



*From the Desk of Andrew D. Gillum*  
City Commission, Seat 2



### Palmer Munroe Youth Center

It's approved!!! After several months of meetings, planning, networking, and collaborating, in January 2010, we obtained approval and funding from the City and County Commissions and the Department of Juvenile Justice to convert the Palmer Munroe Community Center into Palmer Munroe Youth Center (PMYC)—a facility that will focus on programming and activities for teens. It will also include restorative justice. Many thanks to the various community partners along with Walker Ford Teen Council members who helped to push this idea forward.

It's time now to put the pedal to the metal. Our goal is to have the youth center open and operational before the end of the summer. With haste, County Commissioner Bryan Desloge, Public Defender Nancy Daniels, Assistant City Manager Jay Townsend, and City staff will hammer out an operational plan. They will develop the structure for a PMYC governing board, which is proposed to include two representatives from each of the primary funding bodies: the state, the County, and the City. The State Attorney's Office and the Public Defender's Office will both serve in an ex-officio capacity. A nationwide search will be held to select a suitable candidate to operate the PMYC.

The multi-faceted facility will be designed to insure that youth have a major role in the process. The focus remains for PMYC to be a center of youth, by youth and for youth. With that in mind, we will reach out to each of the local middle and high schools to identify youth to serve on a PMYC youth advisory board.

This is a major accomplishment for our community and our teens. Be on the lookout for the official grand opening coming soon.

### Winter Relief Assistance Program

**WRAP Extended Through March 11, 2010**

WRAP was designed to ease the financial burden resulting from higher than normal energy use during the extreme cold weather. The program allowed all residential City and non-demand small business utility customers to carry over up to 25 percent of their utility bill, dated between January 9 and February 11, to the following month's bill. Due to the continuation of frigid weather, WRAP has been extended for one month. The extension will provide relief to customers receiving bills issued through March 11. For more information on WRAP or to request the carryover option, customers must contact *Your Own Utilities* at 891-4YOU (4968). For information on other energy programs, contact *Your Own Utilities* at 891-4YOU (4968) or visit online at <http://www.talgov.com/you/>

### Cold Night Weather Shelter

When the National Weather Service forecasts nighttime low temperatures to fall below 35° F for three (3) consecutive hours prior to sunrise and when the emergency shelters for the homeless population exceed their capacity during these type cold weather events, the City of Tallahassee, Leon County and the Capital Area Chapter of the American Red Cross propose to keep open a cold night weather shelter. The public will be notified when conditions warrant this service.

### Thank You for Haiti Relief Efforts

Contributions to assist victims of the January earthquake are needed and appreciated. Rep. Alan Williams, County Commissioner John Dailey and I co-hosted the January 22<sup>nd</sup> "Hope for Haiti Now" viewing party at the Hotel Duval. The \$2,900 raised was donated to the American Red Cross, the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund and UNICEF.

*"Serving is Leading"*

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🌀 Black History Month Recognition 🌀  
 Gilchrist Elementary School

Christian Butts and Henry Byrne eagerly ushered me to their 5<sup>th</sup> grade classroom where their classmates glistening with curiosity sat eagerly to meet their next featured Black History Month Recognition guest presenter. Class projects and admonitions for excellence garnished the walls to remind the students of their goals and the progress of their assignments.

Amanda Whitaker encouraged her 5<sup>th</sup> grade students to appreciate past and present day accomplishments of African American personalities. She interspersed tributes to historical giants with class visits by several local leaders. Evidence abounded through her students' inquiries and responses as well as the showcase of their projects as to why their teacher was selected as Gilchrist Elementary School's "Teacher of the Year".



*Ms. Whitaker*



*Amanda Whitaker's Gilchrist Elementary 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Class*

Foresight, strategy and perseverance were making an impact in the lives of the culturally diverse students whose career interests spanned the gamut of being a pro sports ballplayer, an astronaut, an attorney, an Olympian, an engineer, a fashion designer, a doctor, and a singer. There were a few who were still exploring their options. One boldly declared, "I want to be a vegetarian when I grow up." Upon repeating "veterinarian", as I thought she meant to say, she gently corrected me and said, "No, vegetarian because I like to eat vegetables."

Discussion of career choices was a great lead-in to highlight the City of Tallahassee's array of services—aviation, parks, garbage, fire, police, street maintenance, traffic signals—among others. Henry Byrne, the son of David Byrne, Director of Energy Services with the City of Tallahassee, proudly smiled when he heard how his father is key to helping keep the lights on in the community and schools. Henry later told me that his dad uses energy saving techniques at their home also.



*Henry Byrne  
 aspires to be a  
 professional  
 ballplayer*

Several minutes into my presentation a hush permeated the room as three students paraded in. My initial thought, "Hhmm, they are late to class—coming off of a long three day holiday weekend." WRONG!!!



*News Crew: .Brooks Haisten,  
 Emilee Sims, and Johnny Hentz*

It was the morning news crew coming off the beat from broadcasting the announcements. I was intrigued at the respect given them by their awestruck peers. Yet, when I asked about their career choice neither of them mentioned a desire to be a media professional.

Three student council members were in the class. President Christian Butts noted that he likes to vote for items that grant similar privileges to underclass students as those enjoyed by 5<sup>th</sup> graders. Questions about my position punctuated how serious they took their roles as leaders. Their curiosity reiterated the need to empower youth to make a difference in their communities.



*Gilchrist Student Council  
 Members: Representative  
 Emilee Sims, President  
 Christian Butts, and Alternate  
 Reid Rumenik*

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🌀 FAMU Broadcast Journalism Class 🌀



*Margie Menzel, WFSU radio host and a professor for FAMU Broadcast Newswriting and Reporting class demonstrates interviewing techniques.*

Margie Menzel invited me and my Commission Aide, Angie Whitaker, to speak to her aspiring TV, radio and print journalists. They requested guidelines on how to effectively schedule and conduct meaningful interviews with an elected official as well as leave a respectable impression on their interviewee.

Critical to their success is the awareness that people look to the media to provide factual details that allow them to formulate their own opinion. It cheapens the profession and the value of the work when journalists editorialize what should be a fact-based, news-based story. The greatest injury is done to the public who rely on the reporter for unbiased information. The #1 rule to abide by is to tell the story—cover the full breath and throttle of the topic.

Increasingly, real legitimate news is being muddled by gossip, blogosphere, or social tweets that makes it difficult to discern what’s true, what’s false and anything in between. I advised the students to avoid being considered a frivolous journalist by being prepared; research available background information so that they can ask “tough” questions. Elected officials can discern if the interviewer has researched the topic area and can present depth to their understanding of the issue or if they are just relying on the elected official to feed them the facts.

Current and future journalists are expected to do their job with excellence, ethics and utmost respect for their profession. Doing so reflects respect for those who consume what they are reporting.

Jamela Browne, a graduate student from St. Croix, US Virgin Islands, asked for specific tips on how to break through the invisible barriers to secure an appointment with or information from an elected official. Ms. Whitaker offered the following pointers.

- Each Commission member has his/her own Aide.
- Aides serve as office managers for their respective Commissioner. Each office has its own protocol of operation. Exercise professional courtesy.
- Aides have access to the elected official, knowledge of government operations, and contacts with staff experts. They can offer referrals if the Commission member is not readily accessible to meet with you.
- Several elected officials work a full-time position in addition to their part-time Commission role. Aides may have to consider multiple event schedules and/or juggle several competing priorities to try to accommodate requests.
- Contacts can be made in-person, by phone, letters or by e-mail (social networks such as Facebook may not be viewed as a professional method). Be prepared to provide responses to the “who, what, when, where, why, how” type questions that an Aide might ask.
- Trying to meet a deadline? Initiate contact as early as possible. Due to the nature of our business we might not be able to accommodate your timelines.

🌀 March Calendar Events 🌀

*“Subject to Change”*

Date	Time	Events
3/1	1 pm	Intergovernmental Agency
3/3	9 am – 10:30 am	CHSP Jt. Planning Board
3/10	9 am – 10:30 am	FVIG Target Issue
3/10	10:30 am – 4 pm	Office Appointments
3/10	4 pm	CC Meeting
3/15	Noon & 1 pm	CRA & CRTPA Meetings
3/17	9 am – 5 pm	Office Appointments
3/17	1:30 pm	HHS Target Issue
3/24	9 am – 4 pm	Office Appointments
3/24	4 pm	CC Meeting @ CH

**Code (All meeting at City Hall unless otherwise noted)**

CC – City Commission      CRA – Community Redevelopment Agency  
 CRTPA – Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency  
 CHSP – Community Human Service Partnership  
 FVIG – Financial Viability In Government  
 HHS – Health and Human Services

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