be medical offices for rent and third floor will be the official new offices of Tobin Properties. Jason Tobin explained what is going on with the old office which is being torn down due to hurricane damage – a temporary modular office will go on that site and Tobin Properties will occupy it until the new office is built. As far as what is going to happen with that property once the new office is built, stay tuned.

EXECUTIVE PLUMBING

Our own Mike Simic, owner of Executive Plumbing, has been nominated for the Greater Hollywood Chamber of Commerce Small Business-Person of the Year award. He has done stellar work for many Hillcrest buildings over the years. Our aging pipes can be a challenge so be sure to read the Drain Cleaning article in this issue. Hillcrest 25 just had them complete a major plumbing project in their building. See details on page 6.

Are you or someone you know
64 years old? See page 23.



Building A Better Community

Department of Development Services
Planning Division



tel: 954.921.3471
fax: 954.921.3347

April 5th, 2018

FILE NO.: 18-DP-04
APPLICANT: Harwin-Tobin 3701, LLC
LOCATION: 3701 Hillcrest Drive (3701 Ben Tobin Drive)
REQUEST: Site Plan Review for an 18,000 sq. ft. office building (Tobin Office Building).

Dear Adjacent Property Owner:

This letter is to inform you a Final Site Plan has been filed with the City of Hollywood's Department of Development Services for the above mentioned property. These plans are available for review online at www.hollywoodfl.legistar.com, by following the link to the appropriate Technical Advisory Committee meeting agenda. Plans are also available for review at 2600 Hollywood Boulevard in the Hollywood Branch Library and the Department of Development Services at City Hall, Room 315.

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will review the project for compliance with the Zoning and Land Development Regulations. This meeting will occur April 16th at 1:30 p.m. at Hollywood City Hall located at 2600 Hollywood Boulevard, Room 215.

The TAC will review the Final Site Plan submittal and make a determination as to the technical compliance of the Site Plan. If the project is determined to be compliant, the project will then be recommended for review to Planning and Development Board (PDB), which will conduct a public hearing. The PDB has the ability to approve Site Plan, Design, and any Variances the project may need. Fifteen (15) days prior to the PDB's public hearing, a second notice will be mailed to you to notify you of the public hearing date, time, and location.

Interested parties may appear at the meeting to speak on, submit comments, and/or ask questions regarding the proposed development.

This letter is meant to be informational in nature and does not illustrate support for, or objection to, the project. Please feel free to contact the project planner, Deandrea Moise, at the Planning Division if you have any questions regarding this site plan project by calling (954) 921-3471.

2600 Hollywood Boulevard
P.O. Box 229045
Hollywood, Florida
33022-9045
hollywoodfl.org

BAD PASSWORDS

Eric Chafin from Connections for Business often warns about using simple passwords that are easy to crack. Recently, Realtor Magazine came up with an article entitled, "DO NOT USE THESE PASSWORDS PLEASE". The accompanying article noted "Weak passwords have gotten a lot of attention over the years, yet many people are still apt to choose convenience and simplicity over better security. For example, while "Star Wars" captured the attention of millions at the box office last year, it also emerged as a major gateway to identity theft: "starwars" was the most notable newcomer to 2017s list of worst passwords... compiled from more than 5 million passwords leaked during the year." I get it – who hasn't used "comcastsucks" as a password at one time or the other. But the fact is, you need to come up with crazy, long passwords – different ones for each login – and write them down the old way on a piece of paper that you keep stashed away from your computer. DO NOT keep a copy in your computer document file. Get creative – how about MymomsaGr8cook!?

Here are the top 20 bad passwords according to SplashData, a provider of password management applications.

- | | | |
|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1. 123456 | 9. football | 17. 123123 |
| 2. password | 10. iloveyou | 18. dragon |
| 3. 12345678 | 11. admin | 19. passw0rd |
| 4. qwerty | 12. welcome | 20. master |
| 5. 12345 | 13. monkey | |
| 6. 123456789 | 14. login | |
| 7. letmein | 15. abc123 | |
| 8. 1234567 | 16. starwars | |

PEST CONTROL AND CONDOS

One of our readers, Dr. George Jacobson from Building 4, sent us an article written by Ryan D. Poliakoff, a partner at Backer About Poliakoff & Foelster, LLP, who serves as general corporate counsel to condominium associations about the issue of unit owners who do not allow their units to be treated by the condo pest control company. Here is what he had to say:

"Pursuant to the Condominium Act, and likely also pursuant to your declaration, the condominium association has an "irrevocable right" to access each unit during reasonable hours, when necessary for the repair, maintenance or replacement of any common elements or to prevent damage to the common elements or another unit.

Further, many governing documents expressly state the association is responsible for pest control...pest control is an essential part of maintaining the common elements, particularly where pests often reside in and travel through the common element walls between units. You can imagine what a problem this becomes in hoarding situations, where individual units can quickly become infested with pests, and those pests spread throughout the building."

Poliakoff goes on to suggest that those who have a sensitivity to the chemicals used by the pest control company should explore other options other than spraying, that can and should be used. "The Fair Housing Act provides that a housing provider, such as a condominium, is obligated to make reasonable accommodations to

rules and regulations when necessary to afford a resident the full use and enjoyment of the premises. An association would arguably be obligated to accommodate that disability by allowing you to change the spraying schedule or avoid spraying on certain months."

However, Pest control is a form of herd immunity, such as we see with immunizations. Certain people cannot be immunized for health reasons, and their ability to resist disease relies on the fact that other healthy members of society have been immunized against those diseases. Similarly, if someone cannot have their unit "immunized" against pests, they partly rely on the spraying of other units to prevent infestation of their own unit.

Therefore, those unit owners who maintain fastidious personal habits and allow other forms of pest control, do satisfy the requirements. For those who do not - and create a pest infestation - the Association has a right to act to protect the rest of the unit owners if their units become infested as a result. A reasonable and responsible unit owner will work with the association to accomplish a pest free environment.

Condo living is a compromise; selfish people do not do well in a condo environment. Rules and regulations are intended to make condo living enjoyable for all. Individuals may have legitimate reasons for breaching a rule but they must also have a healthy sense of respect for the rights of others.



Greetings Hillcrest Residents,

Our community has been shaken to its core by a senseless, heartbreaking tragedy. The shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School cut short the lives of 14 students and three teachers. Thank you to our first responders and teachers that put themselves in harm's way to protect others. We at Broward County will do everything in our power to prevent something like this from ever happening again. Meanwhile, we are joined as a Broward community in grief and love for the victims and their families.

We will have to face each day with courage. Courage to ask tough questions about ourselves and our society. We join with far too many communities that have dealt with this kind of tragedy. Let's keep those who are suffering in our thoughts and rededicate ourselves to the larger family to which we all belong.

In the wake of the tragedy, America has been impressed by the incredible young people who have given voice to a movement. In a few days, their concerns went from prom and Spirit Week to preventing other young person from having to feel the pain they experienced. We all should be proud that these voices are coming from Broward County.

These young students have found their voices, and they are certainly letting it be heard. We owe it to them to listen. We need to be swift and proactive about preventing anything like this from ever happening again. Future generations are counting on us to be better.

In order to take action on preventing future tragedies, the Broward County Board of County Commissioners has approved the creation of a task force that will ask questions and get answers. We will also seek an independent comprehensive after-action report. In hindsight, it's obvious we need to find better ways to share information. The County Commission is in a unique position to assist in this, because it deals with almost all the agencies involved. It can help facilitate coordination and review institutional, legal and other logjams.

We owe it to the families of those affected by the tragedy, as well as to the entire community, to find out exactly how and why so many red flags were missed. We count on our government to keep our loved ones safe. When something goes amiss, we have a responsibility to find the better way to prevent it.

We have also approved a resolution urging the State to take immediate action on comprehensive gun control solutions. While state preemption laws limit what we can do at the County level, we are determined to do all that we can to put in place common-sense solutions.

The students from Stoneman Douglas have inspired millions of fellow young people in this country to get involved on this issue. We should listen to them. We need the state to either take action or allow us to take action without preemption. This includes considering a ban on assault weapons, requiring a permit to purchase a firearm, and requiring universal background checks and longer waiting periods for every firearm purchased. Although we keep the victims and their families in our thoughts and prayers, now is the time for action.

Broward County has been shaken by this tragedy. But we have not been broken. We will stand together as a County, leaning on and lifting each other up. There is nothing to say or do that will make the pain of those affected go away. But we can cherish the memory, and honor their voices. We are defined by our response in the most painful of times. In this case, Broward County, especially our young people, has inspired the entire world.

Let us join together to honor those lost, and heed the voices demanding action, so this type of happening never occurs again.

STATE OF THE COUNTY - County Commissioner Beam Furr - District 6



Greetings,

Over the past month, Broward County has continued to show its resolve. As we recover from the heartbreaking tragedy in Parkland, I have seen our community come together as one and lift each other up, as we move past our collective grief and turn to action. Spring is in the air and many exciting things are coming to Broward County. However, as we move

forward, we will continue to hold the memories of those we lost in our thoughts.

State of the County

As Mayor, I had the opportunity to deliver the **State of the County** address to more than one thousand people at an event organized by the Broward Workshop. It was inspiring to see students from Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School at the State of the County affair and I know how much everyone in the audience appreciated their strength. Their talent and their courage will be the new currency that attracts investment in our county. The State of Broward County is strong and getting stronger. I look forward to working with these young leaders for years to come as we all join together as one to lead Broward County toward brighter days.

At the State of the County gathering, I introduced our new **Broward County Dashboard** which tells more about what the County does. I envision that this website will tell our story – how we are doing, what we have done, and how we can improve. It tracks metrics in real-time, showing you exactly how Broward County is progressing toward our goals. Whether you are curious on the economic development at the Port, or if you want to see how many library books have been checked out, this information is now available for you to see and interact with. The website is still undergoing changes, but I encourage you to **check it** out and learn a little bit more of our Broward County story!

Parkland Tragedy

Wednesday, March 14th marked one month since the tragic shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School. In response, thousands of students across the country participated in National School Walkout Day to advocate for safer gun laws. The March for Our Lives, organized by Parkland students and families, drew millions of people all over the world in one of the largest mass demonstrations in history – **including thousands in Parkland and more than 800,000 in Washington, D.C.** These brave students are proving that the next generation is one of incredible talent and courage. Where once there was inaction, there is now movement and dialogue.

We should be proud that the students leading the charge for other young people across America are from Broward County. These students have found their voice, and they are speaking loud and clear. We owe it to them to listen.

New Animal Care Director

Congratulations to Lauralei Combs on being selected as the new Animal Care and Adoption Director for Broward County!

Combs comes to us from Austin, Texas, where she previously ran the largest no-kill municipal shelter in the entire country, with more than 18,000 animals sheltered. Combs brings years of dedicated experience and a wealth of knowledge to Broward County as we work on our no-kill goal and provide the best care for our animals. We are very fortunate to have her!

Chamber of Commerce

It was an honor for me to speak at the annual Hollywood Chamber of Commerce installation luncheon this month. **Congratulations to Sara Lavenka on her election as the new President of the Hollywood Chamber, and thank you to Ed Walls for his terrific service as President over the past year.** The Hollywood Chamber of Commerce is an important part of our community and is essential to attracting new businesses to Hollywood with good jobs and good wages. The past few weeks have shown that Broward County has as much young, unbridled talent as anywhere in the country. I know our business community will benefit from this incredible talent as they step up to fill various job opportunities.



Congratulations to the new President and Board of Directors!

Water Matters Day

One of my favorite events every year in Broward County is **Water Matters Day**. Water Matters Day is an all-day event featuring activities and discussions that focus on water conservation. This year's Water Matters Day was held at beautiful Tree Tops Park in Davie. It was a gorgeous day, and I enjoyed learning more about what we can do to preserve our precious water supply through the theme "**Water Matters and Conversation Pays.**" At Water Matters Day, we also recognize our annual Emerald Award winners that include homeowners, businesses and municipalities participating in our **NatureScape Program**. Some of the landscape management techniques are incredible – you can really turn your home into an oasis! Each one of us can make a difference for the environment when we turn our home into a sustainable NatureScape, **so I encourage you to check out the website and participate in the program!**

Continued on Pg. 12

KUDOS TO EXECUTIVE PLUMBING CONTRACTORS

Submitted by Steve Hurtig, President, Hillcrest 25



**Congratulations and Good Luck to
Executive Plumbing Contractors
NOMINATED
for Greater Hollywood Chamber of Commerce
Small Business Person of the Year - 2018**

Executive Plumbing replaced all our risers and domestic water pipes including the outdoor pipes to the pool. The new pipes are all high-grade copper.

Subsequently, we no longer have to bathe and cook in tinted orange water let alone drink it. After implementing and completing this \$530,000 plumbing project, we no longer have expensive weekly leak repairs. Furthermore, our building's insurance premiums and water bills have been reduced.

Executive Plumbing has their own staff of workers eliminating the need for non-caring, rude, sloppy and unreliable subcontractors. Their workers were neat, polite and gracious to all our unit owners. There were no cost over runs and the project was completed 2 weeks ahead of schedule. Mike was able to secure the services of a Hollywood Plumbing Inspector to sign off on each riser on the same day as completion. Therefore, no unit owner was without hot water for more than 24 hours. (Totally Amazing) Mike replaced in excess of 50 water heaters at deep discounts for unit owners in need.

Our residents to this day continue to compliment our board for the professional manner in which this project was handled. At the end of the day Mike and his entire staff demonstrated true professionalism and devotion to our project.



**EXECUTIVE
PLUMBING
CONTRACTORS**

**888-954-LEAK
954-924-8211**

2020 Lee Street
Hollywood, FL 33019

www.epcfla.com

"If Water Runs Through it, We Do It"

**Residential • Commercial • Industrial
24 Hour Service**

**Full Service Plumbing
Sewer & Drain Services
Video Pipe Line Inspection**



LICENSED & INSURED CFC-1425969

AmericasWindowAndDoorStore.com

TRY OUR SERVICES

- Repair Services
- New Screens and Re-Screens for Sliding Glass & Patio Screen Doors
- Glass Cut to Size While You Wait
- Hundreds of Parts for Windows and Doors



Se Habla Español Portuguese

AMERICA'S WINDOW & DOOR STORE



SALES | PARTS | REPAIRS

954.989.7722

5908 Johnson Street, Hollywood, FL 33021



NOW DOING CONDOS ABOVE 3rd FLOOR.

IMPACT WINDOW BENEFITS

- SECURITY AND PEACE OF MIND
- SAVE ENERGY
- INCREASE PROPERTY VALUE
- REDUCE OUTSIDE NOISE
- FREE ESTIMATES



GREATER HOLLYWOOD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

REPAIRS AND PARTS FOR YOUR WINDOWS & DOORS



HILLCREST CONDOS AND DRAIN CLEANING

Most of us know NOT to use chemicals like Drano or Liquid Plummer in our drains because of our aging pipes, but many of us do not know what to use. According to the internet (which I believe

has replaced the phrase "they say..."), biological drain cleaners like Citra-Drain and Zep are safe but they are a preventative measure. They help PREVENT clogs, but they will not clear a completely blocked drain.

Many buildings have cast iron pipes and the last thing we want to do is pour corrosives down them. Plungers are still considered the best way to push and pull clogs loose on the cheap. Consumer reports recommends MAIN SQUEEZE or MASTER PLUNGER. Gas-powered devices are best for blowing plugs of built-up food particles down the line.

For everyday drain cleaning and deodorizing, the following is the best bet for use in condos:

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Pour a pot of boiling hot water down your drain.
- Dump in about 1/2 cup baking soda and let sit for a few minutes.
- Pour a mixture of 1 cup white vinegar and 1 cup very hot water down on top of the baking soda.
- Cover with a drain plug if you have one to keep the reaction down below the drain surface and let sit for 5-10 minutes.
- Flush one more time with a pot of boiling water.

Why this works: The baking soda and hot water treatment will loosen up any grimy sludge that is hanging out at the bottom of your drain, and the explosive chemical reaction with the vinegar will jolt it all loose. The final super-hot water rinse flushes all the gunk down the drain.

April Kitchen Korner - by Cindy Abraham



Sometimes I just make a recipe because I have the ingredients and need to get rid of them. I had too many apples in the house, so when I found this one in a magazine where I get my nails done, I took a picture of it with my phone. I did not have high hopes for it sounded kind of so-so to me but it turned out to be surprisingly delicious. And of course, very easy and fast. When a recipe asks for salt, Kosher, Himalayan or mineral salt tastes better than table salt. Our Canadian friends, Sheldon and Marcia, bring us the BEST maple syrup from home so I love any recipe that calls for it.

Stir in maple syrup and vinegar, return pork chops to pan, scooping the apple mixture over the chops, and simmer for another 2 minutes. Serve.

PORK CHOPS WITH APPLES

Spice mix:

- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp black pepper
- 1 ¼ tsp salt – divided use
- 3 thick bone-in pork chops
- 1TBS olive oil
- 2 tsp butter
- 2 crispy apples, cored and sliced 1/4 “- thick
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 TBS maple syrup
- 1 tsp red-wine vinegar

Stir together chili powder, pepper and 1 tsp of the salt in a small bowl; sprinkle both sides of the pork chops (a small sifter works great) with the spice mix.

Heat the oil in a non-stick skillet large enough to hold the pork chops over medium-high. Add pork chops to skillet and cook until golden brown on both sides and slightly pink in the center – about 5 minutes per side. (Don’t keep turning them – let them cook for the full 5 minutes to get a brown crust.)

Transfer chops to a plate and cover with foil to keep them warm. Add butter to skillet over medium. Scrape up brown bits and mix with the butter before adding the apple slices, cinnamon and remaining ¼ tsp salt. Cover and cook stirring occasionally until apples soften and caramelize around edges – about 8 minutes.



***** OPIOID WITHDRAWAL SCAMS *****

Anytime there is a group of people who are in a bad way, there is another group of horrible people looking to profit from their misfortune. People who have a devastating illness, a serious financial problem or anything that seems hopeless, will often out of desperation try almost anything. The latest scams are “supplements” that claim to ease the symptoms of opioid addiction withdrawal. Exploitative companies are aggressively hawking their wares. Withdrawal is a painful, prolonged but necessary process so who wouldn’t want to believe there is an easier way?

like “Imagine a life without the irritability, cravings, restlessness, excitability, exhaustion, and discomfort associated with the nightmare of addiction and withdrawal symptoms” and promise to “break the pain killer habit.”

Bottom line, they don’t work. The FTC and FDA are cracking down on these unproven “treatments” that claim to ease the symptoms of opioid withdrawal painting pictures with words

If you or a loved one are going through withdrawal, know that the FTC and FDA have sent warnings to 11 companies that are illegally marketing these products which include Opiate Freedom 5-Pack, Mitadone, CalmSupport, TaperAid, Natracet, Opiate Detox Pro, Withdrawal Support, Soothedrawal, Nofeel, GUNA-Addict 1 and AddictaPlex. Of course, by the time you read this article, 11 more with even more clever names will have popped up, but hopefully forewarned is forearmed. Don’t fall for it.

Continued from Pg. 5

Public Relations Society – Emergency Response

Preparing for the next storm or tragedy is never easy, but it is critical that we prepare early so that we can communicate the best response. This is what I spoke about when I talked to Public Relations Society of America members about emergency preparedness and crisis communication this month. I enjoyed the chance to speak to these esteemed professionals on what Broward County does to alert residents before a storm, communicate with media about emergency operations, and get people in the loop after a hurricane strikes. As always, we continue to work to improve how we communicate and get ready for the 2018 storm season.

Leadership Hollywood

Leadership Hollywood is a one-day crash course in leadership and political affairs for ambitious, passionate Hollywood residents. This year’s event gave the 2018 Leadership Hollywood class invaluable insight into how our County works, and what they can do in their community to make an impact. I spoke a little about how I got my start in politics, organizing my neighborhood in Hollywood to plant trees and make it a safer place to live. Thank you to those who organized this event including **Marie Suarez, Adam Geller, Ed O’Sheehan, and Jeremy Shir.**

Campaign for Grade Level Reading

Promoting childhood literacy, to ensure every student in Broward can read at grade-level at an early age, is one of my key goals as

Mayor. There’s good news on this front: 21 of 31 municipalities in Broward have made a commitment and passed resolutions to be actively engaged in activities that promote childhood literacy. This month, I spoke with representatives from several of the cities about specific solutions on how child care centers in their cities could become nationally accredited. I look forward to continuing our work to make sure every student in Broward County has the fundamental reading skills needed to succeed.

Women’s History Month

March marks **Women’s History Month** in Broward County and throughout the country. Women’s History Month is a time to reflect on the immense contributions women make and understand that there is still so much that needs to be done from equal pay to non-discrimination laws in the workplace. New conversations have been opened because of the #Me Too movement. It is inspiring to see so many finding their voice and running for office!

Our District office is conveniently located in the lobby of the Hollywood Branch of the Broward County Public Library at 2600 Hollywood Blvd, next to Hollywood City Hall. This office is open for your convenience Monday through Friday from 10AM to 4PM. If you would like to schedule an appointment, or you have a great idea, suggestion or an issue that needs my attention, feel free to call me at 954-357-7790 / 7006 or send me an email at bfurr@broward.org.



**Now Enrolling
Pre-Kindergarten through 8th Grade
(After School Care Available)**

- *Fully Accredited
- *Safe and Secure, Monitored Campus
- *Professionally Certified Teachers
- *Curriculum and Instruction for 21st Century Learning
- *Apple iPad Learning Lab and Apple iPad Computer Lab
- *Promethean Interactive Whiteboards in Every Classroom
- *Science Lab, Art Lab, Indoor Gymnasium, Sports & More
- *WiFi Campus, Safe Internet Access

Annunciation Catholic School

Discover Our Differences...
Contact us to schedule a tour today!

Principal: Mrs. Fernandez
School Secretary/Registrar: Mrs. Balbuza
(954)989-8287
www.annun.org
Broward County
3751 S.W. 39th Street * West Park, FL 33023

Bring this Ad when you Enroll. You will receive a \$50 Credit towards your Initial Registration Fee.

JAWS

p o d i a t r y

an unforgettable foot & ankle experience


Abraham Wagner, DPM
Travis Martin, DPM
George Schwenck, DPM
Hugo Fernandez, DPM

**call today to schedule a visit
and meet the JAWS team!**

954.922.7333 se habla Español

3700 Washington St, #403, Hollywood, FL 33021

THINKING OF SELLING?



Brian Gaiefsky
Cindy Abraham



Our goal is to help YOU get top dollar for your condo. The better it looks and the better shape it is in, the more money you will get when you sell. We are the Hillcrest experts and we can help.

As licensed realtors we do what nobody else in the business does; we invest our own time and money to help you prepare your property for sale. We will advise you on what is necessary (and unnecessary) to maximize your profits! If need be, we advance our sellers the funds to do it right; from repairs to staging, showing and marketing, we do what it takes to get top dollar.

We live here in Hillcrest and have a personal stake in increasing our property values. For as little as a \$1200 investment, one of our Hillcrest condo sellers got a 5K higher offer than expected. In another instance, for an investment of \$8400.00, our seller's profits went up over 22K!

Want to know how much your condo is worth in this market?

Call: 8-HILLCREST (844.552.7378)



info@ateamflorida.com
8-HILLCREST (844.552.7378)
www.ATeamFlorida.com

April State of the Market

– by Cindy Abraham, Keller Williams Realty Professionals A Team Florida

Not using a professional to buy or sell property is generally a very bad idea. FSBOs (For Sale by Owner) and sellers who try to save a few bucks by hiring discount brokers rarely fare well. Agents who discount their services do so for a reason; usually they don't want to provide the services necessary to get top dollar (most have another job). If you hire a realtor who is not willing to fight for their own money, do you think they are going to fight for yours? The following are true stories about real sellers that did not hire us to sell their properties.

One was a 3/2 home with a pool in a gated community. Pricing was the easy part since several comparable homes had recently sold for 389K. Our goal is to beat the highest comp, so we were going to list at 399K and see if we could get at least 394K AND get it to appraise. That has been our claim to fame lately. But let's say we could only get 389K – the total commission would have been \$23,340, split between us and the buyer agent.

Our listing appointment was last February (2017). The sellers decided to sell it by themselves. They listed the home on Zillow for 425K for a few months. Finally, on June 1st, they hired a flat fee broker for \$5000 to put it on the MLS – they would have to do all the negotiating and showings themselves. Of course, they had to offer the standard 3% for the buyer agent in the listing. But still, they were saving \$6,670 should they get 389K for the home.

In July, they lowered to 387K, in August they lowered to 379K and in September, they lowered to 369K and went under contract. The deal fell through in November to they raised the price to 379K. They went under contract again in early December and it fell through mid-December. They went under contract for the third time one week later and closed at 365K just before the end of the year. Yes, your math is correct – they saved \$6,640 in commissions and lost \$24,000 on the sale.

And this happened here in Hillcrest too. A potential seller decided against using us and went with a discount broker who was willing to take 4% instead of the standard 6% (3% to the buyer agent and 1% for himself). I had advised this seller that 159K was the highest sale so far for her type of unit, but I would list at 169K and try to get at least 164K. Her agent listed at 189K in September, lowered to 174K in November and TURNED DOWN 169k from one of our buyers who ended up buying a townhome in Washington Palms down the street for the same price. Long story short, the condo is STILL on the market – down to 150K. Same story, she saved 3K in commissions and to date has lost 19K in profit.

We need to say it again. If you are a seller, you need to LOOK AT YOUR LISTING! Here is a Hillcrest listing we came across: "OWNER OCCUPAY, 24 Hrs notice, not exception!! For a 55+ adt person. Bring your fuzzy clients. A condo that will appreciate with time!"

April 2018 IT Security Tips

The Importance of Using Strong Passwords

With no thanks to powerful brute-force-attack software readily available online, hackers can try tens of millions of possible password combinations per second. For example, hacking software can guess a five-character password in under three hours. If you only use lowercase letters, it's 11.9 seconds.

You know you need to have a better password than "password" or "letmein" if you have any hope of keeping hackers out of your computer, but what does a "strong" password even mean?

A strong, good password should; be at least 12 characters long (if not longer), and should have a combination of uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers and symbols that are hard to guess.

Guide to Creating Strong Passwords:

Remembering Long Passwords: Try using a phrase like, "You can run but you can't hide!" makes a great password and if you add a few numbers in there you can dramatically improve its strength (**U can run but u can't hide!**). Now take a look at how this phrase could serve as a strong password. Be sure to notice how we've used upper case, symbols, a number, and a lot of characters. UcanrUnbUtUcanth!de1

Jumble Odd Words Together: Another idea would be to put a few words together that would only make sense to you. And there's no rule against using fake information in your password. Hackers can easily find your birthdate, schools, year of graduation, pets names, maiden names, etc. Here's an example: My favorite color is blue, the first street I lived on was Pine, my first teacher in 1979 had curly hair and coffee breath & she loved the Beatles. BluePineCoffeeBeatles_79

Another idea is to use the first two letters of every word in a phrase [YoCaRuBuYoCaHi]. Don't use dictionary words with proper capitalization because they're easy to guess (like Password123#). Even though it meets the requirements we just discussed, it's easily hacked. Remember, these criminals have sophisticated password-hacking software that will run 24/7/365.

Don't Click on It!

You're working at your computer when all of the sudden – BAM! You get a pop-up notification telling you that your PC has been infected with a virus and you must "click here" to run a scan or install antivirus software. This is a common scareware tactic used by hackers to get you to click and download a virus. (You should know we would NEVER deliver that type of pop-up to you!)

Often it will appear to be a system alert or a Microsoft operating system alert. Regardless of how legitimate it looks, NEVER click on the site or the pop-up.

The safest thing to do is close your browser; do not click on the "Close" or "Cancel" button in the pop-up or on the site because clicking on anything on the page or pop-up could trigger a virus download. If that doesn't work, bring up your task manager (hold Control + Alt + Delete on a PC and Command + Option + Esc to "Force Quit" on a Mac) and close the web browser or application where it appeared. Next, notify your IT department (us!) that this has happened, so we can double-check with a legitimate scan if your computer was infected.

I hope you found value in this IT Security Tip! Please let me know if there's anything I can do for you!

Sincerely,

Eric Chafin
Business Development Manager
954-624-9518
echafin@connections.com
www.connections.com



Erik Chafin
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT
MANAGER

2843 Pembroke Road
Hollywood, FL 33020

Direct: 954.624.9518
Main: 954.920.9604
Cell: 305.613.5101

Email: echafin@connections.com
Web: www.connections.com



A-1 Custom Mica, Inc.

Wood • Therma Foil • Mica

Established since 1987

● Countertops
● Vanities
● Furniture
● Complete Kitchens
● New or Resurface

Save up to 50% by Resurfacing

Specializing in Hillcrest Area

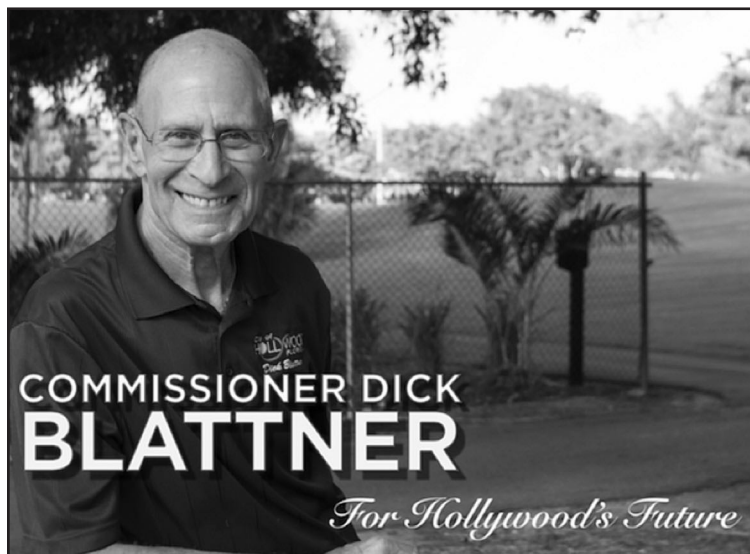
954-980-5678

Expert in new & refacing cabinets

State Licensed # CBC022069 and Insured

APRIL 2018 COMMISSIONER'S REPORT

by Commissioner Dick Blattner



RECYCLING: IT AIN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

Remember the I Love Lucy episode where Lucy and Vivian were packaging candy coming down a conveyer belt and they couldn't keep up, so they started stuffing the candy in their mouths? Well, Waste Management's recycling facility in Pembroke Pines reminded me of that old TV classic!



It is a gorgeous day as I write this month's report. Spring brings lots of gorgeous days, while I bring lots of news to report.

AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL THERE REALLY IS LIGHT

FPL has agreed to replace 5,800 of their light fixtures in Hollywood with LED fixtures. This will start soon and be completed by the end of the year. The lights will be directional, meaning they focus the beam downward and will not light up the sky. The City pays FPL monthly, so you will see no change in your bill for this project. There are roughly another 1,200 poles which the City owns. They will be replaced later, with FPL taking over maintenance for them.

GIFTED SCHOOLS UPDATE

The County school board recently made a truly momentous decision to create a gifted high school starting in the fall at an available building at Plantation HS. The first class will begin with graduates of the outstanding CITY program at Parkway Middle in Lauderhill. CITY stands for Community of Intellectually Gifted Youth. I spoke at that meeting and think this is a giant step forward for Broward. The new school will be open to all who meet the requirements. That information will be available in May. When you think of gifted schools, one that might come to mind is Dade's Performing Arts School.

OTHER MATTERS

General Obligation Bond Update: City staff and commissioners are definitely moving forward on a November 2018 referendum. Still working out details but the primary focus will be on streets, alleys, sidewalks, landscaping and beautification, parks, and neighborhood improvements you will be hearing lots more about in the coming months.

South Broward High School

40 seniors attended part of our last Commission meeting led by Senior Class Advisor Ashley Lehman. This is the sixth year for this program and we love having them. By the way, the school is now at capacity and so is MacArthur!

Two months ago, on a tour for elected officials, I saw a lot of people standing by conveyer belts sorting our recycling, tossing stuff into bins. There is a problem. THE RECYCLING MARKET IS TANKING. There is no market for glass. None. And the Chinese, who had accepted much of our recycled goods, declared they will no longer accept anything that has more than 3% contaminates. The result of both factors means bales and pallets of stuff have nowhere to go. A landfill perhaps, but doesn't that defeat the purpose of recycling?

What does that mean for us?

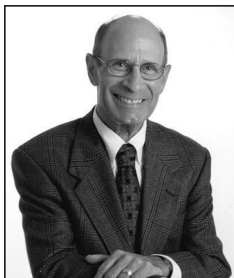
Hollywood is going out to find a consultant to help prepare a proposal for sanitation service starting in 2019. Commissioners and city staff are concerned no one will submit a quote for picking up recycled items. What would really be neat is for someone to build another waste-to-energy plant like the one at 441 and 595. Burn it, don't bury it. STAY TUNED!

Upcoming events

For regular updates from the City, go to www.Hollywoodfl.org, and click on News.Updates come out at least once a week. FINALLY.

Thanks for your time. Take care of your garden and let's make Hollywood Green!

COMMISSIONER DICK BLATTNER



About 20 years ago we lived on a lovely street in Hollywood Hills. One of our neighbors, Mike, was a hard-working guy and he and his wife took amazing care of their property. They were compulsive; if there was one drop of mildew on the roof they scrubbed it off. Their cars were washed almost every week and if they even thought they saw a drop of oil on the driveway, they scrubbed it

clean. They were the epitome of a perfect neighbor placing a high value on taking care of what was theirs.

So, I was surprised when Mike told me he and his family were moving to a gated community. Mike was tired of the city failing to require his neighbors to fix the fence in the alley behind their house; to have another neighbor trim the trees that were overhanging his property; or, the other neighbor who wasn't taking care of his

property. Moving to a gated community, one with strong enforcement of property standards, was his way of joining a community where maintaining property is valued.

There are many reasons why neighborhoods and cities deteriorate, but one is when a municipality fails, or is unable to enforce its own property standards. It's a tug-of-war between the concept of property rights (my home is my castle) and enforcement of community standards embedded in city codes.

Someone said recently that Parkland is a beautiful, fairly new community with high standards. They then went on to say Parkland is similar to what Emerald Hills was like thirty or forty years ago: new and pristine, filled with people who made significant investments in their properties. But, as often is the case, subsequent owners may not have the same commitment. Landscaping deteriorates, tiles get dirty, things don't get fixed as promptly, and so on. Some houses go the rental route, often resulting in little or no interest on the tenant's

part to maintain the property. Then there are more cars per house than the property can sustain, and the swale turns to dirt.

What happens next is the slow, downward value of properties that is difficult to reverse. We don't have to update property standards in our Code, but, as elected officials and city staff, we do have a duty to take a hard look at enforcement. That can mean more Code officers, better use of technology, or expeditious handling of violations, which can take up to a year from a Notice of Violation to appearing before a magistrate, during which time conditions deteriorate even further.

Correcting the process certainly requires funding. Mostly, though, it takes a commitment from elected officials to make a public statement on how they intend to improve the city's appearance as a key component to raising property values. Then, the challenge is for city staff to develop a multi-year plan and find the financial resources to execute that plan.

Some wise person once commented the best-looking cities spend the most money on code enforcement. Sounds reasonable. It is time to make that happen in Hollywood.

South Florida Ballet Theater & School
2018 - 2019 Season

Professional Classical Ballet Training
 Under Artistic Director
 Lynda DeChane

Boulevard Heights Community Center
 6770 Garfield Street
 Hollywood FL. 33024

ages 6-Teens
 Beginner - Advanced

Professional Classes in:
 * Classical Technique
 * Conditioning & Stretching
 * Choreography
 * Pre Pointe and Pointe
 (at the discretion of the Director)

50% OFF Registration Fee
 First Class Free

Ask about our upcoming Summer Camp Intensives Program
 Camp I June 11-22 / Monday- Friday 1-5pm

Call to register: 954-929-4601
 southfloridaballet.theater



A Cure for Stupidity?

- by Stephen Nadler - Nadler, a finalist for the 2004 Pulitzer Prize in General Nonfiction, is a professor of philosophy and the humanities at the University of Wisconsin–Madison and the coauthor of *Heretics!: The Wondrous (and Dangerous) Beginnings of Modern Philosophy*. The paragraph in italics is an abridged version of the paragraph.

Let me be clear: By “stupidity” I do not mean a lack of knowledge, education, skill or savvy. Stupidity is not the same as ignorance or incompetence or folly (although it often leads to foolish behavior). I do not mean it as some immature, all-purpose playground insult. I don’t want to offend but to diagnose.

In that spirit, I offer a different, more philosophical definition: Stupidity is a kind of intellectual stubbornness.

A stupid person has access to all the information necessary to make an appropriate judgment, to come up with a set of reasonable and justified beliefs and yet fails to do so. The evidence is staring them right in the face, but it makes no difference whatsoever. They believe what they want to believe. Not only do they have no good reasons for thinking that what they believe is true — there are often good reasons for thinking that what they believe is false. They are not acting in a rational manner.

Of course, everyone is stupid sometime or other. We have all fallen headlong for some product because it looks cool or because some celebrity we like but who has zero expertise tells us he has one, despite there being no reason whatsoever for buying the item and maybe even good reasons not to buy it. We often make choices based on emotions like hope, fear, love, envy, pride and anger — instead of reason. However, while other nations seem to be tackling the local and global problems we face head on, relying not so much on passion but on science and common sense, we seem as a nation to be acting stupidly. And in this regard, we fail to live up to, and even betray, just those values that have informed our republic from its founding and to which we now so often merely pay lip service.

In these matters as well as matters of health, finance and even love, It can prove to be dangerous for us to make crucial decisions not based on what Descartes called “clear and distinct” evidence, but on prejudice, hearsay and, of course, those passions of hope and fear.

What is the solution to our creeping national stupidity? Learning how to gain more information from a variety of certifiably reliable sources is an important first step. But what the American public really needs are lessons in how to be rational, how to assess that information — distinguishing between real evidence and fake evidence — and end up believing only what one is justified in believing. We could use more lessons on what it means to be rational and how to be epistemologically responsible citizens who are familiar with the difference between a valid and invalid argument, and who know an unjustified belief when they see one.

Changing people’s cognitive behavior will not be easy; it may even be a fool’s errand. By young adulthood, we naturally become stuck in

our ways of forming and abandoning beliefs. I like to think that the key lies in more philosophy, and more of the humanities overall. Most people, if they study philosophy at all, do so only in college — typically to fulfill some distribution requirement.

But what if we start exposing young people to philosophy well before they become undergraduates? There is no reason why high school students, even children in elementary school, cannot absorb the basic lessons of rationality and critical thinking that come from studying the great thinkers of the past and of today, and the problems in ethics, politics, epistemology, metaphysics and aesthetics that they address.

If there is a cure for stupidity, I am convinced that this is it. I hope I’m proven right.



14th Annual Golf Classic




Friday, April 20, 2018

12 Noon Registration
1:00 pm Shot-Gun Start
5:30pm Buffet Dinner & Award Presentation
Silent Auction & Raffle



**Golf at Pembroke Lakes Golf & CC
on Friday afternoon
Benefiting the Poor &
Homeless of South Broward**




Sponsorship Opportunities available at all levels

Last Year’s Participating Sponsors











For questions or phone registration/sponsorships:
please call 954-920-0106
or e-mail lvasquez@thejubileecenter.org

Mail completed form and payment to:
Jubilee Center
2020 Scott St., Hollywood, FL 33020

For Credit Card or PayPal go to <http://www.jubileecenterbroward.org/giving.html>
Our Mission: To provide the poor and homeless relief from hunger and despair

Are YOU Going 'Round the Bend?

- BK Mike George Brahma Kumaris', London, England - Submitted by Etta Stevens



It flows freely. It's almost impossible to contain. It has the power to smooth the roughest edges. And it can penetrate almost everything to maximum depth. Such is the nature of water. Such is the nature of life. Life is like water. It is never static. It flows. It takes many forms. When life itself is seen as a river, almost by instinct we catch the rightness and importance of the idea of 'going with the flow'.

Letting go, and going with the flow, is not original wisdom. But going with any old flow, as history teaches us, is not so wise. Each day, if we are awake and aware, we are faced with the challenge of choice - where in the river of life should we stand? Should we go where the current is strongest and the rapids create white water? This is where we know we will find the most challenging relationships and what can appear to be the greatest obstacles to our progress. When we do go where life moves fastest, we take risks - but a life without risk is a life un-lived, and growth is impossible.

Many people live 'white water' lives, but few do so consciously and choicefully. They tend to be the action addicts and the rushaholics, always competing with others and living life as something that has to be either survived or conquered. They often seek to stimulate crisis, are sometimes the catalyst for chaos and their drug of addiction, and therefore choice, is adrenalin. They tend to carry a fair amount of 'baggage' but they cannot see that it is their baggage that hinders their ability to 'flow', to be fluid and flexible, to yield when its time to yield and to smooth the way when its time to smooth the way. Stress will be a frequent companion.

Others have cultivated the wisdom to find and visit a bend in the river of life, where the movement is gentler. Time spent here is created with the purpose of standing back, observing, learning,

and preparing for the right moment and right place to enter the mainstream again. Time spent 'on the bend' is time spent on the mend. Time spent in reflection on the process of life itself, perhaps several times a day, allows insight and wisdom to reach the surface of awareness. It is an investment with guaranteed returns.

The wisest however, have found a spot just 'around the bend' where they conspire with the currents to create a place of total stillness. Here is the time and the space for renewal. In silence and solitude the human spirit is refreshed, the mind refocused. Regular time, spent just around the bend, out of site and beyond sound, provides the calm and the power necessary to avoid being driven round the bend by the frenetic, high anxiety, 'white water' games of others. This is no cop-out. This is where the power of real wealth is found, the wealth of personal peace and the power to handle the thrashing and the crashing of others! Few appreciate the efficacy of time spent around the bend.

Action balanced with reflection and empowered by silence is the masterful way to live. Then it may be possible to see that if the river is a metaphor for life so water is a metaphor for our consciousness, our self. Just as water has the ability to take many forms according to the place, space and immediate environment, so consciousness can take many forms according to what is perceived to be the need of the moment. Knowing what form to take lies at the heart of being effective. Learn from the free meditation classes how to effectively take the correct path just as water is able to do. When in silence and finding your original "Peace of Mind" you will make live an easier journey for you and the people nearest you.

FIND A LIFE OF PURPOSE AND POSITIVITY

Free Raja Yoga meditations taught by the Brahma Kumaris continue at several local libraries*:

***Hollywood Library Tuesdays
10:15-11:30am & 6:30-7:30pm.**

***Dania Beach Library Saturdays at noon.**

***SW Regional Library, 1st & 3rd Saturdays 10:30-11:30am.**

***Sterling Rd. Library's Wellness Program
4th Thurs 6:30-7:30pm:**

APRIL 26TH LAST EVENT FOR THIS SEASON

***Call Roz with questions or to sign up
for course at 954 801-6639.**

***Join us at ArtsPark the 3rd Sun at 6pm for WORLD PEACE
Sunday, April 15, 2018 • 6-7:30 pm**

Bring a chair and a flashlight, see you there.

***MEDITATE@8 CALL IN FOR LIVE MEDITATION**

Call: 712-775-7031 • Meeting ID 660-469-256# Thurs. 8-8:10 pm

*FOR A FREE THOUGHT OF THE DAY INSPIRATIONAL MESSAGE SIGN UP: http://brahmakumaris.org/interactive/mailing_list

PET PEEVES – by Cindy Abraham

MISPRONUNCIATIONS

Mispronunciations can be funny. The news guy who said “evacuation” instead of “evacuation” – loved it! People who say, “I was conversating with someone...”. “Conversating” is amusing unless someone I like uses it, then I will correct them so they don’t sound like idiots. Never did figure out why some people can’t say “ask” instead of “ax”. Practice!

I like the show “Cops” and just love it when the guy in handcuffs won’t answer the arresting officer because he doesn’t want to “discriminate” himself.

And now there is a new one and what really gets me is that I hear it from people I consider intelligent and I even heard it from one of my heroines, Michelle Obama! The words strong, street and structure do NOT have an “H” in them. It is NOT shtrong, shstreet or shstructure. When the hell did this start? Cut it out! The Queen’s English doesn’t need to suffer any more butchering from us than it already has.

CON-MEN

It is hard to feel sorry for anyone who sends money to the Nigerian Prince or to the foreigner who will split their multimillion-dollar fortune for a small fee. But things have gotten much more sophisticated – especially on line – and we all need to be very vigilant.

I only buy gas from Alex at the Marathon on the NE corner of Pembroke Rd and N Park Rd. so I don’t have to worry about the credit card skimmers. Family owned gas stations tend to pay more attention to what is going on at the pumps.

The scammers know what you do and who you do business with. As a Realtor, I often get emails with “Closing Statements” to review and I now need to stop and think before I open them. I get legitimate offers from CVS but the one for \$50 is a scam. In fact, ALL the \$50 offers are scams from Amazon to Walmart – don’t click on them. ALWAYS look at the sender email name. If it is a person’s name or if the company name is spelled wrong, that should be a BIG red flag. No one should be fooled by the bank scams by now – your account is frozen, etc. Be sure you are reading the security tips we run every month.

I was conned once – I fell for the fake domain name company who said one of my domains was up for renewal. I should have paid attention to where it came from before I paid them. Fool me once...

Some of the ones we get in the regular mail are very clever. Some are not scams in the traditional sense of the word. Anyone who just bought a home or condo will get a letter offering a certified copy of your deed for \$. When you read the fine print, you find out that they are not affiliated with any government agency and may even admit that you can get the paperwork online for free, but if you send them the money, they will send you the document so that is not technically a scam. Reminds me of Billy the Book, a bookie back in the 70’s who liked to sell stocking stuffers for

Christmas. He would tell you, \$3.00 each or 3 for \$10.00. If you paid the 3/\$10.00 and then later realized you overpaid, he would calmly explain that he gave you the option and YOU chose to pay the 3/\$10.00 – no refunds.

MAYONNAISE SQUEEZE BOTTLES

They don’t even squeeze the mayo that well and a lot gets left in the bottle when it is supposedly empty. I cut one open and scraped out ¼ cup of mayo. Yes, I am that frugal. Buy jars.

AUTOMOBILES AND PURSES

Where the hell am I supposed to put my purse if there is someone sitting in the passenger seat side? Car companies spend bazillions on ads – between them and the drug companies, their ads are longer than some TV shows. They can’t come up with a space for a handbag?! I get so upset I need medication...oh, now I get it.

FOUR-WAY STOP VIOLATORS

I can’t blame people for not knowing that the law when a traffic light is out is to treat the intersection like a four-way stop. When I was younger, I did not know either and just followed cars through the dead lights – I thought it was every man for himself type situation. Then I moved to Texas for 10 years where people are super polite anyway. When a light was out, they behaved perfectly – everyone taking their turn. I called my friends in Florida and told them what a GREAT idea Texas had – of course they laughed and said that the law was universal; Floridians just choose not to obey it. Duh! Ironically, on a drive to Miramar, we saw a BMW almost hit a bicyclist because she ran the dead light, 3 Lexus’ did the same thing and one Mercedes. I was chatting with a guy in line in Publix the very next day about the crazy post-hurricane drivers and he said that the three worst types of drivers are #1 BMW, #2 Lexus and #3 Mercedes! I almost dropped my teeth – THAT was funny. (Although in my experience Lexus should be #1).

NASTY PEOPLE

What gets me is that saying outrageous things has become the norm so much that they no longer make headlines. For example, I read an article about Roy Moore, the Republican candidate for the senate who is alleged to have sexually assaulted a 16-year-old girl. One of the paragraphs stated that Alabama State Auditor Jim Zeigler defended Moore’s alleged proclivity for teenage girls by saying: “Take Joseph and Mary. Mary was a teenager and Joseph was an adult carpenter. They became the parents of Jesus.” Two years ago, a comment like that would have been on the front page.

What a world. To keep my sanity, I only surround myself with friends and family members who have open minds and disagree agreeably. Now it is more important than ever to be selective and choose people who are your own definition of “normal”. Normal is an interesting word. One definition states it means: “An idealistic state of being. However, the idea of such a state varies from being to being.” Makes sense. Another definition is “A word made up by this corrupt society so they could single out and attack those who are different.” This is quite interesting because I think it could also read, “A word made up by kind, considerate, thoughtful people to differentiate themselves from the hateful crazies.” Pick one.