

VILLAGE OF PINECREST



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Meet Your Staff



[Darlene Perez](#) is an Account Clerk in the Department of Finance. She joined the Village staff in December 2002 as a part-time Park Service Aide. She has a bachelor's degree in Finance from FIU and is pursuing her MBA. Darlene loves to travel the world, take kickboxing classes, and bake delicious cupcakes for her co-workers.

E-News

December 2009

From the desk of Mayor Lerner



Strategic Planning has Begun

What would you like to see in the Pinecrest of 2015, and 2020? Are you satisfied with the land use, the number of parks and their utilization? What about the US 1 corridor? Do you want to see more density or different commercial configurations? Do you want to see more sidewalks and bike paths or are you satisfied with the current rural nature of the Village? Is the level of service from our public works, parks and recreation and building and zoning departments satisfactory, or can you suggest improvements? How about public safety - do you feel the protection is sufficient, or is there something missing? These and many more questions will be answered by those residents who respond to our outreach. We will be conducting a resident survey in the near future, as well as holding a public workshop to solicit input to the draft plan. We have already held four focus groups and invited many residents to provide ideas and comment on proposed areas of interest. If you are called for the telephone survey, we hope you will give thoughtful consideration to the caller, and when we hold the workshops, we hope you will take the time to attend and give us your ideas. If you have suggestions, feel free to contact me at mayorlerner@gmail.com.

It Takes More Than Property Taxes to Run a Village

At last month's Village Council meeting, we selected the firm of Alcalde and Fay to represent Pinecrest in an effort to acquire federal dollars that are necessary to complete the potable water construction project. In addition we will be applying for grants and other allocations to assist in improvements to Pinecrest Gardens and for transportation improvements.

[Option to Purchase Morningstar Renewal Property at Southwest](#)

Pinecrest
Business
Association

www.pinecrestbusiness.com

**MEMBER
HIGHLIGHT**

Marvin P. Stein, CPA
www.marvinpstein.com

Police Tips



Economic Crimes

An economic crime is any offense in which individuals or collectivities of people purposively act in an illegal manner in order to gain financial returns.

As the pressures of the Holiday Season set in, law enforcement is seeing more Economic Crimes throughout Miami-Dade County including Pinecrest. Here are some tips on how to avoid becoming a victim of an Economic Crime:

- 1) Monitor all your bank accounts on a regular basis. Any unusual activity should be reported to your bank immediately.
- 2) Secure unused bank cards/checks and credit cards at home. If you have a safe, this makes a great place to keep these items until you need them.

124th Street and 72nd Avenue

The Archdiocese of Miami has decided to sell many of its property holdings and this nine acre parcel in the middle of Pinecrest is one of them. This property has served as a retreat center, first by the Dominican nuns from 1957 to 2000, and then purchased by the Archdiocese of Miami. The archdiocese has offered it for sale to the Village first, before putting it on the open market. We have voted to pursue a 90 day option to purchase, in order to have appraisals done and solicit the interest of the residents in purchasing this property. The Village is built out, and there will not be other opportunities to acquire such a piece of property in the future. But in order to acquire the property, it will have to be financed by general obligation bond, which will require a vote by the electors of the Village. The first step is to see what the property appraises for, and if we can agree on a sale price, since I assume it will appraise out at far less than the asking price. Then we will be soliciting input from the residents, as we go through the strategic planning process, to make sure we are building a vision of how to best create public amenities that meet our residents' needs. If you have questions or suggestions, feel free to contact me at mayorlerner@gmail.com.

Sidewalks Coming on 60th Avenue

The Village's Transportation Advisory Group has been meeting for the past ten months and has heard from residents about the needs for sidewalks in many areas of the Village. The residents whose children attend school are especially concerned that there is no safe route for their children to walk or bike to school, or to the community center and library. In addition, there are school bus stops all along 60th Avenue that require children to walk from home to the stops, without a safe sidewalk. The Village Council voted at the last meeting to have the manager develop the plan for installing sidewalks along 60th Avenue. In the future, we will be conducting a study to review the east side of the Village for appropriate additional safe routes for walking. Feel free to contact me at mayorlerner@gmail.com with any comments.

Pinecrest Pioneers Celebration

We will continue the tradition begun earlier this year by hosting a holiday/birthday celebration potluck luncheon to honor many of our seniors who have turned ninety or older. It will be held on December 11th, 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. in the Hibiscus Room at Pinecrest Gardens. If you would like to join us, please RSVP to me at mayorlerner@gmail.com. The Palmetto Middle School orchestra will perform.

In June 2003, the Florida Legislature designated the first week of December as Intergenerational Week in Florida. Intergenerational programs and activities allow us the opportunity to bridge the experience and wisdom of elders with the unbridled curiosity and energy of our youth. The make-up of our society is rapidly changing as the aging population increases at an unprecedented rate. However, our communities are also missing intergenerational contact. Children spend their days with other children of the same age group. Teens spend their days on Facebook or twittering and texting their friends. Adults work with

3) If you contact or if anyone contacts you offering to do work or provide a service, they should have their credentials and/or licenses available on demand.

Keep in mind that in Economic Crimes your personal information is what is targeted and most useful to someone wanting to compromise your finances. Keep it safe!

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

others who are for the most part in the same age group. Older adults often live and/or socialize in communities or facilities that include only members of their own generation. Our communities tend to be age segregated, allowing each generation to see itself as separate rather than an integral part of a larger community. Intergenerational week provides an opportunity to honor children, teens, adults and elders. It is also a time to celebrate people of diverse backgrounds, ages, and experiences, and the gifts they share one with another. Intergenerational programs and initiatives provide opportunities for individuals, families and communities to once again enjoy and benefit from the richness of an age-integrated society that brings people together to address the needs of all ages through cooperation and pooled resources. These programs fill gaps in community-based services for special populations such as persons with disabilities, frail elderly and at-risk youth. Intergenerational programs increase community awareness about issues that affect both young and old and promote understanding of shared values and respect for individuals in all stages of life. For more information about activities, as well as programs celebrating intergenerational relationships, visit Generations United at www.gu.org or contact ZsaZsa Ingram-Fitzpatrick at fitzpatrickzz@elderaffairs.org.

[A Butterfly Habitat is Born at the Community Center](#)



Members of the Palmetto Middle School National Junior Honor Society brought sun block, enthusiasm and the desire to help, on Saturday, November 21st. Students Emma Kirkpatrick, Juliette Choiseul, Etienne Choiseul, Stephanie Levine, Conor Whalen, and NJHS "member in the making" Jean-Luc Choiseul, got some dirt under their nails as they labored side by side, digging holes, and planting dozens of butterfly attracting plants, outside the Pinecrest Library, adjacent to 111th Street. This community project was spearheaded by Sharon Biddix-Maessen, a member of the Pinecrest Garden Club, and labor came from a handful of Palmetto Middle students to whom leadership and service to their community is part of the curriculum, as members of NJHS. The area, which was outlined in the shape of a Zebra Long Wing Butterfly, is now home to Pentas, Porterweeds, Milkweeds, Lantanas, and other butterfly attractors, which will provide a nectar source. Climbers such as Dutchman Pipe and native Passion Vine were planted as larval source. It is not only a plentiful habitat and refuge for winged creatures, it is also a colorful addition to our community center that can be viewed from inside the library. Morning turned into afternoon as the students wrapped up the project with a healthy watering and the release of thousands of Ladybug beetles, as an ecologically safe alternative to pesticide. As tools were gathered and clean up began, students were quick to notice that butterflies and bees were already starting to feast in the new plantings. Obviously, the "buzz" was out about the newly planted Butterfly Habitat at the Pinecrest Community Center.

Thanks to Christian Armstrong for submitting the news of this wonderful enhancement to our community center/library grounds.

Palmetto Senior High School's Swim Team takes State Championship

Congratulations. I am told this is the first time in 40 years that a South Florida public school won the state championships - Go Palmetto!

News on the Education Front

We hosted an advocacy workshop on November 30th at Palmetto Middle School to help arm parent advocates with the facts and the messages they will need when speaking to our legislators about what we expect them to do to support our public educational system during the upcoming legislative session. I am including important information below about the lawsuit that was recently filed to force the legislature to find the funds to provide the constitutionally mandated high quality education.

Excellence in Education Now

More than a decade after voters approved a constitutional amendment imposing a "paramount duty" on the state to provide a high-quality education to all Florida students, Florida's schools are still failing our children.

On November 18, 2009, a coalition of parents and citizens groups filed a law suit to force state leaders to meet their constitutional duty.

About the Lawsuit

Join the Movement!

We need Floridians to join these parents in demanding better schools -- show state leaders we're not going to go away until they live up to their constitutional responsibility.

[Visit our sign-up page now to voice your support.](#)

[Fighting for High-Quality Schools: Moving the Battle from the State House to the Courthouse](#)

[Press Release](#)

Read the press release announcing the filing of the litigation.

[View the Complaint](#)

The plaintiffs filed a 24-page complaint in the Leon County Circuit Court, alleging that the state has failed to meet its constitutional burden.

Media Coverage

[Nov 18, 2009 St. Petersburg Times: Lawsuit claims Florida is Failing Its Schools](#) *Florida is violating the state Constitution by not pouring enough money into schools and relentlessly focusing on high-stakes testing policies that aren't getting good results, says a lawsuit expected to be filed today in Leon County circuit court.*

[Nov 18, 2009 Orlando Sentinel: Lawsuit: Florida failed to provide 'high-quality' schools](#) *A lawsuit filed today charges that Florida has failed to adequately fund education or to provide for a system of "high quality" public schools in violation of the state constitution.*

[Nov 19, 2009 Jacksonville Times-Union: Lawsuit claims Florida schools fail children](#) *Parents from Duval County and across Florida filed suit against the state's education system Wednesday, setting off legal and political battles over the future of Florida schools.*

[Nov 19, 2009 Tallahassee Democrat: Lawsuit: Fla. failing kids](#) *The Florida Constitution clearly states the importance of education in this state. But superintendents, children advocates and parents are up in arms because they are angry that the state is not upholding its part of deal.*

[Nov 18, 2009 WFTV: Parents Suing State Over Poor Education](#) *Some Orange County parents say their children are getting such a poor education they're suing the state legislature and Department of Education. The parents told Eyewitness News that*

lawmakers are violating the constitution by spending too little money on education.

[Jul 16, 2009 Miami Herald: Florida's Public Schools Are At Risk](#) Miami Herald editorial board asks: "Why is Florida abdicating its responsibility to fund public schools to ensure quality education mandated by the state's constitution?"

Coalition Partners

[Fund Education Now](#)

Fund Education Now is a permanent grassroots, non-partisan group created by parents to inspire and empower voters to advocate on behalf of Florida's children. Supported by teachers, principals, administrators, and concerned citizens- we believe that Florida's public education crisis is about more than money. For years, the Florida Legislature has not met its responsibility as described in Article IX of the state constitution to provide funding for "a high quality education."

[Pinecrest Gardens is Blossoming](#)

The Village Council fully appreciates the significance and value of Pinecrest Gardens, as a crown jewel in this community, and must be treated as such. Therefore we have taken the steps necessary to provide opportunities to strengthen its capacity to serve as the cultural arts center for the Village. We voted to create a separate department for the gardens with its own executive director, whose primary responsibility will be to create arts, musical and theatrical programs, market them to the community, provide professional development to bring in a strong revenue stream, and to build a strong base of volunteers to support the cultural, educational and horticultural aspects of the gardens. The Executive Director position is now open and advertised. The salary is in the \$80-100 range. The deadline for acceptance of applications is December 11, 2009. The application is available at www.pinecrest-fl.gov.

The rationale for doing this was simple; we have an asset that is not meeting its best and highest use, and is a true jewel for our community to experience cultural enrichment in a gorgeous setting and learn more about our history and our environment. We can no longer afford to have the gardens remain a financial drain on the Village, and fully realize that with some specialized attention, and professional marketing and development skills, it is capable of bringing in significant revenue, to cover the \$1 million it costs to operate the gardens. We will also begin to aggressively seek federal grants, and have recently hired a federal lobbying team to help us acquire funds for this and other infrastructure.

Pinecrest Gardens holds much promise as home to a cultural arts awakening in the Village, alongside the continued enhancements to the horticultural component. The Pinecrest Garden Club has trained the first of our volunteers for our Docent program, and is now available every weekend to provide tours of the incredible array of plants. The Pinecrest Gardens Advisory Committee provides advice and support for the outreach and collaboration with the many other horticultural, environmental, cultural and educational programs we seek to engage. And the Community Gardens Charitable Fund, a local 501(c)3, continues to provide financial support through the yearly Soiree and other fund raising activities.

An arts and entertainment consultant has been retained to provide us with a business plan for the cultural programming

potential our Banyan Bowl holds for our community. In addition, the farmers market formerly held at Gardner's on SW 124 street is now moving to Pinecrest Gardens, beginning December 6th and will be there every Sunday from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. through April. You can stroll through the gardens and then shop at the farmer's market on Sundays. We hope to bring in some entertainment as well.

We are excited about the possibilities, and look forward to our new executive director to make it all happen for Pinecrest Gardens.

Toy Drive

Max Lucas, of Palmetto Middle School, is organizing a toy drive at the school. The donations will be distributed to the children of migrant workers from the Homestead Soup Kitchen. Students should bring one new and unwrapped toy to their social studies class. Please contact me at mayorlerner@gmail.com if want to help.

Pinecrest is Water Wise!

This fall, 102 cities throughout South Florida competed for the title of "Most Water Wise" - a competition organized by the Wyland Foundation in conjunction with the Living Green Fair held in early November. I am proud to report that Pinecrest was in the top ten and finished in third place.

Events

December 4th - Villagers Holiday Home Tour in Pinecrest

Tour begins at Pinecrest Gardens (Hibiscus Room). For more information, contact Pat Kyle Lawrence at 305-338-6223 or galloway_inc@bellsouth.net, before Thursday, if you are interested in tickets (\$30.00 a piece to tour five homes in Pinecrest). Tickets can only be purchased before the event. It is not advertised! You will receive a tour map at the Hibiscus Room at Pinecrest Gardens from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

December 11th - Pinecrest Pioneers Luncheon

The luncheon will be held in the Hibiscus Room at Pinecrest Gardens from 11:30 a.m - 1:00 p.m.

Wishing you and your families a safe and happy holiday!

Cindy Lerner
Mayor

**Help us expand the E-News readership -
please forward this to a Pinecrest neighbor.**

Community Calendar

[Subscribe to the Parks and Recreation Program Calendar](#)

LIBRARY

ROUND ROBIN READ AND STORY SLAM

December 1, 8, 3:30 p.m.

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

December 2, 7:00 p.m.

READING READY TODDLER STORYTIME

December 4, 11, 18, 10:00 a.m.

S.M.A.R.T. Science, Math and Reading Tutoring

December 5, 12, 10:00 a.m.

CHESS CLUB

December 5, 12, 19, 10:30 a.m.

HOLIDAY HIJINKS @ THE LIBRARY

December 5, 2:00 p.m.

INTERNET BASICS

December 7, 10:00 a.m.

PJ LIBRARY STORYTIME

December 10, 6:30 p.m.

RESUME 101

December 14, 10:00 a.m.

PARROT JUNGLE POETS

December 14, 1:00 p.m.

MIAMI POETS PRESENT A POETRY SOIREE

December 17, 6:30 p.m.

BASICS OF MEDITATION

December 19, 3:00 p.m.

[Click for additional information and other programs](#)

Pinecrest

Branch Library - 5835 SW 111 Street

305-668-4571

VILLAGE MEETINGS

Village Council Regular Meeting

December 8, 2009, 7:00 p.m.

Pinecrest Municipal Center - 12645 Pinecrest Parkway

www.pinecrest-fl.gov/agendas.html

OTHER

The Villagers Holiday Home Tour

December 4

[Information](#)

Farmers' Market

December 6, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (Sundays)
Pinecrest Gardens - 11000 Red Road

7th Annual Pinecrest Gardens Fine Arts Festival
January 16-17, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Pinecrest Gardens - 11000 Red Road

Going Green Conference
January 29, 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Pinecrest Gardens - 11000 Red Road

If you are a non-profit or civic organization holding meetings or events in Pinecrest and wish to be included in this listing, please send an e-mail to communitycalendar@pinecrest-fl.gov. Please include complete event information such as name of organization, date, time, place, and contact information.



Village of Pinecrest
12645 Pinecrest Parkway, Pinecrest, Florida 33156
t 305-234-2121
f 305-234-2131
www.pinecrest-fl.gov

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