



# Palm Beach County Planning Congress

Newsletter - Vol. 27, No. 6

November 2003

## PALM BEACH COUNTY PLANNING CONGRESS, MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



**Vicki Silver, AICP**

Sole Proprietor,  
Planning, Project Management &  
Grant Writing

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*Members are encouraged to submit news for the Newsletter by 5pm, the first Monday of each month to [scoughan@sfwmd.gov](mailto:scoughan@sfwmd.gov)*

## THIS MONTH'S PROGRAM

### PBCPC Annual Holiday Party

An Evening at Brogues Irish Pub

"K" st. and Lake Ave., Downtown Lake Worth

Sunday, December 7th, time (6:30 – 11:00 pm)

Through special engagement by the Planning Congress, we will have the newly opened "Banshee Room" all to ourselves for some festive holiday fun and frolic, with the lilting Irish tunes of Brogue's own house band. A sumptuous buffet dinner will be served including Connemara Chicken, Irish Stew and Shepard's Pie, along with salad, home made Irish bread, desserts, and choice of beverage (soda, coffee, etc.). The price of admission includes a specially prepared fruit and cheese appetizer and two drink tickets for your choice of beer, wine or mixed drinks - after that you're on your own. Don't forget to pick a "designated driver"!

For *game time*, prepare a "little known fact" that people would be interested in knowing about you. Be ready to add it to a list of everyone else's "little known facts." The fun starts when you try to match the facts with those in attendance. Prizes for those who come up with the most correct attributions. Plan to stay for the unveiling!

We will also be announcing the Winner of our Logo Design Contest and electing our slate of Officers and Board Members for the coming year. Let the Nominating Committee know if you're interested in serving or want to recommend someone. See the announcements elsewhere in the newsletter for contact names, phone numbers and email addresses.

**Cost: Members & Significant Other: \$20 per person; Non-members: \$25 per person**

**Please RSVP by noon, Thursday, December 4th, to Dave Flinchum at (561)233-5230 or [dflinchu@co.palm-beach.fl.us](mailto:dflinchu@co.palm-beach.fl.us) with the names of those in your party, a contact phone number, and your "little known fact" if you've figured it out.**

Speaking of driving, here's how to get Brogue's -

**From the North:** Take the 10th Avenue North Exit from I-95 and head east to Dixie Highway. Turn right and go south to Lake Avenue (one way east)

and turn left. Take your first right onto "J" Street and then take the next left onto 1st Avenue South. Turn left onto the next street ("K" Street). There's a parking lot immediately on your left or on-street parking any where in the vicinity in the downtown. Brogue's is on the east side of "K" Street, right across from the parking lot.

***From the South:*** Take the 6th Avenue South Exit from I-95 and head east to Dixie Highway. Turn left and go north to Lake Avenue (one way east) and turn right. Take your first right onto "J" Street and then take the next left at 1st Avenue South. Turn left onto the next street ("K" Street). There's a parking lot immediately on your left or on-street parking any where in the vicinity in the downtown. Brogue's is on the east side of "K" Street, right across from the parking lot.

There is also a smaller lot right behind the restaurant you can use if space is available. Our own special entrance to the "Banshee Room" is on the west side of the building. Look for the familiar "rosy-cheeked" faces of your fellow Planning Congress members coming and going in all their holiday finery!

***Come - have fun - and help us initiate a new location in grand Planning Congress fashion!***

***The Official 2003 Planning Congress Kris Kringle Jingle!***  
***By Wes Blackman***

In downtown Lake Worth there's a pub  
Where planners will come for good grub  
Is it Irish? You bet.  
Best food we've found yet  
Come down to the new Brogue's Irish Pub.

Don't worry about the worldly ills  
Sick or tired? Swallow three pills  
Bring a friend, it don't matter  
Not a member? It'll add chatter  
Bring'em each down for twenty five bills.

Grab your boyfriend or girlfriend real quick  
Cause you just might miss good ol' St. Nick  
So mark down 12/7  
It's our slice of heaven  
To eat, drink, be merry - our shtick!

Parking you ask? Real great!  
All the planners say it's "Top Rate"  
Right across ol' K Street  
There's a lot. It's real neat!  
Make plans now - so you won't be late!

You're lookin' for a group that's nice  
A restaurant that has no mice  
You're a member? Twenty bucks  
A significant other? Aw shucks  
We'll let them in for the same price

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## **NEW MEMBERS**

***WELCOME! to the following new/renewing members since our September Newsletter...***

Rene Guerra, Centex Homes; Ray Liberti, WPB City Commissioner; and Robert Muchel, Coldwell Banker.

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# PBCPC 2004 Board Nominations

It's that time of year again to look at our schedules and polish off the ol' volunteer spirit. Is this the year you will set our eyes on one of those coveted PBCPC Board Member seats. If you can dedicate one evening per month to meet with fellow PBCPC Board Members and help plan our events for 2004 it's time to toss your hat in the ring. Email your nominations to Wes Blackman at wesblackman@earthlink.net or Aime Craig-Carson at 561-536-1025 or acraigcarlson@centexhomes.com or Dave Flinchum at 233-5230 or dflinchu@co.palm-beach.fl.us

## EVERGLADES AGRICULTURAL AREA TOUR

The Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) tour on Saturday, November 15<sup>th</sup>, was an excellent opportunity for Planning Congress members and guests to meet local agricultural owners and operators and discuss the challenges of local agricultural production. Coincidentally, the keynote speakers at the 2003 American Planning Association National Conference in Denver, Colorado stated that food quality and distribution will become the #1 problem and concern of the United States in the future. While Palm Beach County is Florida's #1 agricultural county, our EAA tour leaders noted that many of the products grown locally are not consumed locally. Crops such as sugar, radishes, corn, rice, sod, and beans are often exported to other geographic regions along the Atlantic Seaboard, even other countries.

Fortified with coffee, juice, Dunkin Donuts, and fruit, we headed out SR 80 from the Palm Beach County Planning, Zoning & Building Department offices at I-95 and Southern Boulevard, past 20 Mile Bend, to the turn at SR 880, the entrance to the Glades. At our first stop, we were met by **Modesto Ulloa, Director of Farming Operations, Sugar Farms Cooperative (SFC)** where we had an opportunity to taste freshly pressed and iced sugarcane nectar while learning more about sugar cane farming operations in the EAA. From there we stopped at a newly planted sugar cane field (which is planted with cane stock, not seeds) on our way to an USDA Outfield Test site where several varieties of sugarcane were being grown and evaluated. Planting is one of the few sugar cane growing processes that has not been mechanized and is still done by hand since mechanized planting can result in over-sowing, poor seed germination, and financial losses.

While at the USDA site, we were able to observe first hand some of the differences between the varieties of sugar cane being tested. Mr. Ulloa explained the importance of naturally diversified germ plasma that is used to seed muck grown sugarcane. Collections of disease resistant and cold tolerant germ plasma are primarily sought from India, Barbados and New Guinea. Generally, the highest quality germ plasma are those germ strains that are closest to native origin. Out of a possible 120,000 varieties of sugarcane, only 8 -10,000 varieties are ultimately determined to be best suited for use in the EAA. Cane suitability criteria are based on cold tolerance, stubbing ability, sweetness and sugar / fiber content. USDA Canal Point scientists and growers collaborate to ensure that the test plots result in the best local seed adaptations that are exactly matched to local soil type. Muck grown germ plasma is also exported abroad to developing countries in an effort to support better production yields.

The next stop on the tour was a field where radishes are grown as one of the rotation crops from sugar cane. There we got to see one of the large mechanical harvesting machines in action, plucking radishes efficiently from long rows. It was amazing to watch the radishes being scooped up from the ground, green stems chopped off, as they were being launched into a large "wagon" behind the harvester in record time! All agreed these were some

### BOARD MEETING

The Planning Congress Board Meeting are held the first Monday of each month, 5:30 - 6:30pm, at the 121<sup>st</sup> Bomb Squadron, Southern Blvd. *Suggestions, comments, and questions* about programs and other items are welcome. Contact our President, Wes Blackman, 308-0364 or wesblackman@earthlink.net.

of the best radishes we'd ever tasted, noticeably hot and tangy!

This was followed by a stop at one of the main pump stations for the SFC where we learned about the Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are used to manage water levels on the various tracts of lands within the Farm so that off-site discharges are minimized. We got a first hand look at one of the water quality sampling / monitoring stations and learned about the water quality treatment and monitoring requirements that the farmers in the EAA must comply with under the EAA Works of the District rules adopted by the South Florida Water Management District.

After leaving the fields, we toured the Sem-chi Rice Products Corporation processing plant where we got a chance to see its Japanese Satake processing equipment in operation. A series of rollers separate hulls from rice, based on weight. This facility efficiently produces rice bran, white rice, and brown rice for sale and rough rice hulls that are eventually recycled back into the black muck.

One of the challenges of local rice production and consumption is that grocers such as Winn Dixie, Thrifty Made, and others are very strict in regulating the quality of the rice they order. In response to consumer demand, local rice production is limited to refined white (rather than the less processed brown variety) and the amount of broken grains are strictly limited. Sem-chi rice is shipped abroad to European and Middle-Eastern countries (and until recently even Iraq and Iran) in addition to local and US markets.

Upon leaving the Rice Mill, we were joined by **Mr. John Fanjul, Manager of the Atlantic Sugar Association (ASA) Sugar Mill**. While we traveled the ASA fields, Mr. Fanjul stated proudly that 'La Granzafra' farm-workers were currently celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> crop! ASA's 2002 - 2003 cane production resulted in 2,274,088 tons of cane and 251,536 tons of refined sugar. In the field, Mr. Fanjul explained the importance of directing and timing controlled burns on plots which typically measure 1 mile-long by 1/2 mile wide. Mechanical cutting to ensure crop freshness immediately follows cane field burning. We then followed the "Florida wagons" that have been used since 1960 to efficiently transport cane over rock roads to the mill. At the mill our bus weighed in at the weigh station, although we were a significantly lighter load than the typical "Florida wagon". Once weighed, the cane is dumped in mechanized bins and cut into 12" billets to avoid rotting that can occur within 13-20 hours following harvest. In the near future, ASA will spend about \$20,000,000 on new, state-of-the-art harvesting equipment that will also replace the old "Florida wagons" and is capable of "floating" on muck soils to avoid compaction.

During this time of year, the Mill operates at full capacity 7 days a week. It was originally designed in 1960 by Cuban-born engineers, according to tropical cane production standards, and has been continually retrofitted over the years with numerous improvements, including digital readout equipment and air scrubbers on its emission stacks. Mr. Fanjul energetically paced our group through a maze of tiered floors and hissing boilers enabling us to view the entire process of turning raw cane to syrup and into its more common granular form. Along the way, we had the opportunity to sample the syrup and the granular forms of sugar. Before leaving the mill complex, we also toured the quality control testing lab.

During the tour, we learned that the primary challenges of growing, refining and selling refined sugar is the protection of rapidly oxidizing muck soils in the EAA, water quality assurance requirements necessitated by the Everglades Forever Act, and prices that drop when countries dump product on the world market. In response to an inquiry about sugar subsidies, we were carefully advised that the price of sugar is "protected in the US, but not subsidized." Another challenge is the recent switch by the soft drink manufacturers in this country from sugar to high fructose for sweetening purposes. Currently mill sugar is used primarily to produce candy and cookies in the USA.

Lunch was held in the old mess hall adjacent to the buildings that were historically used as worker dormitories. The mess hall is still used for large meetings, but the dormitories have been converted to storage areas. Due to the mechanization that has occurred, the number of workers required to harvest the cane has been significantly reduced. We enjoyed a gourmet banquet of tasty appetizers, Spanish Wine, and outstanding Seafood Paella, prepared by ASA Human Resources Director (and Master Chef) Ernesto Priede, who is well known throughout the company for his paella.

For the last leg of our tour, we were joined on the bus by **Rick Roth, Owner of Roth Farms, Inc.**, and a third generation Florida farmer, who led us onto his fields, “the best place to farm in the world.” Along the way, we received a quick, but very informative lesson in the design, excavation and operation of the farm’s surface water management (SWM) system (commonly referred to as drainage systems in the past, less sophisticated days of water management). Now, on-site SWM systems are managed to conserve water, minimize off-site discharges, and protect the muck soil from oxidation. According to Mr. Roth, the key to successful production (cheaper, higher yields and lower per unit crop price) is homogenous soil moisture. Roth designed and laser-leveled his growing fields to a tolerance of 2 inches. This minor elevation change avoids excess water that can cause root and thatch problems. Roth’s fields are planted with seasonally rotated crops such as sod, sugar cane, rice, lettuce and other vegetables in order to enhance production and meet changing demands.

Like many of the farmers in the EAA, Mr. Roth has been an active participant in developing appropriate best management practices and is very excited about the reduced phosphorus loads that have been achieved to date. Mr. Roth also plays an active role in training young farmers and has been involved in numerous leadership roles with the Florida Farm Bureau.

Many thanks to our Tour Leaders who took time out of their busy schedules during to the harvesting season to give us a first hand look at the many facets of agricultural production in the EAA. Their well-informed, and sometime frank, discussion of the various aspects of farming in the EAA during these times was very enlightening, even for the few of us who may have grown up on farms elsewhere in the USA. It’s sometimes hard to believe that such an extensive and productive agricultural operation exists only ¼hour away from downtown West Palm Beach – so close and yet, in so many ways, so far away from our typical urban/suburban lifestyles!!

For more information, visit the following web sites: <http://www.co.palm-beach.fl.us/coopext/agriculture/>; <http://www.floridacrystals.com/sitemap.asp>; and <http://www.sugar.org>. And look for locally grown produce in your local supermarket!

All agreed...it was a splendid day in the EAA... and our best tour yet!

## **JOB POSTINGS**

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**The South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD)** has the following positions available. For more information on these jobs, call (561) 682-6519 or visit their web site at [www.sfwmd.gov/career/gisopp.html](http://www.sfwmd.gov/career/gisopp.html).

- ❑ **Staff Economist**, Planning & Development Division, Water Supply Department, West Palm Beach; Conservation and Alternative Water Supply section.
- ❑ **Senior Planner**, Planning & Development Division, Water Supply Department, Lower West Coast Service Center, Ft. Myers; Regional Water Supply Plan Project Manager for the LWC planning region.

**Palm Beach County (PBC)** has the following positions available. For more information about these jobs, visit the County's Job Postings web site at [www.pbcgov.com/erp/jobs](http://www.pbcgov.com/erp/jobs).

- ❑ **Senior Planner**, Planning Division, Planning, Zoning & Building Department (PZ&B Dept.). Closing Date: 12/05/03.
- ❑ **Code Enforcement Officer**, Code Enforcement, PZ&B Dept. Closing Date: 12/05/03.
- ❑ **Professional Engineer**, Engineering Services, Engineering & Public Works Department. Closing Date: 12/05/03.
- ❑ **Extension Agent**, Cooperative Extension Service. Open (no specified closing date).

The **City of West Palm Beach (WPB)** has the following position available. For more information on this job, visit their web site at <http://www.cityofwpb.com/employment.htm>.

**Landscape Planner**, Planning Department. Closing Date: 12/12/03.

## MOVERS & SHAPERS

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**Ed Breese** is now a **Principal Planner** with the **City of Boynton Beach Planning and Zoning Department** where he is working on Site Plan, Master Plan and DRI reviews and other current planning activities. Ed can be reached at 742-6262 or [breesee@ci.boynton-beach.fl.us](mailto:breesee@ci.boynton-beach.fl.us).

**Raphael Clemente**, Senior Planner and Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for the Palm Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization, recently served as Race Director (and competitor) for the very successful 2003 Cycle Fest in downtown West Palm Beach on October 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>. The Friday night tour through City Place kicked off 3 days of bicycling events that drew 4,000 – 5,000 spectators and over 400 professional and amateur competitors, including several nationally ranked riders, from all over the United States as well as Canada, Guatamala, the Netherlands, and Australia. Through the bicycle touring events on Flagler Drive on Saturday and Sunday, Cycle Fest helped Team in Training raised over a million dollars for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Other activities included a Bicycle Safety Course and a run.

Cycle Fest started in 1999 as a local racing event organized by a group of long term racing enthusiast here in Palm Beach County. It has since grown into a National Cycling Racing Calendar event sanctioned by the U.S. Federation of Cycling. The 12-member Cycle Fest Board of Directors includes representatives from several groups as well as several of the early organizers. For more information about these cycling events, visit [www.cyclefest.org](http://www.cyclefest.org) or [www.usacycling.gov](http://www.usacycling.gov) or contact Raphael at 684-4163 or [bikeape@aol.com](mailto:bikeape@aol.com). And, for those of you who were wondering how Raphael did among this auspicious group of cyclists, he took Fifth Place (out of 105 racers) in the Pro Category!

**Dorothy Gravelin, CMC (Certified Municipal Clerk)**, Town Clerk for the Town of Cloud Lake and Planning Congress member for many years, is now wearing two hats. She also serves at the Deputy Town Clerk for the Town of Haverhill. Dorothy can be reached at (561) 686-2815 or [TownofCloudLake@msn.com](mailto:TownofCloudLake@msn.com) or at (561)689-0370 or [dorothy\\_g@bellsouth.net](mailto:dorothy_g@bellsouth.net).

**Sara J. Lockhart, AICP**, formerly with Calvin Giordano and Associates, Inc., has started her own planning firm. She is specializing in private sector land development approvals, including comprehensive plan amendments, rezonings, variances, and site plans, and is also preparing yield analyses and due diligence reports. Sara is based in both Palm Coast (in northeast Florida) and West Palm Beach and can now be reached at (561)301-4050 or sarajlockhart@aol.com.

**Susan A. Mason, AICP, PMP**, recently joined the Palm Beach County Planning, Building and Zoning Department, Comprehensive Planning Section as a Senior Planner, reporting to Isaac Hoyos, Principal Planner. Susan is coordinating the County's Comprehensive Plan Water Utilities Element and Evaluation and Appraisal Report and will participate in water resource-related activities of the County's Water Issues Group and the South Florida Water Management District. Susan can be reached at (561) 233-5338 or smason@co.palm-beach.fl.us.

**Rick Miessau**, Senior IT Project Manager at the South Florida Water Management District, made a presentation on the Everglades Restoration Data Management Program to the Federal Geographic Data Committee (FGDC) in early October. The meeting was hosted by the National Capital Planning Commission in Washington, D.C. For more information, click on [www.evergladesplan.org](http://www.evergladesplan.org) or contact Rick at (561) 682-6521.

**Thuy Shutt, AIA**, an Urban Designer with the Delray Beach Community Redevelopment Agency, recently attended the 2003 International Downtown Association (IDA) meeting in Cleveland, Ohio on behalf of the City of Delray Beach and the CRA to accept the IDA 2003 Downtown Achievement Award for the Delray Beach Downtown Redevelopment Plan adopted by the Delray Beach City Commission in March 2002. The IDA is an international organization (members include countries from North America, the United Kingdom, Australia, etc.) that focuses on cities and towns engaged in urban revitalization. The Downtown Achievement Award is given for exemplary downtown revitalization projects.

Delray Beach was the only Florida City to be recognized and the only city to receive the **2003 Planning Merit Award**. Other Merit awards in other categories (economic development, special events and promotions, public spaces, business recruitment and retention, etc.) went to much larger cities (Austin, TX; Pittsburgh, PA.; Charlotte, NC; Los Angeles, CA.; Winnepeg, Canada, and Brisbane, Queensland Australia). The Delray Beach Downtown Redevelopment Plan has also received top planning awards from the Florida Chapter of the American Planning Association, the Florida Planning & Zoning Association, and the Florida Redevelopment Association. It's just goes to show that you don't have to be big to do great things!! Congratulations to the City of Delray Beach Downtown Redevelopment Agency!

For more information, visit their web site at [www.delraycra.org](http://www.delraycra.org) or contact Diane Colonna, AICP, CRA Executive Director at [ColonnaD@ci.delray-beach.fl.us](mailto:ColonnaD@ci.delray-beach.fl.us) or (561)276-8640 or Thuy Shutt at [ShuttT@ci.delray-beach.fl.us](mailto:ShuttT@ci.delray-beach.fl.us) or (561) 276-8640.

**Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>. DANIEL LIBESKIND LECTURE.** Internationally known Architect and World Trade Center Competition Winner. CUILLO CENTRE (201 Clematis Street, WPB). Lecture begins at 7:00 pm / doors open at 6:00 pm. Sponsored by the Palm Beach Chapter, American Institute of Architects. Cost: \$25 – AIA members; \$35 Non-Members; \$10 – Students RSVP (with check and email address) to AIA Palm Beach, 504 Pinto Circle, Wellington, FL 33414. Tickets will be returned electronically. For more information, visit their web site at [www.aiapalmbeach.org](http://www.aiapalmbeach.org).

**Thursday – Friday, December 4<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup>. Florida Earth Project Course: Fourth Annual Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Update Forum.** Grassy Waters Preserve (north side), WPB. Sponsored by the University of Florida. For more information or to register (required; cost is \$100), visit their web site at <http://222.floridaeearth.org/restore.htm> or contact Stan Bronson at (561) 233-1724.

**Saturday – Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>. 2003 National Public Land Acquisition & Management Partnership Conference.** Ritz-Carlton Amelia Island Resort. Hosted by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. For more information, contact Karen Crawford at 1-888-320-6129 or [kcrawford@cmc-associates.com](mailto:kcrawford@cmc-associates.com) or visit their web site at [www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/conference/index.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/conference/index.htm).

**Tuesday – Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>. “Groundwater EXPO: Ground Water in Coastal Zones: Availability, Sustainability, and Protection.”** Orange County Convention Center, Orlando. Sponsored by the National Ground Water Association. For more information or to register, visit their web site at <http://www.NGWA.org> or contact Kathy Butcher at 1-800-551-7379 or [kbutcher@ngwa.org](mailto:kbutcher@ngwa.org).

**Wednesday – Friday, January 7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>, 2004. “St. Lucie Estuary & Southern Indian River Lagoon Watershed Symposium: Watershed in Transition 2004.”** Marriott Resort, South Hutchinson Island, Stuart. For more information, contact Doreen DiCarlo, Florida Center for Environmental Studies at (561) 799-8553 or visit their web site at <https://secure.ces.fau.edu/wit2004/>. Sponsored by the SFWMD; FDEP; GCY, Inc.; Big Red Tomato Packers, LLC; CAPTEC Engineering, Inc.; Indiantown Cogen; National Estuary Program (SJRWMD); Camp, Dresser & McKee, Inc.; Creech Engineers, Inc.; Crossroads Environmental; EW Consultants, Inc.; Hazen & Sawyer; Labor Finders Personnel; Mock, Roos and Associates; Tetra Tech FW, Inc.; and the TCRPC.

## 2003 EVENT SCHEDULE

DATE	SCHEDULED EVENT
January 6, Monday	Philippe Pierre Cousteau
February 20, Thursday	South Florida Science Museum Expansion
March 8, Saturday	Winter Equestrian Festival
April 24, Thursday	Robert Gibb Lecture at Abacoa
May 22, Thursday	Trump International Golf Course Clubhouse Tour
June 19, Thursday	Riviera Beach Redevelopment Program Discussion and Mobile Tour
July 24, Thursday	<i>Legislative Update (Tentative)</i>
August 23, Saturday	Annual Family Picnic – Ocean Cay Park, Juno Beach/Jupiter
September 18, Thursday	Convention Center Tour
October 3 – 6	Keysfest - Breezy Palms Resort, Islamorada
November 15, Saturday	Glades All-Day Agricultural Bus Tour
December 7, Sunday	Annual Holiday Party. Brogues Irish Pib

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## LOGO Design Contest

The Palm Beach County Planning Congress Board of Directors is seeking a logo design that uniquely identifies the Planning Congress and can be used on our letterhead, membership certificates, banners, web site, and other communication materials. Copies of logo designs previously used by the Planning Congress can be found at <http://www.pbcplanningcongress.org/special/certificates.html> or by clicking on the link to Membership Certificates on our Home Page at [www.pbcplanningcongress.org](http://www.pbcplanningcongress.org).

The competition is open to all current (paid) Planning Congress members. The winner will be announced at the Planning Congress Holiday Party on Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at Brogues. The individual submitting the winning logo will receive \$100, a year of free membership, and a plaque featuring the new design.

Submittals should be mailed to the attention of David Rafaidus, Palm Beach County Planning Congress, PO Box 1371, West Palm Beach, Florida 33402 and received no later than Friday, December 5, 2003. Please be sure to include the designer's name, address and a contact telephone number (that you can be reached at after work hours). Any questions, please contact David Rafaidus at 355-4705 or [rafaidus@yahoo.com](mailto:rafaidus@yahoo.com).

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## KEYSFEST 2003

Thanks to the Palm Beach County School District, many Planning Congress members were able to take advantage of the public schools being closed on Monday, October 6<sup>th</sup> and enjoy a 3-day Keys Fest Weekend this year. Total attendance for the weekend was 30 adults and 26 kids of all shapes and sizes. Even though it now seems so long ago, our Florida Marlins were still swinging their way through the initial Playoffs games. Little did we know at that time that they would end up World Champions!

Every year we try something different to make the weekend more enjoyable and provide something for everyone. New this year was renting a larger boat at the marina next door for both Saturday and Sunday to allow more outings. Whether the trip is to the always entertaining Indian Key Festival, snorkeling at the Lighthouse Reef or the sandbar, or just cruising to nowhere, it just doesn't get any better than in the Keys! This is sure to be something we'll try again next year!

As always, our Saturday Night Shrimp Boil was a big hit! The food was delicious, the weather was great, and the companionship memorable! There's something special about eating outside by the ocean – whether it's enjoying the stars during the Saturday Shrimp Boil or indulging in pancakes, sausage and egg soufflé for breakfast under the tiki hut or by the docks while enjoying the balmy ocean breezes on a gorgeous sunny day! And, once again, we've added to our repertoire of Keys Fest recipes with a new "Key West Marinade" that turned ordinary chicken on the grill into something great during our Sunday night Potluck Supper. Click on the link to RECIPES for a sampling of our Keys Fest Recipes for Egg Souffle, Guacamole, Seafood Spread, and Key West Marinade.

This year's Scavenger Hunt turned out to be lots of fun and a pretty tight race to see who the winners would be. Some of our members were very creative when it came to collecting the various Planning and Florida Keys related items on the list. And, thanks to the generosity of several Florida Keys merchants, our winners received some really great prizes! Whenever you're in the Keys again, please be sure to patronize these merchants. Here's the list of winners and prizes they selected (Note: Winners were allowed to select the prize of their choice beginning with the First Place winner):

First Place:	Henry Bittaker (46 points)	One Free Night at Breezy Palms (\$110 value)
Second Place:	The Miessau's (40 points)	Whale Harbour Inn Gift Certificate for their Seafood Buffet for Two (\$50 value)
Third Place:	The McGinleys (39 points)	World Wide Sportsman Gift Card (\$20 value)
Fourth Place:	The Castro's (37 points)	Loreili Gift Certificate (\$75 value)
Fifth Place:	The Flinchums (35 points)	Complimentary 2004 Planning Congress Membership (\$40 value)
Sixth Place:	The Schloessers (21 points)	Complimentary Planning Congress Holiday Party Ticket (\$25 value)
Participation Prize for All Participants:		Outback Steakhouse "Bloomin Onion" Gift Card

Many thanks to all who helped out behind the scenes with advance preparations, the scavenger hunt, prizes, runs to the grocery store for forgotten items, or pitched in as cooks and grill masters, cleaning crews, and courageous boat captains. This weekend is truly a cooperative effort and somehow gets easier each year. The staff at our Breezy Palms headquarters continues to give us the red carpet treatment and truly appreciates our repeat business, as well as the visits of those of us who come down during the year for vacations.

If the School Board cooperates again next year, the extra day of rest and relaxation is well worth it! With so many things to choose from – whether it's fishing at the dock, hanging out by the pool, watching football (and baseball this year) on the covered deck of the beach cottage, playing shuffleboard and volley ball, snorkeling the off shore sea grasses, sampling all the boat trips, sightseeing, or just plain relaxing – it's easy to see why Keysfest has become such a tradition!

## MEMBERSHIP REMINDERS

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- If any of your contact information (agency/firm name, job position, postal/email addresses, phone/fax numbers, etc.) has changed, please be sure to contact our Vice President, Susan Coughanour, at [scoughan@sfwmd.gov](mailto:scoughan@sfwmd.gov) or (561) 682-6519 promptly so we can update our records.
  - The 2003 Membership Directory is being finalized this month and we want to be sure we include your most current information.
  - Look for an email from us later this month with your assigned membership number - it will serve as your password and allow you to log onto the Planning Congress web site, access member only features, and review your directory information. If you have any questions about your membership dues, please contact our Treasurer, Carol Wallace, at [cwallace@aol.com](mailto:cwallace@aol.com).
  - And, as always, please share this newsletter and our web site information ([www.pbcplanningcongress.org](http://www.pbcplanningcongress.org)) with any of your colleagues who may be interested in the Planning Congress and its activities.
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*THANK YOU to following contributors for the November newsletter: Wes Blackman, Susan Coughanour, Dave Flinchum, Susan Mason, David Rafaidus, Carol Thompson and Rick Miessau.*

## Member Spotlight on Vicki Silver (cont. from pg.1)

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### **Hometown**

Fair Lawn, New Jersey, 11 miles from New York City; years later I learned that the nicest part of town, Radburn, was one of the “Garden Cities” master planned in the ‘20s. After a distracting two years studying agricultural sciences and rural development at the University of New Hampshire, I returned to New Jersey and received a B.A. in Economics from Montclair State College. After one year with the Joint Center for Environmental and Urban Problems, I obtained a Masters degree in Public Administration, with an Environmental/Growth Management Specialization, from FAU.

### **Proudest Work-related Accomplishment:**

I still feel proud to have helped get the \$42 million Save Our Coast grant that enabled the City of Hollywood to purchase and preserve North Beach, Broward County’s last undeveloped beach, as a regional park. Our staff team prepared an economic assessment and videotape convincing a regional park district to contribute \$15 million, which persuaded the state to buy the land.

### **Personal Accomplishment**

Having helped raise a teenager with autism who is well-behaved and multi-talented.

### **Spare Time**

I walk on the beach with family, grow tomatoes, and play traditional music on the fiddle with other acoustic musicians.

## **Family**

My husband Bob Banks is a land-use lawyer and former planner, and our son Joshua Banks is in tenth grade at Dwyer High School.

## **Movie**

I like two genres of movie: musicals and absurd comedies, from the Music Man and My Fair Lady to Mel Brooks' 2000-year old Man and Woody Allen's "Bananas". I also like Willie Wonka's Chocolate Factory because it was very true to the book, which author Roald Dahl recommended I read at age 13, in response to my fan mail about the "Giant Peach". Due to Joshua's influence, animated musicals are high on my list, especially Dumbo, which should be required viewing to inspire GIS students because it features the earliest, and most practical, animated aerial photograph of Florida, which guides the stork's deliveries.

## **In Your CD Changer Now**

Bob Dylan's Nashville Skyline

## **In Her Own Words**

Regardless of title or job description, throughout my 28-year planning career, I've been a special projects coordinator. I love to build multi-disciplinary teams to identify creative, practical planning strategies, and, unlike other grant-writers, later manage the program I helped fund. As a Palm Beach County planner for 13 years, I was best known for a program that helped diversify the economy of the Glades area. My toolbox included historic preservation/heritage tourism, recreation and trails planning, landscape beautification, public education, and extensive intergovernmental collaboration, and I found about \$8 million to develop or construct projects to implement my vision of the lake region as a tourist destination. Since 2002, as a sole proprietor (Vicki E. Silver, AICP), I've obtained more than \$1 million in grants to develop a Lake Okeechobee trailhead, while expanding my clientele from small rural local governments to diverse non-profits on the coast.

# **SEPTEMBER PROGRAM - Palm Beach Convention Center Tour**

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There we were, standing in the newly paved parking lot, personal injury release forms in hand, hardhats on, safety goggles ready, and counting off for safety. The brand new \$80 million dollar, 350,000 square foot complex was going to be unveiled to about 40 Planning Congress members and guests for a behind the scene peek behind Door #3 (the one with the protective plastic sheet). URS Corporation Project Manager Tim Ackert gave a few quick introductory remarks and URS Project Architect Greg Zielinski emphasized to the group to stay together and please watch your step. The Center is now about 95% complete with most of the remaining work finishing up details on the inside. Partial building occupancy is anticipated in November with the first scheduled event to be a Sports and Leisure Show on November 24th.

As we entered the south side of the building, the first thing you realized was the air conditioning wasn't quite working yet even though there will be sufficient heating and cooling capacity comparable to over 100 homes. The 31,000 square foot of glass in the north curtain wall runs parallel to Okeechobee Boulevard and faces both the Kravis Center and City Place. The interior design supports the human behaviorist's notion of Convention Center attendees wanting to both "see and be seen" at future events. There is also a great emphasis on interior acoustics and accent lighting throughout the public areas. The perimeter public space (concourse area) features a

dramatic custom wood slat ceiling and each meeting room adjacent to the concourse will feature a distinctive entry.

The ceiling over the pre-function area adjacent to the 25,000 square foot Ballroom will also include chandeliers that mimic ship sails. The walls will be painted with sea shore colors and a specially designed carpet will appear as water reflections.

The parts of the Convention Center you won't see are over 21,000 cubic yards of concrete (about 200 miles of sidewalk), more than 17,000 feet of pre-cast concrete joists and 290,000 square feet of block walls. The floor plan has been strategically designed with an elaborate interior utility service hallway system to provide uninterrupted food service, room change outs, fire, emergency and, yes, even anti-terrorist access points throughout the building without crossing public areas. The second floor Board Room is also available for outside functions and overlooks the main exhibit hall. It can be completely shuttered for private presentations by using a computer aided infrared system including remote "smart boards" to conduct a completely hands free "smart room" meeting.

The main exhibit hall floor is 102,000 square foot with an 8 inch thick concrete slab incorporating state of the art floor boxes laid out in a 30 foot grid to allow vendors to connect internally or via cable links to various satellite networks. The Convention Center's caterer, Aramark, will provide all food services from their gourmet kitchen with four walk-in coolers (900 square feet each) and offer outstanding service for groups ranging from 20 to 2000 people. The exterior treatment of the new Convention Center will be predominantly painted stucco with Coquina cast stone on the sills and accent walls and the great stairway in front of the building facing Okeechobee Boulevard will be covered with Coquina stone face. The adjacent courtyard will serve as an outdoor reception area while still providing some intimate patio spaces.

The new Convention Center has been a long time getting here. The economic benefits to Palm Beach County range from travel, restaurants, car rentals, hotels, entertainment, and shopping. It will have a major positive impact for our local businesses and give visitors one more reason to keep coming back.

For those who were fortunate to join us at the reception afterwards at Urban Design Studio's new Lofts at City Place location, we had a chance to catch up with some of our (old) Charter members and familiar faces. It was great to have such a large group and the staff made everyone feel most welcome. In keeping with his firm's name, Hank has incorporated both old and new furnishings into their new office which has wonderful balconies overlooking the busy streets and night time activities of City Place. With the next day still being another workday, we finally starting packing up the few remaining scraps of food and drops of drinks.

Special thanks to everyone who helped put this evening together with kudos to Carol Thompson and Hank Skokowski. As we left the downtown and started back home, one had only to drive around the block and look in the rear view mirror to marvel at what's been accomplished downtown in the time since we first came here.

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