

BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION

NEWS

VOL. XIX NO. 1

NEWSLETTER OF THE BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

WINTER 2009

BRICKELL HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION is comprised of condominium association members and associate members representing some 17,500 residents along the Brickell corridor and on Brickell Key from the Miami River to the Rickenbacker Causeway. The purpose of BHA is to communicate common interests more effectively and mobilize support on important issues relating to the quality of life in our neighborhood.

www.brickellhomeowners.com

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Some victories to report on traffic, green space issues

At a time when the news is dominated by the global economic crisis and few glimmers of hope, it is a welcome change of pace to lead this *BHA News* with a few bright spots in our own neighborhood. BHA advocates have seen some progress on key issues and are hopeful the anticipated improvements become real.

First, three improvements along our roadways that BHA residents have been requesting, awaiting or promised for some time:

- ✓ Improved vehicular and pedestrian signalization at 2451 Brickell Avenue. At this intersection accommodating north and southbound Brickell Avenue vehicles and two large condo associations, a southbound left turn arrow was added and the pedestrian signal heads were upgraded to the countdown type. Homeowners in Brickell Townhouse and Brickell Bay Club applauded the improvements for safety and convenience.
- ✓ Pedestrian crossing mast arm and signalization system at the pedestrian crosswalk in front of UTD Towers on the east (1809 Brickell)

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Announcing...FDOT Public Meeting

Brickell Avenue Concrete Pavement Repair and Restoration Project

April 14, 2009, 6:00 p.m.

Miami Science Museum, 3280 S. Miami Avenue

The Brickell Avenue roadway is slated for major repair work from SE 25th Road to SE 5th Street in 2010-2011. This Public Meeting will present details of the Florida Department of Transportation's construction plans, and invite residents to comment and voice their concerns. It is an opportunity to hear directly from FDOT officials, and most importantly, how they will minimize disruption to residents throughout the residential corridor and the Brickell business district during construction. All are urged to attend this public meeting.

A series of previous meetings and discussions have been held over the past two years with FDOT. BHA has advocated for conversion of the roadway to an asphalt surface for a smoother ride and uniform appearance.

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It's been a great ride, and so good to see where we've landed!

It gives me great pleasure to pen this, my final column, as your Brickell Homeowners Association President. I am pleased because I am turning over my responsibilities, and the leadership of our important advocacy organization, to Claudia Bruce, who many of you know as one of our calm yet deliberate — and effective — warriors.

Claudia has led the charge on a number of neighborhood initiatives, working with our NET offices, our Miami Police, officials from Public Works, FDOT...you name it, she has reached out to all of them (whether or not they were readily receptive). Claudia has been a right hand to me for several years now, and knows what it takes to navigate

the roadblocks that we so often encounter in our neighborhood efforts.

I will happily remain involved in a consultancy role whenever called upon, officially elected in February to the chairman of the board position. This undemanding office, as those of you familiar with BHA bylaws know, carries with it no official duties or authority beyond that of any board member. I vow of course, to answer any questions I can and be a resource as the new Executive Committee leads you forward.

Along with Claudia, our very capable Ernesto Cuesta, resident and president of The Metropolitan, continues as BHA Treasurer. Gloria Konsler, vice president of One

Tequesta Point and a great Brickell resource as Brickell Area

Association executive administrator, continues as BHA Secretary. We welcome Larry Imber, president of The Palace, as BHA's new Vice President. Larry has been dogging the issue of the landscaping shortcomings in the Brickell Streetscape project, reminding the City and its contractors that plants, especially newly planted ones, need watering.

BHA executive committee and members of the board will be assisted by Natalie Brown, who has expertly handled all our communications for years and assisted me

Continued on next page

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INFINITY AT BRICKELL

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and the board with whatever we have asked, and without whom BHA would not be what it is today.

It has been a gratifying experience to serve you for all these years, and to witness the transformation and growth of the Brickell residential area. We have watched as Brickell Key developed, welcoming new members from the new luxury condos on one of Miami's most desirable island locations. We saw the last few vacant and underused parcels along Brickell Avenue converted into striking high-rises of magnificent condos. Now, we welcome members from new skyscraping neighbors along Miami River and further north along Brickell, with folks living the urban experience in what was once considered strictly Brickell's "Financial District."

Underscoring the residential growth of our area, when BHA was formed in 1990, we had some 16 condo associations representing 3,000 residential units. Today, the number of residential units in our area, from Miami River to Rickenbacker Causeway, has surpassed 17,500 units. If you project 2.3 residents per unit, the Brickell residential corridor from just Brickell east to Biscayne Bay represents 10% of the official U.S. Census figure (2006) for the total population of the City of Miami. Our newest neighbor associations who want to be part of the collective effort take us from Brickell west to I-95, further increasing the impact of this residential enclave.

For the City of Miami, our area with its upscale and vertical density, should be the most cost effective to

serve. The Brickell community, with its concentration and significant tax contributions, should be more than Miami's Golden Goose. Those of us who live here imagine more of a Golden Gate role—a grand thoroughfare in the heart of the City of Miami running along its sparkling, one-of-a-kind Biscayne Bay.

Many before me—and many more after me, I am certain—will envision Brickell as exemplifying the "magic" we so often hear about associated with our Miami. If BHA continues steadfast on the path we've set forth, marked with involvement and vigilance, it is very possible that we'll all see that destination vision realized. •

*Please note BHA's new mailing address:
P.O. Box 45-2403
Miami, FL 33245-2403*

BHA News is published by the Brickell Homeowners Association to keep neighbors, public officials and others in the community informed of the activities and concerns of its residents. Advertising is accepted on a space-available basis, and BHA reserves the right to accept or reject all advertising. For advertising information or other details, reserve your space at the BHA website (www.brickellhomeowners.com) or write to Communications Director Natalie Brown at nbrown@brickellhomeowners.com. Editorial material and suggestions are also welcome for consideration.

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Traffic, Green space Victories continued from page 1

Avenue) and immanuel Lutheran Church on the west (1770 Brickell Avenue). This plan was promised by FDOT a year ago, but delayed due to “trouble with utilities and finding locations there.” FDOT representative reported in late February that the mast arm should be installed and operational by the end of March. We are still waiting to see installation get underway.

Bridge Curfew Hours

During weekdays, the Brickell, South Miami Avenue and Second Avenue Bridges are to stay in the down position to facilitate vehicular traffic during rush hours. The bridge tenders are to raise the bridge for ships being towed and tugs only, and not for other vessels during these “curfew” hours:

- 7:30-9:30 a.m.
- 12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.
- 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Residents are urged to call the Coast Guard Bridge Division, 305-415-6734, (6 a.m.-2:30 p.m.) if curfew violated.

✓ Advanced Warning System for the Brickell Avenue Bridge. This project is designed to provide motorists with advanced notification when the Brickell Avenue Bridge is in the up or “open” position. Drivers can then seek an alternative route via one block west on South Miami Avenue with its higher bridge over the Miami River, thus, avoiding the lengthy traffic tie-ups so often associated with the Brickell Bridge’s openings.

This last project has been discussed for many years. Residents, Downtown workers and others are often trapped in vehicular gridlock when the Brickell Bridge is raised.

Warning signs are to be installed at four locations along Brickell Avenue as well as SE 8th Street: Brickell Avenue at SE 15th Road, SE 13th Street (Coral Way) and SE 10th Street, and on SE 8th Street westbound, east of Brickell Bay Drive. BHA Directors advised FDOT to

consider adding a warning sign further south on Brickell Avenue to provide one more outlet before coming upon the bridge.

Installation of the warning signs which are solar-powered, stand-alone units that receive a wireless signal from the bridge, should be easy.

Project Engineer Don Avery explained, “The most disruptive part is installing a two-foot diameter pole in the ground. It’s solar powered, so there’s not a lot of underground trenching or conduit work.” Work is slated to begin in late March and take 112 days to complete at a cost of \$340,000, according to FDOT documents. There may be lane closures during non-rush hours during the day and overnight. “At least one lane will remain open in both directions and access to bus stop locations, residence and businesses will be maintained at all times,” FDOT promises.

Green space continued next page

Brickell Pavement Project continued from page 1

With all but some 3% of FDOT roadways asphalt as opposed to concrete as is Brickell Avenue, it seemed a logical choice. Plus, many residents recall the concrete repair project in the 1990s that had disappointing results. The road got its patchwork look then, and the ride did not quiet down.

However, FDOT has decided, due to time, expense and other factors, that Brickell Avenue (also U.S. Highway 1) must remain concrete. The project will entail repairing and replacing the existing concrete slabs rather than redoing it completely. Advances in diamond grinding, we are promised, will greatly improve the ride of the roadway and make Brickell Avenue more uniform. •

Brickell Avenue Repair & Restoration Project - From FDOT—

“The purpose of the Brickell Avenue Project is as follows:

- Repairing existing concrete pavement to meet FDOT standards
- Diamond grinding to improve the riding surface of the existing concrete pavement
- Improving drainage problems by installing a new pump station and deep wells at the intersection of SE 13th Street/Coral Way/Brickell Avenue
- Repairing sidewalks, curbs and gutters as needed from SE 25th Road to SE 5th Street [See related Sidewalk article, page 6.]
- Milling and resurfacing existing asphalt pavement from just west of SE 8th Street to SE 5th Street.
- Adding left turn lanes along SE 15 Road at the intersection of Brickell Avenue; new signals at this location
- Upgrading existing lighting from SE 15th Road to SE 5th Street
- New signage and pavement markings from SE 25th Road to SE 5th Street
- Pedestrian ramp improvements to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act
- New decorative pedestrian crosswalks at several intersections”

No, we're not talking improved financial returns, but rather some new public green space on the horizon. Through an unusual public-private partnership, private land will be converted into a public park and turned over to the residents of Miami for their use for a limited time. City of Miami District 2 Commissioner Marc Sarnoff conceived the plan with Developer Tibor Hollo to create a temporary public park on a vacant construction site at 1201 Brickell Bay Drive.

"With the sluggish real estate market, Mr. Hollo says he'd rather lease the 2-acre property to the city for \$1 per year for use as a park, rather than allowing the land to remain vacant until the markets improve," Commissioner Sarnoff said.

"Miamians deserve more green space and I'm hopeful that Villa Magna Park will serve as a catalyst to transform similar vacant properties around the city into beautiful parks which our residents can enjoy," said Commissioner Marc Sarnoff. "Our Mayor and City Manager are committed to making these parks a reality and we are grateful to Mr. Hollo for his outside-the-box thinking and generosity."

Particulars are being settled, but according to preliminary plans Tibor Hollo would build pathways and park benches on the site, while the City would cover insurance and landscaping costs.

"We expect the matter to go before the City Commission in April, and we're not expecting any objections. Then, hopefully work can begin in May, said David Karsh, spokesman for Commissioner Sarnoff.

This is welcome news as Brickell residents clamor for green space. (See extensive park discussion in Fall 2008 *BHA News*.)

In other park news, a beautiful entrance to Simpson Park was unveiled in December at the northeast corner of the park at Broadway (15th Road) and South Miami Avenue. Decking, signage and landscaping create an inviting entrance, reopening the passageway in the historic coral rock wall. Now funds are needed for staffing and security so the entrance can actually be unlocked and opened. •



The rendering on page 1 shows the site of Villa Magna Park nestled in between high rises. Above, the pedestrian path along Biscayne Bay.

To the right, the rendering shows the park providing something for everyone. The details across the bottom call for a Boardwalk, Hammocks area, Benches, Pergola, Soccer space, a Sand space for volleyball, low plants, Small Kids Area, Dog Area and Entry Pergola.



City Manager Pete Hernandez, Mayor Manny Diaz, Tibor Hollo, Commissioner Marc Sarnoff and Tory Jacobs at the dedication of Villa Magna Park in December.

New Simpson Park entrance at South Miami Avenue and Broadway (15th Road)



“Sidewalks are hazardous, can’t wait,” FDOT Told

There are portions of sidewalks that are so bad, they are dangerous and cannot wait another couple of years for the road project,” BHA President Claudia Bruce told FDOT representatives in February.

Photos document the deteriorated condition of sidewalks on Brickell Avenue. When presented with visual evidence FDOT representatives agreed, and although they had committed to sidewalk refurbishing as part of the roadway construction project, acknowledged that these slabs cannot wait. BHA is standing by for their repair.

Special thanks is extended to FDOT Senior Project Manager Judy Solaun-Gonzalez for her responsiveness to BHA concerns.

Cracked, uneven and missing in places, these photos show the unsightly and unsafe condition of sidewalks in the Brickell neighborhood.



Brickell's Historic Roots



As part of Dade Heritage Days, the public is invited to tour the historic office of pioneer Dr. James Jackson at an Open House hosted by Dade Heritage Trust on Friday, April 17th from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Student art and photography depicting Miami's historic landmarks will be showcased as well.

The one-story white frame house at 190 SE 12th Terrace on the corner of Brickell Bay Drive was built in 1905. Since 1977 it has been the headquarters of the Dade Heritage Trust, a nonprofit historic preservation organization that works to save Miami's architectural and environmental heritage. It is a one-of-a-kind historic jewel surrounded by high rise

**Brickell Neighbors are Invited!
Open House at the
Historic Office of
Miami Pioneer Dr. James Jackson
190 SE 12th Terrace
Friday, April 17, 2009
5:00-7:00 p.m.**

condos and offices. It was damaged by adjoining high-rise construction a few years ago and has been undergoing repairs as well as renovations.

The Student Art and Photography Exhibit is sponsored by Dade Heritage Trust as part of the Trust's two-month-long Dade Heritage Days celebration.

Free tours will be given and refreshments will be served. Visitors are invited to join Dade Heritage Trust that evening and help preserve Miami's historic places. Valet parking for \$5 will be available at Gordon Biersch Brewery Restaurant, which is also offering a 15% discount that evening as part of this Dade Heritage event. •

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Volunteer Profile: BHA Leader Tory Jacobs

By Natalie Brown, BHA Communications Director, News Editor

T. Sinclair Jacobs, known to all as “Tory” and to many as “Mr. Brickell,” has handed over the presidential reigns of BHA after 19 years of serving in the organization’s top office.

“It took me 19 years to find a replacement,” Mr. Jacobs joked at the BHA’s Annual Meeting in February. “But after working with Claudia Bruce in her role as vice president for several years, I know we’ve got the right person for the job. She’s both capable and committed.”

It also took this same nearly two decades for Tory to allow himself to be the feature of a BHA News “Volunteer Profile,” always suggesting others to highlight when this editor has asked for the personal interview.

He finally agreed that it seemed a fitting time to allow me to write an article about the leader behind BHA for so long as he moves from the President role to Chairman of the Board, a position, which he reminds, according to the bylaws, “has no official duties.” As his Communications Director for nearly as long as he’s been BHA president, I also think Tory figured I was as good as any to get the facts straight.

I try to find out what motivates or inspires volunteers to work in what can be thankless jobs, carrying out some pretty time-consuming, non-glamorous duties. For no pay. For little, if any, power or recognition. The most direct way to find out is to simply ask, “Why do you do it?”

For Tory, the reason for 20 years of volunteerism is simple. It’s not outrage over a particular issue. He has no specific ax to grind, no philosophical discord with “the establishment,” societal mores, or even “young kids these days.” In fact, very little gets him noticeably riled

up. His answer is uncomplicated, as unassuming as Tory himself: “There were some issues that had to be addressed, otherwise decisions would be made without the input of those of us who live here. It had to be done...someone had to do it.”

So he has been an advocate for Brickell out of a sense of duty, keeping the focus on the Brickell Homeowners organization, and those individuals of BHA and what they want to see for their neighborhood. Tory believes in the adage that one gets further with honey than vinegar. He also believes one learns more by listening than by speaking. Tracing his path to here and now, it all fits. It all makes Tory.

Tory is unmistakably southern, not having lost his southern drawl or his southern charm. Originally from Atlanta, Georgia, he was born, where else, but on the city’s most prominent roadway, Peachtree Street. His family owned a chain of drug stores, and he grew up in the tony Buckhead area. Tory enjoyed all the mundane yet sublime rites of childhood: boy scouts, summer camp, family fun.

College began at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, followed with a degree from the Emory University School of Business, and soon after graduation, a Naval commission serving aboard ships in the Atlantic, Mediterranean and South Pacific. Tory served in active duty in WWII from 1943 to 1946, which was a time of great adventure, he admits, for young men like him eager to see the world and do good. But it wasn’t without times of dire fear either. More than once he thought he was a goner.

After the war ended, Tory returned to Atlanta, and his career

turned to business. He worked in sales and advertising, eventually landing in New York City and handling large national accounts at BBDO. It was an exciting time for advertising, which was finding a home in the new medium of television during its golden years. New mass audiences appreciated commercials, sponsors and popular game shows like “The \$64,000 Question” where some of Tory’s clients advertised.

In 1976, Tory migrated, as have scores of New Yorkers before and since, to Miami, lured by an attractive job offer. He found he loved the warm climate and all readily available to do.

“In New York, you had to travel to your weekend; in Miami, it’s all outside your door,” he explained.

Tory worked for General Development Corp (a.k.a. GDC), which was the largest community development company in Florida for a time. In 1985, he became his own boss, forming Bankers Financial Corporation, dedicated to managing investments for institutional clients.

Tory’s first home was at 1865 Brickell Avenue, in Brickell Place I. In 1981 he moved to Brickell 25, a 37-unit building on 25th Road overlooking Biscayne Bay, where he still resides. It was here that Tory met Attorney Henry Taylor, who convinced him that residents needed to be proactive rather than reactive, and that a homeowners group of all the neighborhood condo owners could get a lot further at City Hall than just the few of them.

Henry Taylor’s law firm drew up all the legal paperwork needed to form BHA, which was formally incorporated in 1990. Tory was the natural choice as its first president, a job that stuck. Among the early battles were preventing a low-cost hous-

“There were some issues that had to be addressed, otherwise decisions would be made without the input of those of us who live here. It had to be done...someone had to do it.”

ing development on Brickell, reducing jet ski noise and safeguarding against commercial encroachment.

Tory still works, connecting ambitious entrepreneurs with the right franchise to match their goals. Even as an octogenarian, he keeps working, he said, because he enjoys it, it keeps him young, and also, he half-jokes, to “maintain the standard of living to which I’ve grown accustomed.”

That standard includes fine wine and food and at least once-a-year travel to a far-off destination, along with his partner of 23 years, Jo Ann O’Neill. They count more countries visited together than the many years they’ve been a couple, with their most recent “journey of discovery” a cruise of the Danube, with stops in most of the 10 countries bordering it.

Fittingly, Tory has long been a member of the International Food & Wine Society, having served on its board of governors. He was a member and officer of the Committee of 100, Miami Beach’s group of prominent community leaders begun in 1925 by Northern and Midwestern industrialists making their winter home in Miami. No longer filling the power void it once found in South Florida, the organization now meets as a subgroup of the Historical Museum of Southern Florida, keeper of its rich archives.

Tory has long been a box holder for the annual Sony Ericsson Open on Key Biscayne since back when it was the Lipton. A tennis player himself, he enjoys as many of the match-

es as his schedule will allow. He is active in the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce as a Trustee, representing BHA on the New World Center Committee. He serves on the “MOV’N” Traffic Task Force sponsored by the county, and is in regular communication with public officials to resolve concerns important to the neighborhood. He stays with issues on behalf of BHA as long as it takes, some never-ending and some resolved, only to later resurface in need of re-fixing. Some never get satisfactorily resolved.

Tory and other Brickell residents formed the Brickell Neighborhood Political Action Committee in 1997 to address ongoing situations where the will and rights of neighbors were ignored. (Remember “Sly-Gate,” union meetings on Brickell and the proposed “health clinic”?)

“The PAC could give representation for many residents of the Brickell neighborhood who were certainly stakeholders, but were not eligible to vote due to citizenship,” Tory recounts. With a mission to support causes and candidates that align with Brickell neighborhood concerns, through PAC endorsements and financial contributions, “those residents could have a voice.”

The PAC did prove to be more effective getting the attention of City Hall, and continues its work when important elections or issues come before Brickell voters. It will be active no doubt, in the upcoming mayoral race for City of Miami.

The most troubling part of his experience as a volunteer advocate for the neighborhood, Tory said, is the slow, unresponsiveness of City of Miami elected and career personnel who often seem to lack the commitment to get projects done, and done right, in a timely manner. But, always the seeker of balance and



fairness, Tory also recognizes the huge challenge our municipalities and their public officials face in meeting the needs of so many diverse constituents.

Overall, for Miami, Tory remains, naturally optimistic. He thinks Miami can overcome her challenges, achieve her potential to be one of the world’s great cities. It’s only a matter of leadership. “Someone has to do it.” •

New BHA President Claudia Bruce

Claudia Bruce has been vice president of BHA for two years and a vocal advocate for the Brickell neighborhood. She is dogging the Brickell Avenue Streetscape and what seems like its never-to-be-completed punch list. She’s after the City and FDOT to do something about the deplorable and dangerous sidewalks before 2011 when they propose to address them. And she’s tracking all the other quality of life, police and safety concerns of BHA, as detailed in stories in this *News*. •



Congratulations and Thank You to Officer Jeff Giordano!

Officer Jeffrey Giordano, a 17-year veteran of City of Miami Police, has served as the Neighborhood Resource Officer for our area since the NET program's inception. He has always been attentive to BHA and our needs. He has received a promotion to Public Information

Officer for the force.

The BHA Board, on behalf of its member residents, extends its thanks and congratulations to Jeff for his professionalism and dedication to public service. We wish him well in his new post.



Officer Jeff Giordano and Chief John Timoney look on as Deputy Chief Frank Fernandez announces our new Neighborhood Resource Officer



Officer Ariel Saud takes over as Brickell's Neighborhood Resource Officer

Jeff's replacement is Officer Ariel Saud, who was introduced to BHA Directors in February by Chief John Timoney, who also paid tribute to Officer Giordano:

"I wanted to stop by and personally thank Jeff. He is one of our best NROs and will be missed. But we will not miss a beat with Officer

Saud."

Chief Timoney also talked about the area's transformation and his commitment: "The changes we've seen in this area in the last six years have been a beautiful sight. It's a great neighborhood and the Police Department is committed to ensuring quality of life here." •

IMPORTANT COMMUNITY CONTACTS

The NET offices are generally residents' first line of contact in resolving neighborhood concerns. The NET office will contact the appropriate department on your behalf, or direct you to the right resource to resolve your issue.

Coral Way NET

Administrator Liza Walton
(305) 329-4750
lwalton@ci.miami.fl.us
(Territory from 15th Road south)

Downtown NET

Administrator Eddie Padilla
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hpadilla@ci.miami.fl.us
(Territory north of 15th Road)

City of Miami Police

Officer Ariel Saud
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Miami (305) 535-5485
gelber.dan.web@flsenate.gov

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Dist. 107: Rep. Luis Garcia, Jr.
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Miami (305) 325-2501
luis.garcia@myfloridahouse.gov

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D.C. (202) 224-5274
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CORNERSTONES OF FAITH

The Shul of Downtown and Brickell

Ancient tradition finds home in the heart of modern Miami

By Donna DeCarlo

They're a short walk from your condo or office. No membership is required, and there are no dues. A new Brickell spa or private dance club? No, it's two houses of worship: The Shul of Downtown and The Shul of Brickell.

The Shul, (Yiddish word for synagogue), strives to be a welcoming place for strengthening Jewish identity and heritage and is open to all, Rabbi Chaim Lipskar, explained. With a location on Flagler Street in the heart of Downtown, aka the Central Business District, and a location on Brickell, these Shuls reach out to a unique urban mix of Brickell and Downtown residents, as well as those who work in Downtown Miami.

"There is something for everyone and for every age group" said Rabbi Lipskar. "At the Shul on Brickell, everyone is family. Our Shul is for Conservative, Reform, Orthodox, the Non-Affiliated—any Jew who moves," quipped Rabbi Lipskar.

Urban Jews find the inclusive atmosphere of the Shul of Downtown inviting, and take advantage of the variety of creative programs and services sponsored by the Shul to encompass the religious, social and cultural needs of the congregation, he said.

Shabbat dinners for single and young professionals 21 to 40 who work or live in Downtown encourage them to join the Young Leadership of Downtown while providing a convenient location and setting to meet and network. With the rental market growing to fill apartments and condos, the area is becoming more available and affordable for

young professionals and families. Monthly community Shabbat dinners feature unique speakers and are open to the entire community of men, women and children.

Another program, The Jewish Women's Circle, has the express purpose to provide "an opportunity for Jewish women to meet new

"...every Jewish person I meet in our area already knows Rabbi Lipskar and holds him the highest regard. He is doing amazing and admirable work."

—Mel Frankel, BHA General Counsel

friends, socialize, and truly discover the power of the Jewish woman through creative activities and workshops." About 100 families regularly participate in Shul services and activities.

The Miami Jewish Legal Society meets at the Shul and offers membership and Continuing Legal Education programs involving monthly luncheon series at different law firms around Downtown and Brickell with panelists of federal and circuit court judges. The most recent series was based on legal ethics. It is the first of its kind in Florida of a comparative law program, Rabbi Lipskar said. He characterizes it as a healthy mix of intellectual exploration and spiritual rejuvenation.

"Rabbi Lipskar is extremely intelligent, down to earth and makes a friend of every person he meets," Brickell resident Mel Frankel said. "His efforts, directed only at fellow



Rabbi Chaim Lipskar

Jewish people, is to bring them back to Judaism and to bring Judaism to every one of us, to the extent that we wish to participate. His congregation is a diverse group of people, including both the young and the older residents of the area. His doors are open to anyone and everyone, including his home on a Friday night and daily at the synagogue, which as you know, is located in an office building. He seems to know everyone, and every Jewish person I meet in our area already knows Rabbi Lipskar and holds him in the highest regard. He is doing amazing and admirable work for our area."

The Shul of Downtown is an Institution of the Lubavitch Rebbe. Chabad-Lubavitch is described as a philosophy, a movement and an organization, considered to be the most dynamic force in Jewish life today with over 3,000 institutions worldwide, according to chabad.org.

The Shul's website is robust for all things Jewish in Miami, including links for visitors and tourists, and lists of Kosher restaurants, stores and bakeries. Check it out at www.JewishDowntown.net. The Shul is also linked into the national Jewish Learning Institute, so you can be sure it's offering some heady, timely Jewish topics in its eight-week programs.

The Shul of Downtown provides

Continued on next page

NEW NEIGHBORS

BHA welcomes two new luxury hotels

BHA welcomes two new luxury hotels in the Brickell area, The Epic Hotel and Residences and The Viceroy. They face each other on opposite shores where the Miami River meets Biscayne Bay.

The Epic, located at 270 Biscayne Boulevard Way, sits on the old site of the Dupont Plaza. The 54-floor hotel has 411 rooms. The residential side includes 342 condominiums. It is sleek, modern and beautiful, with unmatched views of Brickell Avenue and Biscayne Bay.

The Viceroy Miami is located at Icon Brickell, 485 Brickell Avenue, the former site of the Sheraton which was razed in November 2005. Like the Epic, it shares its location with a residential component, in this case the 1,700 units of the Icon condominiums. Located in Tower 3, the Viceroy has 50 floors of 162 rooms.

Viceroy General Manager Florent Gateau is offering Brickell Homeowners Association residents their Preferred Neighbor Rates. "We want to show the community that we are more than just a corporate hotel, and that we are here to serve as an amenity to the community."

Mr. Gateau encourages Brickell area residents to

enjoy the services they provide for the residents at Icon at Brickell including their signature restaurant on the 15th floor plus, with a "Very Viceroy" membership, use of the fitness center, spa facilities and access to Club 50.

The Epic Hotel hosted a recent BHA Board meeting, showcasing their food and beverage services and exemplary service. BHA wishes both venues well. •



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Continued from previous page

an afternoon prayer service (MINCHA) at the Flagler Station Mall, 3rd Floor, Monday to Thursday at 2:00 pm. Friday night services are at 6:30 p.m. and Shabbat morning services at 10:00 a.m. Both services are held at the Brickell location and are followed by a Kiddush.

The Downtown Shul's two locations: the Flagler location at 48 E. Flagler St, Suite 363 and the Brickell location at 1101 Brickell Ave., North Tower, 2nd Floor. Rabbi Chaim Lipskar can be reached at (305) 373-8303, or reach him online through the website. •

Cornerstones of Faith is an occasional series by BHA News Contributor Donna DeCarlo on the Brickell area's houses of worship.

Houses of Worship Services in Brickell Area

Beth David Congregation

2625 SW Third Ave. • (305) 854-3911

Daily minyan 7:30 am & 5:30 pm; Saturday 9:30 am
Sunday 8 am and 5:30 pm

Christ Fellowship

500 NE 1st Ave. • (305) 379-4781

Sunday 11:00 am

First Presbyterian Church

609 Brickell Ave. • (305) 371-3439

Sunday 11:00 am

Gesu Catholic Church

118 NE 2nd Street • (305) 379-1424

Daily & Sunday Mass various times in English and Spanish; Saturday 4:00 pm (English)

Immanuel Lutheran Church

1770 Brickell Ave. • (305) 854-0840

Sunday 11:00 am

The Shul of Downtown & Brickell

1101 Brickell Ave., 2nd Floor, North Tower
(305) 373-8303

Friday night 6:30 pm; Saturday 10:00 am

Temple Israel

137 NE 19th St. • (305) 573-5900

www.templeisrael.net

Shabbat Services: Friday 7:00 pm and 7:30 pm

Saturday Shabbat Study and Morning Services:
Torah Tykes, 9:30 am; Service 9:45 to 12 noon

St. Jude Melkite Catholic Church

126 SE 15th Road • (305) 856-1500

Saturday Vigil 5:00 pm (English), 6:00 pm (Spanish);
Sunday 9:30 am (English), 11:00 am (English/
Arabic), 1:30 pm (Spanish)

St. Kieran Catholic Church

3605 South Miami Avenue

Daily and Sunday Mass various times in English
and Spanish; Saturday 5:00 p.m.

Tots, strollers transform Brickell as families call it home

By Josie Gulliksen

The Brickell area has long been considered a place for singles and couples and not necessarily for families. No visible signs of childhood, no swing sets, playgrounds or parks to be found. But over the past few years, this has been changing.

Strollers are now part of the makeup along Brickell Avenue, along with joggers, bikers and rollerbladers. You can't help but notice the difference if you've lived in the area for more than a few years. Most are welcoming the change and are making adjustments in their condominiums.

Diana Puentes, property manager, and Ernesto Cuesta, board president, both of The Metropolitan at 2475 Brickell Avenue, are spearheading efforts at their building and in the Brickell area to accommodate new families.

Puentes recalls in 2005 when she arrived at The Metropolitan there were no kids, and it seemed like those couples that had children were moving out. In the past year and half however, she says that has changed.

"We now have between 15 and 17 kids in the building" she said. "One couple just had twins and are now looking to stay but move into a two-bedroom unit."

The Metropolitan hosts activities for their child-residents, including holiday parties.

One stumbling block Puentes has run into is getting a playground built at The Metropolitan, "something I've been endeavoring to achieve but has been difficult," she said. So one alternative she's found is using the media room and multi-function room in the building to host movie nights for the youngsters.

Along with changes for families at The Metropolitan Ernesto Cuesta, also BHA's Treasurer, is fighting to get a park built in the Brickell area, to "green up Brickell" as he says. He has also advocated to the Florida Department of Transportation for an overpass from Brickell to cross the Rickenbacker Causeway so Brickell's children could safely access and enjoy Alice Wainwright Park. The department's response was less than enthusiastic and they recommended pedestrians cross three streets in a circuitous route to the Park (see Fall 2008 *BHA News*.) Not too safe for moms and tots. Cuesta recalls FDOT telling the BHA that the project was too costly. He has however, not lost hope and continues the search for green space.

"There are a couple of options including the end of 25th Road where there is a small section for perhaps a park. There are some other spots we are researching," Cuesta

said. "We need to take a stand to ensure green spaces around Brickell."

"The demographics on Brickell Avenue have changed enormously since 2001 and we have seen that change in the fact that unit owners in Brickell are not singles anymore, they are families," said Cuesta. "Before 2001, couples starting families would move from Brickell and buy a home elsewhere."

And he says this movement has less to do with the current economic environment and more with residents enjoying the convenience of having a fitness center and other amenities housed in their building.

Another Brickell resident taking notice of the changes is Ron Rogers, a 12-year resident of Brickell Key I, who has noticed families crossing over the bridge to utilize their park.

"Where it was once part-time South Americans it is now definitely many more families in the area," Rogers said. •



When Santa travels to Brickell Avenue, of course his ride is a convertible, as shown here in this holiday photo courtesy of The Metropolitan

CANINE COURTESY Residents Urge Program Encore

BHA's Canine Courtesy Program was launched in fall 2007 in partnership with Miami Police, Officer Jeff Giordano and NET Administrator Liza Walton. The program combined education and enforcement. BHA funded off-duty police officers who monitored the neighborhood on foot, passing out informational flyers and citing those residents who did not comply. Liza Walton led the outreach and communications to building and property managers in the area so they could help spread the word and raise awareness that owners are required to pick up after their dogs.

The program was successful in educating residents, most felt at the time. The officers who worked the shift (not really a popular off-duty gig), reported people changing their ways and being aware that there was a "police presence" on the matter. The officers watched dog owners notice the off-duty cop, and find "whatever" to pick up after their pooping pet.

The real human trick, of course, is to get this behavior on a regular, unmonitored basis.

BHA is funding the program again in 2009. Dog owners with pooping pooches: Don't forget your doggie bag! •



ATTENTION BRICKELL RESIDENTS!

The Brickell Homeowner's Association is currently working with the Miami Police Department to immediately begin enforcing Canine Courtesy in Brickell.

Please leash and pick up after your dog.
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Pet waste is unsightly, un-neighborly and it transmits disease.

Miami Dade County Ordinance states that it is unlawful for any person to not immediately remove and dispose of any fecal matter deposited by a dog on private or public property. This includes sidewalks, swales, and condominium lawns. **Any person violating this ordinance shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and may be ARRESTED OR FINED up to \$500.**



On the Web:

brickellhomeowners.com

for the latest news, links, listings

An advertisement for daruma workshop salon & spa. The word 'daruma' is written in a large, lowercase, sans-serif font. Below it, 'workshop salon & spa' is written in a smaller, lowercase, sans-serif font. The background is dark with light text. Below the text, there is a white box containing the slogan and contact information.

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