

# SOLID WASTE works

Spring 2009

Solid Waste Works is a quarterly employee newsletter published by the Miami-Dade County Department of Solid Waste Management

## United Way Campaign Breaks Record

2008 was another record-breaking year for the Department's fundraising efforts in support of United Way of Miami-Dade County. With a goal of \$93,750, the Department kicked off the annual fundraising drive in October. By the campaign's end in December, the United Way committee proudly reported that it had exceeded the goal, raising a total of \$111,308 through special events and payroll contributions.

"I'm always touched by how deeply Solid Waste Management employees care about this community," said Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson. "In spite of the downturn in the economy, our employees continue their history of giving generously to the United Way."

During the 8-week campaign, employees organized 45 fundraising events that included everything imaginable – raffles, dance lessons, ice cream socials and sales of breakfast, lunch, seafood platters, Jamaican patties and barbecue dinners. "Our employees are pretty creative and

competitive when it comes to fundraising efforts," said Stacey McDuffie, chairperson of the Department's 2008 United Way campaign.



The dollars raised each year through special events and employee contributions are important to social service agencies and programs in our community. Thanks to United Way funding, dozens of agencies are able to offer programs that strengthen families, support our youth and improve the quality of life for thousands of residents in our community.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- ♻️ One recycled glass bottle can save enough energy to power a computer for 25 minutes.
- ♻️ Every ton of mixed paper recycled can save the energy equivalent to 185 gallons of gas.
- ♻️ Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to run your TV for 3 hours.

### MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Dear DSWM Staff,

**Happy Spring!** The first two quarters of Fiscal Year 2008-09 have been very busy for the Department. In November, we completed the implementation of our new single-stream curbside recycling program at the homes of more than 320,000 customers in our waste service area. Following the success of cart delivery to and service start-up for our customers, we rolled out 20,000 carts to households in 11 cities that have signed inter-local agreements for curbside service. Needless to say, I am extremely proud of our accomplishment. In just six short months, we successfully completed the phased implementation of one of the largest curbside recycling programs in the country. As usual, all Divisions stepped up to the plate and worked as a team to ensure that the program implementation stayed on track. And now that implementation is complete, we're seeing an enthusiastic response from our residents and record recyclable tonnage. In December 2008, 5,543 tons of recyclables were collected – more than double the tonnage collected in December 2007. I look forward to reporting record achievements for this program in the coming months!

As we move forward this year, we need to continue to be conscious of our image in the community. Results of a recent county-wide survey indicate that residents remain very pleased with the Department's core services. Less than 5 percent of the 5,000 survey respondents recommended that we improve our service delivery in the areas of garbage, trash and recycling collection. Our customers

are pleased with the job we're doing, but there's always room for improvement. I'm reminded of the "coffee stain principle" when I think of the relationship between an organization's image and customer service. A local professor who travels frequently by airplane is always mindful to inspect the condition of the plane as he boards. Are the flight attendants well-groomed and neatly uniformed? Are the seats clean and free of coffee stains? He concludes that if the employees aren't neat and the plane's interior isn't so tidy, then the standards for the aircraft's maintenance might be careless as well. To some, the connection between coffee stains and a plane's maintenance might be a huge leap, but in this case, it's the professor's perception that counts. I use this to illustrate how customer perception dictates the way citizens feel about our organization. Let's be sure to pay attention to and clean up our Department's "coffee stains." Clean vehicles, tidy Trash & Recycling Centers, uncluttered workstations, neatly groomed and courteous employees leave positive impressions on our customers.

*Kathleen Woods-Richardson*  
Director

# Single-Stream Significantly Boosts Residential Recycling

The recently completed switch to single-stream recycling throughout most of Miami-Dade County is already showing considerable benefits: a significant increase in the amount of recycled materials collected. In December 2008, the department collected 5,543 tons of recyclable materials – an increase of 121 percent over the same period the year before. The total amount of recyclable materials collected over the first six months of the program increased 65 percent over the same time frame in 2007.



The last of the Department's 340,000 carts is delivered to complete the launch of one of the largest single-stream residential recycling programs in the nation.

"This is great news and underscores our belief that if we made it easier for our customers to recycle, they would – and they have even gone beyond our projections," said DSWM Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson. "That's especially important because there's a long-term benefit to everything that's recycled; we're saving energy, clean air, water and landfill space."

The single-stream recycling process means there's no longer a need for multiple recycling containers. The 340,000 participating residents can now put glass, cans, cardboard, chipboard, magazines, newspapers, junk mail and juice cartons in the same 65-gallon wheeled containers.

Residents have responded enthusiastically to the program, with

more than 5,000 exchanging their 65-gallon cart for the 95-gallon recycling cart, depleting the Department's original supply. More of the larger carts were ordered to meet the increased demand.

## A FEW FACTS ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT'S RECYCLING PROGRAM:

- ♻️ In the last half of 2008, 15,375 tons of paper were collected in the curbside recycling program which saves more than 261,375 trees.
- ♻️ During all of 2008, enough recyclable materials were collected to fill 4,500 garbage trucks.
- ♻️ Plastic bottles collected for recycling often end up as carpeting.
- ♻️ There are 13 different recycling collection day schedules.

*"For the past five days (including all day on Saturday as we sat at the local soccer field) we have watched the recycling carts be delivered to Miami Springs. In addition to being the proud County geek that I am and having the tears well up in my eyes as I see the orderly rows of navy blue bins that say 'Delivering Excellence Every Day' line our streets, my neighbors and friends are EXCITED about the new recycling program. Everyone has been talking about the bins and what they can put in. It is like a special holiday gift!"*

**Jennifer Glazer-Moon**  
Director, Office of Strategic Business Management

## Master Plan to Guide DSWM Into the Future

Ensuring public health and environmental protection for the next generation of Miami-Dade County residents is the goal of the comprehensive Solid Waste Master Plan. Throughout its history, the DSWM has been successful in implementing modern collection processes, recycling programs, waste transfer, conversion technologies and environmentally sound landfills, but now the need is to plan far into the future.

"A growing population, aging facilities, and limited disposal capacity make it critical that we have plans in place to meet the changing needs of the county over the next 30 to 50 years," said DSWM Deputy Director of Administration Christopher Rose.

"We'll be examining the full array of options available for both Collections and Disposal and will develop a method for screening the alternatives. There will also be a significant outreach component, to ensure the public is involved."

The planning process will be led by a consultant team selected from a pool of respondents to the Department's RFP for master plan services and coordinated by Stacey McDuffie, Division Director of the Department's Planning & Intergovernmental Affairs Division. When completed, sometime within 24 months, the plan will provide the DSWM with a solid waste management system that will offer sustainable solutions over the long term.

# CONGRATULATIONS

# CORNER

*Delivering Excellence Every Day*

Six DSWM staff members have been rewarded for their hard work on the job with a promotion during the first quarter of the fiscal year. The following is a listing of the employees and their new positions:

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|---|--|---|
| <b>Yvette Colbourne</b><br><i>Executive Assistant to the Dept. Director</i> | <b>Gayle Love</b><br><i>Division Director 2, SWM Public Information and Outreach</i> | <b>Latuan Walker</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 1</i> |
| <b>Michelle Sifontes</b><br><i>Chief, Human Resources</i>                   | <b>Virgie Johnson</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 1</i>                                 | <b>Thelbert Smith</b><br><i>Waste Truck Driver</i>  |

Welcome the following County employees who transferred to the DSWM:

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|--|--|--|
| <b>Olga Espinosa-Anderson</b><br><i>Division Director 3, SWM Procurement</i> | <b>Alicia Acuna</b><br><i>Cashier 1</i>                      | <b>Emmanuel Luna</b><br><i>Waste Attendant 1</i>     |
| <b>Luis Vargas Jr.</b><br><i>Special Projects Administrator 2</i>            | <b>Nathaniel Surrancy</b><br><i>Administrative Officer 3</i> | <b>Angela Freeman</b><br><i>Waste Scale Operator</i> |
|  |  | <b>Elnora Coleman</b><br><i>Waste Attendant 1</i>    |

Welcome the following new hires to the DSWM team:

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|---|--|
| <b>Charlie McNear</b><br><i>Waste Attendant 1</i> | <b>Levi Starks</b><br><i>Waste Attendant 1</i> |
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## Kudos to Accounting for Excellence In Financial Reporting

In mid-December, Director Woods-Richardson and members of her management team recognized the Department's Accounting Division for receiving a Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the Department's 2007 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR). This prestigious recognition is only awarded to government agencies in the United States and Canada whose CAFRs achieve the highest standards in government accounting and financial reporting. The 2007 report marks the 14th time that the Department's CAFR has been recognized.

*Congratulations to the entire Accounting Division for a job well done!*

Congratulations, best wishes and a heartfelt thank you for your commitment to the County to our recent retirees:

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| <b>Eddie Martin</b><br><i>Waste Truck Driver, Garbage Division, 36 years</i>                 | <b>Kenneth Bachoo</b><br><i>Transfer Station Superintendent, Transfer Division, 23 years</i> |
| <b>Oraida Alfonso</b><br><i>Accountant 2, Accounting Division, 34 years</i>                  | <b>Roberto Gamarra</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 1, Trash Division, 23 years</i>              |
| <b>Sylvester Pates</b><br><i>SW Landfill Superintendent, Landfill Division, 33 years</i>     | <b>Kay Gilpin</b><br><i>Administrative Secretary, Landfill Division, 21 years</i>            |
| <b>Charles Holiday</b><br><i>Division Director Trash Division, 29 years</i>                  | <b>Albert Thrower</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 2, Transfer Division, 20 years</i>            |
| <b>Ellis Dames</b><br><i>Administrative Officer 3, Trash Division, 28 years</i>              | <b>James Albury</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 2, Transfer Division, 17 years</i>              |
| <b>Jackie Keels</b><br><i>Trash Truck Driver 2, Transfer Division, 26 years</i>              | <b>Frank Watts, Jr.</b><br><i>Waste Collector, Garbage Division, 15 years</i>                |
| <b>Agustin Pais</b><br><i>SWM Maintenance Superintendent, Maintenance Division, 25 years</i> | <b>Fito Maturin</b><br><i>Waste Attendant 1, Trash Division, 8 years</i>                     |
|  | <b>Eddie Clark</b><br><i>Waste Truck Driver, Garbage Division, 35 years</i>                  |



Director Kathleen Woods-Richardson and senior staff join the Accounting Division to honor their achievement of excellence in financial reporting.

# Changing Minds One Poem at a Time

The South Dade Connection (S.D.C.), a group of spoken word artists and motivational speakers, is uplifting our community with the words of our very own Kenny Fountain. This group's main goal is to reach youth in need of positive re-directing, and they have done just that! Incorporating the motto **"Changing Minds One Poem at a Time"** the group has earned rave reviews and more requests for speaking engagements than they can handle. As a member of S.D.C. and DSWM Waste Enforcement Officer,



DSWM Waste Enforcement Officer Kenny Fountain helps motivate the youth in our community with performances of his inspirational poetry.

You may have heard their positive lyrical content at the Enforcement Division's **"Poetry & Patties"** United Way fundraiser. Miami-Dade Police have enjoyed their presentation and positive lyrics so much, they offered to incorporate them in a **"Stop the Violence"** campaign initiated by state and county lawmakers.

Fountain began performing five years ago, but has always liked to write poems. When he's not at work, chances are you might find him performing at a wedding, traveling to Atlanta to perform at the annual Black Arts Festival or Washington D.C. to perform at the Poetry Festival.

"I'm inspired by personal experiences and things I see every day," said Fountain. "I want to be a role model for the group."

Not only does Fountain provide excellent service to DSWM customers, he also provides great entertainment in the community through spoken word. The Department congratulates Kenny Fountain and the S.D.C. on their commitment to *Delivering Excellence Every Day* by **"Changing Minds One Poem at a Time."**

Fountain stays busy while performing at the Department and on the stage.

The S.D.C. has received recognition for performances at high schools, universities and juvenile justice programs. They created a writing workshop at Bay Point Schools, a Level 6 Detention Center, where staff commended the results. They produced poetry CDs that have been incorporated into the curriculum at Florida Memorial University where they are requested to perform regularly, as well as at Robert Morgan Educational Center, Miami Southridge Senior High School and Homestead Job Corps.

*"I'm inspired by personal experiences and things I see every day," said Fountain.*  
*"I want to be a role model for the group."*

## Remembering Dr. King

The 19th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade in West Perrine honored the nation's revered civil rights leader on what would have been his 80th birthday. Director

Kathleen Woods-Richardson led the Department in the parade, which was sponsored by the West Perrine Community Development Corporation.



# Scale House is DSWM POWERHOUSE

The transaction process at the Department's scale houses is now much more streamlined, thanks to a new integrated computer program developed by the Information Services, Accounting and Disposal Operations Divisions. The program links each of the eight remote sites with DSWM headquarters, and incorporates information from the weigh station with accounting and video surveillance.

The system has simplified the transaction process, meaning more efficient customer service. And the scale houses now have the potential to be operational 99 percent of the time. The new system is becoming an important tool for Department management, providing the ability to create customized reports – including historical information – for better analysis of current operations, as well as planning for the future.

DSWM Computer Systems Manager Rey Perez and Project Manager Lou Broughton continue to refine the system and are now working on a process that will allow unmanned transactions that can be processed automatically.



## Questions about FRS and Deferred Compensation?

Has the turmoil in the financial markets left you wondering about the effect on the companies that manage the FRS retirement accounts and Deferred Compensation accounts?

The Florida Department of Management Services reminds enrollees that the Florida Retirement System (FRS) Pension Plan benefits are guaranteed by state law. The plan's funding takes place over decades and assets are then paid out over the retirement years. This approach, combined with sound investment strategies that focus on the long term, allows the retirement system to withstand fluctuations in the investment market.

Rather than stress about it, check for yourself. Free financial

planning and counseling are available to FRS members by calling the MyFRS Financial Guidance Line (866-446-9377) and speaking with an Ernst & Young financial planner.

National Retirement Solutions, [www.nrsservicecenter.com](http://www.nrsservicecenter.com) and ICMA-RC, [www.icmarc.org/miamidade](http://www.icmarc.org/miamidade), have information on their websites that may also answer your questions. The sites have facts to help you make more informed decisions about your retirement account, as well as educational seminars and online calculators to help manage your finances and plan your future.

You may also want to visit the appropriate site to make sure your contact and beneficiary information is current.

## Annual Management Retreat

In December, the Department held its annual senior management retreat at Miami Metrozoo. The theme of this year's retreat was team building and gave our senior managers an opportunity to take part in several creative and fun exercises that required plenty of teamwork. Participants also had an opportunity to hear special presentations by Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez and County Manager George Burgess who thanked and praised the Department for its continued commitment to service excellence. Office of Fair Employment Practices Director Lucia Davis-Raiford gave a dynamic presentation on employment issues.



At the conclusion of the retreat, the Director asked each of the senior managers to consider additional ways that they can strengthen

their individual teams as we go forward in 2009. "I firmly believe that our Department's continued success in the work that we do is a direct result of our teamwork," said Director Woods-Richardson.

To continue building on the benefits of Departmental teamwork, the Director's Office has planned a retreat for field supervisors and middle managers. Look for photo highlights and reflections from participants in the next edition of Solid Waste Works.



Miami-Dade County Manager George Burgess joined staff at the Department's annual senior management retreat.

# EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT

## Giving Back To Our Community!

*Department employees were involved in a variety of community fundraising and volunteer activities in the fall and winter months. We take our hats off to the following employees for their efforts in support of non-profit and community agencies in our community:*

### Heartwalk 2008

Event participants Eduardo Rubio-Garcia and Tonisha West participated in the annual walk held at Tropical Park. The Department's team raised **\$1,514** that will be used by the American Heart Association to support research activities and community education and outreach programs in the fight against cardiovascular diseases.

### Making Strides Against Breast Cancer

Yvette Colbourne, Catrease Taylor, Marta Ortega and Carla McMullen took part in the activity sponsored by the American Cancer Society. Team members raised **\$1,316** in donations from co-workers, family and friends.

### Habitat for Humanity Blitz Build

Employees Raymond Ng, Aundrea Luc, Kandice Williams, Thomasina Crapp, Shandale Jackson, Wieland Uchdorf, Nancy Fernandez and Carla McMullen spent the day working on homes at the Jordan Commons Habitat for Humanity community in south Miami-Dade.



Department staff took part in an accelerated construction event for one of the nation's largest Habitat communities.



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| <p><b>Carlos Alvarez</b><br/>Mayor</p> <p><b>George M. Burgess</b><br/>County Manager</p> <p><b>Dennis C. Moss</b><br/>Commission Chairman</p> <p><b>José "Pepe" Diaz</b><br/>Commission Vice Chairman</p> | <p><b>Barbara J. Jordan</b><br/>District 1</p> <p><b>Dorrian D. Rolle</b><br/>District 2</p> <p><b>Audrey Edmonson</b><br/>District 3</p> <p><b>Sally A. Heyman</b><br/>District 4</p> <p><b>Bruno A. Barreiro</b><br/>District 5</p> | <p><b>Rebeca Sosa</b><br/>District 6</p> <p><b>Carlos A. Gimenez</b><br/>District 7</p> <p><b>Katy Sorenson</b><br/>District 8</p> <p><b>Senator Javier D. Souto</b><br/>District 10</p> <p><b>Joe A. Martinez</b><br/>District 11</p> | <p><b>Natacha Seijas</b><br/>District 13</p> <p><b>Susanne M. Torriente</b><br/>Assistant County Manager</p> <p><b>Margarita Fernandez</b><br/>Assistant to the County Manager</p> <p><b>Kathleen Woods-Richardson</b><br/>Director</p> | <p><b>Vicente Castro</b><br/>Deputy Director, Operations</p> <p><b>Christopher Rose</b><br/>Deputy Director, Administration</p> <p><b>Gayle Love</b><br/>Editor</p> |
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