

# Inside Hillcrest

– Connecting Neighbors to Neighbors –



APRIL 2017

HOLLYWOOD, FLORIDA

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## April 2017 INSIDE HILLCREST

### REAL ESTATE

There are always hot topics when I run into Inside Hillcrest readers throughout the course of the month. Usually it is questions about the redevelopment and sometimes comments on our current political climate. Lately, many of you have questions and comments about where Hillcrest Real Estate values are headed. The number one questions: “How will the new construction affect our values?” The answer is that our values – and property taxes – will probably go up.

The number two question: “Is it better to sell now or wait until the development is complete?”

I don't completely understand this question; the best time to sell is when you have to or you want to. If you love it here, it doesn't matter how much your condo is worth. If you want to live somewhere else or you must move because of health or job issues, the best time is now. If you are toying with the idea of moving sometime in the next few years but have no deadline, it is best to wait until the construction is complete or almost complete and possibly the wait will be worth it. Remember that “rising waters lift all boats” so not only your condo will be worth more, everything else will have gone up also.

We sold one of the new single family luxury homes a few weeks ago and the final price tag was 450K. This was not a “deposit” situation, it was a sale. Even with the townhomes which start at 319K, if the buyer wants certain features (a balcony, W/D, tile floors, impact windows on both levels), there are additional costs. So, it stands to reason if a buyer wants a completely remodeled 1499 SF 2/2 with gorgeous views, a Hillcrest condo is an excellent value at half the price.

Hillcrest is and always has been undervalued. The “over-55 community” label has stuck. There is not a week that goes by that I am not educating an agent as to the fact that Hillcrest has 11 all ages buildings. I have a spread sheet that I send them with the building #, address,

and the key bylaws regarding down payments, pets, leasing and number of cars permitted.

Not having a Master Association is not ideal. It is hard to get 24 buildings on the same page. The HLC meetings help – if your leaders show up. But that doesn't mean they will cooperate with an initiative. Several years back I tried to get 9 high-rise buildings to pitch in \$48.00 each to fix the lighting on N. 46th Ave one STILL complained about having to contribute. On the positive side, one building paid for paint and another volunteered their staff to repaint the light poles.

It would be great if at least the sister buildings stuck together when hiring landscapers, parking lot pavers, painters and the like. Most don't. The bottom line is that no matter how great – or how bad – your building is; it affects all of us. When one building gets a negative “reputation”, some realtors make assumptions about the whole community. Boards who insist on treating realtors and potential buyers like the enemy hurt us all.



### HILLCREST LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

A recap of the last meeting with Pulte is on page 2. We will probably start meeting every OTHER month on the last Monday of the month starting in May. We will keep you posted. I don't want to sound like a broken record but we need a VERY STRONG leadership alliance BEFORE the HOA for the new homes and townhomes is formed. It doesn't have to be board members but those of you with strong management background and

solid leadership skills who are consistently professional and articulate, **WE NEED YOU!**

### CONSTRUCTION DUST

With the windy weather, the construction dust has been almost uncontrollable. I see the trucks out there spraying the areas with water to keep it down, but friends and neighbors with asthma or other respiratory problems are suffering. Also, many folks are doing remodels of their units and drywall dust is everywhere. Either way, getting your A/C coils cleaned is very important. Most of us can't remember the last time we had it done. There are THREE reliable A/C contractors in this issue of Inside Hillcrest. Call your favorite and get it done! It will extend the life of your machine as well as lower your bills when your A/C doesn't have to work so hard to push the cool air into your unit.

### BYE BYE SNOWBIRDS

This is the time of year when our northern friends head back home. They escaped the bitter cold of winter about in most cases their summer is as hot if not hotter than ours! Hillcrest is 5.4 miles from the beach (about 17 minutes) so we still get the ocean breezes. Safe trip, friends and see you next year. Remember you can contact us at [inside.hillcrest@comcast.net](mailto:inside.hillcrest@comcast.net) to continue to get your issues of IH by email.

### MARK YOUR CALENDAR

April 30th is Sunday in the Park – A Taste of Hollywood from Noon to 5:30PM. The Greater Hollywood Chamber of Commerce (GHCC) in collaboration with the City of Hollywood, CRA and the ArtsPark is planning Hollywood, Florida's new signature event: Sunday in the Park – a Taste of Hollywood. This all outdoor family event is FREE to the public will feature the best of our local restaurants with food, craft beers and wine. There will be arts, business displays, entertainment, music and a Kidz Korner. For a stress free outing, Uber and Lyft can get you there for less than \$6.00 – no parking hassles.

## HLC MEETING RECAP WITH THE PULTE GROUP

The sponsors for our March 27, 2017 meeting were **MR Restoration** and Complete Elder Care. MR Restoration is owned and operated by two U.S. Army veterans. Steve Rowe, our friend and colleague from the Hollywood Chamber is one of them. He is our go-to when we have friends and clients with water damage problems and he has helped folks in buildings 6, 26, 16, 22, 4, and 18. He is there with his crew right away and works with the insurance companies to avoid out-of-pocket expenses for the owners. Trace Sanford, his Director of Sales and Marketing, and Joyce Sagi, Independent Contractor, shared valuable information about mold remediation and hidden water damage that can affect our condos. All buildings now have their contact information should you have any questions.

Also, if your building has not yet ordered leak detectors from Glentronics, you should. At the very least they should be placed by every water heater and washing machine in your building. At most, they should be available for sale to your residents and placed under every sink in their unit. The minute a drop of water hits the sensor, an alarm goes off (LOUD) and a lot of damage can be prevented. Case prices are reasonable. Their contact info is on your Condominium Preferred Vendor list which has been sent to your board members. See the ad for **MR Restoration on page 5**.

In our quest to protect our elderly residents, we also brought in Princella Seymour of **Complete Elder Care**. She is the first line of defense should a board member or resident notice that something is not quite right with a neighbor. One building was worried when a couple mysteriously moved in with an elderly man. Princella was called and an investigation is underway. We have had cases where an elderly resident signed over his Lexus to an aide – that was taken care of. We have had residents show signs of dementia and the family was unresponsive. Princella is the one to call and she will take it from there. Understandably, it is tough enough to run an association and there is just so much that a board member can take on. It is also uncomfortable to feel like you may be interfering or even wrong about your suspicions. Let Princella determine whether there is a problem and either close the case if it is she finds that there is nothing amiss or follow up with the proper agencies. Whether our residents need medical help, financial protection or legal representation, Princella has the know-how and resources to help. Hillcresters pride ourselves on being compassionate and charitable; taking care of our own is important.

Andrew Maxey, Pulte's Land Property Manager and Tony Palumbo, Pulte's Director of Land Acquisition were our guest speakers. Representatives from Buildings 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 27 were in attendance. Dianne Brodie from Bank United was a special guest. Bank United handles many of our Hillcrest buildings finances and she wanted to meet her clients in person so we appreciated her stopping by. The first question was whether there would be a fitness center in the general clubhouse that was accessible to all Hillcrest residents. The answer was "no", there would be one in the Clubhouse for the new homeowners. The HLC will contact the HOA for the homes and townhomes and ask if Hillcrest Condo Owners can buy memberships. Another option could be if we are willing to buy equipment and place it in one of the rooms of the General Clubhouse and if that would be permitted. There will be meeting rooms available for rent and an outdoor kitchen/BBQ area.

There was a question about a rumor that Championship Academy here in Hillcrest was going to expand. We know the school can go up to 10th grade eventually and are capped at 850 students. I have seen the inside of the school and it appears to me to have been built to accommodate the 850 students so the "expansion" rumor could be about the eventual goal of 850 students when the higher grades are in place.

There was a concern from Building 27 who has been told the land north/east of the building would be a public park with no gate separating it from Hillcrest 27. Pulte will be meeting with the building leadership to discuss and resolve the situation. It should be noted that Andrew and Tony have been very up front and forthcoming with answers to concern and we appreciate their efforts.

The three-foot plastic tarps covering the fencing have not done a good job of filtering the dust and debris. With the recent winds, it has been a losing battle, even with dampening the areas. Once we are in the second phase, there will be temporary construction fencing; a five-foot high chain link fence with a screen. Some attendees thought (including me) that the parks, lakes and walking trails would be usable before the homes were built. However, we didn't realize that an active construction site would not be the safest place for recreational activities. **The following is a brief explanation of the four phases and what each entail:**

In accordance with our development resolution with the city, the amenity and park delivery will be phased with development. Prior to the issuance of the 60th CO, the Phase 1 park and shared amenity building must be complete, and Pulte is well ahead of schedule on this. The 2nd phase park will be delivered in conjunction with the development of the homes in that phase. The first sub-phase will be approximately 250 homes behind the amenity parcel and extending down to Pembroke Road. This phase is expected to be completed in the 2nd quarter of 2018 and that portion of the park will be delivered at that time as well.

Building 22 had a problem with a large flatbed truck cutting through their parking lot. Palumbo was firm about this being unacceptable and asked for residents to take pix with their cell phone whenever they saw something that isn't right INCLUDING trespassers on go carts, bikes and scooters roaming the area.

One building complained of a rodent problem and asked if that was because of the construction. The answer was yes. Rodents and other animals lived on the golf course and with the earthwork going on, they have no vegetation to hide in. Eventually all the earthwork will be complete and their will no more critter hiding places. Some buildings have been proactive and stepped their exterminating services.

Building 21 is having to replace their well system with a cooling tower. Pulte has agreed to allow an easement to allow their new equipment to encroach on Pulte property. The agreement must be recorded. Some buildings have irrigation pumps that encroach on Pulte's land and the development team is working with the individual building boards to resolve the issues.

Building 24 which now has a view of the warehouses was wondering if there will be a wall or trees to mask the view. There is only so high either can be and another issue was with the mount of noise coming from the truck transfer station and auto businesses along Pembroke Road.

*Continued on Pg.13*



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## KEEP YOUR COOL – courtesy of FP&L (modified for condos)

Annual cooling cost to run a 3-ton (36,000 BTU/Hour) installed in the 1990s with a 10 SEER will be \$1,009. If replaced with a new 16 SEER system, the cost drops to \$632 - a savings of \$377 per year.

Summer heat is tough on air conditioning units, but cooling your home doesn't have to break the bank. Keep your energy costs under control by following these simple tips:

- Cool your home at 75° F or warmer with the thermostat fan switch on "auto." For additional savings, raise the thermostat to 78° F while you're away. If you have a humidistat, use it – mold is a real threat in humid South Florida.
- Use a fan to keep cool so you can raise your thermostat even higher. But, remember to turn the fan off when you leave the room.
- Close the shades, blinds and drapes to keep sunlight out.
- Maintain proper airflow by keeping interior doors and vents open to help air circulate.
- Clean or replace your A/C filter regularly to help your unit run more efficiently.
- Consider buying a new high-efficiency air conditioner if yours is more than 10 years old, needs frequent repairs and doesn't keep your home cool. We have three WONDERFUL A/C vendors in Inside Hillcrest – call them for quotes.
- Adjust your thermostat. Set your A/C to 78° F or higher in the summer with your fan set to auto. Save 5% on monthly cooling costs for each degree you turn it up. Set your heat to 68° F or lower in the winter with your fan set to auto. Save 5% on monthly heating costs for each degree you turn it down.
- Consider purchasing and installing a smart thermostat. Average savings could add up to 3 percent of your total energy costs
- Use ceiling fans or tower fans to feel cooler. Consider adding more fans – so you can feel cooler with your thermostat set higher. When leaving a room, turn off your fan. A fan that runs all the time costs up to \$7 a month
- Keep your A/C unit clean and clear. Check your filter regularly for excess buildup of dirt, dust and pet hair. How often you change the filter depends on the type of filter you have, how often you run your A/C and the number of pets in your home. Keep leaves, shrubbery and debris at least 18 inches away from your outdoor unit
- Turn off kitchen-exhaust and bath fans immediately when you're finished using them
- Keep sunlight out during summer months. Close your blinds, drapes and shades during the hottest time of day

- Seal your condo for savings to control airflow and reduce leaks. Close exterior windows and doors tightly when your heater or A/C is running. Caulk around windows, weather strip round doors if you feel a draft, and add door sweeps to the bottom of doors leading to the hallway or outside (for catwalk buildings). Keep interior doors and A/C vents open to help air circulate

Depending on the size and efficiency of your current A/C, a new cooling system could save you money on your electric bill. For example, if you upgrade an older three-ton A/C with a new, higher efficiency model, you could save around \$377 annually. You should consider a new, more efficient A/C if your current system: Is more than 10 years old. Needs frequent repairs. Runs longer to keep your home cool. If any of the above is true, you may benefit from a new high-efficiency A/C.

Choose the system that's right for you. The main types of systems to consider are:

**Straight cool system** - An A/C that includes a cooling cycle only. A gas, oil or electric strip heater may be included.

**Heat pump system** - Provides a cooling cycle during the summer and a heating cycle during the winter. Could save you up to 70 percent on heating costs compared to conventional strip heating. May cost slightly more than a straight cool system to purchase. Strip heat may be added to a heat pump system for "backup" heating on cold days (below 40 degrees) when heat pumps are less effective



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Greetings Hillcrest,

Good News, according to the Department of Labor, Broward County was the number one job creating region among all 32 metropolitan divisions in the US for 2016. I am thrilled to see that our local economy continues to grow at such a rapid pace and that this economic growth is leading to more of our residents gaining employment. However, I am concerned that our local employers are not coordinating enough at working with our high schools to provide meaningful opportunities to local high school graduates. I want to make sure that this economic growth is a rising tide that lifts all boats. This is why, last year, I initiated the idea of “My Next Move”, an event where companies who do most of their business in Broward County, make available, jobs that only require a High School Diploma and offer them to those local students who are graduating, but don’t have immediate plans to attend college.

As some of you know, prior to becoming your County Commissioner, I worked for many years in our public schools. I had the pleasure of teaching a variety of subjects over the years, and worked with a range of age groups. Most recently, I worked as the media specialist at Charles W. Flanagan High School in Pembroke Pines.

High school is interesting from a teacher’s perspective. At the same time many students are discovering their interests and passions and finding themselves, others may start to fade. There are many reasons why some students struggle most through these years, but for some students in particular, it is perceived as a lack of opportunity that holds them back.

In Broward County, our High School Graduation Rate for Academic Year 2015-2016 was 78.7%. This rate improved 2 points over the previous year, but still lags behind the state average of 80.7% for this same year. Of course, we should celebrate the improvement in our graduation rate, but it is disconcerting to realize that across our state, nearly one in five students will not graduate high school on time this year.

Beyond graduation, there is another large item that concerns me and that I have been working on together with several community partners. I want to be certain that our community is doing its part to help our students who are graduating high school, are not necessarily going immediately to college, but need direction and/or contacts in finding suitable employment that coincides with their skills and interests.

Last year, to address this, I brought together a team of representatives from OIC of South Florida, CareerSource Broward, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, The Broward Chapter of Black

Trade Unionists, Hispanic Unity of Florida, The Washington Park Community Enhancement Collaboration Inc. and The Broward County School Board. Together we invited 400 students from four high schools in southeast Broward to the first “My Next Move” event which was held at McArthur High School in Hollywood. The event was extremely successful.

On April 6th 2017, I am happy to say that we successfully launched the second” My Next Move” event, this time at South Broward High School in Hollywood. The success of these events has now made them an annual occurrence.

Once again, we asked the principals at each of four high schools in southeast Broward County to choose 100 graduating students who didn’t have immediate plans to attend college, yet showed the greatest potential for achievement. Those students were then invited to work on career building skills with OIC of South Florida, Career Source Broward and Hispanic Unity of Florida, so that they could attend the “My Next Move” event dressed for success, with the necessary materials in hand.

We invited local colleges, unions, HR directors, and industry leaders from firms that do their most business within Broward County. We filled a gymnasium with everything from giant construction firms, to the plumbers and pipefitters union, to the leaders in the South Florida Tourism and Marine industries, to the U.S. military services and everything in between. The only condition was that we needed to know that these firms had open positions and were able to employ someone with a high school diploma.

I was hoping for students to leave there with at least one or two contacts to follow up on. To my surprise, some of these graduates walked out with job offers in hand. As we often say at the Broward County Commission meetings, Broward is an amazing place to be. For the last few years, our unemployment rate has consistently been below the state average and we continue to grow year after year in population and median household income. Yet, we don’t ask enough of our giants of industry to focus on recruiting those students and graduates who are most likely to stay here in South Florida and need an opportunity of a first time job.

After all, that’s what it’s all about. When we afford all of our students realistic opportunities for their future, it provides real benefits for our entire community. This is one way to build a better Broward.

-Beam



## HASSLE-FREE CAR BUYING/LEASING

I am not one of those who enjoys haggling. The last time I bought a car I wrote down EXACTLY what I wanted (it was a Honda CRV) and went to four Honda dealers from Ft. Lauderdale to North Miami. My ex-partner, David Korkoian, was with me. The rules of the game were: I walk in and ask for the salesperson who will give me the least amount of BS (you should have seen them scatter). One brave soul would step up. I would hand him a paper with what I wanted and tell him (it was always a him) to write down the best deal he could offer, that I was going to three other dealers and would be buying a car within 48 hours.

The first salesman gave me what turned out to be the highest price. The second one on Broward Boulevard was training a new salesman and started out by saying, "That is a really pretty blouse." It was a plain gray. Then he wrote down a few add-ons that I did not want and gave me the price. I told the guy he was training, "Pay close attention to what he just did and don't ever do it."

The third salesman was at Hollywood Honda. He was a HUNK named Jose. He gave me the lowest price so far and threw in a few free things like mud flaps or something. I wanted to work with him but had one more to go.

At the Honda dealer in North Miami Beach, the salesman was a big fat sweaty guy. His price beat Jose's by \$800.00. I took David aside and before I could open my mouth he said, "I know what you are going to say - you want to go back to Jose the hunk and have him match the price so you can buy it from him. YOU made the rules of the game. You have to buy from the fat sweaty guy or you are not playing fair." Never take your conscience car shopping with you.

Yes, I bought the car from the fat sweaty guy who started to sweat even more and moaned that he came in "too low". I am a gracious winner so I told him he only beat Hollywood Honda by \$100. Of course, he then tried to play games with the financing, warranties, etc. but that is what David was there for - he kept things kosher.

That was the last time I bought a car and have leased ever since. On March 20th, I totaled my car in an accident that looked so bad it is a miracle three people walked away OK. A young lady driving her mom's BMW and either talking or texting blew a light.

Luckily, I saw her coming and slammed on the brakes. She hit the front left of my car which slowed her down enough so when she rammed into a pole and her air bags went off, she escaped being badly hurt. Long story short, I needed a new car. I am a member of the Sun Credit Union up the street and they offer a car finding service.

I called Holly Wright, Founder and President of Auto Source of America Inc. who works with several Credit Unions to help members get the best deals. She has connections with car dealers all over South Florida. I told her exactly what I wanted and within days she found it and delivered exactly what I ordered. I got a brand new 2017 white Subaru Forester with all the safety features for \$100 less per month than I was paying for a Toyota RAV4! Sun Credit is offering interest rates as low as 1.99%. If the thought of having to go it alone to lease or buy a car makes you want to Uber the rest of your life, call Holly at 954-270-3987. She knows her stuff, will make the process completely painless if not enjoyable and she doesn't sweat.

I love SUN Credit Union. My business account is there plus I opened a Pelican Pennies account for my granddaughter, Zowey. Every month a dollar amount from my checking account is automatically transferred to hers. She is only 7 years old so by the time she is ready for college, she should have a nice little nest egg. **For info on banking at the SUN Credit Union, call Shirley Langford, Marketing and Business Development Coordinator at her office: 954.967.4441-Ext 333.**



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And of course, **Sandy Briglio, of Briglio Insurance Group**, held my hand through the process of insurance claims on my wrecked car and insuring my new one. His office is right up the street and he is always there to help Hillcresters with homeowner's and auto insurance. His company motto is, Do the right thing by the customer and everything else takes care of itself."



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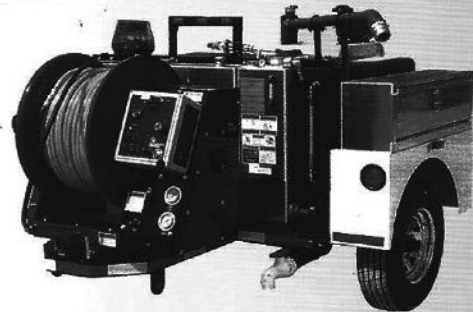
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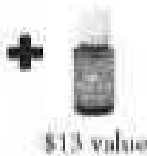


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## THIEVES

Once upon a time ready-made household cleaning supplies were not available in stores. Natural cleaning methods were the norm. There is a good chance that most of the toxins we are exposed to today come from cleaning supplies. The Sun Sentinel had a great article about how to make natural cleaning products complete with formulas (many involving dish soap, vinegar, alcohol and baking soda) for cleaning tile floors, oven racks, granite counters, toilet bowls, shower doors as well as mildew removers and furniture polish. None of them smell great and they take some elbow grease to use, but they are effective and non-toxic. For a copy send me an email at [inside.hillcrest@comcast.net](mailto:inside.hillcrest@comcast.net).

Cheryl Ductor (see her ad on page 9) has been using all natural products for years from personal hygiene products to household cleaners. I had bought the introductory kit with the diffuser and they are beyond wonderful. I use the lemon oil to polish wood furniture and pre-soak seafood! Copaiba and Frankincense are two of the skin oils that smell and feel good while moisturizing skin. Panaway is our runaway favorite for personal use. Aches and pains seem to be more common these days and Panaway works better than any store bought topical pain reliever I have ever tried. AND it smells amazing. A few drops are powerful for a sore knee or shoulder or we mix it with pure coconut oil for back massages. We found out it works best used before bedtime so it has time to work while the body is at rest.

The diffuser keeps the air in our bedroom fresh and some of the oils (R.C. and Eucalyptus) seem to actually help us breathe better. I like the starter kit because there are so many options. Digeze helps digestion and relieves gas. The Lavender and Peppermint I give to people with migraines and then found out from one friend

## HOW TO HANDLE A WOMAN:

There are only two ways to handle a woman; and nobody knows either one. This puts the guys we love in a bad position every so often so here is a basic primer for men. You don't have to understand us, just do the following and you will be fine... most of the time. And none of these need to be done in front of your friends.

Scenario #1: Your girlfriend/wife is getting ready to go out and makes the remark, "I love (this dress, my hair, this new lipstick color, these shoes...)"

Answer: "Baby, you look gorgeous!"

Scenario #2: You don't seem yourself; you are quieter than usual or demonstrate some other behavior that prompts the question, "Is everything OK?"

Answer: "I'm a little (tired, worried about...)", whatever) but looking at you always makes everything better (hug)."

Scenario #3: She says something negative about her appearance. Answer: Either shut up and don't comment or look puzzled and say "You look great to me; but then again, I'm in love" (big smile).

Scenario #4: You are out at a show, movie, play etc. where there are a lot of gorgeous women on the screen/stage. You are enjoying looking at them.

Answer: Pick one out with the same hair color/length that she has and whisper "Wow, that one looks like you!"

Scenario #5: Your wife/girlfriend is pissed about something and you don't know what.

Answer: This is a 4-step process. Step 1- put your hands on her shoulders and say, "Honey, I hate to see you (upset, unhappy), what's going on?" Step 2 - Stop talking, Step 3- hug her until she stops ranting. If she pushes you away, give her space but stay put. Either way, Step

4 - Look hurt and remain silent.

If it turns out she is made at you about something, add step 5 - get as far away as possible. Don't deny. Don't explain. Keep the hurt look, shut up and scam. It'll blow over.

HOW TO HANDLE A MAN: Boodro's advice is still the best. "Keep the candy store open. Kill the bitch switch. Go into the kitchen and rattle some pots and pans every once in a while."

that it relieved her hot flashes too. Purification is great in the diffuser as well as repelling mosquitos on people and for putting on the paws of cats or dogs to repel fleas. It is so weird how some of these oils work! They are not cheap but a little goes a long way.

Getting back to cleaning: Thieves is my absolute favorite all natural cleaner because it smells AMAZING. Loyal readers will remember it got its name because graverobbers during the plague used it when they were robbing the bodies of the plague victims and never contracted the disease. It is an oil but also can be bought to mix with water for cleaning. Use it once in your bathroom; shower, sink, toilet, etc. and you will never go back to store bought bathroom cleaners. We need to use fragrance free laundry detergent and softeners because the scented ones make me itch so mixing a little Thieves in makes laundry smell great too. I bought the 64-oz. bottle which will last for months so if you want to try it first, (and you are here in Hillcrest) give me a call and I will bring you a sample to try.



# State of The Market - APRIL 2017

A Team Florida believes everyone should #LoveWhereYouLive. Life is too short not to. 2016 was probably the best year to upsize, downsize or stop renting and buy something. 2017 is the next best year. Inventory is a little tighter and interest rates may rise some more but loving where you live is very important not to explore the possibilities. Our home is our haven. If you no longer like how small it is or you don't like the work that goes into maintaining a big house, or even if you no longer like WHERE you live, this is the year to do something about it. And of course, if you are renting and want to own, you need to find out what is necessary to make the transition.

In any case, your final decision must make financial and logistical sense. That is where A Team Florida comes in. We will help you define and weigh your options.

When I bought my condo in bldg. 22, I swore it was my last stop – they would have to carry me out feet first. Then Brian moved in and it was a little cramped for the two of us. But I was still determined never to go through the hassle of moving again. When I saw a condo in bldg. 27 that was remodeled exactly the way I wanted, we tried to remodel ours to look like it. The cost was prohibitive. We ended up buying the larger, remodeled condo and sold ours for \$5000 less in one day! Yes, there were closing and moving expenses but we now Love Where We Live.

I made my son buy a one bedroom condo for 60K in 2013. He just sold it for 95K and the equity has allowed him to make down payment on a 2/2 townhouse. With South Florida's real estate going up faster than the national rate (it was 7.8% last year and projected to be 6.2% this year), he will have enough equity in less than 5 years to buy the 3/2 house with the garage and pool he wants. If he had kept renting, he would never have been able to get this far.

You can't put a price on happiness. If you are not completely thrilled about your living situation, give us a call. It will only take an hour of your time to sit down with us and find out if it makes economic sense to make a move. Give us a call at 954-964-2559 or 8-HILLCREST.



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## A TALE OF TRUE HILLCREST COMMUNITY SPIRIT

*(The author who shared this wonderful story prefers to remain anonymous)*



Early in 2012 at the height of a ravaging crisis of foreclosures, one Hillcrest newly installed president faced a daunting challenge. Only 36 of 42 units were paying maintenance fees; and a New Year's increase had still not been yielding an adequate operating account. A late insurance payment had incurred a \$115.00 fee. The new Board voted a 2d maintenance increase to start

week, one-third of all the residents had sent 3-month payments to the property manager's accounts-receivable.

This wonderfully cooperative, true spirit of community "saved" this Association's budget issues for the year and became the basis for continued beneficial progress over the next few years; thanks also to excellent work & leadership by the Association's attorney.

Like other Hillcrest buildings, ours is blessed to have outstanding, ever-cooperative snowbirds (many of whom are Canadian) who, despite their part-time residency, are always willing to volunteer to help. Indeed, one Canadian couple even paid 4 months in advance.

that May. But with the operating fund still not adequate to pay the April expenses! The president decided to make a quarterly payment up front to help pay the bills.

Volunteering for major money-saving projects has also been a regular benefit for our building and has helped us install safety friction tapes on all the staircases, paint the walkways, stairs and catwalks as well as numerous other necessary projects.

The new president mentioned this to the previous building president. The response was, "I'll make a 3-month payment too and I will also ask some of residents to do the same." Within one

Our building and our community are very fortunate to have such responsible, generous owners who are an inspiration to us all.

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*Continued from Pg.2*

The entire area will be landscaped and there will be hedges along the walls. The impact on the absorption of noise remains to be seen. The new homeowners will be given options for fencing an foliage in their yards for privacy purposes.

Each association will be meeting with the Pulte team when it comes time to establish the gate entrances to the park. Building 1 asked about handicap access for residents who are in wheelchairs. It will be necessary for the individual buildings to provide a concrete path to the gate if that is what they want since that area is owned by the association.

There was a question about the fencing around the community. It will be black aluminum railing like what is now around our pools. The Clubhouses and each phase of the park will be ready before residents move in. Again, the parks will not be open to the residents while construction is going on for obvious safety reasons. As each phase of homebuilding is completed, the park areas will open. The last question was about a roundabout on 52nd avenue and this has not yet been finalized as it is up to the City.

We again thank the Pulte Group for their candor and willingness to meet with the Hillcrest Leadership whenever they have some progress to report.



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# The Kitchen Korner

by Cindy Abraham

We do not eat a lot of pasta although we love it. The whole “carb” thing. But occasionally, we find a recipe that is so good, we make an exception. The trick is to cut the pasta part of the recipe in half so there is more topping which is the best part anyway.

This recipe called for 8 oz. of pasta which we cut down to 3 oz. We have the from scratch version and the cheater version (the easy way). The best way to buy tomato paste is in the tube so it lasts a long time and you always have it. We used regular half and half. The pasta soaks up most of the sauce so the flavor is perfect. For the cheater version, just buy some bottled Vodka (tomato cream) sauce and use 1 cup of the bottled instead of the sauce recipe below. Makes two servings.

## Shrimp Tomato Cream Pasta



### Ingredients:

3 oz. rotini or fusilli  
 1 TBSP oil  
 1 lb. peeled/deveined medium shrimp  
 Salt and pepper to taste  
 2 garlic cloves, sliced thin  
 2 sliced green onions (set aside the dark green part for garnish)

### Sauce:

¼ cup dry vermouth or white wine  
 ¼ cup chicken broth  
 ¼ cup sun-dried tomatoes (not in oil) sliced thin  
 1/4 cup heavy cream  
 1 TBS tomato paste  
 2 oz. Feta Cheese  
 1/8 cup chopped parsley  
 1/8 cup chopped fresh basil

Boil the pasta al dente, drain and set aside. Heat oil in a large skillet and sprinkle shrimp with salt and pepper. Cook until slightly done. Transfer shrimp to a large bowl. Sauté the garlic



with white and light green sliced onions for about 2 minutes and transfer to bowl with shrimp. Lower heat and stir in vermouth, cream, tomatoes and tomato paste. Bring to a boil and then lower to medium. Stir until reduced by half. Add pasta, shrimp mixture, feta cheese, parsley and basil. Turn off heat and stir well for 1 minute. Serve topped with dark green onions.

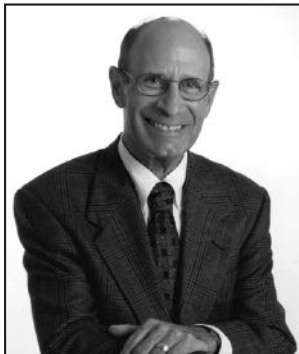
Brian mentioned that there was a time when Olive Garden had a pear/gorgonzola ravioli dish that he really loved, so I decided to make it. It involved stuffing my own ravioli with cream cheese, diced pears and crumbled gorgonzola so I went to Mimi's on Johnson Street to buy some pasta sheets. That end of Johnson street has THREE great stores: Discount Liquor, Gino's Italian Market and Mimi's. Always hit all three. We love Oscar at Discount Liquors and of course, Gino and Anthony run the best family owned Italian market around (they even have Muffuletta sauce).

Mimi's is also family owned and it is always fun to shop there. Their specialty is ready made Italian dishes. They make you feel like part of the family whether they know you or not and they seem to know almost everyone's name. Frankie, one of the sons (the other is Anthony and Mamma mans the cash register) was willing to make the pasta sheets for us but when he found out what we were making, he suggested we buy Mimi's homemade Pear & Cheese Fiocchetti and top it with the tomato cream sauce (above recipe) with gorgonzola instead of Feta. Fiocchettis look like little pouches. The result was DELICIOUS and super easy. All we did was boil the pasta and melt gorgonzola cheese in Mimi's Vodka sauce and Voila!

The second time we made it, Bravo Market sells thin chicken strips so we cooked them up and added them to the recipe with leftover snap peas and it was even better.



## April 2017 Report - Commissioner Dick Blattner



Prior to his election as Mayor, Josh Levy and I were having coffee and I asked him what he thought of the city's workshops for Commissioners. He had no idea, so we talked about them. Immediately following the election, Josh supported my recommendations to set aside two hours prior to the second Commission meeting each month for workshops. This got unanimous support, so on March 15 we had two.

### Workshop #1: Illegal Conversions

This was conducted by Code Director John Chidsey, who described a new organization structure for our city's code, along with new procedures to identify illegal conversions and amnesty provisions to encourage resolution of these violations. The initial focus will be on multi-family properties. John is doing a great job and the presentation was a hit with Commissioners.

Workshop #2: 441 Corridor. Assistant City Manager Gus Zambrano brought us up-to-date on the status of the zoning re-write for the State Road 7 corridor. While this was a comprehensive report on one of the most important economic development issues we face, I must say there is some confusion here that must be cleared up, especially because Phase 1, from the Dade County line to Fillmore, is due to be completed by the end of 2018, so we are running out of time.

### CRA/COMMISSION ACTIONS

**Selected** five engineering firms to provide professional services on a rotating basis for coastal engineering services.

**Approved** \$359,000 contract for sewer improvements in an alley between 22 and 26 Avenues, south of Hollywood Blvd.

**Passed** resolutions and ordinances related to dumpster enclosures throughout the city. Up to now, enclosures were required only on the beach and downtown.

**Passed** a resolution in support of the City of Hollywood Sustainability Action Plan.

**Passed** legislation restoring compensation for Mayor and Commissioners based on reductions and a freeze imposed during Financial Urgency, and set future increases tied to the same changes that would apply to General Employees.

**Heard a presentation** on outstanding Requests for Proposals (RFP's) issued in 2016. This is still a wait and see...not happy about that. These projects should have been underway by this time.

**Accepted a grant** for \$150,000 from the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for improved lighting in the Liberia Community. Thanks to former State Senator Sobel and Representative Jones for their help.

**Appointed** 13 members to the Charter Review Committee, who will spend the next year studying our City's Charter and making recommendations.

### OTHER STUFF

Planning and Development Board approved variances allowing the installation of athletic field lighting at Chaminade High School.

Technical Advisory Board accepted an application for a collision repair center at Washington and 441. We're trying to improve the appearance of the corridor and this large auto repair business does not accomplish that. I strongly oppose this project and will fight to have that application rejected.

This board also heard a presentation from a company wanting to establish an extreme sports park on the old Sunset Golf Course. The nearby community is seriously opposed to this project. I don't see this happening.

### Up, Up & Away!

Happy to have attended the ribbon cutting on the 21st floor of Hollywood Circle, the big building going up on Young Circle. The views are spectacular (NOTE: I am aware of eight other projects along the Circle that could develop over the next few years). Some people are skeptical about whether projects like this are what should be built on the Circle, but it is transformative and, really, the best way to revitalize our downtown.

### On the Road Again

Attended the Strong Cities conference in Tulsa last week (accompanied by Greg Stuart, Executive Director of the Broward MPO), a movement encouraging organic growth and smart planning to make cities more user friendly and walkable, and communities more connected. Strong Cities opposes urban sprawl.

### While we're on the Subject...

Very happy to represent the Broward MPO in celebrating the Miami MPO's 40th Anniversary. I must admit, I have not been in downtown Miami for a long time. It is an amazing city, especially from the 38th floor! I thought I was in New York, San Francisco...or Hong Kong.

After talking to several people about jobs, I now know there is a shortage of workers in the building trades and hospitality fields. What are you experiencing? I'd like to know.

In an exciting meeting, I met with two key people from All Aboard Florida (and it's parent company), to talk about Tri-Rail Coastal Link, the long-awaited, proposed passenger rail service on the FEC tracks along Dixie Highway. They are seriously interested in developing at that site, but must wait for the County to step up and pay the current access fees required (Editor's Note: my editorial in Friday's Sun Sentinel was on this very subject.)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### CRA and Commission meetings Wednesday April 5.

Fiscal Retreat Thursday April 6, 10 - 12:30. This IS a MUST see for anyone concerned about our city's financial health. This is where we will set priorities for 2018. Open to all.

#### Pension Workshop April 19

For those following my literary taste, reading *The Orphan Masters Son*, a Pulitzer prize winner, and highly recommended by my son. Very powerful, well written story about North Korea. If there is a kernel of truth here, it is worse (condition-wise) than we could imagine.

Movie I enjoyed (since our last visit).

*Land of Mine*, which was at Cinema Paradiso. If still there, a must see.

#### Holy Holidays

Passover and Easter rapidly approaching. Celebrate the holiday your choose with your family.

#### Welcome to spring!

# SWEET TOMATOES, OAKWOOD PLAZA - *Michael Killeen*



Too much of a good thing? I will very rarely do a review on chain restaurants as I like to patronize self-made establishments and great home cooking. **Sweet Tomatoes** chain is an all you can eat veggie buffet that has a homemade recipe touch and a delicious variety of healthy foods made from scratch. Therefore, I will make an exception in favor of Sweet Tomatoes because I love this place. In addition, seniors get 10%

off their bill and club veggie members (website: [souplantation.com/join-club-veg](http://souplantation.com/join-club-veg)) will get bigger discounts and weekly savings as well as five dollars off just for signing up.



Upon entering sweet tomatoes, you might feel like you are in the lunchroom cafeteria at school. While this may be true, don't be discouraged. In fact, do what I do and grab two plates instead of one and dig in to the locally grown family farm fresh salads and veggies that taste so great that one plate is not enough.

Accordingly, there is over 45 fresh items on the first salad bar that you tackle when walking towards the cashier. The multiple colors from the radishes, carrots, beets, red and green cabbage among dozens of other items will beautify your plates. The salad and veggies here are so fresh I use little to no dressing although there is over six delicious dressings to choose from. Equally important, don't forget to try the tuna tarragon which has been my favorite for many years. Then, there are more stations of delicious and fresh homemade foods to try after this.

Next, after payment you will find a seat in the modest dining room filled with booths and tables. Similarly, it reminds me of school lunch settings with close tables but without the unpleasant school fare. Nearby, there is a potato station with items such as sour cream & chives and cheese & bacon for a fully loaded baked or sweet potato. Furthermore, eight soups are located enroute to your seats. The chicken noodle is my favorite and on this visit I found out why this might be true. Consequently, 43 years ago Mike and Bill two USC frat boys decided to make pasta. This turned into the Gourmet Fresh Pasta company. Subsequently, they have been providing noodles for Sweet Tomatoes Big Chunk Chicken

Soup for over 20 years for all their 103 restaurants. Likewise, all the other varieties of soups are made fresh from scratch and have similar fresh ingredients. Thus, don't let my favorite soup steer you away from the seven other heavenly soups. The soup flavors change regularly so every time you return here there is something deliciously different to try.

Finally, the next station has plenty of scrumptious baked good as well as three hot pasta dishes. And yes, you can have all you care to eat. The hot pasta station has macaroni and cheese as well as two Italian pasta dishes cooked in small quantities as you watch and they continuously change monthly. Also, they create authentic focaccia very similar to pizza that compliments your pasta. Equally important, fresh bread, corn bread and muffins are always available. Granted, on this day I consumed nearly half a dozen coconut muffins that were out of this world.

As a healthy restaurant, you might ask yourself what about healthy deserts? Well let me tell you, I don't know how healthy they are and don't really care. I love sweets. Frozen soft serve yogurt with toppings, rice pudding, tapioca pudding and fruit round out this over indulgence. Somebody once said "If it's worth doing its worth overdoing!" That is certainly the case here at Sweet Tomatoes. Although healthy, if you dine here often you probably won't lose weight.

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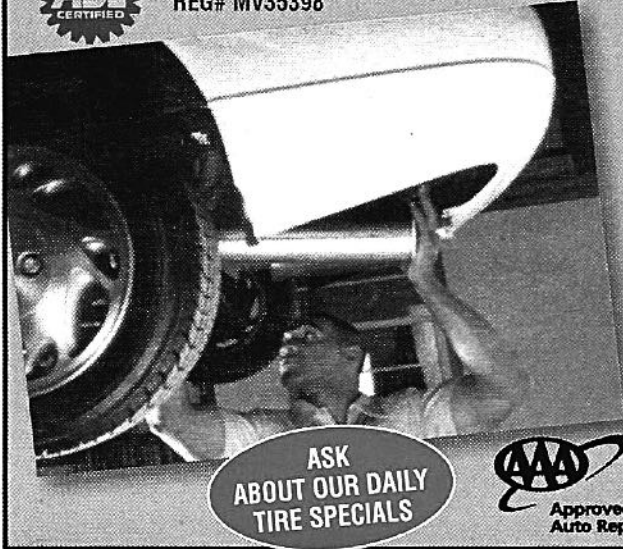


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# Happiness is in Your Hands

By Aruna Ladva Brahma Kumaris London, England – submitted by Etta Stevens

Happiness and sorrow are two very common emotions, yet are they both essential? Some have the notion that to experience happiness you must experience sorrow (in order to know the difference), but is that really so? Or: is it possible to constantly stay in a state of happiness? Or are we so 'comfortable' with, or 'addicted' to our sorrow that life just does not feel complete without a little of it every day?

How many situations do we create each day for ourselves from which we then take sorrow? It could be setting ourselves up for expectations, only to find that the other also has their own set of expectations waiting to be fulfilled! Or, is it that we are wanting the clouds to disappear, or our colleague to be in a better mood, or our favorite football team to win the match before we can feel happy? The list of things that can take away our happiness is endless if we allow it to be. Yet we do exactly that, we wait for the circumstances around us to be the way we want them to be, and only then can we 'be happy'. Or we try to do the impossible and try to control the situations around us, when in fact we need to be controlling ourselves.

What are the reasons why we create sorrow for ourselves?

1) We do it out of habit; we are just accustomed to it. Patterns were formed in early years and we continue to repeat them as adults without giving them a second thought. For example, say in your childhood, you ran to your parents to give them a hug and say good morning to them. But every time they turned you away from far and insisted you first go and brush your teeth. So, the pattern (and hence the sorrow) is that I cannot get love unless I am clean. Later in life, you may feel this way towards your spouse or others.

2) We are comfortable with it. We are stuck in our comfort zones. We call it a 'comfort' zone even though it is uncomfortable, yet it is very familiar and known to us. Anything unknown is likely to be uncomfortable. So, we stay with what we know rather than to delve into the new, where they may be risks and changes involved. It could be the example of an unhappy marriage. One stays in it because to leave would create a lot of uncertainty.

3) We enjoy it. Yes, we sometimes do enjoy our sorrow! It creates drama in our life, we get to become the drama queens, without which life might be boring! So, a little spice and action helps to get through life!

4) We get attention. Like young kids who play tantrums, or like the squeaky wheel that gets oiled, we too feed off our sorrows and get the desired attention. And once we get the attention, it makes us a little bit happy again... for a while!

5) We are addicted. Yes, we are addicted, and all the above fall into this category. Sorrow is like a drug. We get a hit from it, a release of a neurotransmitters that make us feel we are alive.

The most important question might be: Did the sorrow take away my happiness or is it that I lost my happiness, and sorrow set in? Which comes first?

Happiness or bliss is our natural state. We are not naturally sad, nor we do strive to be sad all the time. Hence, sorrow comes and goes like clouds which don't allow the sun of happiness to shine through. So, realize that happiness is there all the time! It is we who either take sorrow from the circumstances, or create sorrow from a situation, causing the happiness to play hide and seek for a while.

Recently a group of about fifty of us were on a remote mountain top, some 2000 miles above sea level. The electricity went off on a few occasions for long stretches of time. We were without light, heat, hot water and all the other comforts that go with it (no phone charge), yet because these meditators had an inner training over time to adapt and accommodate situations, and more importantly had practiced over an extended period of time to not allow anything to take away their happiness, everyone remained calm and cheerful. As they lowered their expectations and heightened their awareness, they remained unperturbed. It became high end camping, and suddenly everyone was in gratitude for what little they did have!

Let us also not take sorrow because of someone else's weaknesses. We become disappointed when someone does not fulfill their promises, we become annoyed ourselves when someone else becomes angry, we become peace-less due to someone else's restlessness. So, who is influencing who here? Surely the positive one needs to 'inspire' the negative one!

It is up to us whether we take sorrow from the situation or not. An interesting video came my way recently. It was comparing the responses of a chief minister of India and PM Modi when both encountered faulty microphones during their speeches. One reacted rudely, while the other remained calm and cool. Which would you rather be? A slave to the circumstances, or a cool king? It's time to take the matter into your own hands and choose HAPPINESS. It is a choice, you know! Look in the mirror of your heart and face and say, "today I choose to be happy, no matter the circumstances". Meditation helps you make this choice. We learn in the practice of meditating every day that we do not need to fall into unhealthy habits of the past but develop positive and grateful habits for our future. Everything is not always how you wanted it to be but it is life's drama and we must accept it or completely lose the good days also. The spiritual path is different for all souls but following your guides you will find the positive affirmations to continue your life in joy.

Free meditation classes are given by the Brahma Kumaris Organization here in Hollywood and Miami. Check the schedule and join any class that is convenient for you to attend. See how your life can change for the better. Meditation has changed my life so it will change yours also, I promise you! It's time... to stay happy no matter what. Happiness is your innate treasure, yes you may share it, but no need to give it away completely!

## *Meditation Schedule*

**Hollywood Library**, 2600 Hollywood Blvd., Every Tues 10:30 am & 6:30 pm.

**Hallandale Beach Library**, 300 S. Federal Hwy. 1st & 3rd Every Sat, 10:30 am

**Carver Ranches Library**, off Pembroke Road and 48th, Every Sat 10:30 am

**Call Roz (954) 962-7447**

All Classes sponsored by Brahma Kumaris are free of charge as a service to our community.

**Brahma Kumaris Hollywood Meditation Group**

## GLOBAL MEDITATION FOR WORLD PEACE Sunday, April 23, 2017 • 6-7:30 pm

Bring a chair and a flashlight, see you there. Meditation at the school is changed to the Church at the corner of Polk and 46th street. Wednesdays at 4-5pm. Watch for something new to be happening in the future!

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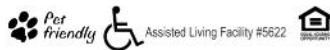


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