



GABLES
GOOD GOVERNMENT
COMMITTEE
Newsletter



ONLINE AT GGG-NEWS.WIX.COM/GGG-NEWS# • **MAY 2014**
1825 PONCE DE LEON BLVD., BOX #448, CORAL GABLES, FL 33134 | 305-975-8158

CORAL GABLES' CITY MANAGER RESIGNS

On the morning of Tuesday, April 8th, after City Manager **Pat Salerno's** absence for the first part of the City Commission meeting, he showed up to take his seat, and announced his resignation (effective April 18). The City Commission then voted 4-1 to accept Salerno's resignation, with the Mayor dissenting.

Although Salerno was praised for his attention to the budget and for helping to build up the City's reserves (owing significantly to increased property values since the end of the recession), his management style had rubbed many the wrong way. *THE MIAMI HERALD* reported **Commissioner Vince Lago** "placed an item on Tuesday's city commission meeting agenda to remove Salerno's power to prepare meeting agendas and give it to the city clerk, as well as three discussion items about the commission's working relationship with city staff—all items presumably aimed at Salerno." Perhaps the City Manager saw the writing on the wall.

The search is on for a new City Manager. **Colin Baenziger & Associates** has been hired for the search, and the City has asked the following citizens to serve on the committee: **Chip Withers, Cristina Moreno, José Mas, Manny Kadre, and Rudy Fernandez** with **Bud Park** as advisor.

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE POSITION OF CITY MANAGER

Submitted by GGG readers, here are a few worthy candidates we hope will be in the running for the job of City Manager:

Cathy Swanson Rivenbark, current Hollywood City Manager, was the head of the City of Coral Gables Economic Development Dept. and worked here for 22 years. She facilitated bringing The Palace to Coral Gables, worked well with City staff, was open-minded, and got the job done.

—ED ENGLISH



Director for City of Miami, and is a retired Army Colonel who served in Iraq.

—ANA BAIXAULI, FORMER CORAL GABLES ASST CHIEF OF POLICE

Dr. Hector Mirabile, (at left) former City Manager for South Miami, is a retired Miami PD Homicide Police Major, was HR

George Burgess, former Miami-Dade County Manager, is now teaching part-time at FIU. He is an excellent administrator and planner with years of experience in urban management, well educated, experienced, and a real gentleman.

—EDMUNDO PEREZ-DE COBO

Genaro "Chip" Iglesias is Deputy Mayor to Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez. Before joining the County in 2011, he was Key Biscayne Village Manager. He was also Chief of Staff to then-County Commissioner Jimmy Morales. Prior to that, he was a member of the City of Miami Fire Department for 24 years, rising to the rank of Captain.

Yvonne Soler-McKinley, former City Manager for Doral, is a Coral Gables resident. Prior to working for Doral, she served as Director at Miami-Dade Expressway Authority, Inc. She also served as Executive Director at the Miami Bayside Foundation, and was the City manager of South Miami.



Also suggested: **Joe Rasco, Jack Eads . . .**



GABLES GOOD GOVERNMENT ANNUAL RECEPTION

Gables Good Government will hold its annual reception at **The Palace** (One Andalusia Avenue, Coral Gables) on Tuesday, June 10th, 5:30-7:30 PM. We will be honoring **Raquel Regalado**, Miami-Dade County School Board Member, District 6, covering most of Coral Gables.

Generously sponsored by **The Palace** (PalaceCoralGables.com), GGG Members are free. Non-members may attend for \$50 per person or couple. Join or renew your membership that evening. RSVP to info@slesnick.net or 305.975.8158.



1,000,000 ORCHIDS BEING PLANTED



That's right, one *million*! The **City of Coral Gables** and **Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden** have partnered to restore the orchid's prominence in public spaces in Miami-Dade Co. Budgeting \$30,000 a year for the next 5 years, the City will place 250,000 native orchids in the tree canopy.

CORAL GABLES' MANAGEMENT SHOULD BE MORE OPEN

The Miami Herald
MiamiHerald.com

MIAMI HERALD Letter to the Editor printed May 9, 2014

<http://www.miamiherald.com/2014/05/09/4108016/letter-coral-gables-management.html>

by Jeannett Slesnick, GGG President

The recent departure of our last city manager hopefully heralds the end of an autocratic style of government which minimized the flow of information and marginalized the input of citizens. While optimistically wishing that I am correct, I am concerned. In the City's "E-News" of May 7, there is another "announcement" about expensive public art pieces being planned for the two "Segovia Circles" at Biltmore Way and Coral Way.



Segovia at Coral Way
(which is well landscaped)

This is a project conjured up by the departed manager without broad-based input. In fact, it appears that someone in the City has narrowed the list of "artists" to five "semi-fi-

nalists." This is reportedly a \$1 million-plus project which has never had a public airing with the citizens who live in the area. The circle at Coral Way is the main entrance to the Greenway Drives—one of our classic historic neighborhoods bordering Granada Golf Course. One would think that the residents should have a voice in determining if (1) they desire to have large art work in the circles, and (2) if so, what type of art work. After all, this will impact the vision and value of our homes.

Those of us who live on the Greenways already host one of the City's most active outdoor centers in our front yards. We have golfers, joggers, skate-boarders, bikers, walkers, walkers with pets (large and small), excessive on-street parking caused by catering events at the Country Club, as well as overflow rush hour-traffic (morning and evening) from Coral Way. The homeowners take this activity in stride seven days a week from before dawn to well into the evening.

You would think that the City government might consider that it would be appropriate to give us the courtesy of weighing in on "nice-to-have" but certainly not essential projects which will impact our quality of life.

I strongly support art in public places, but I might suggest that the City focus, instead, on solving the crime problems which greatly impact our standard of living.

Isn't it time to go back to the days of open, participative government with a warm, embracing administration where citizens can be heard?

Segovia at Biltmore Way (which has been barren of landscaping for 2+ years)



RIOTOUS COMEDY AT GABLESTAGE...



Set in present day, the play "Vanya and Sonia and Masha and Spike" by **Christopher Durang** takes characters and themes from **Anton Chekhov's** plays, pours them into a blender, and mixes them up. May 17-June 15 Tickets at web.ovationtix.com or 866-811-4111. **GablesStage at The Biltmore**, 1200 Anastasia Ave. | Box Office: 305-445-1119 **Joseph Adler**, Producing Artistic Director

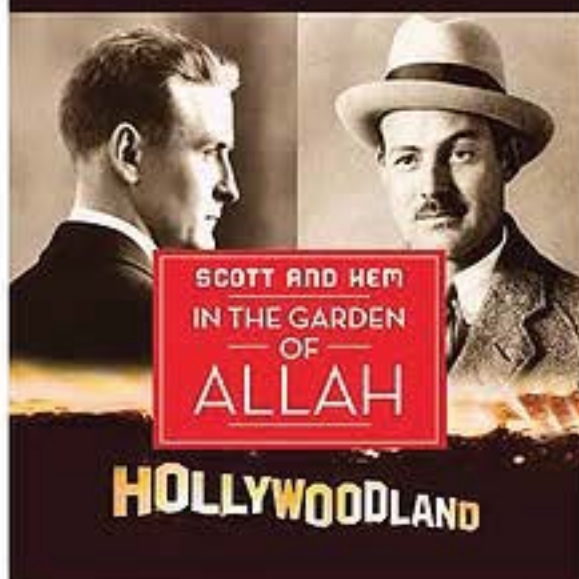
NEW TO THE GABLES

Burger Fi's all natural, free-range beef has no chemicals or additives. They have speciality items like Wagyu Kobe Beef hot dogs, a "Secret Menu", frozen custards and concretes, craft beer, and wine. 136 Miracle Mile, 305-967-8260.

Latin Burger and Taco is the first restaurant for the famous food truck. The expanded menu offers quesadillas, Dolci Peccati gelato milkshakes, new sandwiches, and cupcakes by Sugar Yummy Mama. Open 7 days at 232 Miracle Mile, 305-787-4911.

Pummarola Pizzeria serves authentic Neapolitan pizzas, and their pizza bar features rustic pie, rosemary potatoes, pancetta, buffalo mozzarella, homemade pasta, and more. Open 7 days at 141 Aragon Avenue, 786-409-6866.

Uvaggio Restaurant & Wine Bar Small-production wines with scrumptious menu pairings based on aromas, flavors, textures. Try a wine cocktail! Open 5PM-12AM, closed Sundays, at 70 Miracle Mile.



"SCOTT AND HEM" AT ACTORS' PLAYHOUSE

BY MARK ST. GERMAIN
MAY 14 THROUGH JUNE 8, 2014

Legendary authors **F. Scott Fitzgerald** and **Ernest Hemingway** wrestle with the sparks of art and the perils of creativity. This combative new play is set in 1937 Hollywood, at the infamous **Garden of Allah**, a celebrity-filled apartment complex. Fueled by friendship and rivalry, these two literary heavyweights reunite for one final night in this smart and powerful new drama exploring the cost of love, friendship, and the personal and professional price of being a writer.



Order early for best seats & savings!

305.444.9293
actorsplayhouse.org
280 MIRACLE MILE
@APMiracle

The residents of Coral Gables should be proud of the wonderful cultural mecca we have with the **Coral Gables Museum**, **Coral Gables Art Cinema**, **Books & Books**, and **Actors' Playhouse** at the **Miracle Theatre** all close to the new parking garage on Aragon Avenue that holds 604 cars. Support the Arts. Join one or more of these organizations today...

ROMANTIC COMEDY AT GABLES ART CINEMA



"Chinese Puzzle" (Casse-tête chinois), begins Friday, May 30, and stars art-house favorites **Audrey Tautou** (Amélie) and **Romain Duris**. Chinese Puzzle is the delightful conclusion to writer-director Cédric Klapisch's critically acclaimed, globetrotting Spanish Apartment trilogy. Opening Night Special Event screenings at 7 & 10 PM. Anyone who purchases a ticket for either show may attend an open bar (courtesy of **Bacardi**) reception 9-10 PM with food from **Gilbert's Bakery & Seasons 52**. Opening Night tickets are \$20 at movietickets.com or call 786-385-9689 (\$15/ Members). Rated "R" 1 hr. 54 min.

260 Aragon Avenue, Coral Gables, FL 33134



Memorial Ceremony at Woodlawn Park
3260 SW 8th Street, Miami, FL 33135

Sponsored by **Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce**, **American Legion**, **Veterans of Foreign Wars**, **Boy Scouts**, **Vietnam Vets**, and **SouthComm**. A wreath-laying ceremony and music by the 313th U.S. Army Band will honor our fallen heroes.





FIRST FEMALE PUBLISHER FOR THE MIAMI HERALD



Congratulations to **Alexandra "Alex" Villoch**, the first female publisher in the **Miami Herald's** 110-year history. Alex started with the Herald in 2000 as National Advertising Director, and served as senior VP of Advertising & Marketing since 2005.

Chamber of Commerce's "Good Morning Coral Gables" breakfast will be held on Thursday, May 22nd (Alex will be the key-note speaker). Why not become involved in Coral Gables and join the chamber. Register at coralgableschamber.org or call 305-446-1657.

LOCAL PROMOTIONS AND HONORS

Mario Garcia-Serra (at right) has joined **Gunster** law firm's Miami office. Gunster is an environmental and land use law practice. Mr. Garcia-Serra has a broad range of experience representing clients before local, regional, state and federal government boards and regulatory agencies, and will be working on land use/zoning law, and government affairs.



Alberto Carvalho (at left) was honored as the "National Superintendent of the Year" on May 1st, 2014, at the White House where President Obama praised him for turning around the nation's 4th largest public school system. Mr. Carvalho had also been named Florida's "Superintendent of the Year" in December 2013.



Former **Junior Orange Bowl** President **Col. John "Jack" Thomson** was presented with the Junior Orange Bowl **Presidents Award** at the 2014-15 swearing-in ceremony (pictured at



right with his wife, former Coral Gables Mayor **Dorothy Thomson**, who did the swearing in of the Board).



12 GOOD MEN Annual Luncheon

Over 300 people recently attended the **Ronald McDonald House "Twelve Good Men"** luncheon at Jungle Island. The event honored men with outstanding community involvement, civic service, and participation in one or more charity organizations, and raised \$80,000. Proceeds benefit seriously ill children receiving treatment at south Florida hospitals, and provides a 'home-away-from-home' for their families at the "House That Love Built®".

The Junior Orange Bowl Presidents' Award is given to a past president who has continued to devote his or her time and effort that contributes to the success and growth of the Junior Orange Bowl.

MIRACLE MILE STREETSCAPE PROJECT

by **Ralph Cabrera**, GGG Member
Guest Op-Ed Columnist
Coral Gables City Commissioner 2001 – 2013

The refreshing breezes of springtime have ushered in a new era in Coral Gables that excites hope for renewed appreciation of important, long-standing traditions in the city. Once again, there is reason to hope that citizen involvement in government affairs will be embraced and encouraged rather than dismissed as unwanted interference. Two very important and related issues that will affect all residents far into the future are the **Miracle Mile streetscape project** and the **replacement of two city-owned parking garages** on Andalusia Avenue. A conceptual template for the streetscape was presented to the city five years ago, and then it basically disappeared as the country plunged into the Great Recession. Some people believe that this plan was formally adopted by the city, but that is not true. The heart of this plan called for changing parking on the Mile from angle to over-sized parallel spaces. This would result in the loss of at least 100 parking spaces, and it was opposed by some merchants and the single largest owner of property on the Mile. Picture the Mile with an average of 12 or 13 parking spaces on each block face rather than the current average of 29, and you can immediately see how commerce on the Mile could be adversely affected.

Parking spaces on the Mile are extremely valuable. They turn over an average of 20 times per day, and each generates an average of \$6,000 yearly income for the city. Take away 100 of them and you realize that 2,000 vehicles per day will not find parking on the Mile, and \$600,000 per year will be lost by the city. Those who argue that none of this matters because those spaces can be replaced in parking garages are making a leap of faith that not everyone is willing

to make. People prefer to park on the Mile primarily for reasons of convenience and safety; not simply because the parking garages are in disrepair. Replacing the city's parking garages on Andalusia is going to be expensive, but it should be remembered that these facilities pay for themselves and, in the long run, generate a profit for the city. Parking-related fees constitute the largest source of non-ad valorem income for the city.



The upside of all this is that resident involvement in the decision-making processes related to these matters is more important than ever. People affiliated with Gables Good Government are among the most involved, well-informed, and forward-looking members of the city. Your city needs you, and I rest easier knowing that you have never failed to answer the call.

HOW TO JOIN GGG

To join GGG, send a letter to:

Gables Good Government
1825 Ponce de Leon Blvd., Box #448
Coral Gables, FL 33134
or email us at info@slesnick.net.

ANNUAL DUES

\$50 Member (household)
\$250 Sponsor/Advertiser
\$500 Donor
\$1,000 Corporate Donor

Gables Good Government was organized to support issues and causes that preserve and improve the quality of life in Coral Gables and promote the effective and efficient management of its government.



SUMMER CAMPS FOR KIDS

Actors' Playhouse

- **Broadway Musical Theatre Techniques** 6/9-13 or 6/23-27, \$350. (Ages 7-12)
- **Lights Camera Action!** 6/16-20 \$350 Live, filmed presentation on final day (7-12)
- **4-Week Summer Theatre Camp** 7/7-8/1, M-F 9AM-4PM. (Ages 7-12)
- **Advanced Musical Theatre Camp** 6/9-8/9, M-F 9AM-4PM + Sat 1-4PM 6/28-8/9 Production of "Pinocchio" \$1,500 (Ages 8-18)
- **Teen One-Act Showcase** 6/23-8/1 \$400 Audition techniques/rehearsal/show (13-18)

ActorsPlayhouse.org | 305-444-9293
280 Miracle Mile, Coral Gables, FL 33134

Coral Gables Museum

- **City Trekker Summer Camp** Mon-Fri 9AM-5PM 2-week sessions: DESIGN and PLAY 6/9-20, SHUTTERBUGS 6/23-7/3, SPLISH 'N' SPLASH 7/21-8/1, NATURAL WONDERS 8/4-15. Ages 5-10, \$450.

CoralGablesMuseum.org | 305-603-8067
285 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables, FL 33134



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